SKID ROWERS:

THEIR ALIENATION AND INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.

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ABSTRACT

SKID ROWERS: THEIR ALIENATION AND INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY.

by Ronald C. VanderKooi

This was a study of the involvement of skid rowers in American society and the skid row community. To provide an orientation to skid row, attention was first given to the historical process by which skid rows developed and to the general appearance of skid rows today. Next this study reviewed the development of thought concerning skid row. Then it surveyed the background of alienation literature and attempted an analytic treatment of the concept. Finally the hypotheses of this study, along with the methods employed, were introduced.

It was considered important to observe a great variety of social and other activity and attitudinal patterns within skid row in order to characterize the overall alienation or involvement of skid rowers. While a variety of approaches utilizing some "participant observation" and resource people were used, for descriptive and validity purposes, the chief method employed for this study required the interviewing of a random sample of residents drawn from a stratified selection of hotels, missions and other sleeping places.

Interview schedules consisted of questions about many life activities along with numerous items intended to measure aspects of alienation. Some of the latter items were developed by the author and others were taken from scales of Dean, Nettler, Srole and Rosenberg. Several attempts at developing scales from these were not successful in this study, but one five-item set, which we chose to call "Meaning of Life," did show sufficient reproducibility to be called a scale.

Eight general hypotheses provided the framework for the findings of this study. Concerning the first set of four, the following summary of findings can be stated: Regarding overall alienation, skid rowers showed themselves to be little different from other populations in terms of four comparative measures (Hyp. A). They showed the strongest concern (and, possibly, alienation) about unemployment and financial problems, skid row community-related problems, and alcoholism (Hyp. B). In almost all institutional areas, alienation of powerlessness was more prevalent than that of normlessness (Hyp. C). None of Merton's nonconforming "modes of adaptation," such as "retreatism," seemed suitable in labeling the actions of skid rowers.

A second set of four general hypotheses was concerned with the relationships between 1) certain kinds of alienation and 2) activities and personal attributes of skid rowers.

These were treated in 166 subhypotheses. "Meaning of Life" alienation was significantly related to 18 of 55 generally negatively-valued activity patterns and personal attributes of skid rowers (Hyp. E). More specific kinds of alienation, for example, regarding work or family, were related to "time of residence in skid row" in only five of 41 tests (Hyp.F). Those specific kinds of alienation were related to "Meaning of Life" alienation in 12 of 41 tests. (Hyp. G). Finally, those specific kinds of alienation were related to specific, usually negatively-valued, activity patterns and personality attributes in ten of 29 tests (Hyp. H).

The descriptive aspects of this study showed that respondents tended to accept what are said to be important American value-orientations and that they do not ascribe to a unique lower class or skid row set of values. They showed general interest and approval of what was going on in American society and they showed a limited acceptance of skid row's generally deleterious conditions, while complaining of jackrollers and similar hazards of skid row.

Skid rowers, many of whom have lived both in families of origin and procreation, expressed generally positive attitudes toward these. They showed themselves to be active in a variety of friendship groups and appreciated these.

They experienced a range of social interaction with women, predominantly favoring heterosexual relations and being repelled by the idea of homosexuality. Their attitudes toward themselves were, in most regards, positive and not in keeping with accounts of them as "alienated from self."

While only a minority worked, they almost unanimously supported work values. Their financial status tended to be critically low and they tended to use such resources quite carefully. They were quite active in a range of rather typical, if low-cost, American uses of free time. Similarly, they were, with some limitations, active in politics, religion and education and gave very definite support to values regarding such participation.

Skid rowers exist in a community and subculture which is organized and thus facilitates the existence of poor males who are often alcoholic, aged, unskilled and otherwise handicapped. While this is an atypical community, its men are at the same time accepting of, and willing to participate in, general cultural patterns. Given their limitations, careful planning, in cooperation with them, is necessary before any attempts to change that community are made.

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By

Ronald C. VanderKooi

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

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Department of Sociology and Anthropology

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PREFACE

A study that develops as this one did affords the researcher an extensive and many-faceted experience. It elicits the cooperation and contributions of many people who many times provide pertinent ideas and sometimes give continued effort to the research problem.

With beginnings in working with alcoholics in rehabilitation centers and then studying college student drinking, I came to do research on skid rows and, after two such studies, developed a conception of skid row as a community which provides many social, economic and other facilities that are useful to handicapped, poor and old men. My work with these men has secured my interest in them and their community and has led to a continuing interest in skid row research. Even though skid row has stood out as a social area which could be pointed to by Americans as the place for failures and "bums," many aspects of life there have not been systematically investigated; and nearly all the interest shown in skid rows is of a provincial sort, for example, focused on a particular mission or on police work. Such phenomena as the workingman's culture, visible in the business of the street after five a.m., have not received their fair recognition, probably because most Americans would rather have a more simple picture of "skid row bums."

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The men of skid row, through patience, cooperation and frequent, intense interest, gave this study whatever success it may have. My chief regret is that I could not give an assuring answer to respondents' questions about how this study would help them and other skid rowers. As is frequently the case in the "culture of poverty," they had once again "been had" by a social system which is skilled at using the poor. I only hope that I can, through continued effort, make the data here gathered useful in improving the lot of skid rowers.

Hotel owners, mission workers and other professionals were helpful in facilitating this study and providing information. If their knowledge and ideas could be effectively discussed and sponsored in a wholistic way, Chicago could immediately embark on a precedent setting program of skid row improvements.

One must have the help of persons removed from skid row to accomplish such research as this. Three of these have my greatest appreciation: Professor Walter Freeman, who helped get this research through its planning stages and into the field, Professor Arthur Vener, who assisted through the middle stages and Professor Duane Gibson, who by steadfast interest and diligent effort helped give the report that follows whatever quality it has.

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My wife, Betty, gave not only the patience and encouragement which is expected of a graduate student's wife but also countless hours of assistance in the less glamourous off-skid row tasks of this production.

This is necessarily the preface to an unfinished work. I hope it will encourage others, as it has myself, to ask new, more insightful questions of skid rowers and others who hardly share in the "affluent society."

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with an American community called "skid row"[1] and its effects on men. Skid row exists as a legitimate object of sociological examination. It is a form of social organization which is in certain ways significantly different from other social organizations found in American society. It maintains a deviant subculture which is generally disapproved by those in the mainstream of American culture. Its differences have frequently led laymen and some social scientists to assume that skid row is socially-disorganized and populated by nothing more than an aggregate of alienated individuals.

This student, however, is in accord with others who have seen skid row as somewhat organized and functional both for its members and for American society.[2] This study, then, assumes the existence of skid row as an organized, if deviant, community. It takes as its purpose the detailed examination of many social activities of skid row and the involvement in or alienation of skid rowers in regard to these activities.

According to Mercer,[3] the community is,

> a functionally-related aggregate of people who live in a particular geographical <u>locality</u> at a particular time, share a common <u>culture</u>, are arranged in a <u>social</u>

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[1] The term, "skid row,"(hereafter not in quotation marks) is used in a generic sense in this dissertation even though the findings are chiefly based on one Chicago skid row. Rationale and limitations regarding this generalization are discussed at a later point.

[2] See for example Warren Dunham, <u>Homeless Men and Their Habitat</u>, p.12; Peterson and Maxwell, "The Skid Row Wino," <u>Social Problems</u>, pp.308-316, V.5:4.

[3] Blain Mercer, <u>The American Community</u>, p.27.

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> structure, and exhibit an awareness of their uniqueness and separate identity as a group. (emphasis mine.)

These criteria are borne in mind throughout this study. The conception of skid rowers as merely an aggregate of individuals, alienated from society for various reasons, becomes false to the extent that men seek in skid row not simply an escape from society but a viable community in which many social activities and attitudes similar to those found in all communities are sustained. The understanding of skid rowers demands community study as was suggested by Park in his preface to Anderson's classic, The Hobo.[4]

> ...every community...tends to determine the personal traits as it does determine the language, the vocation, social values, and, eventually, the personal opinions of the individuals who compose it.

Skid row areas as such have existed for nearly one hundred years and have long attracted the interest of laymen and social scientists. Many studies have been done and present interesting, surprising and useful information.[5] None has produced a definitive theory of skid row and its population. Similarly, movements to abolish skid rows or bring them under rigid control have failed. Skid rows have demonstrated their functional nature in their persistence and show their complexity by defying easy explanations.

Skid rows have been studied in many theoretical perspectives and probably most often in one of "social problems." Like other parts and issues of American society so considered, they have received an abundant

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[4] Nels Anderson, The Hobo, p.xxv.

[5] See the bibliography here or that of Samuel Wallace's, Skid Row as a Way of Life, pp.207-214.

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but unsatisfactory treatment. They have been considered as areas where social problems, chief of which is alcoholism, are concentrated and evident. Among other problems so considered have been crime, unemployment, family disorganization, sexual perversion, drug addiction and mental illness. In recent decades, studies have clearly shown that a "problem" focus, as well as traditionally-similar social disorganization approaches, is inadequate in describing and understanding situations such as skid row.[6] Another focus on skid row, building upon that of "social problems," has been concerned with "social action." Many agencies have undertaken action in the area, usually with only vague or implicit theoretical background, and these attempts have been generally ineffective.[7]

Most studies have been of a descriptive nature and likewise have been limited in scope and generalizing power. A number of survey researches and demographic studies have been done but they have usually assumed the existence of problems and disorganization. Few researchers have studied skid row by looking for its organized and functional nature as a community.

The ecological area of skid row has never been well-defined. It has sometimes been confused with other slums or roughly defined as an area in which men have collected as failures and withdrawees from society.

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[6] C. W. Mills, "The Professional Ideology of Social Pathologists," American Journal of Sociology, V.49:2. pp.165-180.

[7] For instance, see Minneapolis Housing and Redevelopment Authority, A General Report on the Problem of Relocating the Population of the Lower Loop Redevelopment Area: Social Planning Council of Toronto, Report of the Committee on Homeless and Transient Men: Chicago Tenants Relocation Bureau, The Homeless Man on Skid Row: The Greater Philadelphia Movement, What to Do about the Men on Skid Row: City of Detroit, Mayor's Rehabilitation Committee Report on Skid Row Problems. For evidence on the ineffectiveness of Detroit's project, see "Skid Row," the Detroit Free Press Magazine, August 11, 1963.

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Skid row men have often been taken as examples to illustrate alienation and similar themes. Many times the curious assume skid row alienation and want to know its objects. The ask for instance, "What are skid rowers running away from?" "Wives?" "Work?" and so forth.

While in some respects skid row men may be alienated, their total alienation as a blanket assumption is viewed here as subject to question. It is the purpose of this dissertation to examine the nature and extent of this alienation. Further discussion must await a definition of terms. It is sufficient at this point to say that skid row will be approached here as an on-going community of men in American society who, though they are deviant in important ways, still may have certain identity and involvement as skid row dwellers and as Americans, and will demonstrate these in their activities and attitudes.

In summary this study, in analyzing the alienation of skid row men, examines a variety of important potential types of alienation in American society. Its concern is with the nature of the skid row community and the effects that community has on the alienation of its population. A good deal of descriptive treatment is thus basic to this study but more intensive comparisons and analyses are also undertaken.

Having selected alienation as a major concept, it might be assumed that the study is negative in approach, but such should not be taken to be the case. While "social problems" approaches have been relatively negative and have imposed middle class values, the alienation approach is less judgmental in that it allows participants of a system to evaluate themselves. Thus, the relative presence of alienation and involvement can be measured in the kind of quantitative study done here, and comparisons with other communities become possible.

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Alienation as such is a personal quality but it is very much the result of sociological circumstances. The concept, therefore, is useful in observing such social situations as the skid row community. In using it, a consistent frame of reference is developed in which a variety of socially-induced effects can be observed. The chief question, in addition to "Alienation from what?" becomes "Does the skid row community encourage involvement in or alienation from its various institutions as well as from those of American society?"

The concept of alienation has gained increased acceptance in recent years among both social scientists and the general public. Its broad perspective facilitates the examination of many aspects of human existence. The term has been used haphazardly, sometimes as an all-revealing principle, sometimes in narrow operationalizations. It has been heavily criticized, and the concept in itself is no more an explanatory tool than "sin" has been. Alienation demands rigorous treatment if it is to be useful in sociology. Though this study is not primarily a methodological one, rather careful attempts to order basic characteristics of the concept are made in Chapter Four.

In connection with this study, an extensive research project was carried out in the city of Chicago on its large West Madison skid row. The author obtained the principle data by means of one hundred survey interviews but also accumulated a knowledge of skid rows in previous studies in Chicago and other cities. Many contacts with resource people permitted the collection of various perspectives on the situation. An extensive literature was reviewed and the author used a limited amount of participant observation and casual contacts to help determine the validity of this study.

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hypotheses and theories about other such communities and they may be helpful in providing some general knowledge about alienation and its meaning for all men. Chicago's skid row is a large one with some special features, but it has parallels in skid rows elsewhere.

In Chapter Two, the origin, development and current status of skid row are outlined, with emphasis put upon skid row's structural-functional place in society. In Chapter Three, attention is turned to sociological theory of skid row, observing its beginnings, classical form and overall development to the present.

Chapters Four and Five deal with methodology. In the first of these, alienation is introduced and its meanings discussed. Attention is given to its current definitions, treatment and criticisms, and its operationalization in this study. The latter chapter introduces the general problem and some hypotheses explored in the study.

Chapter Six provides a broad introduction to findings. The eight hypotheses central to the study are treated and some findings concerned with the daily life of skid rowers are presented. Chapter Seven is a treatment of the skid row man's orientation toward American society and his community. His attitude toward people in general and toward important American values are treated, as is his lower class status and attitudes toward certain "lower class values." Then the existence of skid row as a community is examined. Some basic community activities and attitudes of skid rowers are treated, some special problems of that area are observed and brief attention is turned to the issue of race.

The rest of the chapters treat particular institutions which are relevant to skid rowers and their community. Each institution performs "locality-relevant functions," and thus is part of the community to which skid rowers must react. In observing the participation in and

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psychological attitudes of skid rowers toward these institutions, evidence is offered for the structure and function of a skid row community in American society.

Chapter Eight investigates the skid rower's association with various potential primary groups including families and friendship groups. His apparent lack of interaction with women is explored and finally his very important relationship with himself is treated.

Chapter Nine is concerned with work and finance, and with a wide range of free-time uses. Chapter Ten is a consideration of three other institutions: politics, religion and education. Chapter Eleven contains a summary of findings and some conclusions concerning this study.

Throughout the investigation of these institutions there exists a predominant concern with the relative adherence or conformity that skid rowers display in regard to important value and behavioral patterns of American society. The data will suggest the degree to which skid row exists as a distinct community and subculture in which men are involved in or alienated from society and its various component parts.

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CHAPTER TWO: THE DEVELOPMENT AND NATURE OF SKID ROW

Skid rows in American society are communities that are at once familiar and little-known areas of the "invisible culture of poverty."[1] Nearly everyone knows of them: their mention stimulates quick interest and preconceived ideas. Nevertheless available descriptions of these areas have shown that skid rows have different meanings for various observers in such vital matters as the physical areas covered, the people who occupy them and their life styles. Even the actual existence of many particular skid rows is frequently questioned.

The idea of skid row as a community is introduced in this chapter by examining its development in historical context and by some initial descriptions of the contemporary area and population. Skid row, like other communities, experiences continual change and has, within American societal development, evolved through various stages which have affected its present condition.

It is important that a sociological perspective be maintained in this admittedly historical and descriptive chapter. In the account rendered here, skid row can be positioned in the development of human culture and in that of American society, and the structural and functional development of skid row is suggested. Reasons for skid row's development are important to the understanding of it as a contemporary community and its men as alienated or involved members of that community and American society.

A. SKID ROWS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.

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American communities with distinctive institutional patterns. Though each had developed something of its own distinct character, all have developed in a similar pattern, for similar purposes and they maintain similar forms today. An historical examination of skid rows may be viewed meaningfully in terms of stages of their development such as those that follow.

1. Before Skid Row; Beginning of History to 1850 (the decline of nomadism and the increasing definition and sanctioning of homelessness as deviant.)

The antecedents of American skid rows and their inhabitants date back apparently throughout man's history with the "homeless man" appearing as nomad, vagrant, tramp and in other forms. Nomadism by definition was the pervasive way of life before the beginnings of civilization. With the growth of civilization until now, the nomadic person has been increasingly defined as a deviant, and often outcaste, person. Stable and, especially, industrial societies tend to define the wanderer as a liability to the system who must be discouraged. Communities of nomads became less common and the individual wanderer became more visible. Many variations of the vagrant and beggar as they have existed throughout history have been documented by Gilmore and Ribton-Turner.[2]

The beginnings of Western civilization brought negative definitions and severe sanctions for homelessness and vagrancy.

> Edward VI's response to this growing problem was a statute of unparalleled severity ...all persons loitering, wandering, and not seeking work were to be...marked with a hot iron in the breast the mark of V...

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[2] Harlan Gilmore, the Beggar; and C.J. Ribton-Turner, A History of Vagrants and Vagrancy and Beggars and Begging.

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[4] ibid.

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> presented to his captors as a slave for two years and...fed on bread and water...caused to work by any means. If he ran away he was to be branded on the cheek in the sign of an S, and the second time...put to death.[3]

Nevertheless, "the number of men, women and children who were vagabonds and rogues steadily increased," and eventually other less severe kinds of societal reactions resulted.[4] By 1601 the English Poor Laws were being written, witnessing for the first time some humanitarian attitudes towards beggars and others who were clearly handicapped. From 1524 until 1676 in England, at least forty-nine works were published on the distress of the poor and these included some studies of the homeless.[5] Nevertheless, harsh judgment and repressive treatment were to continue to be common. Feudal attitudes that people should permanently attach themselves to one locale continued strong, and they persist today.[6]

2. Boomer Days:[7] 1850-1900. (Disorganization and industrial development in America conducive to new kinds of homelessness).

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[3] Wallace, op.cit. p.6.

[4] ibid.

[5] Dunham, op.cit. p.7.

[6] To the extent that there is an alienation and estrangement of the homeless from society (or the existence of a deviant skid row community), it has increasingly been a society-imposed state of affairs. As Howard Becker states in Outsiders (p.9) "social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infractions constitute deviance." By enforcing these rules societies create deviant groups such as skid rowers and other outcastes.

[7] The "boomer" was a temporary, migrant worker, either by his own choice or his employer's. He was, according to B.A. Botkin and A. Harlow in A Treasury of Railroad Folklore (p.164)

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a) Immigration, Industrialization and the Western Movement

Emigration from the Old World to North America established a startling new pattern for community-bound Europeans. Whereas mobility had previously been an unthought-of activity, many had been "uprooted,"[8] and the possibility of further migration was clearly realized. With the intensive industrialization and development, especially that occurring from 1850 to 1900, American men were further encouraged to loosen community ties. The expanded Industrial Revolution with its great effects on labor and the Western Movement, which were vital to this nation's character, also meant a "loss of community" for many. They provided an impetus for new kinds of homelessness, for the banding together of the homeless and the later emergence of skid row communities.

b) Work as a Cause of Homelessness

It is argued here that the development of skid rows can be traced chiefly to the need for a large mobile male labor force and thus to a proportion of society finding nomadism its most desirable way of life. The migrant role was recognized as necessary but undesirable both by the migrant people and by the communities which they left and entered. Thus the case of these new homeless was one which fitted the "price for progress" theme often raised with regard to civilization and industrialization. Two earlier and two contemporary students make this a strong point.

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(7) ...an itinerant...who travelled light, skipping at short notice from one [rail] road to another ...[his] heyday was the period of national expansion between the Civil War and World War I. He was bred of wanderlust, wars, strikes, depressions, seasonal rushes, liquor, the desire to avoid shotgun weddings, and often just plan bad luck.

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> The tramp comes with the locomotive, and almshouses and prisons are as surely the marks of "material progress" as are costly dwellings, rich warehouses, and magnificent churches.[9]

> These men are the necessary and innocent victims of existing conditions who are turned out every day as surely as chaff is produced by a threshing machine.[10]

> While the phenomena of vagrancy and mendicacy have been recognized since the days of ancients, they assume their modern form as a result of the industrial revolution in Europe and America, and the social forces which were unleashed by this revolution.[11]

> It is clear that in the overwhelming majority of cases, the migrant is the product of economic and social conditions. He is the end product, some have called him the waste product, of a society in which opportunity is limited.[12]

With early industrialization, a new kind of poverty, particularly noticeable in urban centers, was developing. Skid rows were being formed by industrial and cultural forces and affected by such traumatic events as wars and depressions, issues which will be treated below. These forces, whether supporting the idea of alienation or not, point out substantial reasons for the beginnings of skid row. There is, moreover, evidence that migrant workers did create certain kinds of communities in which they shared common interests, special languages and many facilities, and in which they maintained much cooperation.

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[9] Henry George, Progress and Poverty, p.7.

[10] Edmund Kelley, The Elimination of Tramps, p.140.

[11] Dunham, op.cit. pp.6-7.

[12] Frederick Feied, No Pie in the Sky: The Hobo as American Cultural Hero, pp.7-8.

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Brief attention should be given to a few industries which were prominent in recruiting men for migrant work. It is clear that 1) in so recruiting, these industries were weakening the traditional integration of many families and communities and that 2) the men were generally adhering to American values concerning work and that any alienation found among them would have to take into account such motivations. In times of growth and prosperity, these industries employed "boomers" by the hundreds of thousands; in depressed times or whenever workers were not needed, they were simply released. The actual operation of many industries was made possible by the existence of a rootless male labor force. The four industries to be considered here include railroading, seafaring, farming and logging.

Railroads were once massive employers of the homeless. The building and maintenance of railroad facilities required a great many workers, domestic and foreign, most of whom were unskilled but strong. The construction of level railroad grades required countless shovelers, graders, mule drivers, track layers and others in an era devoid of bulldozers and automated machinery. The literature on railroading is replete with tales of the boomers and their more adventurous experiences. The railroads recruited their workers in massive campaigns and gradually developed labor hiring centers, usually in what came to be skid row areas. Many railroad workers came to reside in these areas during winter off-seasons or when unemployed.

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> The railroads came to hire men in great numbers. They were located in the area. (The large North Western Station is located on the edge of skid row and Union Station, which serves five major railroads, is two blocks away.) Other smaller employers came to realize that West Madison was an ideal hiring place.[14]

From today's perspective, it is clear that the development of such industries as the railroads, depending at first on much manpower and gradually becoming automated, helped at first to develop a migrant work pool and then later contributed to the unemployment of that pool. Reformers were strong in their denunciation of early railroads for their dangerous and inhuman operational practices.

> Most American railroads are to blame for the industrial conditions in which the unskilled laboring class finds itself. They offer starvation wages, under unsafe conditions... After the job...has become completed, they are left stranded wherever they have finished their work....Hundreds of thousands of able-bodied, economically useful citizens of the country are being put to immature death by the railroads of America and an equally appalling number are being maimed and crippled by "accidents."[15]

The role of the railroad boomer, always an unstable one, is nearly extinct today, as this summary suggests.

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[13] Stuart Holbrook, The Story of American Railroads, p.397.

[14] From an interview with Frank Igolka, the Director of the Chicago Office of the Illinois Unemployment Compensation Agency.

[15] Edwin Brown, Broke: Man without a Dime, pp.36-37.

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> A million railroaders were uprooted by the Civil War, the violent strikes of '77, '86 and '94, and a succession of panics and business slumps. They became floaters. Blacklisted as strikers or furloughed when traffic fell off, they roamed to areas where work was to be had, at least temporarily. But the top factor in creating boomers was the seasonal rushes -- moving the various crops as soon as they were harvested. Nowadays the periodic needs of railroad companies for additional help to wheel the seasonal crops is met by recruiting local workers.[16]

Seafaring as an occupation was important in many cities serving as sea or river ports from New York to Seattle. In a day of no powerful unions, longshoremen and sailors were free agents who found jobs in the daily "shape ups." There the most able workers were hired and released when work was short or when cheaper or more able workers were available. The Bowery in New York until fairly recently was a convenient place to hire for ocean shippers. Anderson, in describing Chicago's West Madison skid row, states that it was located "near the river...a stronghold of casual labor...a rendezvous for the seamen."[17] Another observer with forty years acquaintance with that Chicago area stated that,

> Skid row concentrated at the point where West Madison crosses the...river....many ships tied up there or nearby. Some men were hired aboard the ships and many more were hired through employment agencies opened on West Madison.[18]

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[16] Botkin, op.cit., p.165.

[17] Anderson, op.cit., pp.5-6.

[18] Frank Igolka, op.cit.

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Farming, too, required many mobile workers, especially in certain seasons, and this has been an enduring pattern of employment for skid rowers. Some workers learned a traveling circuit for harvest and other work, similar to ones observable today, while others came to urban hiring centers to obtain the jobs available there. Early farming required the hiring of from one to hundreds of "hands" during harvest and other peak seasons. Today automation has reduced this labor market and evidently will soon affect the migrant employment which has still remained rather extensive in fruit and vegetable harvesting. But at the present time farming is the one industry which consistently recruits skid row men by the busload, whereas railroading was formally the "large scale employer."

Although there were other notable employers, only one more industry need be mentioned here. Logging drew many men from urban areas and other settled communities into unstable male work camps in backwoods sections of the country, and it has been documented as an important factor in the development of skid rows.[19] In such states as Michigan and Maine and in the whole Northwest region, thousands of men became part- or full-time workers and moved into the rugged and isolated industry that fostered the legend of Paul Bunyan.

Loggers reputedly worked hard and waited for the time when they would quit, be fired or more likely deliver logs to port or to the mill. They would then arrive at a town such as Saginaw or Seattle where the logs were skidded down and into the river, and the celebration would start.

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[19] Peterson and Maxwell, op.cit., p.308, and Stuart Holbrook, The American Lumberjack, pp.90-112, 173-183.

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> Skid roads were where you blew her in. A Skid road might be one, two or a dozen streets of a lumber city. You didn't have to ask how to find it, for it has a character of its own. It was usually handy to the waterfront, whether of river or ocean, and not far from the railroad depot. Its places of business catered to loggers, miners, cowhands, fishermen, sailors and construction workers, but on the West Coast loggers were the most important customers.[20]

Other such towns included Bangor, Maine and Muskegon, Michigan.

> Muskegon was close by the "down end" of the Muskegon River and when a man had finished his work on the drive, well -- there was Muskegon. Keen-nosed loggers claimed they could smell Muskegon booze as far upriver as Big Rapids, fifty miles away, and said they detected the first erotic whiffs of Sawdust Flats (the red light district) perfume at Newaygo, half as far.[21]

The naming of skid row is evidently derived from the lumbering industry.

> Even the useful term "skid road" has been corrupted in many places and turns up in the press as "skid row." Ignorance and carelessness bred the bastard "skid row" from a term which originated in Seattle seventy years ago. "Skid road" is a word of unsullied etymology, derived from saloons and fancy houses that grew up along Henry Yessler's logging road in the Puget Sound metropolis and is now Yesler's Way.[22]

Holbrook describes the general character of smaller city skid rows as they have changed.

> ...The old time slave markets -- as employment offices were known -- have largely

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[20] Holbrook, The American Lumberjack, p.173.

[21] Ibid., p.103.

[22] Ibid., p.231.

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> been supplanted by union hiring halls. Time was when the skid road districts of all logging towns were lined with employment offices....Gone too are the Wobbly Halls and Wobbly soapboxers. The burlesque theaters have faded along with ...honkytonks...lodginghouses.... fewer shops selling loggers' boots and clothing. "For Rent" signs mark many store fronts in skid road districts.[23]

The influx of workers encouraged the opening of saloons, houses of prostitution, missions and other facilities, and the area developed some notoriety among most townsmen despite the profits obtained by some of them. Most of the celebrating customers would return to work, especially when their money was gone, but the area came to maintain a few permanent characters, often natives of the town, i.e., the "town bums."

In summary, work and the lack of it created and encouraged the migrant worker and then led to his later maladjustment and finally to the establishment of skid row communities.

> When Americans built a labor movement, the Bowery played host to heroic hoboes, singing songs and writing poetry that was fierce and wistful or funny, spreading the gospel of an organized working class while they mistrusted all rules....[24]

c) Other Reasons for Homelessness and the Emergence of Skid Row: War, Wanderlust and Recreation.

While the function of early skid row areas in relation to work is extremely important, attention also should be turned to at least three other factors which supported the development and persistence of skid rows. The first two of these, war and wanderlust, helped motivate the hobo, the forerunner of the skid rower.

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[23] Ibid., pp.230-231.

[24] Elmer Bendiner, The Bowery Man, p.192.

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The third, recreation, helped prepare skid row for its eventual role.

War is perhaps the greatest of a variety of traumatic events which can weaken the ties of men with their communities. The Civil War was a major event in which many men were rendered physically or psychologically unfit to return to their normal home lives.

> Although the homeless had existed for centuries both here and abroad, skid row ... came into being roughly at the close of the Civil War. The number of persons uprooted, rendered destitute and homeless by the Civil War is legendary....Public Welfare in New York was extended to persons removed from their places of settlement because of War and to disabled veterans and to the resident families of soldiers wounded or killed in action.... relief doubled [between] 1861 [and] 1877.[25]

Many men, particularly in the South, found their homes and the economic status of their communities too devastated or changed to encourage their return. Others experienced an awakening to the country around them and dissatisfaction with their old communities. Many of these took to the road and became the first of many tramps or "knights of the open road" as their literature described them.

As the term "knights of the open road" suggests, those made homeless by war and other events developed a folklore of their wanderings that stressed "wanderlust" as well as the other romantic features of the road. Their interpretation of this psychological state is well-summarized in a hobo song stating, "Once

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[25] Wallace, op.cit., p.13.

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you got the roamin' fever, why you're never gonna' settle down."[26]

Some note should be made of this "romance" which is said to have existed with regard to an ideal of the "open road" with its adventure and freedom. An extensive literature developed which was at once critical of societal constraints and admiring of the hobo life ranging from writers of the 1850's to Kerouac[27] and others today. The early hoboes told of adventure and wanderlust that "got into the blood," and warned of the dangers thereof.

> Restless young men and boys who read this book, the author who has led for over a quarter of a century the pitifully hard and dangerous life of a hobo gives this well-meant advice. DO NOT JUMP ON MOVING TRAINS, even if only to ride to the next street corner, because this might arouse the "wanderlust," besides endangering needlessly your life and limbs.
>
> Wandering, once it becomes a habit, is almost incurable, so NEVER RUN AWAY BUT STAY HOME....There is a dark side to a tramp's life; for every mile...one escape from a horrible death...many weary miles of hard walking with no food or water...there are...bitter, cold, long winter nights...scores of unfriendly acts ...hounded by minions of the law...one never knows the meaning of home and friends ...What is the end?...ninety-nine of one hundred times...an unmarked pauper's grave.[28]

It is an interesting note that this dire warning came, as usual, from someone who practiced hoboing

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[26] This and the following lines quoted in this section on "wanderlust" may be found in George Milburn's, The Hobo's Hornbook.

[27] Jack Kerouac, Lonesome Traveler.

[28] Leon Livingston, Life and Adventures of A-no.1, preface.

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extensively and throughout his book made many boasts about his skills and experience. Whatever the meaning of "wanderlust," there certainly have been romantic forces drawing men to the open road. Moreover, Tully reasoned that life on the road was, for the poor, at least as good as staying home, even though he describes many hardships and risks of train-riding against the opposition of railroad police, machinery and the elements.[29]

Hoboing probably served first as a means of making a living. Nevertheless, its functions as a romantic life has been recorded in songs, poetry and prose -- speaking of the folly of "working when the skies are so blue," and the search for a utopian "Big Rock Candy Mountain," with its "lemonade springs," "cops with wooden legs," "trees full of fruit," "no snow," and so forth.

The life of the hobo had its paradoxes as attested to by "The Great American Bum."

> I am a bum...and live like a royal Turk.
> I have good luck...and to heck with the man that works.

but one verse admits:

> Lady would you be kind enough to give me something to eat?
> ...for really I'm so hungry, don't know where I'll sleep tonight.

Though war and work served as important factors in producing the homeless migrant worker and the formative skid rows, at least one other factor, that of <u>recreation</u>, was affecting the early development of skid rows.

Among the most clear examples of skid row providing recreation was the old Bowery. In American history

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[29] Jim Tully, <u>Beggars of Life</u>, esp. pp.328-336.

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it first served for a colony of freed Negroes who were given land where they would serve New Amsterdam as a buffer against Indian attacks.[30] During the Civil War, violent riots were ignited there by anti-Negro Yankees, and many Negroes were lynched and much property destroyed.[31] After 1865, the area became one of New York's "tenderloin" areas, a place of extravagant entertainment and vice.

> The war cost the nation and the Bowery their innocence. Corruption has always been there, as in most societies, but bloodshed, politics, fortunes made too easily during the war's aftermath, exhaustion of emotions and the return of business as usual while the corpses are still warm - all this meant a change in the Bowery.[32]

At this time the Bowery was becoming a place of particular kinds of entertainment. Bendiner exemplifies its mood with the case of Stephan Foster who "turns out the type of entertainment the Bowery craves and dies a penniless alcoholic in its rooms." He further describes the postwar era saying,

> It is more and more a street of pleasure. On the Upper Bowery here are the white gloves and white waistcoats...ladies... beergardens...Johann Strauss, fresh oysters ...more whores in New York City than Methodists....Highly moral reporters...harrow the souls of Harper's Weekly readers with descriptions of the "rough thieves, fallen women and little children of the Bowery." Stephen Graham notes the profound separation of the street from the rest of the city. "The Sunday law which seems so rigidly enforced in other parts of the city is a dead letter on the Bowery." There are still

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[30] Bendiner, op.cit., pp.41-42.

[31] Ibid., pp.61-65.

[32] Ibid., p.64.

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> some relatively innocent diversions on the Bowery for the sailor on leave, the slummer, the farm hand on a spree, and the uptowner in diamond stickpin playing the very devil...dime museums...electric shocks...private movies of exotic dancers ...five cent vaudeville....[33]

The Bowery seems almost nonexistent as a place of entertainment today. A song containing the words, "The Bowery..., they say such things and they do such things, I'll never go there again," spoke of a place quite unlike the deteriorated, alcoholic skid row which is the Bowery today.[34]

In Chicago, the two skid rows besides that on West Madison do not seem to have employment facilities as a major reason for their existence. Today South State Street has a notable skid row which, though much of it has been razed, serves as an entertainment place for a large number of Chicagoans, sailors and others who are interested in burlesque, tatooing, "penny-arcades" and the bars. A few hotels and one large mission do cater to what appears to be a highly alcoholic and handicapped population.

Chicago's North Clark Street area appears to be a bohemia with a notable sample of chronic alcoholics, disturbed individuals, older men and women, immigrants, quasi-intellectuals, artists, beatniks, homosexuals of both sexes and other "characters" who often hold unusual beliefs or causes.

Obviously skid rows have and do serve an important

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[33] Ibid., pp.65-66.

[34] In a turn of events in the 1960's, some artists and others from nearby Greenwich Village have invaded the area to escape urban renewal and rising costs in their former community.

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entertainment function for many who would drink to excess, seek a prostitute or burlesque show, or enjoy the uniqueness of slumming -- all types of entertainment which their own community would not allow.

Thus these three factors, war, wanderlust and recreation played their roles in the nineteenth century and had a formative effect on skid rows. By 1900 the tradition of the "open road" was well-established. But increasingly negative attention was being given to the homeless since the frontier was closing and the need for migrant labor was becoming less important. Writers were beginning to be concerned with the "hobo problem," work was becoming less readily available and many cities and towns were no longer welcoming transient workers.

Many of the "boomers" settled down to assume local responsibilities as "home guard" and gained position and respect in their communities. Many others did not and skid row began to gain them as citizens. Skid row developed more clearly as residence for the unemployed and alcoholic where the usual norms of family and public morality were not maintained. Police, while becoming more severe with the traveling migrant, came to tolerate more deviance in skid row areas. A definition evolved of skid row as an undesirable, nonrespectable area serving only as residence for men who were economically and socially "down and out."

3. Hard Times:[35] 1900-1940 (Decelerating industrial growth and the disorganizing effects of depression and war).

The life of the homeless has never been easy, yet it was at least a major and accepted pattern for Americans at the turn of the century. There was, thus

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[35] Anderson, op. cit., pp.xxxi, 96.

far, little distinction between the able migrant and other workers, but an increasingly important line was being drawn. New wars, economic upheavals and general forces and opportunities for conformity were to make the hobo's life a more difficult and less institutionalized way of life. But migrant labor was becoming less useful as is suggested in the case of railroading.

> As railroading lost its pioneer quality, as the locomotives grew heavier, trains longer, traveling safer, and the competition for jobs more keen, the independent order of boomers gradually faded away....[36]

Thus the nation's industries were requiring fewer migrant workers and skid rows were becoming more permanent settlements for those who did not fit in elsewhere.

By 1920 when Anderson did his classical study, skid rows were well-established. The wandering hobo was still common enough so that Anderson titled his book The Hobo, though he subtitled it "The Sociology of the Homeless Man." While one chapter was concerned with "The Jungles: the homeless man abroad," the other sixteen focused on the hobo "at home" on skid row. One classification common to Anderson and others compared the migrant worker or hobo with the "home guard" who had settled in Chicago. While the former tended to be contemptuous of the latter, the "home guard" was steadily growing in proportion.[37]

World War I seems to have had some effect in

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[36] Botkin and Harlow, op. cit., p.165.

[37] A phrase commonly used to describe depression eras in American folk literature.

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shrinking skid row populations while it lasted, though, like the Civil War, it probably supplied more men who failed to make satisfactory adjustments on returning from the war.

Depressions large and small have had severe repercussions on skid row. In periods of economic depression, the number of homeless men in Hobohemia are swollen with men out of work, the majority of whom for the first time find themselves on the "main stem." The population estimate in 1917 ranged "from below 30,000 in summer to 60,000 in the winter, reaching 75,000 in periods of unemployment."[38]

The Great Depression evoked even greater changes which have had profound effects on skid row. It brought millions of men who were previously sure of their own self-sufficiency to the skid row pattern and shelter-house welfare. The Great Depression had an important demoralizing effect in skid row. The romance of wandering could hardly exist in men who had lost their hope in the security and future of American life, especially since they found it worse to wander than to stay in one place. The literature of the early 1930's focused upon the demoralization that occurred in skid rows. Sutherland wrote about the "roads to dependency" and the process of "shelterization" which he found "morally deteriorating." Dees, in a bitter complaint, berated the Chicago public "flophouse" programs, which he entered, for their "ignorant bureaucracies" and "filthy management."

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[38] Anderson, op.cit., p.13.

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skid rows slowly returned to their normal statuses. The little information available suggests that the auto and a changing economy facilitated something of a diffusion of the skid row way of life into the country and urban fringes and the development of migrant families as well as individuals.[39]

4. The Second World War and the Modern Era: 1940 to Present.

World War II employed all but the most handicapped American males. Skid Row became the habitat of only the most severely handicapped alcoholics, others seriously handicapped mentally or physically, the elderly and perhaps some "draft dodgers." After the war, skid row again attracted some who became maladjusted during the war or displaced occupationally and, more recently, some who never found a social or occupational niche in society.

> In the next twenty to thirty years, excluding depression and the larger international catastrophies, the number of homeless men will gradually decline in American cities.[40]

A 1949 study of New York's skid row population offered evidence of a short term post-war increase in men but a greater long term decrease.

> The number of homeless men in New York in need of free lodging, custodial care and rehabilitation is currently on the

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[39] See John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath. Also, in investigations in Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana (and elsewhere) I found men living outside the central city in trailers and huts.

[40] Dunham, op.cit., p.43.

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> increase. Disregarding temporary peaks and valleys, the trend is upward even in this period of high level employment... a peak was reached in 1935 when up to 19,000 were served per day...a general decline to 1944...when in summer 550 were lodged and since that a gradual increase until in 1948, 1850 were being served.[41]

Chicago's skid row hotels operate at about two-thirds their capacity today, despite the fact that many of them are being razed. Nevertheless, the number of skid rowers remains a large one in Chicago as throughout the nation.

> While the population of Chicago almost doubled from 1910 to 1958, the skid row population was only 25 percent of its 1910 size....The current estimate of homeless men on Chicago's skid row is 12,500 to 13,000...an underestimate... as there are men...living elsewhere in the city under skid row conditions.[42]

In the last 15 years new emphasis has been given to the elimination of skid row areas and to alcoholic, occupational and other rehabilitation of skid rowers. Several cities have initiated action programs which have been in varying degrees successful at eliminating skid row areas or helping some men. It is probable that with aggressive programming, the traditional skid row communities could be completely destroyed in ten to twenty years.[43]

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[41] Welfare Council, "Homeless Men in New York City," pp.1-2.

[42] Chicago Tenants Relocation Bureau, op.cit., p.6.

[43] William J. Plunkert, "Skid Rows Can Be Eliminated," Federal Probation, June, 1961, pp.40-43.

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However, this destruction of facilities would only achieve the removal of what is considered an eyesore. The problems of the population would pretty much remain and new ones would appear. It does not seem likely that enough resources will be directed to the human problem to end the need for skid row lifeways in the near future.

This section has summarized the forces which led to the formation of skid row communities and their populations. If the migrant man developed a sense of alienation, from these experiences, it would appear from this treatment that it would be related to work and to the political system. But rather than anticipating a complete alienation, the evidence has suggested the development of a community in skid row in which human identity as well as various facilities appeared.

B. PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE SKID ROW COMMUNITY TODAY.

1. The Area

In the remainder of this chapter, some of the more observable features of the skid row community will be examined. These features offer some evidence for the existence of a skid row community since they show that skid row is, in great measure, a self-sustaining social system. This section, however, is a descriptive introduction to the skid row community rather than a theoretical discussion of it. Some comments on skid row as a community are made here, though, and the contention that it is a community is further substantiated in the second half of Chapter Eight and elsewhere.

Although skid rows may have become smaller today than in their most prominent years, they still serve many men and are a significant part of American culture. Established skid rows exist in nearly all

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American cities, and one study conservatively states that "almost all of the 100 largest cities contain an identifiable skid row of at least 250 men."[44] Smaller but similar areas, whatever they are called, exist in nearly all communities. Middle-sized cities and towns have small, concentrated areas and more diffused skid row lifeways; villages and rural areas have their town drunks and hermits. The number of skid rows and skid rower types cannot be known until data is gathered on the basis of now-unavailable rigorous definitions. Without such a definition, skid row remains an ambiguous social area and, like homeless men, an ideal type from which actual cases vary.

Skid row areas can be easily delineated in some cities, but more often they are merged into other social-economic areas. In most smaller cities, they are thoroughly merged into business and general slum housing areas. The insulated nature of most skid row cultural patterns has kept outsiders from knowing very much about its structure and operation. Most Americans have only a vague knowledge of what is meant when reference is made to the "skid rows" of American cities.

Bogue has characterized skid rows in a way which points out important facilities in the area and, though these are not universally found, they are helpful in locating the physical areas of skid rows. For him skid row denotes,

> A district in the city where there is a concentration of substandard hotels and rooming houses charging very low rates and catering primarily to men

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[44] Bogue, op.cit., p.8

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> with low incomes...numerous taverns, employment agencies...for unskilled laborers, restaurants serving low-cost meals, pawnshops, and second hand stores, and missions. Perhaps ...barber colleges, burlesque shows or night clubs with strip tease acts, penny arcades, tattoo palaces, stores selling men's work clothing, bakeries selling stale bread and unclaimed freight stores. [They were located] Most frequently...near the central business district and also near a factory district or major heavy transportation facilities such as a waterfront, freight yard or truck and storage depot.[45]

The following definition has been developed in previous studies by this student. It is of a more abstract nature than Bogue's and takes a more generic, explanatory approach to the issue. While such a definition is more difficult to operationalize, it is useful in orienting the reader to the sociological issue.

> The traditional skid row is in a highly deteriorated, mixed commercial and residential area, located nearly always in an older downtown section of the central city, having an extremely high sex ratio in a densely settled rooming house and hotel population and, besides inexpensive housing, several other facilities for maintaining a low economic status male population.

This definition suggests some of the economic and ecological perspectives of the writer as well as the existence of community in skid row. In observing skid row as a community, the criteria established by Roland Warren will be borne in mind.

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[45] Bogue, op.cit., p.1.

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> We shall consider a community to be that combination of social units and systems which performs the major social functions having locality relevance. [That is] the organization of social activities to afford people daily local access to those broad areas of activity which are necessary in day-to-day living.[46]

Among these he includes "production-distribution-consumption" having "to do with local participation in the process of producing, distributing, and consuming those goods and services which are a part of daily living and access to which is desirable in the immediate locality."[47] (He also includes: socialization, social control, social participation, and mutual support, all elements which will be examined in later parts of this study.) In our concern with production-distribution-consumption and the other locality-relevant function of community, it is essential that we examine the physical facilities of skid row. These obviously form the essential spatial framework in which any skid row community or alienation of skid rowers must exist.

By way of introduction, a comparison is made of facilities in one rather typical core block of skid row as it appeared in 1923 and 1964. Nels Anderson first described this block near the concentrated east end of West Madison,[48] and the author surveyed the same block to see what change had occurred.

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46 Warren, The Community in America, p.9.

47 Warren, op.cit., pp.9-10.

48 Anderson, op.cit, p. 15.

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TABLE 1 FACILITIES ALONG WEST MADISON AVENUE IN THE BLOCK BETWEEN DES PLAINES STREET AND JEFFERSON STREET, 1923 and 1964

	1923	1964		1923	1964
taverns/bars	6	7	drug store	1	0
restaurants	6	3	fortune telling	1	1
barber college	4	2	grocery	0	1
employment agencies	10	1	cleaners	0	1
clothing	5	3	funeral home	0	1
hotels	8	9	empty lots	1	8
gambling	2	0	key shop	0	1
mission	1	0	parking lot	0	2
cigar store	1	0			

From the above it can be noted that in forty-two years between the two studies there has been a gradual trend away from such distinctively skid row facilities as employment agencies and cheap hotels. The number of employment agencies has particularly declined and more general purpose businesses, parking lots and empty properties have appeared. In the opinions of the writer and others, this trend is accelerating. Two medium-sized skid row hotels, for example, were razed in the year of the field study, 1964. Plans now call for the elimination of whole skid row blocks with high-rise office buildings to replace them.[49] Nevertheless skid row has retained most of its important facilities over the past four decades.

In describing the specific facilities that serve the skid row community, the hotels and rooming houses are perhaps of most importance. A larger proportion of men use them for greater amounts of time than other facilities. Skid row living facilities range quite widely in price (from less than $5.00

[49] Department of Urban Renewal, City of Chicago, Madison-Canal: Proposals for Renewal.

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weekly to about $2.00 per night). They range in quality from the most dirty with cockroaches and rodents and rarely-changed linen to those which are kept relatively clean. The newcomer finds the worst of these extremely undesirable.

> The sound of the flophouse at night come in surges, each breaking through the uneasy narcosis of the others. There were groans, snores, cries, coughing, spitting, gurgling, vomiting, men calling out in Polish, German, profane English...The sounds in the night are much like those of dying men.[50]

> The smell here is intense: one of urine, sickness, alcohol and crowded living. The small window, the whole room, the single bathroom on the floor, all are dirty.[51]

Some hotels provide regular rooms, sometimes with cooking facilities, but the standard accommodation on skid row is the "cage hotel." The cage is a small improvised room in high-ceiling lofts, about 7 by 5 by 7 feet, with wood or corregated metal walls and chicken wire over the top and a door with a fairly reliable lock. Generally a large bathroom on each floor serves from 50 to 100 men. Most of these hotels start on the second floor and have a lobby with limited facilities. Nonrenters are forcibly excluded from visiting rooms or using lobbies. As one walks down the street, he may well miss these hotels since their advertising is of a minimum nature. A few hotels do advertise their

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[50] Bendiner, op.cit., pp.59-60.

[51] Vander Kooi, Skid Row and Its Men, p.9.

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fire-proof quality, serving to remind all of tragedies that have occurred. One hotel boasts an elevator: all others are characterized by steep stairs that are frequently in poor condition and littered with bottles or other debris.

A second major group of facilities in the skid row community include the bars and saloons. These range in size from very large saloons which date back to pre-Prohibition days and free lunches to smaller, more typical bars. They range in respectability and a few of them rigidly exclude the "bums." Most of them appear to be congenial toward the poor man and obvious alcoholics and they serve cheaper, lower quality drinks (e.g., 20¢ for a shot with a beer) and often low cost lunches. They sell to many who consume their beverage on the street or in their rooms. They have a reputation as great money makers, but are also frequently noted for extending credit and other considerations. They are characterized by a good deal of congeniality among customers as well as employees. On the other hand, police make regular stops at such places as the notorious "House of Rothchild" to stop fights and other unwelcome behavior and to load those "too drunk to stand on their feet" into the "paddy wagons."

Many lunch counters and occasional restaurants appear along West Madison. These serve food ranging from low cost meals that are fairly peculiar to skid row, such as "pig's feet and cabbage," to conventional fried foods. There are a few relatively clean restaurants. Though eating places are a less noticeable part of skid row than are taverns, they are extremely useful in providing for the needs of men on very low budgets. In addition, as in the case of bars and taverns, they provide an important setting for informal socializing.

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The second hand stores and "hock shops"of the West Madison community provide a cheap source of winter clothing, work shoes, shaving supplies, reading materials and other goods when they are needed and a source of money when these are sold back. These stores usually charge about double what they pay for their used merchandise.

Other retail stores sell various new goods to those who can afford them. Food and beverages are sold to those who eat in their rooms and elsewhere. Other assorted businesses on skid row include a few drug stores, dry cleaners and a wide range of others, even including two funeral parlors. They are intended chiefly to serve skid row men. Several barber colleges cater to men who are willing to allow students to learn while rendering free haircuts and shaves. Blood-buying agencies provide a few dollars to men who are willing to sell theirs; many do so too frequently or while sick or infected at risk to themselves and others.

Employment agencies play the crucial role of providing most jobs in the skid row community. On West Madison are many small private agencies and one large state agency. Private agencies charge for their services and pay the workers themselves after subtracting a sizable fee. They are commonly referred to as "slave labor" offices, but they seem to attract more men and good jobs than does the state agency, perhaps because they pay daily for work done and involve less "red tape."

Among social services, Social Security agents devote considerable time to skid rowers because of the high number of older and handicapped men. For similar reasons, state welfare workers are kept busy. Representatives of these agencies are, however, seldom seen on skid row since most of their business

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is conducted in offices outside the area or by mail. Much welfare, moreover, is still carried out by religious and charitable organizations or channeled through them from governmental agencies.

The religious mission is a highly visible part of skid row. At least twenty-five such facilities are present on West Madison. Some have existed over many decades and are evidence of the concern of organizations outside the community for skid row men.[52] They range from those which devote their energies to promoting a very fundamentalistic religion to those which are more concerned with dispensing social and psychological aids than in converting to a particular religious ideology. Some are highly organized and sizable operations; others are run haphazardly and sometimes even as one-man operations. Most seem to be sincere in their efforts; a few have been exposed as illegal operations.[53] Most of the larger ones offer a small meal and place to sleep, sometimes for all who ask, sometimes for a small charge, sometimes for attending a service or being "saved" and sometimes only for those in rehabilitation programs.

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[52] One of these, for example, was established in 1877, though one of its mottos states that it has been "everlasting at it." Many churches send money to the missions and some present weekly programs in them.

[53] One woman, for instance, claimed to be "feeding the men of skid row" and split the proceeds from coin boxes with skid rowers who distributed them.

> There are about 1500 gospel or rescue missionaries along Skid Row, U.S.A. They believe, as Alcoholics Anonymous leaders do, that derelict Rowers cannot help themselves except through reliance on Higher Power. They specify the power as "the saving grace of Jesus Christ" and work to provide Rowers with free beds and meals and washing facilities and clothes in His name. Some who have charge of the larger missions claim to distribute as many as 40,000 free meals and to furnish as many as 65,000 free beds in a typical year. And they say that, although the vast number of men who they contact use their missions for free flopping and eating, an appreciable number, as many as 800 a year are brought to "new lives in Christ" through contact with them and their institutions.[54]

The Monroe Street Precinct Station of the Chicago Police Department with its roving "paddy-wagons" is both an agency of social control and custodial care in skid row. It serves as a part of the "revolving door" bringing men who are usually intoxicated off the street for an overnight stay in the "tank" (large cells with very limited seating), and a morning appearance before a court referee. From observations it would appear that from half to two-thirds of those arrested are released and the rest are sent to the county prison, the prison farm, or the county hospital (for physical or psychiatric treatment). Discipline and welfare are also served by the police social worker who provides released prisoners with bus fare to a job, leads on a place to stay and other personal assistance.

The city Reading Room on West Madison was

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[54] Harris, op.cit., p.138.

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established in 1952. It was opened primarily to allow men a place to read but also a place to be away from the streets, the bars or other undesired features of skid row. In winter it is more crowded since it allows many an escape from the cold. It has undergone gradual change and its present function seems to be quite different than what was envisioned at its inception. Though it still provides a place to read, only out-dated magazines and discarded books from other libraries are avaliable. The room consists of two very large rooms and a shower room. Most of the men sit in a cavernous "TV room" gazing at a totally inadequate TV, or at books, or trying to sleep unobserved, or doing inventory on their personal belongings. Others sit in another room reading periodicals or conversing with other men. Checkers are played and lunches eaten; many men take advantage of a washroom shower and shave. A few men talk with the director and his helpers, often seeking their advice. The Room has developed as an important branch of the Illinois' skid row labor office.[55]

Besides the facilities that have been treated above, some comment should be made about the outdoors features of skid row where life is most observable. The "main stem" or main street is the most important and busy area. During the day, especially in warm weather after working hours and at meal times, it is busy with homeless men walking toward particular

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[55] One employment agent spends half-days there. Many employers call or stop in since they know many men are there. Buses are often parked in front and loaded with men who are then transported to agricultural jobs.

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destinations or loitering singly or in groups. The groups frequently carry on discussions or share a bottle in a rather open manner. Any event, such as the paddy-wagon picking up drunks, a minor squabble, construction work, gathers the attention of the numerous curious by-standers. Many persons, male and female, from outside skid row walk through the area with no inconvenience other than an uneasy reaction to the unaesthetic quality of the area and the occasional approach of a panhandler.

The "main stem" is kept surprisingly clean by the city but also by the bottle and junk collectors of skid row who, for instance, make one half penny for each wine bottle. The alleys are dirtier, more deteriorated and more dangerous to pedestrians because of the greater likelihood of robbery and assault. Though the back streets contain factories, warehouses and other businesses, the skid row community diffuses into this area since a number of rooming houses are located there. These and adjacent residential neighborhoods tend to complete the ecological area of skid row.

2. The Men

The one important aspect of skid row which has not been treated is its <u>men</u>. This researcher and others have found that skid rowers cannot be taken as a homogeneous aggregate. It is not an easy task to delineate them, but several typologies which will be treated below testify to their heterogenity. First an attempt should be made to define skid row men in general, as follows:

> Skid row men are a population with traditionally high mobility, maintaining few visible binding social attachments and few possessions of notable monetary value, holding the

> more temporary and least rewarding types of employment or being chronically unemployed, frequently having any of a range of personal, social-psychological or physical deficiencies, living most of the time in residential areas for men in the central city.

In describing the men further, some information which was obtained in this study would be useful in describing types that other students have noted among skid row men. The term "homeless man" is a commonly-used one. It is value-laden in that it judges in terms of usual familial homes. But men who have settled in skid row, as opposed to those who follow regular migration patterns, might be said to have a personal home there. On the other hand, it is certain that the skid row dwelling is significantly different from "homes" as we usually think of them, with their appearance of permanence and usually including some kind of family. Moreover, very few skid row men identify their rooms as homes even to the extent of staying in them more than a month. In the larger hotels, guests of roomers are rarely allowed in rooms and women are especially prohibited. Though there is a large part of America's non-skid row population which is mobile and even without family, the relatively complete severance of normal social ties and residence in markedly deficient skid row housing might mark the skid row man as "homeless." Since this term remains misleading and encourages value-judgments as to skid rower's "anti-familial" behavior, it will not be used in this study.

The term, "unattached," is occasionally used to refer to skid row men but it is too broad since

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it includes people of all social classes who "go it alone."[56] Among more usual terms are these which suggest a more mobile person than the skid row dweller today: the "hobo," the "tramp," and the "transient." The label, "vagrant," while it is a legal designation, is rarely used in or outside court today and suggests greater idleness than this writer observed. The terms, "bum" and "beggar" are not useful since they are value-laden suggesting as Webster states it, a "worthless person." (The latter term especially, with its emphasis on a parasitic nature, describes very few persons in this era of enforced laws against begging and increased government welfare.) The term "skid rower" which is more neutral and better describes the whole population studied here, will be used throughout the study.

None of the above terms was found adequate in describing the population. Therefore it was decided to use the more neutral and accurately descriptive term, "skid rower," to describe the objects of this study. But skid rowers are not a homogenous population and so a more difficult examination of possible classifications of that population must now be attempted.

One of the most important sociological observations of skid row (treated here though it is also pertinent to our treatment of theory in the next chapter) concerns the presence of various types of men living within it. As early as 1806 Colquhoun

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[56] See for instance Arnold Rose, "Living Arrangements of Unattached Persons," American Sociological Review, 12:4, pp.429-435.

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had presented a classification of "those that will not work and those who cannot work."[57] Other early differentiations were made between the hobo (who works and wanders), the tramp (who dreams and wanders) and the bum (who drinks and wanders). Anderson in 1923 restated these types but also differentiated between the home guard and the bum of skid row, the former being a worker, the latter a beggar or thief.[58]

Solenberg listed these three types: the self-supporting, the temporarily dependent, and the chronically dependent.[59] Sutherland and Locke in their study specified four types: home guard, casual worker, steady unskilled, skilled white collar.[60]

Various typologies in the recent literature are along such dimensions as working habits (e.g., those with a regular job, part time and seasonal workers and non workers), physical and psychological conditions (the healthy and various handicapped types), age (especially regarding younger, middle age and elderly men) and, most often, drinking categories (e.g., teetotalers, moderates, problem drinkers, alcoholics, derelicts, etc.). Other typologies are multi-dimensional, some of them overlapping with others.

> There are...the pensioner, the steady worker, the seasonal worker, the character,

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[57] H. Mayhew, London Labour and the London Poor, Vol. III and IV.

[58] As stated for example by Dr. Ben Reitman, "King of the Hoboes," in Anderson, op.cit., p.87.

[59] Alice Solenberg, 1,000 Homeless Men.

[60] Sutherland and Locke, 20,000 Homeless Men.

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> the tramp, the wino, the bum, chiseler...the dehorn or rubby-dub [who use nonbeverage alcohol], the petty thief and smalltime racketeer.[61]

The most recently published typology of skid row men appeared in 1965 when Wallace divided skid rowers into three kinds: those with mobile occupations, welfare clients and pensioners, and "afficionados" or marginal characters.[62] At another time, however, he states, "Drunk, alcoholic, hobo, beggar, tour-director [self-styled disenchanted intellectuals who entertain outsiders "showing them" skid row] and mission stiff...are the six primary statuses on skid row today."[63]

While some unique types can perhaps be noted on skid row, it is also true that one can also observe persons who are typical of those who would be seen in any community.

> ...the more one stays on Skid Row the more he begins to notice the neatly dressed men with shaven faces who appear to be at home, quietly circumventing the sprawled body, noncommitally navigating the flow of drunks weaving out of a bar. These are mostly retired bachelors, maybe former seamen or truck-drivers, who can live more cheaply here than anyplace else or who prefer the naked drama of Skid Row to the boredom of a placid rooming house in a conventional neighborhood.[64]

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[61] Peterson and Maxwell, op.cit., p.308.

[62] Wallace, op.cit., p.201

[63] Ibid., p.200.

[64] Bagdikian, In the Midst of Plenty, p.55.

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The various types which have been presented are not mutually-exclusive ones and, though such a typology could be developed (for instance, with work as the primary variable), it would serve no good purpose at this time. Neither is it certain that the character types here mentioned treat all dimensions or have been all-inclusive with regard to skid row men. An attempt should be made, however, to list some of the more apparent characteristics of the men.

First, the dimension concerned with the use of alcohol should be examined. The severely alcoholic are those most easily observed on skid row. They represent a sizable minority of the men, (though only a small proportion of all the alcoholics, the "derelicts," are most noticeable to passers-by as they lie in gutters, walk in front of moving cars and carry on other grossly deviant behavior). Alcoholics must be distinguished from moderate drinkers and the occasional drunks and finally non-drinkers. Among alcoholics are many with serious physical and mental handicaps and some of them work full or part time while others cannot.

The second, already-suggested classification separates steady workers from others. Those who are regularly employed, usually escape full involvement in skid row; only on week-ends might some of them participate in the full cultural pattern. There are a great many "spot laborers," who work when jobs are obtainable or when they choose to "stake" themselves with a paycheck. The handicapped, the aged and a few others do not work at all.

A third classification deals with the physically and mentally handicapped. Physical handicaps, such as missing limbs, tuberculosis damage and other deformities, mark some men. Psychological disturbances are less easily recognized but may be noted

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in cases of men who demonstrate withdrawal, extreme temper or "talking to themselves." Many other men, of course, form the much less noticeable "normal appearing" population of the area.

In certain ways length of residence seems a fourth important criterion. Most skid rowers are "middle-aged," (45 to 60 years), and men younger than 30 are unusual and are generally assumed to be jack-rollers or isolates with personality problems.[65] Men younger than 55 seem to be alcoholic more often than others. The aged are, for the most part, in poor health. They tend to live in a quiet and frugal manner. They avoid the younger men and usually stay in their hotels, but often have strong friendships among themselves and many join the Salvation Army's "Golden Age Club," (which provides monthly meetings and excursions with companionship among the men.)

Several classifications of skid row men have been introduced including drinking patterns, employment, handicaps, length of residence in skid row, and age groupings. Others could probably be added and the fitting of all into one typology must await further study, but the heterogeneity of the skid row population has been clearly demonstrated.

SUMMARY

The development and present characteristics of skid row and its men have been outlined. The variety of historical events, facilities of skid row and

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[65] One, perhaps having a personality problem, played chess continually and well, badly defeating this writer. He claimed to be saving to enter the University of Chicago, having been accepted there, but appeared to be making little progress in that direction.

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inhabitants all suggest that this community is not easily explained by any unicausal theories such as that of alienation. A next task is the examination of sociological concern that has been directed toward skid row.

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CHAPTER THREE: THE SOCIOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SKID ROW

Skid row has received a good deal of general and sociological consideration since the turn of the century. This treatment has reflected both the changing skid row scene and the changing American philosophy toward such matters as skid row.

In the preceding chapter some historical conditions affecting skid rows and some of their descriptive characteristics have been treated. In this chapter we will treat the development of sociological concern regarding skid row. This concern has assumed that, despite specific historical causes and unique skid row characteristics, there exist certain patterns and regularities worth observing among skid rows through several decades. Such patterns and regularities must receive prime consideration in any skid row theory. Wallace suggests some patterns which have seemed to exist among skid rowers.

> In only one major respect is the skid rower still true to traditional form. Throughout the years he has remained both destitute and single. For the most part he claims no ...kin. Outcast by all accepted standards, degraded and facing an ever-widening gulf between himself and society, the skid rower has nevertheless managed to survive for almost half a century. More than that, he has managed to evolve on his own behalf a community which shelters, clothes, and feeds him, and keeps him supplied with drink.[1]

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[1] Wallace, op.cit., p.25.

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It has been stated earlier in this dissertation that the predominant early concern was with skid row in a context of social problems and this concern resulted in biased treatment. This chapter will further examine the fact. Furthermore, evidence will be submitted here that nonsociological theories, while they may be useful in part, are not adequate in explaining the existence of skid row. It will be shown that the underlying concern of nearly all sociological studies, whether explicit or not, has been with the relative organization or disorganization that characterizes skid row. Further, the early students of urbanism suggested that skid row and similar urban areas were disorganized and many observers of skid row have made it clear that they considered skid rowers as an alienated population. Finally, and most important, it will be shown that a conception of skid row as an organized community can be supported and that fact would contradict the stereotype of skid row alienation.

A. EARLY CONCERN WITH SKID ROW

The sociological treatment of skid row emerged only gradually from a more general concern first expressed by journalists. Especially by the turn of the century, writers were complaining of the various kinds of slums emerging in the cities. Jacob Riis, with his classic _How the Other Half Lives_ (1890) and other works, was a pioneer in this respect. He described the "Bend" area on the Bowery as follows:

> On hot summer nights it is no rare experience when exploring the worst of tenements in "The Bend" to find the hallways occupied by "sitters", tramps whom laziness or hard luck has

> prevented from earning enough by their day's "labor" to pay the admission fee to a stale-beer dive, and who have their reasons for declining the hospitality of police station lodging houses....The men ...take to the railroad track and to camping out when the nights grow warm, returning in the fall to prey on the city, and to recruit their ranks from the lazy, the shiftless, and the unfortunate.[2]

Riis was, in general, equally critical of the city for fostering the slum and of the inhabitants for accepting it as a way of life, though he was, when compared with most journalists of his time, quite charitable toward the poor and enlightened regarding the social causes of slums.[3]

As the general public became more aware of skid rows, more attention was directed toward them by other writers. Hunter, for example, in 1904 wrote of skid rows as they developed in various cities:

> In all cities there are special districts in which most of the nomadic vagrants as well as the habitual "town bums" are to be found. They usually furnish a considerable element to the flotsam and jetsam which constitute a large portion of the population in the districts of vice. New York has, among other such districts the Tenderloin and the Bowery. Chicago has South Clark Street, Dearborn Street and West Madison; Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Francisco, Denver, have similar districts...vice for the well-to-do, and...

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[2] Jacob Riis, How the Other Half Lives, pp.56-57.

[3] Ibid., Introduction by Donald Bigelow.

> vice for the poor....The average American knows little of the area....The vagrant is only one element...[And Hunter goes on to list several available vices in the area] [4]

Edwin Brown, in 1913, was among the first to take the side of the homeless. He lived among them by choice and reported on the extremely harsh and uncharitable ways in which moniless tramps like himself were treated. He satirized at length on "The New England Conscience," Philadelphia's "Brotherly Love," "LatterDay Saints who sin against society," in Salt Lake City and finally Denver, "The City Beautiful." [5] In one typical case he found a mission "of love and hope" where a detective lurked to arrest any transients who requested help. Many colorful and sympathetic descriptions, such as Laubach's Tramping with Tramps and Jim Tully's Beggars of Life then began to appear.

Among the first attempts to move beyond impressionistic efforts was that of Solenberg who in her 1000 Homeless Men (1910) focused on records of New York shelter house dwellers. This empirical study of large numbers of destitute men was followed by others, (e.g., Sutherland and Locke's Twenty Thousand Homeless Men) which like Solenberg's, provided early systematic data about what was viewed as a growing social pathology.

B. THE "SOCIAL PROBLEMS" PERSPECTIVE

First interests in skid row emerged, thus, in

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[4] Robert Hunter, Poverty, pp.106-108.

[5] Edwin Brown, op.cit. Quotations are from chapter titles.

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a focus upon it as a social problem. Just as the first literature consisted of impressionistic exposes, a "problems" orientation has been maintained by studies in every decade since. Only examples from recent years are noted here. Typical of these have been studies of alcoholism on skid row. The study of alcoholism in this setting is well-represented by Pittman and Gordon's The Revolving Door, which observes many social characteristics of the chronic homeless inebriate. The Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcoholism has published articles of the same sort,[6] and a few Social Problems articles have served well in describing aspects of the culture of skid row. "National Conference Reports on the Homeless Alcoholic" have been sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism.

The "social problem" approach to skid row has not, however, been confined to an examination of alcoholism as the crucial factor. Other particular social problems, while receiving less attention, have also been examined. Deutscher,[7] Goldborough[8] and Schmid, for example, studied crime in this setting.[9] Jones and others[10] and Faris and Dunham[11]

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[6] See in that journal, for example, R. Straus and R. McCarthy, "Nonaddictive Pathological Drinking Patterns of Homeless Men," 12: pp.601-611; J.F. Rooney, "Group Processes among Skid Row Men," 22: pp.440-460; and P.R. Brown, "The Problem Drinker and the Jail," 16: pp.474-483.

[7] Irwin Deutscher, "The Petty Offender: A Sociological Alien," Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, 44: pp.592-595.

[8] Ernest Goldborough, The Petty Offender: A Philadelphia Study of the Homeless Man.

[9] Calvin Schmid, "Urban Crime Areas," American Sociological Review, 25: pp.655-678.

[10] H. Jones, J. Roberts and J. Branter, "Incidence of Tuberculosis among Homeless Men," Journal of the American Medical Association, 155: pp.1222-1223.

[11] Faris and Dunham, Mental Disorders in Urban Areas.

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have respectively observed physical and mental health problems. Problems of housing have received much treatment, particularly by city agencies in New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, Minneapolis and elsewhere, and lengthy reports have resulted (see page 3).

One of the most recent and extensive sociological treatments, a survey study by Bogue, also focused on problems and their amelioration and seems to make alcoholism its chief independent variable. In a review of Bogue's book, Reissman was not only very critical of the extensive use of alcoholism as an explanatory variable, but also commented that:

> ...superficiality...[and] notable sentiments...cannot sustain a scientific investigation...[and] might even be a hindrance. Notably inspired action goals become confused with sociological objectives....[A] just cause is better served by careful scholarship than a spirit of high purpose.[12]

Bogue introduced his 500 page report with a statement which, while not referring to alcoholism, nevertheless clearly showed the social problems approach which he brought to the study.

> Residents of skid row are the most poorly housed group in the urban population. The "normal" population would refuse to live in the housing occupied by these men. Here the incidence of disease, neglect and cruel living conditions is far higher than in almost any other district.... Not only is skid row an eyesore, it is also sociologically poisonous to neighborhoods in a broad surrounding zone....The conditions to be remedied

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[12] Leonard Reissman, American Sociological Review, 30: pp.152-153.

> are acute, more complex, and beset with more problem situations than in most other neighborhoods undergoing urban renewal. [Emphasis mine.][13]

Social problems textbooks typically treat skid row as a concentrated problems area as illustrated by Korn and McKorkle.

> The homeless, friendless drifter who lives by petty thefts as he moves in an endless round from rooming house to the county jail and "skid row" certainly fits the picture of the social parasite who contributes nothing to the social order that nurtured him. He lives for himself, steals for himself and gives nothing in return for what he takes.[14]

It should be noted that, as the above quotation suggests, the "social problems" literature has often assumed the alienation of those confronted with "social problems." The scholarly journals as well as the mass media frequently assume that a list of social problems such as unemployment, alcoholism and family disorganization are, by definition, accompanied by alienation and disenchantment. Thus they continue to regard skid row as a "jungle" and social scientists continue to make passing comments about the estranged and hopeless state of skid rowers, and they assume these characterizations with only the descriptive evidence of problems that exist in skid row.

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[13] Bogue, op.cit., p.1.

[14] R. Korn and L. McKorkle, Criminology and Penology, pp.125-126. Concerning the skid row part of the "culture of poverty," Harrington (op.cit. p.97) stated that, "perhaps the bitterest, most physical and obvious poverty that can be seen in an American city exists in skid row among the alcoholics."

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The weakness of the social problems approach is that it is too often characterized by a lack of objectivity, is based on ethnocentrism, fosters misplaced sympathy and results in value-judgments being read in by the observer. This approach fails to encourage the detailed observance of organization among the people involved and the actual functional nature of so-called "social problems."

C. INDIVIDUALISTIC APPROACHES

Nonsociological explanations for the existence of skid row, including religious and moral, biological, psychological and economic ones have always been popular. All but the last of these tend to be individualistic in nature and have frequently been given more attention than the sociological perspective. Dunham suggests that individualistic theories were becoming outmoded before this century.

> Toward the end of the nineteenth century explanations in terms of character traits and defects, which basically and in terms of later nineteenth century investigation became biological, gave way to broader socio-economic theories.[15]

But individualistic explanations have remained popular. Dunham in 1953 expressed concern about the widespread acceptance of psychological explanations (e.g., the "inadequate personality")[16] being used to describe and explain the inhabitants of skid row.[17] Perhaps the weakness of this approach can best be

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[15] Dunham, op.cit., p.8.

[16] Ibid., p.12.

[17] The writer has found this term popular also in the labeling of prison inmates, alcoholics and other deviants.

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summarized in the words of Dunham:

> While there have been various interpretations of the homeless man in terms of certain personality characteristics and/or mental conditions ...such theories are not suitable for explaining him.
> It is impossible to proceed on the basis of any narrow biologically or psychologically unitary theories for the condition of homelessness as a defined social situation having its roots deep in social organization rather than in psychological traits or biological defects of the individual men.[18]

Rubington agrees, saying,

> Failure to account for the absence of some alienated individuals on Skid Row casts doubt on the individualistic literature on unattached heavy drinkers. The bulk of this literature stresses undersocialization, broken homes, low education attainment, low occupational rank, high residential mobility...as factors which cause people to take up Skid Row social life. Nevertheless, many other people with similar characteristics fail to select the Skid Row alternative.[19]

The biological theories attempting to explain skid row are, like the psychological ones, individualistic in their treatment. They speak of an innate proclivity to alcoholism and even of inborn antisocial qualities.[20] They show a particular lack of imagination in explaining skid row as a social

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[18] Dunham, op.cit., p.12.

[19] Earl Rubington, "Failure as a Heavy Drinker: The Case of Chronic Drunkenness on Skid Row," in D. Pittman and C. Snyder, Society, Culture and Drinking Patterns, pp.146-147.

[20] Korn and McKorkle, op.cit., pp.198-223.

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Psychological and biological theories have been paralleled by religious ones which likewise do little to explain the skid row community in American society. These theories speak of the predestined life of the blessed vis-a-vis skid rowers or of the skid row punishment of "degenerate souls," (for example, those who turned against parents, wives or God or those who took to drinking or some other specified sinful behavior).

It can thus be seen that these individualistic theories, while sometimes showing promise in explaining the behavior of individuals, cannot explain the skid row community as an on-going institution in which a variety of personality types, similar to types found outside skid row, live.

D. SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

1. Introduction

While it remains important to undertand the personalities that migrate to and maintain themselves in skid row, the sociological perspective on the organization and culture of skid row is of prime importance. Skid row is, in itself, a "social fact" and cannot be accounted for simply by observations of those who come to it any more than by observations of the buildings that stand in skid row.

> What is needed is a broad general social theory which attempts to account not only for the fact that a certain segment of the population is homeless, but also for the fact that this homeless group collects in certain particular areas of the cities in the Western World. Such a general sociological theory can be

> stated by weaving together four strands of social theory which have been helpful in explaining both modern urban communities and the men who cannot find a niche in them. These four strands center around 1) the nature of ecological growth and expansion of the community, 2) the nature and function of the socialization process, 3) the evolving of a subculture within the total culture, and 4) social change as it affects both communities and population segments.[21]

This certainly establishes an elaborate challenge for sociology, one which has been met only in a hit-and-miss fashion. It demands a focus upon an ecological area wherein exists a sub-culture which socializes men and in which change is occurring.

Much of the sociological research regarding skid row has dealt with it in a "structural" context but from a negative, "social problems" point of view. That is, rather than looking at the phenomenon as "social organization," it has been viewed with an assumption of disorganization. This approach posits a maximum amount of disorganization both within skid row and in its relation to the outside. All studies which have been concerned with "social action" directed toward changing skid row, (and such probably constitute the bulk of all skid row studies), have either assumed or been aimed at demonstrating the existence of social disorganization. Relatively few studies have taken the opposite approach, that of revealing aspects of social organization, but those which do exist have been able to show some of the existing organizational structure in skid row.

Moreover, the issue of organization is closely

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[21] Dunham, op.cit., p.12.

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related to that of skid row alienation. As will be dealt with later at length, involvement in community and society can be viewed as evidence of organization. If a man fits some social niches, and if the fit is not a coerced one, there is reason to believe that he is not alienated. Social isolation and psychological alienation, it will be argued in Chapter Four, are quite related.

The treatment of skid row as a social problem has been criticized by those who speak of its functional nature in society and urban community. Dunham, for instance, is quick to say that many who see skid rows as eyesores and their inhabitants as victims of tragedy do not see the whole picture.

> The homeless men and their habitats are by the people of a given city generally regarded as something of a public nuisance. But this...overlooks the role which the men and their habitat play in the economy... 1) They represented a reservoir for seasonal demands of agriculture, the railroads and the lumber industry, and 2) they provided some of the labor for the odd jobs in the city for which there were varying demands ...restaurant work, distribution of hand bills, work for the Salvation Army, truck help, snow removal, dock work,and the like....The second economic function of these men is still a significant one in any urban community.[22]

And skid rows are of course useful to the men who go there.

> 1) They meet the needs of the men for food, clothing, alcohol, entertainment, and bed when they are "in

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[22] Ibid., p.25.

> the money." 2) They serve as a playground, a function largely overlooked, for certain persons in the community, who because of unconventionality or dissatisfactions in their own family and neighborhood milieu, seek the anonymous life of skid row ... get drunk, pick up a woman...seek some homosexual...make contacts for petty crime... 3) they provide a means of livelihood for a small segment of the community population.[23]

Thus there is good reason for a sociological approach to the study of skid row. The overall perspective of the sociologist should be upon the structural organization and the functions of skid row communities although, as will be seen in the following sections, such has not always been the case.

2. Sociological Concern with Urbanism

Skid rows, existing in core urban areas, were obviously subject to sociological theories of the city. Much of the research in early emergent American sociology did focus upon the city and there seemed to be a general assumption that urban life had an important and perhaps deleterious effect on society. Early thinkers related the city to alienation and assumed the former conducive to the latter. They felt that urban life was detrimental to the well-being of individuals. Their case is suggested by Simmel in his, "The Metropolis and Mental Life," where he argued that the urban life was anchored upon monetary interests and values and thus man interacted with others in impersonal ways.

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[23] Ibid., p.26.

> The individual is reduced to a negligible quantity in his practice and in his obscure emotional states...The individual has become a mere cog in an enormous organization of things and powers which tear from his hands all progress, spirituality, and value....The metropolis is the genuine arena of this culture which outgrows all personal life. Here in buildings and educational institutions, in community life, and in the visible institutions of the state, is offered such an overwhelming fullness of crystalized and impersonalized spirit that the personality, so to speak, cannot maintain itself under its impact....[24]

The "Chicago School" of Sociology, led by Robert Park and developing such excellent students as Nels Anderson, Louis Wirth, Harvey Zorbaugh and Clifford Shaw, provided the pioneers in American studies of urban areas. These men were concerned with the "natural growth" of urban areas. They made significant analyses of the nature of urban life which are pertinent to the skid row community and its alienation. Wirth's theory of urbanism stressed the city's qualities of anonymity and impersonal, superficial and segmental relations, characteristics that have been taken as particularly apt in describing the skid row area.

> Characteristically, urbanites meet one another in highly segmental roles....The reserve, the indifference, and the blase outlook which urbanites manifest in their relationships may thus be regarded as devices for immunizing themselves against the personal claims and expectations of others. The close living together and working

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[24] Georg Simmel, in E. Josephson and M. Josephson, Man Alone: Alienation in Modern Society, pp.151-165.

> together of individuals who have no sentimental and emotional ties foster a spirit of competition, aggrandizement and mutual exploitation. To counteract irresponsibility and potential disorder, formal controls tend to be resorted to.[25]

This position about the impact of urbanism was extended, and sometimes with added emphasis, to the analysis of skid row. Just as others were becoming concerned with the "social problems" of skid row, certain sociologists were beginning to see skid row as the focal point of urbanism with its anonymity, impersonality and disorganization. Nels Anderson presented what is considered to be the first and perhaps best overall "sociology of the homeless man" (The Hobo) in 1922. He examined the varying types of skid row men and presented an extensive picture of the skid row community. While he thus indicated something of the social organization which characterized skid row, he also contended strongly that attempts to establish any fairly durable social and political organizations among skid rowers had failed. According to Anderson, the skid rower was an individualist in the city and there was a good deal of subsequent disorganization in the skid rows of Chicago. To even a greater extent, Zorbaugh reported a lack of organization among skid row dwellers on Chicago's North Clark Street.[26] Shaw wrote of the "jackroller," the unpopular young strong-arm robber found on skid row.[27]

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[25] Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," American Journal of Sociology, 44:1, p.12.

[26] Harvey Zorbaugh, The Gold Coast and the Slum.

[27] Clifford Shaw, The Jack Roller.

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Skid row is, of course, a core urban area, and its way of life is often taken as a classic example of anonymity, indifference and exploitation by classical students such as Simmel, Wirth and others. That such definitions continue to exist may be noted in Bogue's skid row definition or in his statement that,

> Skid row is a good place to hide from the police...to "get lost" temporarily. Skid rowers do not ask questions and they do not talk much to police...a criminal can register under any name and be accepted.[28]

3. Alienation

Urbanism, then, as is indicated above, was assumed to produce alienation among all exposed to it and, especially, among the homeless. Attributing alienation to skid row men, whether done by journalists who sense unhappiness and isolation there or by sociologists who observe famililess men and chronic alcoholism, is sociologically relevant because it does suggest that skid row is a social system which fosters a significantly noticeable alienation.

Many writers have accepted the idea of skid row alienation. The more careful of these have spoken of demoralization, anonymity and isolation and others of outright despair and hopelessness. Those who write of social problems and disorganization infer, or specifically refer to, alienation. On the other hand, almost all of the literature indirectly shows some kind of organization, even if it is only pragmatic and temporary or in the conspiracy of jackrollers and beggars, and this suggests, at the least, that

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[28] Bogue, op.cit., p.60.

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if alienation is present, it is certainly far from total. It shows that there is a degree of involvement in groups and the subculture as well as some structural interaction and linkage with "outside" society.

The resolving of basic contradictions in the literature awaits further developments in empirical research. In the remainder of this section a wide range of writers, sociologists and others, who have presented various conceptions of skid row as an area of the alienated will be examined.

The idea of alienation was attached to the hobo even before it was attributed to the skid rower. Robert Park wrote theoretically about the idea of locomotion and the resulting lack of philosophy and productivity among hoboes.[29]

> In view of all this we may well ask...what...is the matter with the hobo's mind. Why is it that with all the variety of his experience he still has so many dull days? Why, with so much leisure has he so little philosophy? Why, with so wide an acquaintance with regions, with men and with cities, with life on the open road and in the slums, has he been able to contribute so little to our actual knowledge of life?
>
> ...The trouble with the hobo mind is not a lack of experience but lack of vocation. The hobo is, to be sure, always on the move, but he has no destination, and naturally he never arrives. Wanderlust, which is the most elemental expression of the romantic temperment and the romantic interest in life, has assumed for him as for many others the character of vice. He has gained

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[29] Robert Park, The City, pp.156-160.

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> his freedom, but he has lost his direction. [He is in a state of] Restlessness....The hobo seeks change merely for the sake of change; it is habit, and like the drug habit, moves in a vicious circle. The more he wanders, the more he must. It is merely putting the matter in another way to say that the problem with the hobo... is that he is an individualist. He has sacrificed the human need for association and organization to a romantic passion for individual freedom....[30]

Park was insistent on the salience of the lack of identity with locale as a prime factor in the estrangement of the homeless.

> All forms of association among human beings rest finally upon locality and local association. The hobo, who begins his career by breaking the local ties that bound him to his family and his neighborhood, has ended by breaking all other associations. He is not only..."homeless"...but a man without a cause and without a country; and this emphasizes the significance, however futile, of the efforts of men like James Eads How to establish hobo colleges....[31]

Just as Park was concerned with examining alienation and the hobo, other early commentators were concerned with the state of affairs that led to alienation among skid rowers. Speck in 1917 wrote that,

> ...privation and humiliation had broken the spirit and exhausted

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[30] Ibid., p.158.

[31] Ibid., p.159.

> the energy and will power of these men. They were childish and ineffectual and unable to concentrate. An aversion for work, a fondness for drink and a passion for wandering appeared as substitutes for the normal pleasures they had been denied.[32]

Wood, in Paths of Loneliness, reviewed the case of many young people during the Depression, emphasizing the element of alienation, though she did not explicitly use that term.

> In the early 1930's many young, both boys and girls, took to the roads as tramps....It is...a life full of hardships and physical and moral dangers ...a life of pathetic loneliness and insecurity. They ceased to be a part of those groups in the community which are characterized by relationships of affection and reciprocal obligations. Theirs was a socially-isolated existence which was not so much antisocial as it was nonsocial....many...youngsters became apathetic and accepted their fate with a weary resignation typically unlike the cheerful expentancy normally characteristic of youth.[33]

In today's established skid rows, the life is probably less harsh, but much of the journalistic literature still speaks of a severe personal alienation and of a mood of fatalism in skid rows. Sara Harris, was outspoken in her Skid Row U.S.A.

> Skid Row, U.S.A. belches despair. Skid Rowers consider it 'the last step before the grave.' They wash their hands of themselves and say they're beyond caring what happens to them....They are dyed-in-

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[32] In Margaret Wood, Paths of Loneliness, p.70.

[33] Ibid., pp.72-74.

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> the-wool fatalists....They merely go on existing day after hopeless day.... Everyone on the Row feels hopeless. They wouldn't be there if they didn't.[34]

Bendiner, in a somewhat psychoanalytic vein, found a similar alienation in skid row. He noted that sociologists claim that a subculture exists there and he described it as a subculture of alienation.

> Psychologists agree that the Bowery Men need a place where an effortless going to hell is the accepted way of life.... They need a place where no one requires anything of them. They need the sweet delights of hopelessness, and anyone who seeks to energize them betrays them ...when all they want is for the world to leave them alone, worthless and careless, beyond redemption or competition. In the quiet attitudes of the men in flops--the old ones often sit for hours with hands crossed in their laps--it is easy to read a prayerful solemnity. There is an air of finality on the street. Each man thinks it is all over....[35]

Harrington returned to the Bowery after he had worked there and characterized the attitudes of the residents in the remarks of one homeless man.

> 'We wondered when you would wise up, Mike. Hanging around here, helping us, that's nothing.' [Harrington added], They couldn't understand why anyone would want to care for them.[36]

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[34] Sara Harris, Skid Row U.S.A., pp.5-7.

[35] Bendiner, op.cit., pp.101-103.

[36] Harrington, op.cit., p.105.

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Sociologists, too, have pointed to the alienation of contemporary skid rowers. Dean noted that "theorists have suggested numerous correlates of alienation such as "hoboism." "[37] Nisbet found that,

> At the present time in all the social sciences, the various synonyms of alienation have a foremost place in studies of human relations. Investigations of the "unattached," the "marginal," the "obsessive," the "normless," and the "isolated" individual all testify [to this.] [38]

Pittman treated the skid rower specifically as follows:

> The skid row alcoholic...is isolated, uprooted, unattached, disorganized, demoralized and homeless....His treatment by the community has been at best negative and expedient.... He has lost the self-esteem and sense of human dignity on which any treatment and rehabilitation must probably be based.[39]

Rubington, in a carefully-written article, accepted the idea of a general alienation of skid row men from the wider culture even though he was chiefly concerned with their search for primary relations and identity there.

> Alienation from major value-patterns is one price a complex society must pay for ineffective socialization....A certain proportion of the alienated find it convenient to fend together...Skid Row...affords roles for several types

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[37] Dean, op.cit., p.753.

[38] Robert Nisbet, The Quest for Community, p.15.

[39] David Pittman, "Homeless Men," Transactions, 1:2, p.16.

of unattached males....[40]

Though they do posit an alienation of skid rowers, Rubington and the others have not said precisely what this alienation is, and their comments have been somewhat impressionistic. Thus the task which has been taken up in this study is necessary. The exact nature of skid row alienation, in part because it has been treated in a cavalier fashion by many writers, remains quite unknown.

An important contribution to the concept of alienation was made by Robert Merton in two classic essays on "Social Structure and Anomie."[41] Merton does not use the term "alienation" itself but he discusses anomie in a manner which makes it appear to be synonymous with "normlessness," one of the types of alienation which is investigated in this study. Some writers, expanding on Merton's theme, have suggested that skid row alienation is prevalent in an anomic sense. Wallace summarized this view in saying,

> ...anomie is another way of describing homeless men vis-a-vis society. Anomie ...refers to the homeless man's lack of adherence to the shared system of values and norms held by society at large. The skid rower has rejected the culturally-defined goals he is supposed to be aiming for. The rejection stems from a 'dissociation between culturally-prescribed aspirations and socially-structured avenues for realizing these aspirations.' [42]

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[40] Rubington, op.cit., p.146.

[41] Robert Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, pp.131-194.

[42] Wallace, op.cit., p.134.

Merton, in the same essays, in addition to discussing anomie, suggested five "modes of adaptation" which individuals may make in regard to societal means and goals and which are pertinent to this study. If skid rowers are alienated from American society, in what ways might this be manifested in behavior? Do they simply make skid row a retreat from society, or are they in active rebellion against society? Or, to consider other adaptations, which Merton suggested, is their alienation characterized by ritualism, or is skid row a community in which a range of rather unique innovations are utilized? Finally, is skid row life simply a conformity to certain means and goals which are somewhat different from those of the general American culture? All of these appear to be possibilities in skid row as suggested by the scheme presented in Figure 1, adapted from Merton. (See next page.)

Some have been quick to conclude that the adaptation through retreat adequately describes skid rowers. Bendiner, for example, states that skid row "...is a retreat, an escape into tranquility ...a place where life is thoroughly anesthetized,"[43] and Bogue stated that, "Many of these men have retreated from society and are seeking to escape reality."[44] Merton himself seemed to have skid rowers in mind when he characterized retreat saying, "In this category fall some of the adaptive activities of... pariahs, outcasts, vagrants, vagabonds, tramps, chronic drunkards and drug addicts."[45]

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[43] Bendiner, op.cit., p.103.

[44] Bogue, op.cit., p.70.

[45] Merton, op.cit., p.153.

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FIGURE 1. MERTON'S MODES OF ADAPTATION AS THEY MIGHT OCCUR IN SKID ROW*

Adaptation	Cultural goals	Institutionalized means	Possible skid row illustrations
Conformity	+	+	Complying with a lower class lifestyle or even, with the general culture.
Innovation	+	-	Accepting the society's (or the subculture's) goals but devising "shortcuts" or new ways to "get by" to obtain them.
Ritualism	-	+	Going through daily routines without regard to goals.
Retreatism	-	-	Escaping from the general culture or from a former subculture.
Rebellion	±	±	Rejecting and trying to change the general culture or parts of it.

* According to Merton, "(+) signifies 'acceptance,' (-) signifies 'rejection' and ± signifies 'rejection of prevailing values and substitution of new values.' "

Other writers have written quite graphically about retreatism stating, for instance,

> [Skid row man] retreats from normal living...to become a social misfit... on the treadmill to oblivion.[46]
>
> Here in the brotherhood of the beaten and defeated, men find a perfect hiding place from the world, find what so many citizens of the modern world seek and

[46] E. Goldborough and Wilber Hobbs, "The Petty Offender," The Prison Journal, April 1956.

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never find--escape from tensions.[47]

While many writers have alluded to the contemporary retreatism of skid rowers, others have, in addition, suggested a changing skid row culture over recent decades, seen in a transformation from "rebellion" in past generations to "retreatism" now. Bendiner, for example, asserted that retreatism has replaced rebellion, as follows:

> It is sad to listen to the noises of a street that has had its spirit broken. It is pathetic to see beggars where rebels once shouted, sang and whored.[48]

Lovald, too, suggested that since World War I skid row has been transformed from a place of rebellion to one of retreat, and from one of revolution to one of powerlessness.[49]

The above position may well be a valid one. The proportion of skid rowers who were rebels at some past time in history cannot, of course, be accurately estimated. There were, however, enough of them with their observable behavior and institutions to present a clear image of rebellion, and this rebellion is not visible today. In addition to such organized protesting action groups as the International Workers of the World and various socialist parties, many less formal operators advocated a range of reforms from street-corner soapboxes.[50]

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[47] Josephson and Josephson, op.cit., pp.409-410.

[48] Bendiner, op.cit., p.180.

[49] Keith Lovald, "From Hobohemia to Skid Row: The Changing Community of the Homeless Man." An unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Minnesota, 1960.

[50] Anderson, op.cit., pp.9-10, 215-229.

With the coming of the Depression, the character of skid row seemed to change. The literature reflected more hopelessness, especially among those who resided in the public shelterhouses. Bendiner suggested a rather drastic difference between skid rowers before and after the Depression era.

> The philosophy of the old time hobo who conceived himself as a member of the wide working class rather than a lone failure has no semblance of reality today and the IWW, "the one big union," which, having been conceived and nurtured along the Row, offered dignity in identification, is basically ineffectual. There are no proud Skid Rowers today, and there is no "one big union," to elicit pride. There is only a vast mass of egoless...people, and there are a very few movements consciously designated to "lift them up"...organized by outsiders.[51]

Feied, in an insightful review of "The Hobo As [an] American Cultural Hero," indicated a changing perspective regarding hoboes as portrayed in the works of three authors, a perspective that suggested a trend from rebellion to retreat.

> Jack London (up to about 1926) used the hobo to expose the economic contradictions of capitalism....Conflict he exalted above all else....He loved to pit antagonistic classes against one another in his socially-oriented novels.
>
> DosPassos (in the 1930's) employed the theme of the hobo to show how the consolidation of power in the hands of business resulted in the destruction of civil liberties and the decline of political freedom in the United States.
>
> Kerouac (in the late 1950's) also displays a keen sense of sympathy for the

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[51] Bendiner, op.cit., p.180.

> hobo, though...not the intense concern with the economic reform...Kerouac uses the theme of the tramp and the hobo to chronicle the disaffection of a generation and to symbolize the search for values in an age of disillusionment and widespread social pessimism....[He] looks ...not to Marx...but to Oswald Spengler, author of The Decline of the West... Kerouac...dramatizes the sense of alienation of a large number of his contemporaries...[in] this desire to flee or turn away from the hideous realities that distinguish his fictional heroes from those of earlier times.[52]

Perhaps it is true that in recent decades, American society has become more complacent. Social critics at least, complain of conformity and consensus-living, and they consider rebellion, except in the relatively new and limited case of Civil Rights, to be a "lost art." Perhaps in these affluent times, skid row does tend to attract men who have given up their purpose in life and blame themselves or who have given up any hopes of changing the society which causes their problems.

One cannot, however, accept this position without the kind of comparative data which is impossible to obtain and the matter must be left an open question. Wallace even questions whether we can refer to homeless men as retreatists, unless we view the concept in a special sense. He stated:

> Whether homeless men are retreatists as Merton suggests, or rebels who set up a new system of goals and means - however strange these new goals and means seem to respectable society is the question that only research can answer. The burden of evidence reviewed herein points toward skid row

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[52] Feied, op.cit., pp.82-91.

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> as a community with, rather than without, goals and means for its members. However, Merton may still be correct in stating that skid row is generated by the disjunction of goals and means in the larger society. The lives of skid rowers, at least some of whom are former members of a skilled labor force, indicate that they have failed to achieve, perhaps because they were denied access to the necessary means to reach economic success....[53]

In conclusion, then, it can be argued that the general alienation as well as the retreatism of skid row men has too often been taken for granted. Perhaps the "social problem" orientation of middle class students of skid row has resulted in their being shocked by skid row into projecting their own alienation. Skid rowers themselves must be asked about the issue. When Bogue did so in one question, he found that only 17 percent "sometimes or often felt hopeless," and 10 percent "felt hopeless all the time," while 68 percent "almost never felt hopeless."[54] (Ironically in a preliminary report of the same study it was stated that, "neglected and unwanted, the homeless man lives amid refuse, vacillating between despair and defiance.")[55] Skid row alienation remains a questionable entity and deserves more systematic treatment than it has so far received.

4. Social Organization and Community

As has been suggested, the issue of skid row alienation is closely related to concerns about the

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[53] Wallace, op.cit., p.135.

[54] Bogue, op.cit., p.398.

[55] Chicago Tenants Relocation Bureau, op.cit., p.56.

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social organization of skid row, and this study will be specifically addressed to this relationship. The nature of the social organization of skid row has received only limited study; nevertheless, some useful work has been done. Rubington, for example, in assuming an alienation of skid rowers from society, recognized skid row as a place where identity and membership are sought, and thus where organization can occur. For him, it was basic that, "...the alienated fend together...[and] develop or seek out a social organization....[The] Skid Row...subculture...can accommodate them."[56]

Jackson and Connor found highly institutionalized group life there.

> The lush groups provide for mutual survival and emotional support....To reap the benefits of membership in such a group, the alcoholic must adhere to group standards and accept the obligations imposed upon him. Violation of group standards means not only rejection from a particular group but also isolation from the lush segment as a whole ....All are assured of a steady supply of alcohol...[some protection] from police...[and on becoming] ill help is given....[57]

Peterson and Maxwell also found a variety of organized groups of skid rowers. They clearly documented[58] some important patterns that compose the "wino way of life" including begging, getting wine

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[56] Rubington, op.cit., p.316.

[57] J. Jackson and R. Connor, "The Skid Row Alcoholic," The Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcoholism, 14:3, pp.468-486.

[58] Peterson and Maxwell, op.cit., p.316. The authors readily admitted that they dealt only with types of groups and that details as to "the number and proportion of men to be found in the various skid row groupings" (p.316) remained lacking.

and sharing it, all as group processes.

Edmund Love, in several biographical sketches, showed that at least some skid rowers make their adjustment quite deliberately and thus cannot be considered personally disorganized, and he provided several examples of extensive cooperation in the skid row community.[59]

A few sociologists have argued that skid row should be viewed as socially organized to the extent of being considered a community. Their discussion has, however, tended to treat the matter in an impressionistic manner, concentrating on case studies and presenting what are almost "ideal types." While there are arguments of an opposite nature (a few skid rowers are definitely anti-social, othersprobably never identify as skid rowers and a few retain their identification with other communities,) good overall reasons have certainly been presented for conceiving of skid row as a community.

> But no matter how cut off from the main stream of society, it does not follow that the persons on Skid Road lack a community of their own....Jackson and Connor...found life on Skid Road to be group-oriented, with a describable culture to be learned, folkways and mores to be lived by and a web of expectations and obligations which provide economic and emotional support to members of these groups.[60]

Wallace in 1965, like others in past decades, treated skid row as a "way of life" (i.e., subculture, hence also community), and was unwilling to

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[59] Edmund Love, Subways Are for Sleeping. esp. pp.12-24, 65-78.

[60] Peterson and Maxwell, op.cit., p.309.

accept any more advanced theory for skid row than one which might be paraphrased as follows: "Skid rowers, like others, seek the best available pattern of maintaining life and comfort. Skid row is their communal solution."

> Skid row as a way of life refers to... the larger pattern that emerges from the social organization of hundreds of individuals into one community. The skid row way of life with its prescribed ways of behaving toward members and nonmembers, with its institutions, socialization, status order, special language and tradition is a subculture.[61]

He went on to point out some aspects of skid row which appear to offer evidences of skid row as a community and, even if these appear to this writer to be overdrawn, they do indicate some of the more unique characteristics of the skid row community.

> Skid row is the most deviant community in the United States. 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. He does not even steal....Generally [skid rowers] extend to one another those very things which society denies, beginning with toleration if not acceptance, and ending with mutual sharing.[62]

Lovald has described the community as a "status community," supporting both the contentions that skid rowers are lower class members and that they form a distinct kind of community.

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[61] Wallace, op.cit., p.141.

[62] Ibid.

> The basic thesis of the present study is that the world of the homeless men --the present skid row and its pre-World War II form, hobohemia--represent small encapsulated institutions and distinctive modes of life.[63]

One essential characteristic of a community is that it provide certain services and facilities for its inhabitants. As we have already pointed out in Chapter Two, a set of services and facilities <u>are</u> provided in the skid row community. Wallace showed that skid rowers are "socialized" into the skid row community by their use of its facilities, and he suggested that their activity in this regard is further evidence against the stereotype of alienated skid rowers.

> ...The skid rower develops a special set of relationships of his own with flophouse, welfare agency, mission, the law, justice, the workhouse, the library, bank, barber shop, bar, among others. The daily life of the skid rower involves his participation in these establishments in a pattern which can scarcely be considered either as a product or a symptom of severe personality disorganization or alienation.[64]

Thus a community does seem to exist in skid row providing a culture and certain social relationships of which the population might otherwise be deprived. The skid row community appears to be a social reality in itself. Conceiving of skid row as a community should be helpful, not only in revealing how men are affected by skid row, but also in explaining why men first seek skid row and then remain there.

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[63] Lovald, <u>op.cit.</u>, The Abstract.

[64] Wallace, <u>op.cit.</u>, pp.131-132.

This review of studies of skid row's community characteristics has shown that skid row does provide a somewhat organized way of life,for its inhabitants rather than complete isolation and alienation. The actual nature of this community and many characteristics concerning it must await further research, although some aspects are taken up in the findings of this study.

SUMMARY

An attempt has been made to treat the development of sociological understanding regarding skid row. We have highlighted several issues concerning the "social problems" orientation, nonsociological perspectives, and such important sociological developments as those concerned with urbanism, alienation and community. Certain studies have suggested that social organization does exist in skid row even though most sociological studies have emphasized social disorganization. Much has been said about the alienated character of skid rowers and about retreatistic behavior resulting from this alienation, and only a few studies have in any way considered skid row as a community.

That alienation exists among skid rowers, as in any population, is not in question. However, careful consideration must be given to the prevalence of alienation in skid row as evidenced both in attitudes and activities. Moreover, the existence of skid row as a cultural "way of life" and as an organized community remains the sociological issue which must be observed in this and other sociological studies.

CHAPTER FOUR: ALIENATION; AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CONCEPT

A. THE PROMINENCE AND BACKGROUND OF THE IDEA

Alienation, the chief methodological idea used in this study, has been an extremely popular concept. Unfortunately it has too often been used carelessly or presumptiously, with a consequence that it has been subjected to much criticism. This criticism has, however, not destroyed the utility or worth of the concept, per se, despite its frequent parochial and faulty usage. It is here assumed that alienation and its opposite, involvement, remain as significant and useful conceptualizations in examining sociological problems.

In recent years alienation has received increasing attention. In fact, many have stated that ours is an "age of alienation."[1] The Josephsons, in an extensive anthology, subtitled, "Alienation in Modern Society," offered considerable evidence that a neglect of the alienation issue is a neglect of a core issue in modern life.

> Perhaps never before in history has man been so much a problem to himself. Rocketing through space...conquering the heavens, he is fast losing touch with his own world. Growing numbers of writers describe him in various ways as alienated. What forces have made him so? What kind of society is it that loses control over its own tools and creation? Is it one in which the sense of community has be-

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[1] Note for example the opening sentences in B. Rosenberg, I. Gerver and F. Howton's Mass Society in Crises, "We live in a demented world ...[with] despairing pessimism." p.1.

> come seriously, if not fatally, weakened?...Our present age of pessimism, despair and uncertainty succeeds a quite different earlier age of optimism, hope and certainty.[2]

There is little opportunity to objectively compare our era with previous ones, but many sources suggest that ours is at least more conscious of alienation. Perhaps the absolute gain in wealth occurring in idustrial nations and a rather broad distribution of wealth has pushed subsitence problems into the background and allowed people to become concerned with the state of mind and its discontents. It may be that, while man has come to greater control over his natural habitat, he is now less sure of that which he created.

Obviously, despite the implication of the quotation above, the idea of alienation is not new. Sociologists usually refer back to Marx and a few earlier philosophers in observing the roots of alienation. But there is evidence of man's alienation throughout history and Clark's comment that, "The history of man could well be written as the history of the alienation of man," is well taken.[3] Perhaps only the difficulty of translation and knowing the problems of previous civilizations and contemporary cultures keeps us from understanding the universality of alienation.

> It would be a major blunder to regard alienation as characteristically a phenomenon of modern society. For what

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[2]Josephson and Josephson, op.cit., pp.9-10.

[3]John Clark, "Measuring Alienation within a Social System," American Sociological Review. 24:6, p.849.

> stands out from an historical and comparative standpoint is the omnipresence of alienation: it takes different guises in all societies. There are modes of alienation in small, egalitarian, cooperative and agricultural societies.[4]

Marx and Engels were especially concerned with the concept of alienation in their early careers though they later came to feel that the concept was not sufficiently militant. Their earlier thoughts regarding alienation can be summarized in these words.

> In Marxian theory some men are alienated from their labor objectively by the relation of economic production and the systems of class domination. This separation from their work and the products of their work results also in their being alienated from nature and from themselves.[5]

Students of alienation have also referred to Freud as one who contributed to the idea of alienation. Civilization and Its Discontents illustrates this theme well, although it appears elsewhere, too.

> In Freudian theory, alienation (the term must be imputed although the idea is clear enough) occurs primarily as a result of the needs of civilization, although H. Marcuse suggests that Freud was aware that the demands of social structure, which were hostile to the core of the self, could be made worse by the existence of class domination.[6]

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[4] Lewis Freuer, "What Is Alienation: The Career of a Concept," in Stein and Vidich, Sociology on Trial, pp.138-139.

[5] J. Gould and W. Kolb, A Dictionary of the Social Sciences, pp.19

[6] Ibid.

Contemporary students who are concerned with alienation have tended to follow in the orientations of Marx and Freud. Sociologists have seemed more apt to refer to Marx while the NeoFreudians follow Freud more closely. But in neither case has their adherence been particularly doctrinaire.

The writer has detected an important distinction between students of alienation, separating what may be called the "mass theorists" from the "empirical researchers." The first group has rendered many subjective accounts and comments on alienation in modern society and large-scale organization.[7] This alienation is either assumed to exist or is derived through impressionistic processes. These reports are usually interesting, fairly credible, and frequently cautionary. When these studies are carefully evaluated, it is difficult to separate the real existence of alienation from the subjective interpretations which have been rendered.

The "empirical researchers" (several will be cited below) have attempted to measure the alienation of individuals and groups through the development of appropriate questions and scales. Such tests are often considerably subjective and imperfect: it is not certain what they measure and there is even little consensus as to how alienation should be measured. These scales have, however, achieved some measurement external to the researcher and have made replication and comparative studies possible. They help to avoid the common error of researchers who have allowed their own emotions and "cultural shock" to distort the meaning of alienation in such deviant subcultures as that of skid row. For these reasons, systematic questions and scales are given a chief role

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[7] For example, Rosenberg, Gerver and Howton, op.cit.

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in this study.

DEFINING ALIENATION

A durable definition of alienation must await more conclusive work by social scientists. Blauner, in introducing his study of alienation in four American industries stated,

> No simple definition of alienation can do justice to the many intellectual traditions which have engaged this concept as a central explanatory idea. One basis of confusion is the fact that the idea of alienation has incorporated philosophical, psychological, sociological, and political orientations.... Alienation is a general syndrome made up of a number of different objective conditions and subjective feelings....[8]

Nevertheless some attempts can be made to at least characterize the term, for as Nettler pointed out, there is some consensus regarding the term.

> ...the uses of the term "alienation" are sufficient to indicate some common ground of definition while yet allowing for confusion of conception and assumption.[9]

The three short definitions that follow illustrate the more common general assumptions and conceptions regarding alienation and offer some direction in developing the definition used in this study.

> ...an objective state of estrangement or separation of personality from specific aspects of the world of experience....[10]

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[8] Robert Blauner, Alienation and Freedom, p.15.

[9] Gwynn Nettler, "A Measure of Alienation," American Sociological Review, 22:6, p.67.

[10] Gould and Kolb, op.cit., p.19.

> ...loss or lack of relationship, especially where or when relationship is expected.[11]

> ...an individual feeling or state of dissociation from self, from others or from the world at large.[12]

These definitions, although they are obviously quite abstract, do appear to be very broad ones and suggest that alienation may be concerned with a very wide range of social objects.

The following definition of alienation was developed in this study and serves to introduce certain important dimensions of the issue which will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter.

> Alienation is an individual sense of deprivation of or disagreement with various important parts of one's culture and social order including significant social organization at various levels and significant cultural institutions and values, with an attendant sense of normlessness and powerlessness.

1. ALIENATION IS A NEGATIVE PERCEPTION

Alienation is first an individual reaction to environment and must be observed on that level. It is further a feeling of deprivation or disagreement varying in severity.

Its opposite is positive social and psychological involvement. Etzioni has noted three kinds of involvement which are useful in making alienation clear.[13]

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[11] H. English and A. English, The Dictionary of Psychological and Psychoanalytical Terms, p.22.

[12] Josephson and Josephson, op.cit., p.13.

[13] Amitai Etzioni, A Comparative Analysis of Organization, esp. p.13.

These are "moral involvement" with pure and social commitment to an institution, for instance, a religious one; "calculative involvement" with rational commitment, for instance to an economic institution in order to make money, and "alienative involvement" with an intensely negative orientation toward a system such as a prison in which one is forced to participate. It would follow that in order to be alienated, one must have something forced upon him and be consciously aware of its coercive nature. To the extent that parts of culture and the social order are forced upon the individual, one is compelled either to accept them (i.e., become involved) or to maintain negative (i.e., alienated) attitudes toward them.

2. ALIENATION IS OBJECT- AND SITUATION-RELATED

While many have regarded alienation as a variable innate to the personality, it is imperative that the phenomenon be recognized as occurring in the relationship of personality with environment and thus legitimately a sociological consideration. According to Waisanen, "Alienation is not a condition of personality, but a condition of discrepant relationships between the self and social system."[14] There may well be a general alienation syndrome, with, for instance, some people more generally alienated with regard to life than others (and indeed measures for such are investigated in this study). Nevertheless the more important and meaningful objects of sociological considerations appear to be fairly specific kinds of alienation.

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[14] Fred Waisanen, "Stability, Alienation and Change," an unpublished manuscript.

This study assumes that the relationship of personal alienation to environmental circumstances is its most important characteristic. The question of alienation must therefore be extended to ask, "Alienation from what?" Dean concurred with this in a conclusion concerned with his failure to find a satisfactory scale of personal alienation.

> One explanation might be that alienation is not a personality "trait," but a situation-relevant variable. It is plausible, for example, that an individual might have a high alienation-powerlessness score in regard to political activity, but a low one in regard to religion. For example, the "premillenialists" among Fundamentalists might be politically apathetic precisely because they believe that international crises cannot be solved by man, but that the world can only be saved by Divine intervention.[15]

The contemporary measures of alienation usually accept the idea that the concept is tied to situations. Nettler's scale, for example, was developed to measure alienation from "mass culture" and taps attitudes toward such parts of culture as TV, spectator sports and new automobiles.[16] Dean's scale is more abstract but is, at least in some of its questions, obviously tied to particular cultural objects. (e.g., "There are so many religions one doesn't know which to believe.") Even more abstract items appear to call for answers with specific cultural frames of reference held in mind by respondents.

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[15] Dwight Dean, "Alienation: Its Meaning and Measurement," American Sociological Review, 26:5, p.757.

[16] Nettler, op.cit., p.675.

Other students of alienation have been oriented to specific objects or situations in their research. The contents of the Josephsons' reader treats a wide variety of social organizations, institutions and conditions from which men can be alienated. Others who drew attention to particular situations and objects of alienation include the following: Middletown, who studied Southern Negro and white alienation with regard to education;[17] Seeman, who observed alienation among prison inmates with regard to education;[18] Neal and Seeman, who observed the feeling of powerlessness in a work organization;[19] and Neal and Rettig who noted alienation with reference to political and economic attitudes among workers.[20]

Though, as can thus be illustrated, many researchers recognize the situation-related feature of alienation, Clark complained that too often in research,

> ...situations in which man feels powerless, normless or isolated are not specified nor possibly representative of total societal involvement. This characteristic is common to all or most writings concerning alienation within the whole of society....[Perhaps] a more rewarding approach to the problem of measuring alienation might be the single unit approach, selecting for study only those

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[17] Russell Middletown, "Alienation, Race and Education," American Sociological Review, 28:6, pp.973-977.

[18] Melvin Seeman, "Alienation and Social Learning in a Reformatory," American Journal of Sociology, 69:3, pp.270-284.

[19] A. Neal and M. Seeman, "Organizations and Powerlessness," American Sociological Review 29:2, pp.216-226.

[20] A. Neal and S. Rettig, "Dimensions of Alienation among Manual and Non-Manual Workers," American Sociological Review, 28:4, pp.599-608.

> whom we can establish to be involved in a single, well-defined unit, for instance, a social system.[21]

The idea of alienation has been readily attached to that of social problems, and therefore such topics as skid row have many times involved a consideration of alienation. Grodzin has stated that alienation is an attitude showing itself in

> a tendency to suicide, addiction, poor marriage [adjustment], mental disorder and criminal behavior. He [the alienated person] feels he is being rejected by society which is doing him injustice ....He is becoming indifferent or withdrawn [ritualistic or retreatistic, it might be said]. He may alter his expectations for life. He may become sick or turn to hoboism. He may conform because he has no alternative. He may follow other defiance. [emphasis mine][22]

It has been noted that students of urban life have assumed that the city is detrimental to personal well-being and conducive to alienation. Their interpretations are subjective and personal but reflect a feeling shared by a large part of society today that the city is an undesirable place in which to live. Thus many would still agree with Wirth that "anonimity, superficiality and transitory relationships are inherent parts of city life."

The relevance of the question, "Alienation from what?" is an obvious one as analysis is directed toward the city and skid row life as potential sources of alienation. But this study further assumes that

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[21] Clark, op.cit., pp.847-850.

[22] Morton Grodzins, The Loyal and the Disloyal, p.145.

a number of specific organizational structures (family, friendship groups and others) and institutions (work, religion, and others) should be examined as objects of alienation. Since there are important aspects of each of these structures and institutions that impinge on all human beings, they are relevant to an examination of the presence or absence of alienation among skid rowers.

The particular parts of culture which were selected here for examination as objects of alienation were (as will be indicated below) those which are viewed by sociologists as of special significance in affecting man's behavior in all societies.

3. ALIENATION AS POWERLESSNESS AND NORMLESSNESS:

In his well-known essay on alienation, Seeman presented five basic types of alienation: "powerlessness," "normlessness," "meaninglessness," "social isolation," and "self-estrangement."[23] These have remained the basis for classification by various researchers who have conducted studies since Seeman's article appeared, though none of them have utilized all five types. Dean used Seeman's terms "powerlessness," "normlessness," and "social isolation," although he defined them differently than did Seeman.[24] Other empirical researchers have tended to concern themselves solely with "powerlessness" or with "normlessness."

Dean's three subtypes of alienation are defined by him as follows:

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[23] Melvin Seeman, "On the Meaning of Alienation," American Sociological Review, 24:6, pp.783-791.

[24] Dean, op.cit., pp.754-755.

> Powerlessness: separation from control over one's destiny.
> Normlessness: purposelessness or conflict of norms.
> Social Isolation: a feeling of separation from the group or isolation from groups standards.[25]

To this writer, however, as Dean defined them, these three elements do not seem to be mutually exclusive types of alienation. It is here argued that "normlessness" and "powerlessness" are fairly distinctive types within one dimension of alienation. Normlessness is concerned with the acceptance and understanding of a set of norms (anomie can be taken as a synonym) and powerlessness with ability to accomplish goals which the norms establish as important. Social isolation, however, is taken to be one situational type of alienation with people and society as objects. Social interaction patterns are thus considered as one of several areas in which alienation can occur and can be viewed as "situation related." A person may be normless and/or powerless with regard to social patterns.

4. ALIENATION AS LEADING TO RETREATISM AND REBELLION:

Alienation should also be considered in terms of the adaptive behaviors in which it manifests itself.

> Generally speaking characterization of alienation may be divided into two major categories, according to whether alienation is treated as "rebelliousness" or "retreatism." Rebellious alienation is characterized by a desire to strike back at or somehow violently manipulate the world from which the individual has become estranged; it is

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[25] Ibid.

> embodied in the kind of energy that activates the "true believer." Retreatist alienation, on the other hand, expresses itself in detachment and despair, in the feeling that the world promises nothing in the way of comfort or support.[26]

These two of Merton's modes of adaptation suggest that alienated men may react either by trying to fight the system or change it or by trying to withdraw from it. In addition, it should be expected that lesser alienation would sometimes be acted out in conformity, ritualism and innovation. Each might be said to consist of alienation to the extent that there is a rejection of societal means and/or goals as the Merton model indicates. (See p. 71 above.)

As the model would suggest, rebellion and retreat appear as the more complete types of alienation in that societal means as well as goals are rejected. A good deal of literature on alienation as has been pointed out, suggests that both adaptations do occur among skid rowers and other populations.

> [Many of the alienated] are subdued; theirs are the lives of quiet desparation. [Other]...people do not sit and take it: they <u>rebel</u>, <u>retreat</u>, or deviate in some significant way from ordinary behavior...artistic rebels...juvenile delinquents, addicts, sexual deviants, suicides...alcoholics....[emphasis ours.][27]

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[26] William Erbe, "Social Involvement and Political Apathy," <u>American Sociological Review</u>, 29:2, p. 206.

[27] Josephson and Josephson, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 356.

SUMMARY

This study is based on the assumption that alienation can be studied sociologically if strict attention is given to situational contexts and objects with regard to which alienation may occur. This alienation can well be described as being of two types, "normlessness" or "powerlessness," depending on whether the emphasis is placed upon a lack of understanding or acceptance of norms or a lack of the personal power to fulfill these norms. To aid in conceptualizing the relation between types of alienation, mode of adaptation and the situation in which alienation may occur, the following chart (Figure 2) is presented. Although the chart suggests only the general institutional areas in which alienation can occur, a number of detailed "objects of alienation" within each of these institutional areas will, of course, be examined in this study.

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FIGURE 2. A MODEL FOR THE STUDY OF ALIENATION AND ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Institutional Areas of Alienation	Type of Alienation			
	Normlessness		Powerlessness	
	Adaptive Behavior		Adaptive Behavior	
	Retreat	Rebellion	Retreat	Rebellion
General Societal Values				
Primary Groups -Family -Friendship				
Work				
Recreation				
Politics				
Religion				
Education				
Other Areas				

CHAPTER FIVE: ALIENATION IN SKID ROW: PURPOSES, HYPOTHESES AND STUDY PROCEDURE

Skid row is not just a place nor is it merely a deviant community alienated from the larger society and confined to a recognizable region of the city. Skid row is a subculture in which men live together, not as a simple aggregate, but rather in meaningful relationships which affect the lives of individuals and shape the subculture in which they live. This study seeks to examine those relationships and their ordering into a social structure.

While earlier research has sought to describe the deviation, i.e. the characteristics which differentiate skid row from the rest of American culture, this study purports to describe the major patterns, the activities, values and attitudes of skid row inhabitants which describe skid row as a community. Two sets of hypotheses were formulated, one dealing with the characteristics of alienation in skid row (as introduced in Chapter Four) and a second dealing with a) the relations of the various forms of alienation to activities and attributes of skid rowers and b) the relations among various forms of alienations. Some of these hypotheses were investigated in an exploratory fashion only. Others were tested statistically.

A. SOME EXPLORATORY HYPOTHESES[1]

I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SKID ROW ALIENATION

<u>HYPOTHESIS A</u>. THE ALIENATION OF SKID ROWERS IS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER THAN THAT OF OTHER POPULATIONS.

The key hypothesis of this study is that skid rowers are not completely alienated and are in no way completely

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[1]These hypotheses are lettered A through H in order to identify their subhypotheses as reported in Appendix B.

set off from other men as a subculture of alienated men. While alienation data in many studies has not been of a comparative nature, in this study some comparisons of respondents with others, using various measurements, were possible and were made.

HYPOTHESIS B. THE DEGREE OF ALIENATION VARIES AMONG THESE SOCIAL OBJECTS WHICH TOUCH THE LIVES OF SKID ROW MEN: THEIR (SKID ROW) COMMUNITY, FAMILY, FRIENDSHIP, SELF, ALCOHOLISM, WORK, POLITICS, RELIGION AND EDUCATION..

Since we have argued that alienation is object-related, it should be expected that some social objects will pose more problems to skid row men than others and thus will elicit more alienation. The present state of our theory did not make it possible to specify which of these social objects would induce the greater likelihood of alienation. However, in a limited test of this hypothesis, open-ended questions were used to determine whether there were differences in the alienation-producing tendencies of several kinds of institutions.

HYPOTHESIS C. POWERLESSNESS IS A MORE CHARACTERISTIC FORM OF ALIENATION AMONG SKID ROW MEN THAN IS NORMLESSNESS.

These two major types of alienation (discussed in Chapter Four) were operationalized in a limited way. It was expected that respondents would express understanding and acceptance of certain important norms of American society more often than satisfaction with their ability (power) to succeed with regard to them. In skid row the problems men face, and therefore their alienation, seem to be concerned less with knowing what is normative in American culture than with the ability to succeed personally with regard to the same normative issues. In this study limited measures of normlessness and powerlessness were operationalized in seven institutional areas.

HYPOTHESIS D. ALIENATED ADAPTATIONS OF RETREATISM CHARACTERIZE SKID ROW MEN MORE OFTEN THAN THOSE OF REBELLION.

"Retreatism" and "rebellion," typical adaptations of alienated persons, have previously been shown (in Chapter Three) to exist among skid row men. A good deal of the literature has not only made reference to these two adaptations in skid row, but also to a transition over recent decades from rebellion to retreatism. Such literature commonly asserts that retreatism is fairly predominant in skid row today and that rebellion is almost absent. At the same time, other adaptations to behavior expectations such as those in Merton's scheme--ritualism, innovation and conformity (even overconformity)--also would seem to be found fairly commonly among skid rowers.

This hypothesis received only very exploratory treatment. Some information on this point was gained from a specific question about "reasons for drinking," and from reactions to questions about marriage and employment. In addition, twelve professional workers on skid row were asked to judge the adaptive behaviors of skid rowers which also yielded data bearing on this hypothesis. These findings are presented and some impressions of the writer are discussed, but any full treatment of this hypothesis must await further operationalizing of Merton's idea.

II. RELATIONSHIPS (A) BETWEEN FORMS OF ALIENATION AND THE ACTIVITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF SKID ROW MEN AND (B) AMONG VARIOUS FORMS OF ALIENATION

The second group of hypotheses was concerned with many measurable relationships (treated in subhypotheses) (a) between various forms of alienation and the activities and attributes of skid rowers and (b) among various forms of alienation. These hypotheses

were based on the assumption that alienation is object- and situation-related. Specifically, it was assumed that various kinds of alienation are interrelated and that skid row and many of its characteristics, especially those which are generally judged to be problem-creating, are conducive to alienation. These hypotheses were also exploratory in nature since they treated a great many variables and since, as has already been made clear, the meaning and operationalization of alienation have not yet become well-understood.

HYPOTHESIS E. GENERALIZED ALIENATION IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO MANY SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF SKID ROWERS.

The specific subhypotheses derived from E propose that activities and personal attributes of skid row men will be directly related to a measure of general alienation called "Meaning of Life" which was developed in this study. There is reason to expect that men who do not participate in activities that are normal in society are more likely to be alienated than others. For example, men who are unemployed, do not vote, do not attend religious meetings, or have no friends would be expected to be more alienated than others.

HYPOTHESIS F. LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN SKID ROW IS NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONAL ALIENATION.

In a number of subhypotheses treated here, an attempt was made to determine whether residence in skid row *per se* was conducive to alienation. If skid row forms a deviant community, it is possible that it would have a certain alienating effect on those who have been in skid row longer than others. It is the writer's position, however, that other variables (some of them antecedent variables) such as lower class origins or being unemployed, would cause alienation (as suggested in Hypothesis H) more often than would residence in skid row.

HYPOTHESIS G. ALIENATION WITH REGARD TO THE "MEANING OF LIFE" IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO OTHER SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONAL FORMS OF ALIENATION.

The nature of alienation is such that, while specific kinds of alienation do exist, a general alienation syndrome must also be anticipated. Thus there should be a relationship between alienation with regard to the "Meaning of Life" and, for example, alienation concerning religious institutions.

HYPOTHESIS H. ACTIVITIES AND ATTRIBUTES IN SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONAL AREAS ARE RELATED TO ALIENATION IN THE SAME INSTITUTIONAL AREAS.

A complete examination of the nature of alienation calls, finally, for an examination of the relation between the situation-related forms of alienation and the activities (and attributes) within the institutional frameworks of these situations. Men who are unemployed, for example, would be expected to have greater alienation in regard to work as an institution, and, similarly, men who are religiously inactive would be expected to have greater alienation with regard to religious objects than others.

B. STUDY PROCEDURES

The field work for this study was carried out in the West Madison skid row of Chicago, Illinois in August, 1964. The writer used a specially-designed schedule (See Appendix A) to interview one hundred men. The interviews took about an hour each.

1. Sampling

There is no completely valid way of obtaining a sample of skid row dwellers. Often studies of the skid row community are based upon samples drawn by such biased methods as selecting men on the street, those in

jails, missions or alcoholism programs or those who volunteer. Such procedures cannot help but affect the validity of generalizations made about skid row.

In this study an attempt was made to approximate the procedures used in sampling of "residences." For skid row dwellers, residence may mean "cubicle" and other hotels, missions, jails and the outdoors, these being the places where they sleep.

In an effort to get a systematic cross-section of those dwelling in these various places (with the exception of jails and outdoors), a stratified sample of hotels and missions was selected in order to cover the range of skid row "residences" using these criteria: a) the geographical area of the West Madison skid row, b) the various sizes of hotels, and c) the various kinds of sleeping facilities including cubicle hotels, room hotels, and missions. Men were chosen randomly according to the location of their rooms in each hotel. Since it was found that many men were absent from their rooms, the sample from hotels was supplemented by random selection from men sitting in the lobbies of these establishments.

In order to obtain some representation of those whose "last residence" was in a jail or outdoors, recourse was made to the Reading Room (described on p.39). Here men were selected randomly according to their seating arrangement. This procedure yielded four who had slept outside and one person who had spent the preceding night in jail.

There is no way to estimate accurately the representiveness of this sample. However it is possible to compare the sample drawn in this study with estimates made in Bogue's 1958 study of the same community using several important variables common to both studies. (See Table 2).

TABLE 2. A COMPARISON OF CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SKID ROW POPULATION AS ESTIMATED BY BOGUE WITH THE SAMPLE OBTAINED IN THIS STUDY.

A. Age	20-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70+	Total
Bogue[2] % (median age 49)	4.4	5.8	11.3	12.4	16.2	13.2	10.9	8.3	9.3	8.2	100
This study % (median age 52)	2	7	9	14	12	14	10	10	11	11	100

B. Race	White	Negro	Indian	Total
Bogue[3] %	88.9	9.2	1.9	100
This study %	90*	8	2	100

C. Residence	Cubicles	Rooms	Mission	Hospital or Jail	Outside	Total
Bogue[4] %	67.5	21	8.1	2.7	.9	100
This study %	60	26	9	1	4	100

D. Drinking Status	Teetotalers	Light	Moderate	Heavy	Derelicts	Total
Bogue[5] %	14.8	28.3	24.4	19.9	12.6	100
This study %	24	31	17	19	9	100

E. Marital Status	Never Married	Separated	Widowed	Divorced	NA	Total
Bogue[6] %	43	16	10	29	2	100
This study %	48	13	7	30	2	100

*(Nine of these were immigrants and five were probably Mexican-American.)

[2]Bogue, op.cit., p.91.

[3]Ibid., p. 258.

[4]Ibid., p. 84.

[5]Ibid., p. 92.

[6]Ibid., p. 108.

If one can assume that Bogue's estimates, based largely on projections from his sample of over 600 men, are reasonably accurate, then the sample for this study would appear to be fairly representative of skid row men (assuming too that the lapse of time between the two studies had not produced a drastic change in population character). In comparing the five variables we may first note only slight differences in age with our sample being older than Bogue's estimated ages. The sampling of racial groups here was evidently representative of skid row men. Men were obtained from various kinds of residence in fairly close proportion to the ratio of residences among all skid row men. A greater number of nondrinkers (measured here by rather limited methods) were, however, obtained in this study than Bogue estimated to exist in the skid row population. Finally, the marital status of those interviewed in this study was closely comparable to Bogue's figures. We were satisfied to use this "Meaning of Life" measure as a quasi-scale to provide some indication of general alienation.

Srole's "Anomie Scale" and Rosenberg's "Faith in People Scale" were also tested for reproducibility. Srole's scale was found to be a quasi-scale since its coefficient of reproducibility was 86.4 percent. Rosenberg's scale measuring trust in humanity was reproducible with a coefficient of 92.5 and thus was a legitimate scale. We did not test Nettler's "Alienation Scale" for reproducibility since, as a measure of "estrangement from [American] society," it is not a general scale but contains a majority of elements which are specifically related to particular objects and institutions, such as the family, television and The Reader's Digest.

Finally, a few attempts were made to develop scales measuring alienation with regard to class values and institutional objects using items from the above scales and items of our own, but these were not successful

enough to warrant their usage in this study. An 11 item measure of Williams' "Value-Orientations" obtained a coefficient of reproducibility of 83.6 percent, a ten item measure of alleged "Lower Class Values," 80.0, a six item measure of "Family Attitudes," 82.1 percent and a six item measure of "Political Attitudes," 88.0 percent. The development of good scales to measure specific kinds of alienation must, therefore, await further study. Individual item analysis within the various institutional areas, however, was found to yield useful information regarding object-related alienation.

In terms of testing Hypotheses C, E, F, G and H, the Chi square test of significance was employed to test for significant differences as a one tail test with a .05 probability limit and Pearson's Corrected Coefficient of Contingency was used to measure strength of associations.

2. The Questionnaire and Alienation Measures

The questionnaire was designed to obtain a wide range of data on the activities and attitudinal patterns among skid row men which bear upon the hypotheses described above. Included were questions pertaining to American people and social values, the skid row community, families, friends and self and also to work and finance, free time, religion, politics and education. These were designed to facilitate an observation of activity and alienation in a wide range of possible situations.

Several methods were used in order to provide measures of the critical dependent variable, alienation. First, in seeking to obtain a measure of "general alienation," a portion of Dean's Alienation Scale,[7] selected by McPhail and associates through reproducibility testing[8]

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[7] Dean, op.cit., The scale and permission to use it were obtained from him in a personal communication.

[8] From Clark McPhail, "Dogmatism, Religiousity, and Alienation," an unpublished research report and obtained in personal communications with McPhail.

and viewed as potentially useful here since lower class persons were included in their research, was employed. Srole's "Anomie Scale,"[9] Rosenberg's "Faith in People Scale"[10] and Nettler's "Alienation Scale"[11] were included because of the logical relation these measures bear to the concept of alienation.

Using these scales, and items reflecting alienation which were developed especially for this study, attempts were made to develop valid and reliable scales to measure alienation. Only limited success, however, was achieved. In attempting to obtain a measure of "general alienation," two modifications of Dean's Scale were tested for reproducibility and found to be inadequate. A group of 14 items produced a coefficient of reproducibility of 78.3 percent and a seven item cluster of items, 83 percent.[12]

Three items from Dean's Scale and two from Nettler's were combined[13] since they logically appeared to reflect what might be called "Meaning of Life" alienation, and the combination was found to yield a coefficient of reproducibility of 87.6.

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[9] Leo Srole, "Social Integration and Certain Corollaries: An Exploratory Study." American Sociological Review, 21:6, pp.709-716.

[10] P. Lazarsfeld and Morris Rosenberg, "Misanthropy and Political Ideology," The Language of Social Research, p.158.

[11] Nettler, op.cit., p.675.

[12] Guttman in 1944 set the lower acceptable limit for the coefficient of r producibility at 85 percent and later changed this to 90 percent.

[13] The following items, the first three from Dean and the last two from Nettler, were included:

> I often wonder what the meaning of life really is.
> People's ideas change so much I often wonder if we'll ever have anything to depend on.
> Everything is relative and there just aren't enough definite rules to live by.
> Life as most people live it is meaningless.
> Most people live lives of quiet desperation.

3. Interviewing skid row men

Certain questions have been raised with regard to the validity of survey research in skid row. Some persons would claim that all skid row men have interesting "tales" for the curious outsider and others that skid rowers will not answer truthfully on issues which threaten them personally. Wallace has stated that,

> ...most personal information can simply not be verified....For a variety of reasons, the skid rower's report of his own behavior should be considered unreliable until independently checked, including that which is most "self-evident."[14]

While we might wonder at the seemingly intense suspicion of that skid row student, special caution may well be called for. An independent check of all information gained in our interviews was impossible. Nevertheless, the variety of approaches which this student has used have rather consistently seemed to validate the responses obtained in interviewing. Having studied upper-class executives and many middle-class people, it appeared to this student that skid rowers were as honest and knowledgeable in the matters studied here as other populations have been. The overwhelming impression has been that when approached in carefully planned and forthright ways, and assured anonymity as well as the interviewer's interest, skid rowers seem to respond in a candid and honest manner.

Those who refused to be interviewed (twelve men) should be briefly discussed. They seemed to do so for various reasons ranging from suspicion about the interviewer's purposes to being "too busy." Two of the former group showed what appeared to be paranoid feelings in their relationships with other men, but most refusers seemed simply to express a lack of interest or limited alienation. It seemed that many refusers did so in a

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[14] Wallace, op.cit., p. 154.

group context and sometimes after seeing someone else refuse. On the other hand, the great number of men who gave interviews despite activities in which they were engaged reflected a good deal of willingness to be involved with the interests of the researcher. Not one interviewee discontinued the interview after the first few questions were asked.

CHAPTER SIX: A SUMMARY OF ALIENATION HYPOTHESES AND DAILY ACTIVITIES

This chapter attempts two tasks. The first of these is to present summary findings regarding the eight exploratory hypotheses of this study. In treating these, a basic profile of skid row alienation is presented, thus providing an orientation for the detailed findings in the following chapters. The second part of this chapter is a brief introduction to some aspects of the daily routine on skid row. It facilitates an important general perspective on the lives of men who answered the many specialized, institutionally-oriented questions that were investigated in the interviews, and it indicates indirectly the positive involvement (or lack of it) of skid rowers in their daily routines.

A. TREATMENT OF HYPOTHESES

I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SKID ROW ALIENATION

HYPOTHESIS A: THE ALIENATION OF SKID ROWERS IS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER THAN THAT OF OTHER POPULATIONS.

This hypothesis was tested by comparing skid rowers with other populations studied by the writer and others as to their response to scale items developed by the following sociologists: Nettler, Dean, Srole, and Rosenberg. Each of these scales, with available comparisons, will be examined in turn.

1. Nettler's Alienation Scale

Two comparisons made in this study incorporated the use of the Nettler Alienation Scale. This scale appears to be one of alienation from American mass culture more than one of "general alienation." While it has a few rather abstract questions such as one about "lives of desperation," most of them are rather concrete, like one which asks, "If you had it to do over again, would you marry or stay single?"

In his study, Nettler obtained persons nominated as "alienated" and then applied his scale to 37 of them and to a large cross-section (515) of Californians. The first group scored 17.05 (where 17 would be highest possible alienation and 34 lowest) and the second sample scored 28.56, a difference which he found to be highly significant.[1]

Skid rowers scored 27.75 on the scale, and thus were much closer to Nettler's general population sample than to his nominated "alienated" persons. If one can accept Nettler's scale as valid, skid rowers cannot be assumed to come from a different sample than did his general population.

That skid rowers are not uniquely alienated was further supported in a comparison of our skid row respondents with a sample of 92 introductory sociology students studied by the writer.[2] The students were presented with just seven of Nettler's items and their response was compared with that of skid rowers. In a possible range from seven (high alienation) to 14 (low alienation), students scored 12.65 and skid rowers 11.02, and thus there appeared to be no marked difference between these two samples as to alienation from mass culture.

2. Dean's Alienation Scale

Dean's Scale seems to be more abstract than that of Nettler. Although there are some fairly concrete items, such as one treating "...chance for promotion on jobs

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[1] Nettler, op.cit., p. 675.

[2] The student sample was taken to represent middle-class, upwardly-mobile, relatively-advantaged Americans with promising futures. Questions about the typicality of students as Americans could be raised and, in fact, the literature is replete with assertions about the alienated position of all youths. Systematic studies to support these assertions have appeared to be wanting. The writer stands ready to accept the sample of students he drew as adequate for the purpose at hand.

unless a fellow gets the breaks," more of them, such as "everything is relative and there just aren't enough definite rules to live by," require a good deal of interpretation on the part of respondents.

In three applications of his 24 item scale, Dean reported averages of 1.53, 1.51 and 1.26 per item (with each item being weighted from 0 for low alienation to 4 for high alienation. McPhail, using 14 items from the scale, reported an average of 1.6 among lower class people. This researcher, using the same 14 items, obtained higher average scores among university students (2.21) and skid rowers (2.16).

These statistics offer only rough comparison of skid rowers with other populations. The 14 item scale is, of course, not comparable with the original 24 item scale, and too little is known of McPhail's sample to allow accurate comparisons with his results. The higher alienation found in both of this researcher's samples might be due to the following reasons: an increasing awareness and acceptance of the idea of alienation in modern society (The other studies are five or more years old); the particular techniques used in applying the scales in this instance, or actual higher alienation in the populations here studied.

The comparison between students and skid rowers, however, would seem to be a legitimate one and there was obviously very little difference between them. Our most basic conclusion, then, was that measurement by Dean's scale showed the alienation of skid rowers to be similar to that of a group of students who were studied at about the same time with quite identical techniques. In comparing skid rowers and students on the 14 items, it was noted by the writer that skid rowers showed higher alienation on four items, students on five items and the two samples showed almost identical responses on five items. In a brief examination of these items, the writer

observed no definite patterns to aid in explaining the varying responses of skid rowers and students on specific items except that perhaps the skid rowers tended to show less hope for the future and students, if anything, tended to see the operation of the world and social systems as involving a multiplicity of values ("everything is relative"), lacking single, specific standards ("rules to live by"), and operating as a chance, even inhuman, affair. More study on the different manifestations of alienation among skid rowers, students and other populations would, of course, be useful but this is beyond the bounds of this study.

In Table 3 are shown the responses of skid rowers to seven of the more general items from Dean's scale along with the responses of students. It can be noted that while skid rowers showed no major alienation except with regard to the first item, students showed less alienation in regard to all except one item, though the latter's response tended to vary widely from item to item. (Skid rower and student responses to other items which seem relevant to particular institutional settings will be presented in those contexts.)

3. Srole's Anomie Scale

Srole's five-item scale was also used in this study and comparisons were again made with university students (See Table 4). Skid rowers showed greater anomia than did students on each particular item. And they scored somewhat higher total anomia than did students, averaging 9.21 while students averaged 12.07 (with a score of 5 representing high anomia and 15 low anomia). Srole's scale measures personal anomia and, perhaps, a concern with the future in an undependable world. This seems to parallel the performance of <u>some</u> of the items on the Dean scale (in the preceding section), where skid rowers departed from students most markedly on their hopes for the future. Moreover, anomia as suggested in these items

TABLE 3. RESPONSES TO SOME SELECTED ITEMS FROM DEAN'S SCALE

	Skid Rowers				Students			
	Agree*	Disagree	DK	Total	Agree	Disagree	DK	Total
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
People's ideas change so much I wonder if we'll ever have anything to depend on.	64** ***	29	7	100	55	25	12	92
Everything is relative and there just aren't enough definite rules to live by.	40	46	14	100	69	12	11	92
I often wonder what the meaning of life really is.	55	31	14	100	23	62	7	92
We are just so many cogs in the machinery of life	54	21	25	100	53	26	13	92
There are so many decisions to be made nowadays that sometimes I could just "blow up."	48	43	9	100	29	55	8	92
I worry about the future facing today's children.	47	39	14	100	15	68	9	92
It would be frightening to be responsible for the development of a little child.	42	39	19	100	34	45	13	92

*Regarding this and following tables treating "agree-disagree" items, "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" data were also obtained. In order to simplify reporting and since a relatively small number of "strong" attitudes were obtained, the data were collapsed into "agree," "disagree" and "don't know" categories.

**Simple numbers rather than percentages were used since the sample consisted of exactly one hundred respondents. Throughout the findings N was used when necessary to designate the number of respondents or responses in each category.

***Responses which were underlined were taken to express alienation for each item.

seems to be much more concerned with powerlessness in an uncertain world than with normlessness regarding traditional cultural values and, though the meaning of higher anomia among skid rowers is not completely clear at this time, it would seem to at least indicate a type of alienation notably greater among skid rowers than among students.

TABLE 4. RESPONSES TO SROLE'S ANOMIE SCALE ITEMS

	Skid Rowers				Students			
	Agree	Disagree	DK	Total	Agree	Disagree	DK	Total
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself.	58*	42	0	100	30	57	5	92
In spite of what some people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better.	37	45	18	100	20	57	15	92
It's hardly fair to bring children into the world the way things look for the future.	46	41	13	100	15	69	8	92
There's little use writing to public officials because they are not really interested in the problems of the average man.	61	32	7	100	11	71	10	92
These days a person doesn't really know whom he can count on.	65	29	6	100	35	51	6	92

*Responses which were taken to represent "anomie" were underlined for each item.

4. Rosenberg's "Faith in People"

This scale (which will be treated in more detail in Chapter Seven) served as a final comparison between skid rowers and university students. Its five items measure trust in humanity and attitudes about the cooperative nature of people. In a range from 5 to 15 (with 5 representing high trust) skid rowers scored 10.81 and students 9.73. The two populations thus did not seem to differ to any great extent as to their overall "Faith in People" or humanity.

5. Summary

Four scales or quasi-scales were used in comparing respondents in this study with other samples and, where comparisons were possible, the various populations were usually similar in their response. Skid rowers were much closer to a cross-section of Americans than to Nettler's "alienated" sample, and Nettler's, Dean's and Rosenberg's measures showed skid rowers to be very much like a college sample in their responses. Only the Srole scale showed skid row residents to be clearly more "anomic" than our student sample, and, while this finding may have something to say about the form of alienation (perhaps uncertainty about the future), in skid row, no definitive statement can be made at this time. If one can accept students as reflecting the typical American outlook, the overall evidence gathered suggests that skid rowers are not notably set off as alienated men when compared with the general population.

<u>HYPOTHESIS B</u>: THE DEGREE OF ALIENATION VARIES AMONG THESE SOCIAL OBJECTS WHICH TOUCH THE LIVES OF SKID ROW MEN: THEIR (SKID ROW) COMMUNITY, FAMILY, FRIENDSHIP, SELF, ALCOHOLISM, WORK, POLITICS, RELIGION AND EDUCATION.

Though subsequent chapters will deal in detail with the various objects and institutional <u>contexts</u> in which alienation occurs, brief attention should be paid here

to the issue as it was hypothesized, though this hypothesis received only exploratory attention.

This hypothesis suggested that skid rowers would be more concerned with problems related to some of these social objects than others: skid row, family, friends, self, work, alcoholism, politics, religion and education. Two open-end questions about "problems" and complaints were asked after all specific topics had been covered in the interview. It was thought that the responses would indicate those areas in which respondents experienced most alienation.

As Table 5 shows, the questions posed yielded a wide range of responses. When asked, "What kinds of things are you and others like you complaining about or dissatisfied with?" most commonly mentioned, in order of frequency, were: unemployment, the skid row area, the people in the area, and alcoholism. And asked, "What would you say are the most important problems you face?" by far the largest number mentioned economic matters though a number of others referred to personal and familial problems. Thus the response gained from these two questions tended to show that skid rowers experienced more problems and thus potential alienation with regard to some social objects than with regard to others. Though the methods used in this study were exploratory, they certainly serve to demonstrate that alienation varies with regard to specific social objects.

TABLE 5. SOCIAL OBJECTS AND RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT COMPLAINTS AND PROBLEMS OF RESPONDENTS

a. Complaints and Dissatisfactions	N	b. Problems	N
Work (unemployment, poverty)	25	Work (need job or money, "getting by")	35
Community (skid row area, its people and police)	28	Community (getting out of skid row)	3
Alcoholism	12	Alcoholism	10
Other miscellaneous problems	13	Self (personal adjustment)	4
		Family (lack of, loneliness)	9
		Education (lack of)	2
		Other miscellaneous problems (especially health)	12
No answer	22	No answer	25
TOTAL	100	TOTAL	100

HYPOTHESIS C: POWERLESSNESS IS A MORE CHARACTERISTIC FORM OF ALIENATION AMONG SKID ROW MEN THAN IS NORMLESSNESS.

In a test designed for this study (See Table 6), respondents were asked about the importance of seven major value-orientations and their perceived success in these. In six of seven categories, there was a significantly greater number of respondents who felt that the value-orientation was "an important part of life" than felt that they had "been able to succeed" with regard to that orientation. Thus while most skid rowers apparently understood and accepted the six norms, notably fewer felt that they had personally been able to succeed in them. Only with regard to their capacity to relate to others in a friendly fashion did their performance (63 positive responses) match or exceed their aspirations (61 stated that this skill was important). If the researcher's overall encounter with skid row men could be summarized on this point, it would appear to be that these men do aspire to be in the mainstream of American culture, obtaining its benefits and following its procedures, and while they are not unanimous in regard to this issue, many experience significant feelings of powerlessness in regard to their failure to gain such status.

HYPOTHESIS D: ALIENATED ADAPTATIONS OF RETREATISM CHARACTERIZE SKID ROW MEN MORE OFTEN THAN THOSE OF REBELLION.

This hypothesis, based on the Merton paradigm discussed in Chapter Four, was treated only by limited exploratory and secondary techniques. Of Merton's five "adaptive types," it was thought probable that skid rowers would be more likely to exhibit retreatism and rebellion (than conformity, innovation and ritualism) and that, of these two, it was hypothesized that the former would be more common than the latter. What evidence was obtained, however, would seem not to substantiate the hypothesis. In fact, if anything the responses of the skid rowers

TABLE 6. AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSES TO THE "NORMATIVE IMPORTANCE OF" AND "SUCCESS (OR POWER) IN" SEVEN VALUE-ORIENTATIONS.

"Importance"	Number Agreeing (of 100 respondents)	"Success"	Number Agreeing (of 100 respondents)
Work is a very important part of life.	98	I have been able to succeed in my work life.	61
Free time is a very important part of life.	91	I have been able to use my free time well.	56
Religion is a very important part of life.	89	I have been quite satisfied with my religious life.	75
It is important to be politically interested and informed.	67	I have been able to succeed in being politically interested and informed.	39
It is important to be friendly with nearly everyone you meet.	61	I have been able to be friendly with nearly everyone I have met.	63
It is important to have good friends in life.	99	I have been able to have good friends in life.	73
It is important to know the right things to do in life. (morality)	72	I have been able to know the right things to do in life.	45

seemed to be characterized primarily by conformity though, of course, all five types of responses were represented.

Evidence of conformity was especially prevalent in the pervasive support of institutional values and in the pursuit of them, as will be demonstrated in later chapters. Retreatism was seemingly expressed with regard to some questions and perhaps evidenced in some consistent "I don't know" responses, in apathy about admitted problems, and in refusals to be interviewed. Rebellion was apparent, for example, in some strong criticisms of "slave labor offices," missions, the federal government and racial integration, and suggestions for their reform. Ritualism seemed prevalent in some patterns of seeking work, drinking and other daily activities. Innovation seemed to occur in a few unique ways of "getting by," in finding new forms of alcohol to consume, and in getting money.

The analysis above was based largely upon impressionistic rather than systematic examination of the responses throughout the interviews. Three minor empirical tests of this hypothesis were, however, made. They were concerned with reasons for drinking, and reactions to a potential marital mate and to employment. The majority of responses concerning drinking (to be treated further for other purposes in Chapter Nine) could be summarized as "I like it (beer, wine or liquor)," and "to be sociable," responses that could scarcely be taken for rebellion (as could "to get even with someone") or retreatism (as could "to forget someone/something"). As a further test, an open-end question was presented to a limited sub-sample of skid rowers concerning a situation in which each would encounter a potential marital mate who "showed friendliness toward him...." This question yielded responses which could best be summarized as follows:

> If I liked her and she liked me and if I could begin to provide the things expected of a head of house, I would court her and hopefully marry her.

In a second question regarding a potential job, addressed to the same sub-sample, the reaction could be summarized in this manner:

> If the job paid a minimum wage and were a legitimate one, I would gladly take it on a full time basis.

These responses also would seem to be similar to those one would find in any group of American men.

In a further effort to test this hypothesis several men with businesses or professions in skid row were asked questions regarding the modes of adaptation of skid rowers. The data obtained are presented in Appendix A. In summary, it can be said that there was support for the idea of retreatism but other modes of adaptation were also specified. Moreover, it must be remembered that these were not skid rowers but professionals who probably have their roles in skid row further legitimized by beliefs in stereotypes of skid row alienation and retreatism.

The idea of skid row as a community of retreaters appeared, in general, not to be substantiated in this study. The forms of Merton's modes of adaptation in skid row can probably be evaluated only through extensive, carefully-operationalized research. Until such a step is accomplished, skid row should not be assumed to be characterized by any of the nonconforming "modes of adaptation." The evidence provided in this study would seem to indicate that the view of skid rowers as retreaters or rebels is oversimplified and probably wrong.

II. RELATIONSHIPS (A) BETWEEN FORMS OF ALIENATION AND THE ACTIVITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF SKID ROW MEN AND (B) AMONG VARIOUS FORMS OF ALIENATION

Hypotheses E, F, G, and H called for the testing of a large number of subhypotheses, since each was based upon reference to a number of variables. In fact a total of 166 subhypotheses were involved in all. One way of examining the validity of the four basic hypotheses is to summarize *in toto* the number and proportion of them

which were found to be statistically significant. Using this summary approach, it was found that 75, or 45.2 percent, were significant. Since a far greater number of subhypotheses were substantiated than would be expected to occur by mere chance, it would appear that the four general hypotheses are sound ones and worthy of further investigation. These hypotheses appear to be useful both in 1) exploring the general nature of alienation in relationships among its various types and in relation to other social and psychological factors and in 2) learning further about the place of alienation in the skid row community setting.

At this point it should be sufficient merely to report the general findings and indicate some patterns of significance which seemed to emerge in this exploratory examination. The reader wishing to examine them all is referred to Appendix B where all of the subhypotheses are listed, with an indication of those found to be statistically significant.

HYPOTHESES E: GENERALIZED ALIENATION IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO MANY SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONAL ATTRIBUTES OF SKID ROWERS.

As was indicated earlier, one clustering of five items dealing with alienation showed sufficient reproducibility to be considered a quasi-scale and was designated, because of its content, a "Meaning of Life" scale. It was this measure which was used as the main variable, in connection with this hypothesis, to compare with a large number of variables measuring institutional activities and personal attributes of skid rowers. In 18 of 55 instances (32.7 percent), a significant direct relationship was found between this rather abstract kind of alienation about life and certain attributes of skid rowers which are generally thought to be unfavorable ones (such as, for instance, being jackrolled or having abnormally broken family ties--see Appendix B-1). These results provide some support for the assumption that alienation is related to sociological situations and,

in fact, to certain unfavorable aspects of skid row life. Further research on variables involved in the 18 sub-hypotheses is clearly merited. While the testing of these hypotheses was exploratory in this study, and precautions in their interpretation must be taken, the relationships between "Meaning of Life" alienation and three variables regarding politics, two concerned with the family of procreation, two with leisure time uses and other variables should at least be noted and considered in further alienation research. In addition, the particularly strong association between "Meaning of Life" alienation and "Faith in People," a five item scale shows a noteworthy kinship between these two variables.

HYPOTHESIS F: LENGTH OF RESIDENCE IN SKID ROW IS NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONAL ALIENATION.

The theory upon which this thesis is based would deny the idea that simple length of residence in skid row would be related to specific forms of alienation. Among 41 tests of this idea, only six were found to be statistically significant. In other words, in 35 instances (85.4 percent) there was no significant relationship between length of time on skid row and specific types of alienation (see Appendix B-2). The findings here certainly oppose the contention that skid row is a community and subculture which fosters and reinforces alienation, for, if this were the case, length of residence in skid row would be expected to be significantly related to many specific kinds of alienation. Instead it was related to only these six measures of specific alienation (three of them political): preferring government by a group of experts, finding politics too complicated, thinking self to have little say in politics, disliking religious organizations, not wanting to marry again and not perceiving sexual activity as a "good idea."

HYPOTHESES G: ALIENATION WITH REGARD TO THE "MEANING OF LIFE" IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO OTHER SPECIFIC FORMS OF ALIENATION.

In 12 of 41 cases (29.3 percent), "Meaning of Life" alienation was significantly related to other specific kinds of alienation (such as not being interested in politics). Thus the assumption that various kinds of alienation tend to be inter-related received a significant amount of support in this study even though, as expected, these relationships were far from perfect ones. (As Appendix B shows the corrected coefficients of contingency in the 12 cases ranged from .28 to .53.) Those "specific forms of alienation" which were related to "Meaning of Life" alienation included four so-called "lower class values" treated in Chapter Seven, such as antagonism toward atheists and higher education, and the denial of such middle class values as conformity and activity-seeking, along with opposition to religious organizations, disinterest in politics and other variables.

HYPOTHESIS H: SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES IN SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONAL AREAS ARE RELATED TO ALIENATION IN THE SAME INSTITUTIONAL AREA.

In ten of twenty-nine cases (34.5 percent), the relationship of activities and personal attributes, which are generally thought to be unfavorable in American society, such as leaving home early in life, with specific kinds of alienation in the same areas, in this case reporting an unhappy childhood, was found to be direct and significant (see Appendix B-3). The assumption that these unfavorable circumstances would be related, and probably conducive, to the negative attitudes was thus significantly supported. The supporting instances include: reported broken marriages related to negative attitudes toward marriage, a similar relationship between lack of friends and perceived failure in friendships and political noninvolvement related to negative political attitudes.

Summarizing, since alienation, in its specific forms, was shown to be directly related to specific objects and situations in the same institutional areas, the consideration of alienation as exclusively a psychological entity demands careful examination of social and other environmental factors.

SUMMARY

The evidence provided regarding the eight hypotheses of this study was of an exploratory nature but provided useful perspectives on skid rowers. Alienation as it was measured here is not a characteristic which distinguishes skid rowers from other populations. The problems that skid rowers stated as important to them were work, skid row and its men (community), alcoholism and family problems, and it was around these areas that such alienation as was found revolved. Skid rowers expressed much more powerlessness in not having "succeeded" with regard to important value-orientations than normlessness with regard to understanding those value-orientations. Finally, while professionals and businessmen most often indicated retreatism as typifying skid row behavior, they also referred to conformity and other modes; and, more to the point, throughout the study skid rowers demonstrated no predominant nonconforming mode of adaptation and thus conformity appeared to be the most prevalent type of adaptive behavior although there were also some activities which could be characterized respectively as retreatism, rebellion, ritualism and innovation.

The relationship of "Meaning of Life" alienation to activities and personal attributes (Hyp. E) and to specific forms of alienation (Hyp. G) and the relationship of specific forms of alienation to activities and personal attributes in the same specific areas (Hyp. H) were significant ones in nearly one third of the hypotheses tested. In only a few instances were specific forms of alienation related to the length of time spent

in skid row (Hyp. F). While caution must be taken in interpreting our findings concerning the many very specific subhypotheses, Hypotheses E, F, G and H received a noteworthy amount of support from our data. Table 7 demonstrates the frequency of significant findings among the four hypotheses that tested the four inter-relationships.

TABLE 7. THE RELATIONSHIPS OF VARIOUS KINDS OF ALIENATION WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH CERTAIN ACTIVITIES AND PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF SKID ROWERS

Hypotheses	Variables	Number of Tests	Number of Significant Findings
			%
E	"Meaning of Life Alienation" and Activities, Attributes	55	18 (32.7)
F	Specific Alienated Attitudes and Time in skid row	41	35 (85.4)
G	Specific Alienated Attitudes and "Meaning of Life Alienation"	41	12 (29.3)
H	Specific Alienated Attitudes and Activities, Attributes	29	10 (34.5)
E - H		166	75 (45.2)

B. AN OVERVIEW OF DAILY ACTIVITIES

In concluding this chapter, a very different topic is treated which, nevertheless, also serves in orienting the reader to all the findings that follow. The use of "day inventory" techniques has served as a fruitful approach for learning about unknown societies. Bogue used this technique among others, and an examination of his results seems to reveal some unique skid row activities as well as many activities fairly similar to those of most Americans.[3] In this study the technique was used to provide some basic quantitative information which would be helpful in balancing the more institutionally-based findings in the chapters that follow. The inventory also provided a check on important activities that might have been missed in the interview.

Asked what time they had "gotten up," skid rowers responded as is indicated in Table 8. The findings clearly show that most skid rowers are early risers. The median time of "getting up" was 7 a.m. and 44 men were up before 6 a.m.[4] Many of the early risers were interested in seeking work but, whatever the reason, the data could be viewed as reflecting an acceptance by skid rowers of the general society's norm of early rising. Respondents were also asked what time they "went to bed," and, as would be expected, their retiring occurred fairly early (67 were in bed before 11 p.m.). It should also be noted that most respondents were in their hotels much earlier than they retire and several respondents mentioned fears

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[3] Bogue, op.cit., pp. 116-133.

[4] The reader is reminded that the number of respondents rather than percentages are used throughout this report since the sample was exactly 100 in size. When the total specified does not add up to 100, it can be assumed that the question did not apply to the respondents not accounted for or that they had no opinion.

TABLE 8. CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF DAILY ACTIVITY AND WEEK-END VARIATIONS AMONG SKID ROWERS

a. Hour of rising	N
Before 5 a.m.	20
5 to 6 a.m.	24
6 to 7 a.m.	19
7 to 8 a.m.	15
8 to 9 a.m.	9
9 to 10 a.m.	5
10 to 11 a.m.	2
11 to 12 noon	2
After 12 noon	1
No answer	3
Total	100

b. Hour of retirement	N
Before 8 p.m.	4
8 to 9 p.m.	9
9 to 10 p.m.	24
10 to 11 p.m.	30
11 to 12 p.m.	6
12 to 1 p.m.	4
After 1 p.m.	4
No answer	19
Total	100

c. Major activity:	N
Work	10
Seeking work	33
Activity in lobby or Reading Room	26
Drinking in taverns or on street	6
Moving around skid row	14
Eating or other small routines	11
Total	100

d. Particular things done on week-ends	N
None	68
Saturday	
work	1
leisure	2
Sunday	
church	8
leisure	6
Saturday and Sunday	
church activity	9
beer drinking	3
visiting	3
Total	100

of being on the street after dark. The elderly, sick and alcoholic tended to sleep or rest intermittently during the day.

Respondents were asked to briefly describe what they had done the previous day. The data in the table were summarized from such replies as the following:

> I went looking for work for about two hours with several other guys. Then I had a few beers. Later I went to the mission for some food and then took a nap. I woke up and went out and had a little more to drink.

Ten persons cited work as their chief activity. (It should be noted that this may constitute an under-enumeration since some may have considered it too routine to be called a major activity.) A third of those interviewed indicated their major activity to be looking for work though only eight pursued this for over two hours and about half of those seeking work said they spent most of the day drinking. Only a few admitted to doing nothing but drinking the preceding day, though a considerable number appeared to have spent their time wandering around skid row or engaging in petty activities. Note should be made that while few claimed work as the major activity of their day (some perhaps considered it too routine), one-third claimed to be looking for work. The rest of the men indicated routines that would seem to be quite different than those of working men in American society though perhaps not markedly different than would be found in a community economically-depressed. That this interpretation might be valid is further supported by skid rowers response to the question, "When you woke up, did you have any plans for the day?" Only 34 of the men replied that they did. An additional 30 did not know or did not give an appropriate answer and 36 stated specifically that they had begun the day with no plans.

Respondents were asked whether the previous day had been a "typical" one for them. Seventy-four men replied that it had been a typical day and 23 that it had not been. Several men added that there was regrettably little variation in their lives, and thus a significant amount of boredom seemed to be evidenced.

The respondents were asked whether they did "anything different on weekends" and 69 replied that they did not. Others indicated that they had a day or two off from work, but only a few named any particular activities, such as visiting friends, attending church, or going on outings, which might cause them to anticipate weekends. Thus skid rowers seem generally uninvolved in the typical American weekend activities which seem to elicit the "Thank goodness, it's Friday, " pattern among many Americans.

SUMMARY

The day inventory suggested some aspects of skid row life which make it a deviant subculture, but since it cannot be compared with data on other populations no generalizations can be made at this time. While a lack of enthusiastic involvement with skid row as a community was evidenced in many responses, there was no uniform declaration of alienation. The limited case presented by the inventory appears to be that the skid rower, in a way somewhat similar to many other Americans, sees his days as rather uneventful. His lack of a working day routine contributes further to weekends which are fairly similar to the rest of the week.

In seeking typically-American work,, recreational and social activities in their daily life, skid rowers seem to exhibit <u>conformity</u> to important American <u>norms</u> but to experience <u>powerlessness</u> in fulfilling these norms. A certain amount of <u>ritualism</u> might occur when for example some skid rowers appear to go through the routine of

seeking work while having abandoned hope for obtaining steady jobs; and retreatism (e.g., men avoiding work), rebellion (e.g., men quitting jobs) and innovation (e.g., in finding new ways to "get by") were also suggested in some activities.

CHAPTER SEVEN: SOCIETY AND COMMUNITY; SKID ROWERS IN THEIR SOCIAL SYSTEMS.

Skid rowers, as social beings, find themselves within American society and within smaller urban and community social systems. Their associations with these units are, of course, important to studies of their alienation. In this chapter, some basic relationships of skid rowers with society at large and with their community are explored. In the chapters that follow, attention is turned to particular social groups and institutions that are relevant within societal and communal contexts.

Consideration is here given to attitudes regarding people in general and "average Americans," and to certain value-orientations which have been said to be distinctly American.[1] Then, after skid rowers are shown to be lower class in status, certain values often attributed to the lower classes are presented with skid rower responses to them. Next, reasons for considering skid row as a community are treated. Some basic community activities and attitudes of skid rowers are presented and brief attention is given to what are taken to be some of the undesirable characteristics of the skid row community.

A. PEOPLE

As has been indicated earlier in this thesis, the image of skid row men that is frequently presented is one of alienation from society. While this image of their condition is often treated in vague description (such as have been presented in pp. 63-68), casual writers are sometimes outspoken in affirming this alienation. In their perspective,

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[1] While Seeman referred to "isolation" as alienation from the "goals and beliefs that are typically highly valued," (op. cit.,p. 789), Dean referred to actual isolation from people (op.cit., p. 755). Both of these appear to be important issues of alienation and thus are considered in this study.

> ...the final stage of withdrawal from society takes place when the social isolate is alone on Skid Row with his bottle as a substitute for people.[2]

As suggested in a mission program's introduction to skid row, "...kind coming with us...to a street of forgotten men and women..."[3] Many see skid row as an area of people completely removed from society. Some students have assumed that skid rowers wish to be isolated from society and that they are strictly negative in their attitudes toward it. Harris, for instance, wrote that, "Some of them hate all people and some hate all people except their mothers,"[4] and other, more careful, writers still insist that all skid rowers are "anti-social." The Josephsons said of skid row, "Here...men find a perfect hiding place from the world."[5]

A degree of isolation is recognized by skid rowers themselves, as the following quotation shows.

> Even now when I leave skid row and go to the respectable parts of town I feel the same way ....There are little cues you get from respectable people that give you a sense you aren't part of society....Add to that the look in people's eyes when they find out the world you come from, and it can get pretty uncomfortable.[6]

There are those, however, who argue that skid rowers are neither isolated from nor opposed to the outside world. Love reported that,

> They appear to be anti-social, when they are not at all. If a person can give them warmth and understanding, they accept it gladly. They recognize friendship as the only true charity.[7]

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[2]Rubington, op.cit., p. 147.

[3]Introduction to a weekly radio program, "Unshackled," presented by the Pacific Garden Mission, Chicago, Illinois.

[4]Harris, op.cit., p. 12.

[5]Josephsons, op. cit., p. 358.

[6]Bagdikian, op.cit., p. 64.

[7]Love, op.cit., p. 10.

Bogue found that his interviewers, after over two hours with each respondent classified very few men as "anti-social."

> It has been claimed that skid row is a collecting-place of people who hate other human beings and who are basically anti-social....More than half the men [56 percent] were rated as "sociable" while 33 percent were rated as "asocial" and only four percent were rated as "antisocial."[8]

Bendiner wrote that today "The Bowery Man is above all American,"[9] and Anderson had offered some evidence for this in 1923.

> One test of patriotism is military service. The writer found that, of 400 men he interviewed, 92 had seen military service. The figure is high....[considering the limited number, given age requirements, who had been eligible in World War I][10]

Skid rowers may appear as men who have chosen to escape society and its "hypocrisy," accepting in return the hardships of skid row, but this is probably not the case. While skid rowers may have individual reasons for leaving particular social backgrounds, various students have presented evidences of them as sociable beings and as appreciative and active participants in the human scheme of American society. The findings now reported indicate some of the attitudes of skid rowers toward people in general and Americans outside of skid row.

FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

Skid rowers' attitudes toward people did not show the alienation toward humanity that some of the literature has suggested. They were asked about the importance of "being friendly with nearly everyone," and 61 judged the idea positively. With regard to their success in "being

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[8] Bogue, op.cit., p. 389.

[9] Bendiner, op. cit., p. 99.

[10] Anderson, op.cit., p. 151.

friendly with nearly everyone, even a few more, 63, answered in the affirmative.

Several items were asked regarding the nature of people, and five of these Rosenberg's "Faith in People" items, are presented together with a sixth item from Dean's Scale, in Table 9. The first four Rosenberg items elicited a response which showed a lack of trust, but the last two items revealed a more positive regard for human nature. (In this connection it should be noted that these two items were the only ones in this table which were positively worded. It is possible that this form of wording may have induced a more trusting orientation toward people than more negatively-worded items.) In this area, direct comparison of skid rowers with a general population is, of course, difficult. One comparison was, however, possible. The last item in Table Nine ("People are just naturally helpful and friendly") was asked of our sample of 92 introductory students. Of this number, 48 percent agreed with the statement, 23 percent disagreed and 29 percent, markedly more than among skid rowers, "did not know."

Since it is often thought that skid rowers are bitter toward society and perhaps think of average Americans as hypocrites, they were asked what they thought of "average Americans who are better off than men who live in this area," and the response shown in Table 10 was obtained. The fact that 66 respondents made some kind of positive evaluation of "average Americans" (and four seemed to manifest sympathy for anomic Americans) while only 20 made negative judgments certainly would suggest that skid rowers do not condemn those who live "normal American lives" in any blanket manner but indeed usually admire them.

B. MAJOR AMERICAN VALUE-ORIENTATIONS

In addition to a consideration of the attitudes of skid row men toward people in general, the treatment of

TABLE 9. SKID ROWERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD HUMAN NATURE (ITEMS FROM ROSENBERG AND DEAN)

	Respondents (N)			
	Agree	Disagree	DK	Total
Some people say that most people can be trusted. (Others say that you can't be too careful.) How do you feel about this?**	29	63*	8	100
Would you say that most people are inclined to help others (or more inclined to look out for themselves)?**	22	64	14	100
If you don't watch yourself, people will take advantage of you.	85	13	2	100
No one is going to care much what happens to you when you come right down to it.	64	34	2	100
Human nature is fundamentally cooperative.	80	13	7	100
People are just naturally helpful and friendly.	54	33	13	100

*Responses which were taken to represent low "Faith in People" are underlined for each item.
**Responses of "yes" or "no" to these statements were taken to reflect agreement and disagreement respectively.

TABLE 10. ATTITUDES TOWARD "AVERAGE AMERICANS"

Attitudes	Number	Attitudes	Number
Good, works hard	14	Bad, hypocritical, seeking status	12
Good, wonderful people	25	Bad, crooked cheater	6
Good, married, established	9	Bad (no reason given)	2
He's well off	1	Confused, doesn't know where he's going	4
O. K.	18	Don't know	10
		TOTAL	100

their alienation in this chapter is concerned with certain important American values. Harrington and others, in speaking of a "culture of poverty," have suggested that lower class people tend to be alienated from middle class values.[11] In this section, the attitudes of skid row men toward some major American value-orientations were investigated to learn whether they are alienated from these values.

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

For the purposes of this dissertation, the value-orientations which were selected for analysis were developed from among those treated by Robin Williams.[12] Eleven value-orientations which were thought to be most relevant to skid rowers were employed in this study. The results of our analysis are presented below.

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[11] See, for example, Harrington, op.cit., pp. 131-148. It should be noted that some research has begun to question the existence of separate lower class values. Illustrative of these is S.M. Miller and F. Riessman's "The Working Class Subculture: A New View," Social Problems, 9:1, pp. 86-97.

[12] Robin Williams, American Society, pp. 415-468.

a. Achievement and Success (in work):

According to Williams,

> American culture is marked by a central stress upon personal achievement, especially secular occupational achievement.[13]

Stereotypes of skid rowers would suggest that they have retreated from, and perhaps disdain, work and success motifs. (Note, for example, many cartoons and other comments by observers which suggest skid row life as carefree and without responsibilities.) Only one respondent here disagreed with the idea of work as an "important part of life." (For information regarding the specific questions asked and the responses obtained on this and the other ten value-orientation questions considered see Table Ten.) Rejection of the work motif as a characteristic of skid row was certainly not evidenced in this study. The response which the general population might make to this type of item is, of course, not known, but it would be difficult for it to be much higher!

b. Efficiency-Practicality:

Williams has stated that,

> American emphasis upon efficiency has consistently impressed outside observers. "Efficient" is a word of high praise in a society that has long emphasized adaptability, technological innovation, economic expansion....One of the blackest curse-words we have is 'impractical' ....In the culture at large, the practical man is the good man, an embodiment of a major value.[14]

Skid rowers have been said not to be concerned with what is practical and efficient, being wasteful of time and other resources. Over three-fifths of our sample agreed that "impractical" things should not be done. Although support for this value-orientation was not as high as that for "work and success," a clear majority did hold to this important American tenet.

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[13] Ibid., p. 417.

[14] Ibid., p. 428.

c. Progress:

Americans are considered to be strong in their belief in "progress."

> From the society's earliest formation there has been a diffuse constellation of beliefs and attitudes that may be called the cult of progress. This broad theme.../Is/ a certain "set" toward life that has permeated a wide range of behavior patterns.[15]

Stereotypes of skid rowers would suggest that they no longer hold to ideas of human progress, and that they, perceiving humanity and civilization as hopeless causes, are merely waiting out life. Almost all respondents here, however (91 of the 100 interviewed), were agreed with the idea that "man can make a better world" by his own efforts. Their general support of the possibility of human progress would, therefore, seem clear.

d. Science:

Williams and other observers have noted that most Americans seem to invest an almost magical belief in "science."

> It has become a commonplace observation that the application of science and related rational approaches have transformed the external conditions of American culture. Applied science is highly esteemed as a tool for controlling nature.[16]

It might be expected that skid rowers would be disillusioned with science and technology since it had apparently profited them so little. Almost two-thirds of our respondents, however, showed their faith in science by agreeing that it provides the best means for solving problems. Again, neither this study nor any other known to this researcher can provide us with the beliefs of Americans in general. We can only emphasize that rejection of the value of science occurs only among a minority of skid rowers.

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[15] Ibid., p. 431.

[16] Ibid., p. 454.

e. Activity:

> In the United States is to be found what is almost an ideal type of culture that stresses activity: it is no accident that the business so characteristic of the culture can also be spelled "busyness." We find that a notable series of observers have overwhelmingly agreed that America is the land of haste and bustle, of strenuous competition, of ceaseless activity and agitation.[17]

Stereotypes of skid rowers would suggest that they prefer relaxation to activity and dislike the busy American life. Two-thirds of our respondents, however, said that they would rather use their time in activities than in relaxation and thus they cast doubt on this general belief about them.

f. Humanitarian Mores:

> The central theme of morality in America has undoubtedly had a common base and unified direction, derived from Judaic-Christian ethics. Americans tend to "see the world in moral terms"...with emphasis on disinterested concern and helpfulness, including personal kindliness, aid and comfort, spontaneous aid in mass disaster as well as the more organized patterns of organized philanthropy.[18]

It is assumed by some observers that skid rowers, unlike the general population, would reject such humanitarian philosophy as is represented by the so-called Golden Rule. This would clearly not appear to be the case since almost all our respondents agreed to the ancient principle of treating others as self would be treated.

g. Equality:

> The avowal of "equality," and often its practice as well, has been a persistent theme through most of American history.[19]

Skid rowers have been thought to be disillusioned with the idea of equality, feeling inferior to "average Americans"

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[17] Ibid., pp. 421-422.

[18] Ibid., pp. 425-426.

[19] Ibid., p. 436.

and superior to others (especially to Negroes and derelicts on skid row). Nevertheless, two-thirds of our respondents agreed to the idea of the equality of all men as it was treated in this study.

h. Racism and Group-Superiority:

Williams had pointed out that, despite our general belief in equality, motifs of ethnocentrism exist and prejudice has often been directed toward other races and religious groups in America.

> One of the chief conflicts...has centered around those diverse patterns which have as their common element the ascription of value and privilege to individuals on the basis of race or particularistic group membership according to birth....[20]

Some believe that skid row men, living in a deprived situation, hold strong racial and religious prejudices. In this study, the chief test of this value orientation consisted of two items directed toward assessing beliefs about racial and religious segregation (Table 11). More of our respondents said it would be better if white children had separate swimming facilities than did not, and their response was obviously given with Negroes in mind. On the other hand, they showed less prejudice with regard to children interacting with peers from different religious groups. In summary, skid rowers showed less than majority support for this value-orientation concerned with the group-superiority theme both in regard to racial and religious prejudices. How other Americans would respond to these issues must again remain in question.

i. Freedom:

Among Americans, "...The verbal affirmation of the value of freedom is widespread and persistent."[21] Some observers have thought that skid rowers are disillusioned

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[20] Ibid., pp. 466-467.

[21] Ibid., p. 444.

with the manifestations of freedom in America and are even seeking an "escape from freedom" in a ritualized skid row. Ninety one of our respondents agreed to freedom as a chief value for Americans, showing a marked support for this American value-orientation.

j. Democracy:

> Like freedom or progress, democracy in American culture is a highly complex...theme. The nation has fought a great war under the slogan of making the world safe for democracy...Here again the cultural meanings of a value theme and its actual role in social structure are full of complex variations, conflicts and shadings through time and from one part of society to another..[22]

Stereotypes of skid rowers would suggest that they might be discouraged with democracy and even willing to accept authoritarian controls. However, two-thirds of the respondents disagreed with the idea of substituting experts for the people in running our government, thus demonstrating their belief in "grass-roots democracy."

k. External Conformity:

Americans today are increasingly aware of a pervasive conformity which has characterized our behavior. Williams showed that outside observers have been clearly impressed by this conformity:

> Laski, pointed to an "amazing uniformity" of values ...and tried to show that the American spirit required that the limits of conformity be drawn with a certain tautness. Many Europeans in the period prior to the Second World War had thought American conformity behavior to have a certain harried, compulsive, quality, and have referred to standardization, "flatness," and lack of individuality.../and/ adherence to type, agreement, similarity.[23]

Williams accepts the validity of these contentions and goes on to comment that "Some preoccupation with external

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[22] Ibid., p. 460.

[23] Ibid., pp. 450-451.

conformity is to be expected in a society in which upward social mobility is highly prized and frequently achieved."

Skid rowers, often viewed as having abandoned upward mobility, are said to be "the real individualists" in American society, thus avoiding any conformity and seeking individuality at any physical and social cost. In this study it was found that about half of the respondents believed it was generally better to go along with others and just a few less thought that they would rather do things their own way. There would appear then to be no clear evidence that these people either support or renounce what Williams asserts to be one of our major value-orientations.

The response of skid rowers regarding these value-orientations makes it clear that they are not strongly alienated from any of the values that were explored and, in fact, they were found to support certain values concerned with work, progress and the "golden rule" almost unanimously. Only in the case of group-segregation and conformity themes was there less than a clear majority of support for what were espoused to be major American value-orientations.[24]

Although an examination of the actual behavior of skid rowers in relation to these value-orientations would face the same problems as do all attitude-behavior studies, it seems safe to assert that, as far as the values they espouse are concerned, skid rowers are clearly in harmony with others of the society around them, and their alleged alienation in this regard must thus be disputed.

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[24] Efforts to obtain information from students regarding the same values, while they did not result in satisfactory empirical data, suggested to the writer that skid rowers were subscribing to norms in a manner quite similar to that of the students.

TABLE 11. RESPONSES TO CERTAIN IMPORTANT AMERICAN VALUE-ORIENTATIONS

	Skid Rowers			
	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Total
a. Work is a very important part of life.	99	1*	0	100
b. If something is not practical, it should not be done.	61	25	14	100
c. Man can make this a better world, day by day, by just trying.	91	6	3	100
d. Science is the best thing to solve our problems.	63	23	14	100
e. I would rather use my time in activities rather than in just relaxing.	65	17	18	100
f. You should do unto others as you would have them do unto you.	94	4	2	100
g. All men are equal.	67	29	4	100
h. 1) It would be better all around if white children had swimming pools of their own.	49	40	11	100
2) It is better for a child if he keeps to playmates of his own religious background.	41	56	3	100
i. Freedom is our most important goal.	91	7	2	100
j. It would be better to have a group of experts run the government rather than the people.	26	67	7	100
k. On most things, it is better to go along with others and do things the usual way, rather than to do things your own way.	49	41	10	100

*Responses which were taken to express alienation from American value-orientations are underlined for each item.

C. Lower Class Status of Skid Row Men

Skid row men, though they are members of American society, occupy a distinctly low status in it. By any of the standard definitions, most of them belong to the "lower-lower class." Although some doubtlessly could be considered to be in the upper-lower class, even these tend to exhibit a life style which is significantly different than that of the general American culture. This section deals with the class origins and present class status of the skid rowers.

A common belief has it that many skid rowers come from professional and other higher status backgrounds and that most are persons who, usually as a result of vice, have experienced a severe downward "skidding" mobility. Dunham, in refuting this conception, summarized some of the evidence and provided a contrary conclusion.

> The homeless man is a person who has a high probability of 1) having had to stop school in the grades, 2) having his parental home broken by death, desertion or divorce sometime before his fifteenth birthday, 3) having had a good deal of institutional living in children's homes, reformatories, penitentaries, hospitals, CCC camps or the like, 4) having no relatives or friends to whom he can turn..., 5) having never learned a trade, and 6) having wandered around a great deal in his late teens and early twenties....This picture contrasts sharply with the romantic notion that the homeless man is a person who has fallen from a high status to his present position because of some vice such as alcohol, gambling or sexual irregularity. Straus ...points out that the homeless man could not fall because he has never attained any height.[25]

Bagdikian said that, "Most of these men of skid row come from working class families. Their fathers probably had unskilled jobs."[26] Bogue summarized his respondents' work careers thus:

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[25] Dunham, op.cit., pp. 13-14.

[26] Bagdikian, op.cit., p. 63.

> Their overall lifetime mobility pattern is marked by a comparatively low level first job, rising somewhat and then falling steadily to the present very low socioeconomic level.[27]

In their present study it was possible to obtain data about the occupational experiences of skid rowers and to examine their assessment of their position in comparison with that of their parents.

FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

When respondents were asked about their first full-time job, nearly three-fourths named semi-skilled or lower positions, and when questioned about the best job they ever held, nearly half still named relatively unskilled occupations. (See Table 12) Bogue's finding of low level first jobs thus appears confirmed, as does his finding that these kinds of people may at some later time have held somewhat higher level positions (though here mostly as craftsmen and clerical workers). Evidence supporting Bogue's conclusion regarding a decline from higher status to lower status occupations can be found in the fact that, when asked about present jobs, the great majority referred to themselves as "day laborers" (and frequently unemployed ones), though occupations such as butcher, store clerk, painter, railroad machine operator, and even professional mortician were claimed by some as their present job. In general, the results confirmed the expectation that few of these men ever held high status occupations and that while some decline from middle class occupations occurred, it was neither general in numbers or dramatic in degree.

The commonly believed theme of highly-educated professionals who have "left it all" was clearly evident in only a single case--a doctoral student who had fled "father-in-law domination" and had become an alcoholic

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[27] Bogue, op.cit., p. 24.

on skid row. It is evidently the knowledge of such occasional but dramatic instances that feeds the myth of a skid row peopled by those who have "skidded" from high status positions.

TABLE 12. RESPONDENTS' "FIRST JOB" AND "BEST JOB EVER"

Status	First job	Best job ever
	N	N
Day labor	6	4
Unskilled	16	7
Semi-skilled	53	31
Skilled, craftsmen	13	29
White collar, clerks	7	22
Proprietors, managers, officials	4	3
Don't know	1	4
Total	100	100

In an attempt to measure inter-generational mobility, respondents were asked to provide an estimate as to "how well off" their parents were and to compare their own status with that of their parents. Table 13 shows the relation between these two variables. Though it is not clear what the meaning is of an assertion that their parents were "well off" or "able to get along OK" or were "poor" (although it is likely that "able to get along OK" is nearer to "poor" than to "well off"), we can see that 94 feel they are no better off (i.e. "the same") or are actually lower than parents who were only "getting by" or were "poor."

In general, then, our informants are from lower class families of origin and are themselves lower class. Having established this fact, we may now move forward to examine their acceptance of certain values attributed to the lower classes.

TABLE 13. PARENTS' STATUS AND COMPARATIVE STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

Compared to them, respondents were:	Well off	Got along OK	Poor	DK	Totals
Higher	0	1	5	0	6
Same	7	18	9	2	36
Lower	13	25	6	0	44
OK	1	1	0	0	2
DK	0	5	3	4	12
					Grand Total
Totals	21	50	23	6	100

D. Some Lower Class Values

Some students of stratification, searching for indicators and correlates of social class, have suggested that certain values are typically held by lower class persons. Some of these have been said to be specifically characteristic to skid rowers. In this study, nine such values were operationalized to see whether skid rowers would generally support them.

FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

a. Honesty of the poor:

The following statement by a cab driver reflects the common opinion that poor people and skid row men in particular are more honest and less hypocritical than average people.

> The most honest guys in Detroit live on skid row. They don't pretend to be what they ain't, like the rest of us do. These guys do what they feel like doing; they got no /sic./ responsibility and that's the way they want it.[28]

[28] Ralph Daniel, "Michigan's Alcoholism Rehabilitation Program," First Annual International Institute on the Homeless Alcoholic, p. 56.

A slight majority of our respondents agreed with the sentiment that the poor are basically more honest and friendly than other people. (See Table 14 for the exact statement and data for this and the following values.)

b. Sharing:

It is also frequently believed that the "down and out" are quick to share what they have with others.[29] Almost three-fourths of the respondents here agreed with this idea, but those who didn't usually expressed strong feelings against undeserved charity.

c. Tolerance of deviant behavior:

Slum dwellers including skid rowers, are thought to be especially tolerant of certain deviant behaviors such as mental illness and alcoholism, perhaps because they have no alternative but to learn to "put up with" the situation in which they find themselves. For example, it has been asserted that "...persons who are mentally abnormal fail in their economic life and consequently drift down into the slum areas because they are not able to compete satisfactorily with others."[30] This tendency, known as the "drift hypothesis," is said to produce a higher concentration of deviants to whom skid rowers are exposed and must, of necessity, learn to adjust. On this value, our informants were in high agreement, 86 of them indicating a willingness to accept drunkenness and dirtiness among their fellow skid rowers.

d. Immediate gratification:

Lower class people are thought to seek immediate rather than deferred gratification--the present looming as more attractive than the future. Hollingshead stated that the lower class boy, eager to pay his own way and escape family domination, seeks a full-time job at a very early age and

[29] Bogue, op.cit., pp. 143-145.

[30] Dunham, Mental Disorders in Urban Areas, p. 163.

accordingly quits school early.[31] But more lately Kahl and others have argued that we cannot conclude that having an immediate gratification pattern is a major characteristic of lower social classes.[32] The question we posed (Would you say that you would rather put off present pleasures for the future...?) yielded a slight but not overwhelming preference for delayed gratification as opposed to immediate pleasure.

e. Getting by:

Lower class people have been described as, "Without ...ambition for success and without the desire to improve themselves,"[33] and Kahl argued that this leads to an alienation from all life.

> Alienation from work in a culture which gives work a central place in the life of the people means alienation from life, and from the very core of worker's personalities, their real self. It means unrelatedness to the inner sources of creative living, inability to feel free in the sense of freedom to express oneself.[34]

This value attributed to lower class people appears not to be supported by our study since over two-thirds of our sample did not prefer working "just enough to get by."

f. Physical aggression:

Lower class people have been described as being extra-punitive, and, in doing so, of "handling their aggression by directing it outwards."[35] They are thought to be rigid in their discipline of children and to exercise corporal punishment more often than middle class persons. Fifty of our respondents agreed to the idea of strict punishment for those who "get out of line," while 40 men disagreed.

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[31] A. B. Hollingshead, Elmtown's Youth, pp. 110-120.

[32] Joseph Kahl, The American Class Structure, p. 215.

[33] Ibid., pp. 210-211.

[34] Ibid., p. 208.

[35] Arnold Green, "The Middle Class Child and Neurosis," American Sociological Review, 11:1, pp. 31-41.

g. Authoritarianism:

Lower class people are oft n said to be more rigid and dogmatic than others. Hoffer saw them as a population from which "true believers" are easily recruited.[36] Lipset's "working class authoritarianism" asserts that

> ...other things being equal.../the working class/ will prefer the least complex alternatives.../and/ in the world of work above all, but not only there, the lower-lower class person is more likely to conform than others in the role of a subordinate subject to express demands.../to/ "do this."[37]

And Broom and Selznick depicted the lower class as having the "...strongest male domination. Father /is/ the more traditional disciplinarian.../with/ more physical punishment /than in other social classes/."[38] The present study appears to confirm these assertions, since two thirds of the respondents agreed that persons in such positions as fathers and employers should be obeyed always.

h. Intolerance of deviant belief systems:

Lower class people, though considered to be tolerant of certain deviant individual pathologies (see "c" above) are said to be intolerant of what they consider to be deviant belief systems. Cohen and Hodges found that, "The lower-lower class was most harsh in condemnation of other sorts of deviants: the atheist, the homosexual, the "un-American," the artist-intellectual...."[39] Supporting this position, three-fourths of our respondents agreed that "communists and atheists should not be tolerated."

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[36] Eric Hoffer, The True Believer, pp. 31-48.

[37] Seymour Lipset, Political Man, pp. 97-130.

[38] Broom and Selznick, Sociology, p. 385.

[39] Cohen and Hodges, "Characteristics of the Lower-Blue-Collar-Worker," Social Problems 10:4, pp. 321.

i. Anti-intellectualism:

Likewise, the intellectual is said to be disliked by lower class people.

> The lower-lower class expressed least admiration of intellectuals, professors, writers and artists ...he treated them with disdain or suspicion. Those who expressed the hope that their sons and daughters would go to college were most interested /of all social classes/ in the practical, financially renumerative aspects as compared to the esthetic or intellectual aspects.[40]

In this study, however, only 33 men agreed that people in higher education are detached from reality, which appears to question the validity of the assumption that lower class are anti-intellectual.

The findings reported in this section showed that, with the exception of those values related to immediate gratification, "getting by," and anti-intellectualism, a majority of respondents tended to support each of these alleged lower class values. This analysis was, of course, based solely upon the response to single statements rather than scales or indexes so that we do not have strong assurance of their validity. Moreover, we cannot assert that the level of response obtained is unique to the lower classes until comparative studies are conducted in other social classes. In summary, it can only be stated that most of the statements which seem to reflect alleged lower class values were supported by a majority of respondents in this study. It may be that the respondents obtain some sense of orientation and identity in their community and subculture through a manifest avowal of these values (and accordingly feel some sense of alienation from the mainstream of American society which they feel does not share the same values).

E. Skid Row as a Community

Reference has already been made at several points in this dissertation to the question of whether it is

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[40] Ibid., pp. 318-319.

TABLE 14. RESPONSES TO CERTAIN ALLEGED "LOWER CLASS VALUES"

	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	Total
a. Poor people are usually more honest and better friends than those who have more money.	57*	32	11	100
b. One should share what he has with others who are having a hard time.	71	23	6	100
c. I think I should be willing to tolerate the other fellow who may be drunk and dirty as long as he doesn't really bother me.	86	12	2	100
d. Would you say you prefer to give up present pleasures for the future? (or would you rather enjoy things now)**	50	40	10	100
e. I'd rather work just enough to get by and not be tied to a job.	28	68	4	100
f. Strict punishment is the best thing for children and others who get out of line.	50	42	8	100
g. Persons in higher positions such as fathers and employers should be obeyed at all times.	66	28	6	100
h. I don't think we should put up with atheists and Communists.	75	17	8	100
i. People in universities and colleges don't know what the real world is like.	33	48	19	100

*Responses which were taken to represent agreement with lower class values are underlined for each item.
**Responses of "yes" or "no" to these statements were taken to reflect agreement and disagreement respectively.

legitimate to even consider skid row a community. Specific data bearing on this point are examined below, though it is recognized that materials to be introduced later could be viewed as having a bearing on the question.

While the meaning of the term "community" continues to be explored and debated, two important aspects of the concept seem to appear systematically in current definitions: the ecological dimension and the social-psychological dimension of member identification. It is to measures of these two elements that the present analysis is addressed.

Before examining the findings of this study as they bear on these aspects of community, however, some elaboration of these two dimensions of the concept community is in order. As to the first of the dimensions--that dealing with the ecological nature of community--perhaps the most appropriate definition for present purposes is that offered by Warren. He refers to community as "That combination of social units which performs major social functions having locality-relevance," and specifies that these social functions are concerned with "the broad areas of activities which are necessary to everyday living."[41] According to this definition, the area which was the object of attention in this study can be viewed as a community only if evidence can be provided to show that the services essential to everyday living are indeed available on West Madison. Specific data bearing on this point are presented below.

With regard to the second dimension of community--the sense of identification with a place and its activities on the part of those residing there--attention is directed toward what has sometimes been referred to as an "image of community."[42] This prospective suggests that men develop a kinship with and interest in a locality or

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[41] Warren, op.cit., p. 9.

[42] See Robert Nisbet, The Quest for Community, pp. 23-44.

association as a result of their presence or interaction therein. Identification with community is often occasioned by ethnic, occupational or class status, or through residence in a neighborhood. Recently, certain lower class neighborhoods have asserted to be viable communities,[43] but so far little has been said about skid row in this regard. The question here considered, then, asks whether skid row fulfills the requirement of community or is merely a locale used by a category of men.

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

1. The ecological dimension of community

West Madison's skid row seems to fulfill Warren's requirement for community of locality relevant social functions since many facilities for homeless men are provided in the skid row location. To supplement the information already provided in Chapter Two, it should be noted that a list of skid row community facilities would include the following. Skid row provides such sleeping facilities as hotels of various kinds, missions, jails and, in warm weather, nearby freight yards and other outdoor places. It provides such eating and drinking facilities as restaurants and taverns of various kinds, and many retail food outlets. Clothing and other personal items can be had inexpensively at second hand stores and pawn shops. A large number of unskilled jobs (and a few skilled jobs) are available on skid row or through employment agencies located there. Recreational, religious, political, educational, health and other facilities are available, in certain forms, on skid row--as will become apparent throughout this study.

Not only do skid rowers tend to spend much of their time in the ecological community but they also have resided in the area for some time. Asked, "How many

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[43] See, for example, Herbert Gans, The Urban Villagers, esp. pp. 104-119, and William F. Whyte, Street Corner Society.

times have you moved from one town to another in the last two years," 81 listed no moves at all (See Table 15). Among the rest, only one had moved more than five times. Though there were many replies indicating that skid rowers often move from one residence within skid row to another, the large majority evidently had become rather permanent residents of the skid row community. They were also asked about the total time they had spent "in West Madison and areas like it," and, while there were a wide range of replies, the average man had spent from seven to ten years in skid row areas.

TABLE 15. MOBILITY AND RESIDENCE IN SKID ROW

a. Number of moves in past two years		b. Years spent in skid row areas	
	Men		Men
None	81	Up to ½	5
1	5	½ - 1	5
2	6	1 - 3	17
3	2	4 - 6	10
4	3	7 -10	26
5	2	11-15	16
6-9	1	16-20	9
Total	100	21-30	7
		31-40	5
		Total	100

One important difference among men who live in the skid row community concerns the range of residences available. The majority of men here (60) stayed in "cage hotels," and some of them had established relatively "permanent" homes in these accommodations. Twenty six men lived in rooms and apartments, which are generally considered to have better facilities and fewer rules about drinking and visiting in rooms than the cage hotels.

Men who stayed in rooms tended to look down on the "flophouses" (cage hotels) and their inhabitants just as the latter group tended to disparage "mission bums." Nine men depended on the missions for a bed, four slept outside (in August) and one informant had spent the preceding night in jail, and, as might be expected, men who use these facilities appeared to be the lowest status members of the skid row community.

2. The identification dimension of community

In the second aspect of the definition of community discussed above, it was suggested that an identity with community, in addition to residence there, was important. In interviewing skid rowers, we asked two questions which measured attitudes toward the area and its population in an effort to ascertain the sense of community which existed.

Asked, "Would you say that you had gotten used to life in the West Madison area?" 66 men said that they had and 33 that they had not. The former group tended to be noncommital, though a number of them, as well as some of the latter group, suggested that, while life was not wholly desirable there, an adjustment could be made. A few of the latter group complained that no one could ever get used to life in such a "deteriorated" and "cruel" community. At the same time, most gave responses that indicated that the skid row community was nothing unusual and that it just provided another type of life whose uniqueness or undesirability is noticed only by the newcomer.

The question, "Would you say that the people you associate with are typical of men in the West Madison areas?" was designed to find out whether respondents thought themselves superior to most men on the street or whether they identified with that population.[44]

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[44] Though Bogue (op.cit., p. 148) found 73 percent claiming that "their friends were different," he also found 62 percent "wanting to be friends with these men [of skid row]."

Forty-seven men agreed to the statement while only 41 did not. The latter group seemed to accept the public stereotype of the area as made up generally of "skid row bums" but that they and their friends were different than the rest. The larger group (47) would appear (regardless of the status they might attribute to residents of the area) to view themselves as being part of the larger whole made up of people like themselves (i.e. persons with whom they felt some sense of similarity, hence, it would seem identity).

If there is any core of interaction in the skid row community--any "Center" where the sense of identification might focus--it would appear to be in the larger saloons and hotel lobbies. One of the largest saloons functions as such a focal point, although Chicagoans who know the place and the police who "check it out" about every half hour (both to pick up "drunks" and to investigate possible violations of the liquor laws) view it as a source of lawlessness and disorganization. The author had the opportunity on several occasions to observe social patterns of interaction in this community focal point. The rate of interaction was extremely high. Almost no one was observed sitting and drinking in complete isolation. Many of these people obviously were acquainted with each other. Frequently buddies were observed sharing drinks. Bartenders and some of the customers were engaged in running conversations. A few individuals appeared to be known "characters" who were the objects of kidding by many others present. Some of the conversation involved men who were cadging drinks. Female passers-by (none entered the place) were given some attention, both visual and conversational, Police, making routine checks, also participated especially in light banter. There was a continuous flow of conversation about persons and events within skid row and all who participated showed some concern for issues germane to the skid row community. Many customers

stopped briefly to buy carry-out beverages though someone might call for them to join them at the bar. Occasionally someone might help a handicapped person find a seat or more often assist an intoxicated or hurt man back to his hotel. The saloon was a place where, with little pressure to buy drinks, one might come at any time, stay as long as he liked and leave when he wished. The norms of the establishment seemed to be extremely permissive. To some extent, the integrity of customers, whether or not they had money, seemed to be respected.

3. Disorganizing elements in the Skid Row Community

Skid row has, of course, a number of undesirable characteristics, some of which have already been alluded to. Forty percent of Bogue's respondents showed a dislike for other men and ninety three percent of his sample made at least one critical remark about them.[45] Fifty-two of these could be summarized as "they drink too much," while others suggested begging, jackrolling, small crimes, laziness, noisiness, belligerence, personal hygiene and abnormal personalities. (It should be noted, however, that 85 percent were able to mention positive attributes of their fellow residents such as congeniality, helpfulness, empathy, identification and industry.)

Any community with too many negative characteristics counteracting positive ones is likely to be a weak one and will, by definition, force its members to be alienated from it. Thus our concern here was with certain potentially-alienating characteristics of the skid row community and with the effect of these upon respondents. Our considerations included such matters as jackrolling and theft, exploitation, by businessmen and by police, and racial prejudice and discrimination.

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[45] Ibid. pp. 143-145.

a) Jackrolling and theft

The act of jackrolling[46] involves a form of robbery in which money or anything of value is taken from drunk, old or handicapped men, by whatever force is necessary. While jackrolling is a clear case when, as frequently happens, someone is given a physical beating, it is more difficult to define when, for instance, it is accomplished by open or subtle threats sometimes from one's own buddies. Skid rowers have a strong fear of being jackrolled and most of them condemn the act. The police, too, view it seriously and seek out the jackroller with a special vengeance. It should also be noted that a good deal of stealing from person's quarters occurs in the less-than-secure hotels. It would seem that the person with material possessions on skid row is likely an insecure person.

In this study, respondents were asked if they had "ever been jackrolled or had things stolen from them by other men there," and the response shows a number who had never had it happen and almost as many who had often been victims. Money was the loss reported most often, and most of the victims reported losses up to fifty dollars.

Some men complained bitterly of the jackrollers as the worst thing about skid row life. They sometimes accused Negro youths, bartenders, women and police, in addition to other skid rowers, of being the offenders. Nevertheless respondents generally seemed to accept jackrolling fatalistically as one of the more severe hazards of skid row life.

It would be naive to suppose that all jackrolling or theft occurring in skid row was the work of outsiders. Therefore, the informants were asked whether they had ever indulged in these activities. Perhaps because of fears of being labeled as "jackrollers," very few admissions of jackrolling were made. (It should be noted that

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[46] See, for example, Clifford Shaw's classic study, The Jackrollers.

the number engaged in such activity would not need to be great since only a few jackrollers could make the practice appear to be an extremely prevalent one.) With an introduction that suggested that, "...a lot of stealing goes on around here that is not too serious," respondents were asked whether they had ever been involved in "rolling guys," and only 12 men admitted that they had ever done so. Most of these pointed out that this was not a regular activity for them, and some rationalized that they had been offered money by a drunk or that, if they had not taken it, someone else would have done so.

TABLE 16. THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING JACKROLLED OR ROBBED

a. Did it ever happen?	N	b. What was taken?	N
No	27	Cash - up to $10	19
Yes, once or twice	30	$11 - $50	20
Yes, a few times	21	$51 - $150	7
Yes, often	22	over $150	5
Total	100	Clothes and change	9
		Billfold, papers	6
		Other small-value possessions	7
		No answer	27
		Total	100

Little is known about shoplifting and other stealing on skid row. Asked whether they had ever "been able to" take things that belonged to storekeepers or other people who "are better off than you," only 14 admitted that they had. Most of those who stated that they "had not," expressed moral attitudes regarding such activity remarking for example, "I was not brought up to behave that way," a response similar to what might be expected of middle class people. The real extent of such activity cannot, of course, be known, though more vigorous questioning would probably elicit a larger number of men admitting

to limited stealing in certain periods of their lifetimes. (An element of some relevance to this matter should be noted here. Observation would seem to indicate that there is actually rather limited opportunity for stealing in this community. Personal possessions are few, self-service stores are uncommon, and hotel and other facilities are minimally furnished. Moreover, merchants and inhabitants guard their possessions zealously.)

b) Exploitation by businessmen

Skid row men interact a great deal with the operators of business facilities in the area. The nature of these interactions is such that many unfavorable ideas about businessmen have developed in the skid row community. These ideas are generally concerned with the cheating that is said to occur in the many situations in which skid rowers are dependent on businessmen or in which they do not understand the nature of their business encounters. Sometimes, through illegal monopolies, men are forced to buy their food, drinks and lodging from the agents who employ them.[47] Likewise, it is sometimes discovered that merchants are overcharging, keeping unfair accounts and even jackrolling.[48] (The picture is not wholly unfavorable, however, since there is evidence that many skid row merchants are quite charitable in their dealings with customers and are considered as helpful counselors.)

In this study respondents were asked whether they had "ever been cheated out of money or anything owed them by businessmen and employers," and two-thirds of them replied, "No." Among the rest, 17 indicated that it had happened "once or twice;" 11, "a few times;" and five,

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[47] "The Voucher Squeeze on Skid Row Workers," Chicago Sun Times, Sunday, August 9, 1964.

[48] Bogue, (op.cit., p. 440), investigating skid rowers' attitudes toward various facilities in their area, found the following types said not to be doing a good job: labor offices by 43 percent of the men, restaurants - 37 percent, taverns - 31 percent and police - 39 percent.

"often." Asked of what they had been cheated, they indicated the following amounts of money: up to $10, 11 men; $10-$50, 5; $51-$150, 2; and $500 or more, 2. Eight other men indicated low pay and six indicated being fired unfairly. (One mentioned being cheated out of an estate and another indicated exploitation by a business located outside of skid row.)

They were also asked whether they had ever been short-changed or overcharged and 64 agreed that this had happened "once or twice," 13 said "a few times," and only seven said "often." Fourteen said that it had never happened.

Specific instances of exploitation by businessmen were actually found to be relatively uncommon, although there was a general belief among skid rowers that it was a routine occurrence in their community. Particular facilities, such as employment agencies, however, were particularly likely to be accused of specific exploitations. In general, it appears that most skid row facilities do provide positive, appreciated, even humanitarian functions, and they are not simply tools of exploitation despite their general negative image.

c) Mistreatment by police

The police are present in large numbers on West Madison and play important roles there. The presence of the numerous "paddy wagons" and cruisers is often a "sobering" sight to the intoxicated, a warning to would-be trouble-makers and an assurance, many times an assistance, to others. Some have praised the benevolent role of the police stating for instance, that, "Perhaps [skid rowers'] most faithful guardians are the police without whose protection and surveillance these men would surely die of starvation, cold or illness."[49]

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[49] David Meyerson, "Rehabilitation for Skid Row," Fifth Annual International Institute of the Homeless Alcoholic, p. 2.

Others have been extremely critical of the police as was Harrington, saying, "...even more vicious /than tourists infringements on skid rowers privacy, etc./ was the police pickup....The paddy wagon would arrive on the Bowery: the police would arrest the first men they came to at random and that was that."[50]

Some have suggested that the whole police-court system is an evil.

> The court story, with rare exception, is the same from coast to coast. Skid Rowers line up before the bar, filthy, disheveled, some with the look and smell of last night's nausea still on them. Their name is called...they are asked to plead guilty to a charge....They do it like sheep, bleating the same words one after another. "Guilty, your honor." Some don't even bother to raise their heads as they mutter the words. The judges know most of the faces.../some/ men with...two hundred arrests.
>
> Many judges and policemen, embarrassed over their ineffectuality, are callous toward Rowers. They do their jobs routinely...come out from under the routine only occasionally and when they do it is usually in response to public pressure.[51]
>
> The skid rower is isolated from participation in society's legal institutions....arrested...for what he is--a skid rower...under outdated, ambiguous and perhaps unconstitutional laws.[52]

But there are certainly some positive functions to "skid row justice."

> The workhouse is more to skid rowers than simply a shelter from inclement weather, /it provides/ treatment and rest for the chronic drunk, the opportunity to meet and make friends, and for some habitues, a place of residence.[53]

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[50] Harrington, op.cit., p. 104.

[51] Harris, op.cit., p. 158.

[52] Wallace, op.cit., p. 89.

[53] Ibid., p. 105.

Nineteen of the men in the present study had experienced from 40 to 250 arrests; 15 men had been arrested "several times;" 23, "a few times;" six, "two or three times;" nine, "one time;" and 28 claimed "no arrests." Among the 72 who had been arrested, forty-five stated that they had been treated fairly while, of 27 complaints, the following were heard: cruelty, nine times; police arresting at random on skid row, six times; police robbing them, four; false charges, four; sentences too severe, two; and two simply stated that they hated the police.

While many respondents expressed some disdain for the police (and two known as "Mutt and Jeff" were especially cited for their alleged cruel affronts on men "whom they had it in for" [sic.]), nevertheless our data would suggest that a minority of the men actually suffered personal abuse as victims of the police.

The police and courts are actually marginal to the skid row community, though their physical presence is pervasive. Complaints of unfairness, similar to those prevalent in other lower class communities today, are often mentioned in skid row. When skid rowers think of the role of the police in a general sense as protectors in their community, they generally indicate an appreciation of them. The following incident illustrates the complexity of police-community relations in this type of community.

> As I approached, an obviously nervous policeman was roughly searching a Negro man while a white woman nearby cursed the policeman, and a few people watched. More policemen arrived. Several of the watchers had come out of a tavern and claimed that the Negro had threatened them with a gun. The man denied this story and nodded agreement with the woman who stated, with a choice selection of profanity, that the people in the bar had picked on the man since he was with her, a white. No gun was found, but the man and the woman (for "not keeping (her) g...d...f...mouth shut") were taken away in police cars. As I was obviously an outsider, I was asked by a policeman what my interest was, and replying that I was a student..."observing," I was told to move on and was immediately shoved on my way.

d) Racial prejudice and discrimination in skid row

An especially sensitive issue in American society today, that of race, is also an important one in skid row. The skid row community is about 11 percent nonwhite (Negro, nine percent; Indian, 2 percent), and the proportion of Negroes is growing. Bogue has even suggested that the Madison Street community may someday be all Negro.[54]

Our sample consisted of 90 whites, eight Negroes and two Indians. The two groups were rather similar, except that the nonwhites seemed to be somewhat younger, more physically able, and poorer.

Skid rowers maintain particular forms of prejudice and discrimination. Like other lower class people, they seemed to hold highly-prejudiced attitudes. They were not, however, always in a position to practice discrimination. The situation was illustrated by a mission worker, who said, "A lot of Southern boys come here thinking that they'll never mix with niggers, but before long they're hungry enough to sit down at the table and eat next to them."[55] There is segregation on skid row, particularly in the hotels, but it appears to be decreasing.

> ...every Skid Row in Chicago now has people of both races living in segregated but adjoining buildings, and gradually they are sharing the same establishments. Negroes are appearing far more frequently in Skid Row bars and restaurants...[56]

That the facilities which have begun to integrate experience continued ill-feelings between Negroes and whites was observed by this writer in such situations as these:

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[54] Bogue, op.cit., p. 106.

[55] Obtained in a personal interview.

[56] Bogue, op.cit. p. 258.

> In one such hotel few whites remained and one who was interviewed complained about not being able to move away from "these niggers." Shortly thereafter I witnessed an argument in which a drunken white cursed a Negro and the latter, while stronger and trying to get an apology, was very careful to avoid conflict.
>
> I was repeatedly cursed in a mission dormitory by a young intoxicated white because I was engaged in an intense conversation with a Negro.
>
> After a mission service, I observed that whites were given beds first and some Negroes were simply refused. Nevertheless, missions seemed to be the most successfully integrated of residences (except for jails), probably because of the dependent nature of their clientele and the purpose to which these institutions are committed.

Negro infiltration into skid row and integration there were obviously not appreciated by the whites. The consistent reference to Negroes, at least when they are not present, was to "niggers." Bogue found that, of all minority groups, Negroes were most disliked (by 80 percent of whites); Puerto Ricans were second (77 percent); Mexicans, third (60 percent); and Indians, last (only 30 percent).[57] Negroes in this study also showed some dislike of whites, though nearly always as subordinates seeking a "better break" in the social structure.

SUMMARY

1. Society

<u>Alienation</u> from American society, especially from its people and value-orientations, <u>did not appear</u> as an important characteristic of skid rowers in the findings of the present study. The evidence suggested, rather, an acceptance of American people and values and a desire to be more a part of the society. Skid rowers did, however, support some so-called lower class values and the

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[57] Bogue, <u>op. cit</u>., p. 258.

idea of skid row as a deviant subculture was given some support although comparative research is needed to substantiate this point. The little alienation that was expressed seemed to be concerned with powerlessness regarding society rather than with a rejection of its norms. Nonconforming adaptations such as retreat or rebellion in regard to general society was not discovered in this research. (While some of the central issues of importance with regard to "alienation from society" were treated in this section, a number of other issues relevant to "alienation from society" for instance in work, political and religious issues are treated throughout the remainder of this study.)

2. Community

Skid row is a community in that it provides 1) within a limited area the salient facilities, including many social relationships, necessary for human existence and 2) an organization in which men can obtain membership and identity. Nevertheless, skid row was cited second most often in response to two questions about "problems" and "complaints" in this study. Of 31 such mentions, 15 were concerned with the area, particularly its inadequate facilities and deterioration; 12 with its people, particularly alcoholics and jackrollers; and four with police. Skid row appeared to be a community of men who, when they had any claim to outside membership, frequently mentioned it. But it would appear that most respondents showed a general acceptance of the area and its population and understood the rules of behavior which would protect them against exploitation, while they sensed powerlessness in reference to doing anything to change unfavorable conditions in skid row or in reference to leaving the area. There appeared to be no apparent resulting retreatism or other nonconforming adaptation prevalent in regard to interactions in the community and it would seem to be accurate to say that respondents conformed to various norms of the skid row community.

CHAPTER EIGHT: INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS; FAMILIES, FRIENDS, WOMEN AND SELF FOR SKID ROWERS

This chapter will examine the role that certain kinds of primary groups and relationships, which have been observed to be rather universally important to man, play for skid rowers--both in and outside their community. Any complete alienation of skid rowers would seem to demand a withdrawal from all these primary relationships as, indeed, many descriptions of skid row have suggested. On the other hand, the skeptic regarding the generally accepted idea of skid row alienation and those who hypothesize that social organization exists there would expect to find important social relationships of a primary nature in skid row.

Moreover, if skid row is a community, Warren's position would require that it provide socialization, social control, social participation and mutual support,[1] and primary groups would certainly be helpful in these functions. Since the skid row community apparently does not provide typical familial relationships, it might be expected to provide substitute primary relationships.

Five different types of primary groups or relationships were treated in this study. They were: the family of orientation and that of procreation, friendships, relationships with women (and the attendent issue of sex) and, finally, relationships with self. These are all important relationships which might or might not be desired and obtained by skid rowers, and they are obviously relevant in studying alienation and involvement in the skid row community.

The family, which probably serves as the most important primary group in American and all societies, is treated in the sections, "A" and "B," that follow. This

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[1]Warren, op.cit., pp. 9-10.

kind of primary group seems nonexistent on skid row. Its absence is probably one of the most important factors in making the skid row community a unique one. Skid row men are, at least temporarily, separated from their families. The families of origin and procreation, as skid rowers relate to them, will now be examined along with some important attitudes related to these relationships.

A. THE FAMILY OF ORIGIN: A NEAR-UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE AMONG SKID ROWERS[2]

Much has been said about the importance for every human of early childhood experiences in forming personality and, in fact, especially about its bearing on skid row men.[3] Many psychologists and others have espoused theories of "inadequate personality" and more specific ones referring to alcoholic fathers and broken homes or have pointed to over-dependency on the family[4] and particularly on the mother in explaining skid row. Their studies have tended to involve small samples and to be self-fulfilling and biased in explanation.

Mission workers often treat the childhood themes in suggesting either that skid rowers came from disorganized homes or, more often, that they are "black sheep" who rebelled against good homes. For the former group, mission workers try to offer the possibility of a "being born again." For the latter group, they preach against

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[2] A very small proportion of skid rowers are reported to be orphans.

[3] See, for example, Pittman and Gordon, op.cit., pp. 78-93.

[4] The writer, for instance, encountered one man who remained living with his parents until he was about 40 and his parents died. He drifted to skid row within a month and, despite efforts to return him to his native community, continued in a cycle of heavy drinking and working in a mission.

"prodigal son" behavior and hang signs to remind the men that "Mother's Prayers Follow You," or to ask them "How long has it been since you wrote your mother?"[5]

The boyhood homes of skid rowers were probably neither ideal nor totally deleterious environments. The evidence some literature provides is that both poverty and conflict played important roles in giving some skid rowers an unhappy childhood. Many others apparently had fairly typical childhoods. Thus the formative years varied widely, and it would be seemingly impossible to develop a definitive theory of childhood experience as an explanation of the situation of skid rowers.

The role of family background in skid row needs intensive study since, while it does not explain the existence of the skid row community, it can help in explaining the selective recruitment of members. This kind of study could be guided by such hypotheses as that suggested by Dunham: "Persons who have known homeless men will report an early tendency to become isolated from close social contacts."[6] Nevertheless, such gross assertions as the following by Harris would probably not be supported in such research.

> The egolessness started during early childhood for most of them....They were inferior children, neither as strong nor as smart as the others around them. Many...come from poor families or lived in overcrowded homes.../or came/ from homes broken by divorce, separation or death. Many of them never knew what it meant to be loved by their parents. Paradoxically, however, at least as many were loved too much ...by adoring mothers and not ever by anyone else. Skid Row USA is full of adoring sons of adoring mothers.[7]

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[5]An unpublished content analysis of case reports in The PGM News (of the Pacific Garden Mission, Chicago, Illinois) done by me consistently supported these statements.

[6]Dunham, op. cit., p. 43.

[7]Harris, op. cit., p. 12.

Neither is the portrayal of skid rowers as now "alone in the world" accurate. Past research has shown that the isolation of skid rowers from families is less than complete.

> ...There is substantial evidence to indicate that at least one fourth of the /New York/ Skid Rowers have kin.../Many/ reported that they had friends or relatives with whom they could live if they wished. .../Boxerman in 1938 reported that/ over one fourth of the men had no kinship ties. One out of every five men had some kind of parental tie, and a similar proportion reported a sibling....One of every ten men gave the name of his wife as a nearest relative. ...More than one-third of the men had relatives residing in New York City and the majority of these were extremely close ties.[8]

While the studies cited above consisted of very selective samples, they probably reflect the skid row situation better than does any "forgotten men" stereotype.

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

This study presents some information with regard to the issue of the family. Our concern here is with the age at which men left their families of origin, an evaluation of their youth and their present interactions with family members. (See Table 17). Despite the frequent theme of runaway boys and over-dependent men who respectively left their families early or late in life,[9] data have shown that nearly half (47) left home between the ages of 17 and 24, a range which would appear to be fairly typical of American young men. Lacking comparative data we do not, of course, know whether the members found to have left home quite early (four prior to age 14) or rather late (thirteen after the age of 33) are typical or atypical of American men in general of their ages and social origins.

They indicated neither a great deal of unhappiness nor, on the other hand, excessive nostalgia concerning

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[8] Wallace, op.cit., pp. 129, 146-7.

[9] See, for example, The PGM News cited in footnote 5 of this chapter.

their youth--themes that are commonly used in some discussions of homeless men. Two-thirds of the respondents claimed to have had at least a "happy" childhood, but there was no noticeable effort by respondents to reminisce sentimentally about their early years during the interview.

Most skid rowers still had members of their family who were alive (parents or others); and, despite the stereotype of skid rowers as estranged from their families, at least half of those interviewed continued to interact or communicate with their kin. Asked why they did, such comments as these were common: "I like to keep in touch," "To know what they're doing," "To let them know how I'm doing," and "It's only natural." Some interesting relationships were cited. One respondent, for instance, stated, "A friend visits me and tells them I'm all right," and another said, "I just ran into [my family] at the Indianapolis races a while back." A few negative comments also occurred such as: "I want to leave well enough alone," "I left and that was it," "We live our own lives," and "My career and character were such that I cut myself off." But, in summary, a wide variety of interactions with family continue to occur.

B. THE FAMILY OF PROCREATION: AN INSTITUTION ABSENT IN SKID ROW

Literature on the American family suggests that it continues to maintain its importance as an American institution, and marriage seems to be practiced by an increasing proportion of the population. In nearly all communities of all social classes--the exception is usually a restrained community such as prison--marriage and family patterns are well-established.

The skid row community, as our definition makes clear, maintains almost a completely male population. It is, in this respect, a deviant community. As Bendiner has stated, "If there is a man who is regarded as deviant

TABLE 17. THE FAMILY OF ORIGIN: PAST AND PRESENT EXPERIENCES OF SKID ROWERS

a. Age at which respondent left family:

Years	N
6-13	4
14-16	24
17-20	32
21-24	15
25-28	9
29-33	3
34-39	8
40-46	4
over 46	1
Total	100

b. Evaluation of childhood:

	N
Very happy	10
Happy	57
Unhappy	18
Very unhappy	3
Don't know	12
Total	100

c. Parents still alive?

	N
Yes	34
No, but siblings	46
No, but other kin	2
No, but children	1
Nobody known	7
Nobody	10
Total	100

d. Present interactions with family:

	N
Visit	17
Write	12
Both, often	10
Both, not often	15
Neither	29
Does not apply	17
Total	100

/within skid row/ , it is the rare one who undertakes marriage."[10]

Some writers have suggested that skid row men are completely uninterested in the family or even antagonistic toward it. Others have indicated that these men have a fear of women or of family responsibilities, as illustrated by Harris.

> The vast mass of men along Skid Row, U.S.A. /is/ not capable of forming any love relationship with people. Still, there is a need for love in them, not so much to be loved, for they feel too unworthy, but to love somebody.....So they are notorious lonely-hearters /who/write and receive letters and exchange pictures. They mull over /these/.....Similarly they vent their need for love on sexually-significant objects. Flophouse keepers, who doubtless know more than anyone else about sex patterns here, say that there is no flop in this country which does not shelter its share of men whose most precious possessions are blouses or stockings or pieces of women's hair.[11]

Finally, it has been thought that many skid row men would blame their wives for marital problems and their arrival in skid row. In Bogue's study, however, it was found that 40 percent of those separated from wives blamed themselves for family problems and only 30 percent blamed their wives.[12] Their married lives had initially been happy and then due to quarrelling (in 43 percent of the instances) and drinking (in 27 percent of the cases), problems developed.

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

Forty-nine of the respondents had been married and were separated from their wives in these ways: 30 were divorced (two of them divorced more than once), 12 were separated and seven were widowed. Though the question was

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[10] Bendiner, op. cit., p. 95.

[11] Harris, op. cit., p. 82.

[12] Bogue, op. cit., p. 389.

not asked specifically, few of the divorced and separated volunteered expressions of bitterness concerning their marriages. Even more, however, indicated a strong desire to be reunited with their mates. Among 51 men who never married, only four claimed that they had never had a girl friend or been engaged. Thus, even those who had never married failed to support the sterotype of skid rowers as men who never experience normal relationships with women. The overall evidence seemed to suggest that a "marital-problem" explanation for the skid row community as evidenced either in non-marriage or unhappy marriage is not at all a valid one.

Four attitudinal statements included in the questionnaire appear to be relevant in showing how respondents felt about the family of procreation. These are presented in Table 18.

TABLE 18. ATTITUDES OR RESPONDENTS TOWARD MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

	Agree	Disagree	DK	Total
Most married people lead trapped lives.	34*	50	16	100
If you had it to do over again would you marry (or stay single)?**	62	33	5	100
Would you be interested in having children if you could?**	70	25	5	100
Generally, children are a nuisance.	23	71	6	100

* Responses which were taken to represent alienation are underlined for each item.

** Responses of "yes" or "no" to these statements were taken to reflect agreement and disagreement respectively.

Responses which could be taken to represent alienation with regard to the family occurred in no more than a third of the responses on each item, thus presenting evidence opposed to the alienation of skid rowers from the family.

In an effort to shed further light on this matter, five men were posed a situation (cited below) under which

they might consider marriage and were asked to respond to it. Though the sample is obviously small, the reaction to the question would seem to suggest conformity (with some sense of responsibility) rather than alienation and retreatism with regard to marriage.

Q. You meet a woman and she shows friendliness toward you. She seems to be somewhat like your type of woman. How would you react to this? Under what circumstances would you ask her to marry you?

A. 1. /Given/ the circumstances that I am now in I do not believe in being friendly with a lady so as not to lead /sic./ to any future entanglement and the only way I would ask a lady to marry me would be /if I were/ financially secure.

2. I would just become good friends.

3. I would go with her for some time and if she is a good woman I would marry her to make a home for her and myself.

4. I would talk to her and try to get to know her better. If we were congenial in most ways, I would propose marriage, but only after I had secured a steady job.

5. I don't know.

C. THE FRIENDSHIPS OF SKID ROW MEN

In addition to the family, certain other primary groups indicated by the ambiguous term, "friends," have appeared to have universal sociological importance. The term, "friends," though it is without any exacting sociological definition, has an obviously important meaning for most people; and "having friends" is often regarded as one characteristic of "human nature."

In the literature that assumes skid row as an aggregate of homeless and isolated individuals, the idea of friendship cannot exist, and friendship as a primary group activity is thus not even brought under consideration. Nevertheless, the skid row stereotype of friendlessness is in opposition to certain evidence which suggests that skid row is group-centered and heavily controlled by group norms.

Early sociological writers paid a good deal of attention to anonymity and impersonal interaction on skid row. Anderson wrote of men who "Will brush elbows... for weeks without learning each other's names."[13] Sutherland commented on the extreme case of shelterhouse men during the Depression as follows:

> The men as a whole do not want to be known and seem to desire only casual contacts...I can get into any group by just sauntering up to it. I will be introduced to the conversation but never to any person...I just sort of say "hello"....The /negative/ reaction of men to receiving mail and to questions at Intake illustrate their desire to remain unknown....[14]

and Dees commented on shelterhouses in a similar vein.

> ...After spending several weeks in the shelter, I learned only one man's name....I was never asked my name, nor any personal business. /One man advised me/ 'Never tell them /outside acquaintances/ you're in the shelter. No one wants you when you come out. They will think you're a bum and that you're buggy.'[15]

In his 1964 research, Bagdikian received this advice:

> You ask too damn many questions. Do I ask you where you come from? Where you spent the last sixty days?...Take a tip from me, fellow. Don't ask so goddam many questions and you'll get along better here.[16]

Bendiner summarized the case of the Bowery man in this negative way.

> He does not want friends, with their incessant demands upon him..../he/ craves the illusion of friendship /and/ brothers, but not the brotherhood and...responsibilities the concept entails.[17]

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[13] Anderson, op. cit., p. 20

[14] Sutherland, op. cit., p. 20.

[15] Dees, op. cit., pp. 124-125.

[16] Bagdikian, op. cit., p.58.

[17] Bendiner, op. cit., p. 92.

Some of the literature suggests that social distance is maintained between groups and types of men in skid row, rather than between all individuals. Jackson and Connor, for instance, speak of "'lushes'...the prestige group of alcoholics on Skid Road...[who] maintain social distance from other groups."[18] These certainly fulfill Bendiner's proposition that, "The Bowery Man is a social drinker with a sense of responsibility,"[19] and Jackson and Connor make it clear that there are important norms governing "lushes."

> To reap the benefits of membership in [the group], the alcoholic must adhere to group standards and accept obligations imposed on him. Violation of group standards means not only rejection from a particular group but also isolation from the lush segment as a whole.[20]

The "winos," who constitute a lower status aggregate, are also reported to impose group-centered norms, though perhaps of a less rigid nature. Describing them, Peterson and Maxwell state that,

> While an individual may have close friends in the same group as he, and even though some persist over a period of time, permanence is not a prevailing characteristic of these groups. The size and duration of a small group is often governed by the price of a bottle, the time it takes to raise this amount...and the time spent in drinking it. But ...almost all wine drinking is done in such groups and groups tend to be formed within a range of acquaintances. Furthermore the sense of obligation toward all wino companions with whom a man has associated is great.[21]

Thus the "bottle gang" has been cited frequently as an important skid row group. It usually consists of from three to eight individuals who are seen passing a bottle from which each takes a short drink. It is initiated by one person who almost always has a financial contribution

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[18] Jackson and Connor, op.cit., p. 469.

[19] Bendiner, op.cit., p. 92.

[20] Jackson and Connor, op.cit., p. 471.

[21] Peterson and Maxwell, op. cit., p. 311.

and seeks out others to help "form a corporation." Men contribute as they are able and those interested but without finances may join if their "credit" is good. Finally "the baby is born" and a messenger, who must be trustworthy and fairly sober, is dispatched to obtain a bottle of wine. While drinking, those who contributed more may drink more. It is common to see members, for various reasons, leave the group prematurely and other evident acquaintances seek or be asked to join the group. Much group drinking on skid row thus follows certain well-institutionalized procedures as Wallace summarized.

> A fairly complex system of norms is built up regarding what is considered appropriate, and punishment is meted out to those who do not "treat" others when they have funds or who attempt to drink more than their share. The time and place of meeting, the amount of alcohol consumed and the conduct of the drinkers are all controlled by the group.[22]

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

In the present study an attempt was made to determine both the background attitudes and present pattern of friendship as well as the type of social groupings in which skid rowers participate. As to the first of these two elements, ninety-nine men agreed that, "It is very important to have good friends in life." In response to a related question, 73 stated that they had "been able to have good friends in life," and 21 answered in the negative. Thus, although nearly three-fourths claimed to have had good friends, a comparison of the two responses does reveal a notably greater amount of this powerlessness regarding <u>having friends</u> than was revealed regarding normlessness concerned with the <u>importance</u> of having friends.

Regarding friendship patterns, an open-end question was first asked about "your closest friend anywhere,"

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[22] Wallace, <u>op.cit.</u>, p. 186.

and the response is described in Table 19. The diversity of friends among skid row men must be noted, and the fact that many of their friends were outside skid row offers evidence that skid rowers are not completely encapsulated within the skid row community. The number of instances in which relatives were mentioned shows again that many skid row men have not destroyed their connections with families. The naming of skid row social workers and businessmen as friends can scarcely be viewed as a companionship relation. They seem to have been mentioned by skid rowers, however, because they appreciate their relationship with these persons and a few specifically stated that they considered the companionship with skid row peers undesirable and sought identification with non-skidrowers. In two cases, informants responded that the interviewer, because of his interest, was indeed their best friend. One man named "Christ" and thus typified those who have resolved their "earthly" status by looking for "better things in a world to come."

Among questions concerning their best friends, one asked "when (that friend) had <u>last</u> been <u>seen</u>," and the responses to this ranged from less than a day to more than seven years, but 28 had seen their friend within the past week. They were also asked how long they had known this friend, and again there was a wide range of answers, but 59 of these friendships had been of eight or more years. (Those noted as "lifetime friends" were, with a few exceptions, kin.) Finally, respondents were asked whether they would "trust this friend to hold their money if they had to go somewhere without it." Sixty-three men responded in the affirmative to this test of friendship and several voluntarily added that they had already done so.

While this set of measures merely introduced the issue of "best friends" and more study could be extremely useful, strong evidence was provided to repudiate the idea of skid rowers as isolated and forgotten men. These

TABLE 19. PERSONS NAMED AS "BEST FRIEND" OF RESPONDENTS AND SOME FACTS ABOUT THIS FRIENDSHIP

a. Best friend:	N
A specific skid row peer	15
A specific non-skid row peer	18
A skid row businessman or professional worker	15
Member of immediate family:	
parent or sibling	21
wife	2
other relative	7
You (interviewer)	2
Christ	1
No one named	19
Total	100

b. When last seen:	N
Today	11
Yesterday	11
2-7 days	6
Up to 1 month	10
1 to 3 months	5
3 months-year	8
1 to 3 years	9
4 to 6 years	8
7 or more years	13
No answer	19
Total	100

c. How long known:	N
Up to 3 years	3
3 to 7 years	19
8 to 25 years	24
26 to 35 years	3
Lifetime	32
No answer	19
Total	100

d. Trust with your money:	N
Yes	63
No	27
No answer	10
Total	100

initial data suggest that skid rowers desire and maintain many primary social relationships which provide them an integration into various social systems within and outside skid row.

Two specific questions were asked about contemporary friendships in skid row. In the first of these, 25 men responded that they had "no real friends," 39 that they had "one or a few," and 36 that they had "several good friends." With regard to the human settings in which respondents spent their time, 48 men claimed to spend "most of their time alone," 23 with "people who happen to be around," 22 with "acquaintances," and seven with "friends." Thus, the majority of respondents stated that they did have friends and that they spent most of their time at least with people if not with friends.

Finally, consideration should be given to the social groupings in which skid rowers participate. Response has already been made to the "bottle gangs" as common in the community. But drinking groups are not the only ones to be found on skid row. Others noticed by the author were usually dyadic in structure. Two types should be pointed out briefly. First, there are many older men who could be called "old cronies" who "stick together" for the sake of companionship and solidarity. They sit for hours, sometimes in silence, sometimes discussing issues of the day, including problems of skid row and disliked changes (especially in types of men) occurring there. Second, younger men frequently have "buddies" with whom they eat and drink, watch ball games and possibly travel or with whom they jackroll or steal.

The man of skid row, unless he chooses to be a "loner," must go through a socialization process in which he learns the norms that are maintained on skid row, and a cooperative spirit seems to be an asset to him as one long-time observer noted:

> He must get along on the street with those around him. They have a "code of their own," uncomplicated but, in its own way, quite rigid. For example, if they borrow or lend small sums of money, they expect to pay or be repaid; if one of their number is intoxicated, he is protected by his friends from arrest by concealment from the police. Also, it is an unwritten law that no one "informs" on another.[23]

Thus there is much evidence for the existence of groups (and norms) on skid row; and, although the manifest purpose of these groups may be pragmatic--for instance, getting a drink--sociability and friendliness are at least latent results. (In this respect they are probably no different than people in other communities, though data for comparative purposes are not available.) We must suspect that the skid row community not only provides a context in which a variety of satisfying group affiliations are available. The group structures of skid row might thus be expected to be fairly similar to those of groups found in other communities.

Several questions were asked about the most recent "group situation" in which respondents had been present. Though they interpreted this question quite broadly, 62 specified a situation within the past four days. Further inquiries were made into the situations as to what the event had been, whether respondents knew group members, whether they had enjoyed themselves and whether they would probably be in the group again. As Table 20 shows, most of the occasions proved to be quite informal, most members were at least known by sight, the occasions were nearly always enjoyed and of the respondents over two thirds expected to rejoin the group within a week. Thus, as has been the case in regard to other aspects of skid row friendship treated in this study, respondents once again demonstrated a rather consistent socially-active, rather than alienated and isolated, pattern of activities.

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[23] From an interview with a hotel manager in skid row.

TABLE 20. EXPERIENCE "LAST TIME IN A GROUP" AMONG RESPONDENTS

a. When?	N
Today	32
Yesterday	16
3-4 days ago	14
a week ago	3
1-3 weeks ago	6
1-6 months ago	7
6 months-5 years ago	2
Longer ago	5
No answer	15
Total	100

b. Activity?	N
Talking, visiting	31
Some recreation	13
Drinking	13
Watching TV	12
Working	7
Religious activity	6
Eating	4
School activity	1
No answer	13
Total	100

c. Were Members Known?	N
Well known	26
By name	16
By sight	16
Part of name or nickname	13
Part of group well known	3
Slightly known	3
Not at all	8
No answer	15
Total	100

d. Occasion Enjoyed?	N
Yes	74
No	11
No answer	15
Total	100

e. When will you see them again?

	N
Now	23
Today	26
Tomorrow	10
This week	10
This month	5
Sometime	2
Don't know	19
Never	5
Total	100

Several items were used to measure attitudes of skid rowers regarding the issues of friendship and sociability. These included five items from Dean's Scale (the first five items in Table 21) and two regarding "being with people" which were operationalized in this study. The

TABLE 21. ATTITUDES OF RESPONDENTS TOWARD FRIENDSHIP AND SOCIAL ISOLATION

	Agree	Disagree	DK	Total
a. Sometimes I feel all alone in the world.	60*	36	4	100
(students	24%	11%	65%	100%)
Sometimes I feel that other people are using me.	47	46	7	100
(students	46%	6%	48%	100%)
Real friends are as easy as ever to find.	67	27	6	100
(students	66%	7%	27%	100%)
These days a person really doesn't know who he can count on.	65	29	6	100
(students	52%	15%	33%	100%)
There are few dependable ties between people any more.	73	23	4	100
(students	31%	12%	57%	100%)
b. It is very important to have a job with other people around.	86	11	3	100
It is better to spend your free time around people rather than alone.	80	13	7	100

*Responses which were taken to represent alienation from people are underlined for each item.

Dean Scale items revealed a fairly noticeable lack of confidence regarding friendship among a majority of respondents. A comparison with student respondents shows that skid rowers exhibited, more alienation than students on the first, fourth and fifth items, and nearly the same on the other two, but skid rowers also provided more unalienated responses than students on all items since students very frequently used "don't know" responses.[24] The responses regarding "being with people," nevertheless, showed skid rowers giving predominant support for such a norm.

The data collected regarding friendship activities and attitudes certainly show that skid rowers are not strongly alienated with regard to this kind of social relationship. They displayed a wide range of strong friendships and group activities; and, though some of their attitudes suggested a powerlessness with regard to friendship ties in today's world, they almost never displayed any rejection of the idea of having friends.

D. WOMEN AND SEX: THEIR SCARCITY IN SKID ROW

1. Relationships with Women

The topic of women in the skid row situation involves the issues of friendship and sex as well as the consideration of relations with women as possible substitutes for the family. The topic at first would seem alien to skid rows such as the one that was studied here, since almost

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[24] The great number of student "don't know" answers were probably used as an easy "way out" since they were interviewed in group rather than indivdual sessions. Moreover, when only those who agreed or disagreed with the four items are examined, those who showed an alienated response were the great majority (i.e. on the five items respectively: 75, 88, 90, 78 and 72 percent) and students showed a greater alienation than skid rowers on all five items.

no women reside there. (Only one such resident, the wife of a small hotel manager, was observed by this writer.)

The relationship of skid rowers with women would appear to be much as Anderson suggested four decades ago.

> Most hobos and tramps, because of drink, unpresentable appearance, or unattractive personality, do not succeed in establishing permanent, or even quasi-permanent, relationships with women. For them the only accessible women are prostitutes and the prostitutes who solicit the patronage of homeless men are usually forlorn and bedraggled creatures who have not been able to hold out in the fierce competition in higher circles.[25]

The contemporary issue has been summarized by Wallace as follows.

> Rarely has the skid rower formed any lasting attachment to a women. The vast majority report that they have never been married, and even if their self report is questioned, they are certainly not living with a woman on skid row.[26]

There are certain characteristics inherent to the men which limit the potential involvement of skid rowers with women. Many men, because of their age, are not concerned about women. Some writers suggest that alcoholism commonly serves as a substitute for sex and limits interest in, as well as acceptance by, women.[27] And finally, it is held by some that skid rowers are alienated from women and sex and that this is the basic reason for their retreat into a male community. For example, Bendiner states that,

> It seems that there is a flight from all sexuality in the Bowery. There is, in part, the atmosphere of a monastery, a silent withdrawal from all the joys of the world save the passport of Nirvana contained in a little alcohol.[28]

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[25] Anderson, op.cit., p. 142.

[26] Wallace, op.cit., p. 147.

[27] Or as Bagdikian, op.cit., p. 59 states it, "It is a place where wine overwhelms the impulse of women and song."

[28] Bendiner, op.cit., p. 95.

On the other hand, Harris suggested that skid rowers are "lonely hearts" who are incapable of stable love (see quote on p. 173) and stated that the relationships which they have are extremely bizarre ones.

> A few of the younger Rowers manage, despite themselves, to "shack up" with good women who are really in love with them....Actually, most of them prefer alliances with women who are transient and easy of affection. Those who have the contact and can afford the tariff seek burlesque girls out. Working Rowers with seasonal jobs have been known to spend a whole summer's "roll" on a few lush weeks with a "burleycue gal." /Others/ try to make do with prostitutes. Rowers know only two kinds of prostitutes, "live ones," who are younger and cleaner than the majority and "fleabags," old-timers in their sixties and even seventies who came into Skid Row because they could not meet the competition elsewhere.[29]

Questions must be raised as to what does happen to the sexual lives of men who enter skid row and what the relationship is of these men with women. Too little has been written on this issue, and what has appeared has been highly subjective and has superficially suggested that sex was nonexistent or took a highly perverted form on skid row. General observations of skid row suggest that men there spend little time with women.[30] Work, tavern and street activities usually seemed to be carried out in a context of male companionship. Whereas many implicitly assume that skid row men are, willingly or unwillingly, estranged from women, this study attempted to explore these relationships specifically to discover the exact nature.

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[29] Harris, op.cit., p. 81.

[30] There are, indeed, few women on skid row, but the fact that there are few would suggest that the ones who are there might play an especially significant and active role and should, hence, be carefully observed in order to interpret the role of women in the skid row community.

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

Since women might too easily be assumed as absent in skid row, when they were not, we introduced this topic with the statement, "It seems that there are few women in this area, but appearances can be deceiving." Informants were then asked, "When was the last time you took a women out or were with one?" and 51 indicated an occasion within the past month (See Table 22).[31] (The question was usually understood to concern a "dating" or sex-related occasion, though a few replies indicated the reporting of contacts lacking this kind of intimacy--such as those who mentioned social workers.)

Next, respondents were asked who this woman was and friends, prostitutes and a variety of other women were named although many respondents (34) did not answer in any clear way. At least 19 (and certainly some of those who did not answer regarding length of residence but indicated, for instance, that "the woman was known before I came to Chicago" or "I lived with her ") had known the woman referred to more than a year, and 25 indicated that they had never known the woman before. Asked whether they visited or went with any other women, 18 specified friends or acquaintances and six specified casual or professional prostitutes.

Sexual activity was considered "a good idea" by 67 men, and "OK" by four who said they were "too old," while 14 disagreed and 15 did not know. Of those who approved, 48 suggested the "naturalness" of sex and 19 its psychological usefulness. Among the 14 who disagreed, three were concerned about potential disease and 11

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[31] One unusual incident involved a maid who had just left the respondent's room; and, from other testimony, it was discovered that these maids constitute an important sexual market for skid rowers.

TABLE 22. RECENT EXPERIENCES WITH WOMEN AND SEX

a. Last time with a woman:	N
Within 2 days	5
Within a week	14
Within 2 weeks	15
Within a month	17
Within 6 months	11
Within a year	12
Within 3 years	26
Total	100

b. Who was she?	N
Friend	27
Acquaintance	7
Prostitute(professional)	3
Casual prostitute	12
Girl met at bar	8
Maid	2
Wife	5
Social worker (professional)	2
No answer	34
Total	100

c. How long known?	N
Up to 1 year	13
1 to 7 years	12
8 or more years	7
Miscellaneous comments:	
Casually	4
Knew in Chicago	2
Knew outside Chicago	5
Lived with her	1
Didn't know her	25
No answer	31
Total	100

d. Other women specified:	N
Friend	12
Acquaintance	6
Prostitute(professional)	1
Casual prostitute	5
No answer	76
Total	100

e. Sex(ual activity) is a good idea:	N
Natural	48
Psychologically good	16
Helps loneliness	3
OK, but I'm too old	4
Not necessary	11
Wrong--brings disease	3
No answer	15
Total	100

f. Active sexually in past year?	N
Yes	43
No	35
No Answer	22
Total	100

g. Active sexually in past month?	N
1 occasion	5
2 occasions	15
3 occasions	5
4 occasions	2
5 or 6 occasions	3
7 or 8 occasions	2
11 or more	4
No sex	64
Total	100

thought sex unnecessary.[32] Finally regarding actual behavior, 43 men claimed to have been sexually active in the past year, and 31 indicated two or more heterosexual experiences within the past month.

The patterns of general social interaction with women and specific sexual activity with them, while they varied widely, elicited no clear indications of systematic sexual alienation among skid rowers. Most who related to women specified friendship rather than casual, purely-sexual relationships. Some would have liked more interaction with women, and no one expressed any clear and total rejection of the roles of women and sex in American society.

2. Homosexuality

As a community consisting almost completely of men, skid row has been considered by some as a harbor of homosexuality. Given the scarcity of women and assumptions that suggest that sex must have its outlet, homosexual relations could be expected. But just as the absence of women in skid row was disproved, so might the idea of rampant homosexuality be false, and some factors do suggest that little homosexuality exists in skid row. In reference to <u>any</u> sexual activity, for example, many of the men are too old, others too severely handicapped, and, finally, many seem preoccupied with drinking and other possibly "sublimating" activities.

Skid row homosexuality cannot, however, be disregarded. Since the time of the hobo, evidence has suggested that such factors as the freedom of the homeless from normal community constraints and the absence of women, along with frequent and close contacts with other males, does encourage homosexuality.

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[32] Bogue (<u>op.cit.</u>, p. 360) found that 52 percent of his respondents agreed that women interested them sexually, while 28 percent said they did not and 13 percent indicated interest in the past (seven percent did not know).

Commenting on "perversion among the tramps" in the 1920's Anderson wrote,

> All studies indicate that homosexual practices among homeless men are widespread. /There are/ two types...those who are subjects of congenital predispositions /and/ individuals who have temporarily substituted homosexual for heterosexual behavior.[33]

He reported that "boy tramps" were frequent victims and that liaisons were rationalized and intense though short-lived.[34] Contemporary writers, too, make reference to homosexuality on skid row, and some skid rowers talk about the presence of homosexuality, in repugnant terms, as the following illustrates.

> He shakes his head violently from side to side...and says in a confidential whisper: "Queens!...Ya' know what I mean--big young fellers, filthy dirty. Come with a whole bunch of guys--all make you sick. They make beds in the masonary under the stairs and everywhere like that....Dirty shame. Nothing like that ever happened when I first came to the Bowery. It's the young people that does it. And they fight over the queen with knives, too. I tell ya it's disgusting--just like it was a real woman."[35]

Harris provided a description of the ranging durability of homosexual relationships.

> Many men who can't abide /syphilitic/ "fleabags" and are unable to get "live ones" form transient homosexual attachments that last for a few weeks or months or even years and then break up without anybody's getting hurt. Occasionally, two men stay together because they love and need one another.[36]

This comment sounds remarkably like other journalism today which reports "increasing homosexuality" in American

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[33] Anderson, op.cit., p. 144.

[34] Ibid., pp. 145-149.

[35] Bendiner, op.cit., p. 159.

[36] Harris, op.cit., pp. 81-82.

society in general. Evidences do confirm the presence of homosexuality on skid row, but they also show some of the intensely negative reaction skid rowers direct toward it.[37] And recalling Anderson's reports, we must question whether older skid rowers accurately recollect the innocence of the "good old days" in comparing it with modern "moral decay."

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

Respondents were asked whether "they had run into any homo(sexual)s in the area" and, while only 21 gave an affirmative reply, many of those answering "no" probably interpreted the question to refer to some kind of actual interaction with, or other than a mere recognition of homosexuals in skid row.[38]

A second question brought the issue more clearly into focus and elicited an even more negative reaction. Asked whether they would "think it all right to go with one if he paid you right," only four men responded "yes," one of them stating that five dollars would be an adequate fee and three that more than ten dollars would be necessary. While a few of the remainder commented on being too old or handicapped, at least 81 showed very negative moral reactions declaring, for example, that "no amount of money" would be sufficient to interest them, and they frequently used obscene language to describe homosexuals.

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[37] Bogue's (op.cit., pp. 362-365) respondents estimated less than five percent. (He estimated that about 10 percent were homosexuals, though he provides no basis for justifying his estimate or its variation from that of skid rowers themselves.) Twelve percent of his respondents expressed violent dislike for homosexuals, 66 percent disliked them and 22 percent felt they were OK if "they leave you alone."

[38] At least two known "characters," one a male prostitute and another a homosexual seeking a liaison, were pointed out to me by skid rowers.

They were probed even further as follows:

> Some people think that homosexuality is all right as long as no one is forced into it. Have you ever felt that it would be a better solution than marrying or going with a woman?

Eighty-seven said "No to this idea, and only four said that they had, in the past, thought of homosexuality as a solution, with but three of these admitting that they had tried it. Nine men did not answer.

Finally the men were faced with a question which dealt with "sublimation" as follows: "All people seem to have energies stored up. What activities have kept you busy when there were no women around?" While many respondents indicated that they led normal sex lives, among the rest some stated that they masturbated sometimes or often, others made reference to "taking walks," others said that work took all their energy, others indicated that they enjoyed heavy drinking and finally several claimed that they never seemed to have enough energy, let alone an excess.[39]

The evidence here certainly did not suggest that homosexuality is a common pattern among skid rowers; and, though skid row may still be a convenient rendezvous for some homosexuals, the respondents' answers would suggest that most skid rowers are repelled and angered by homosexual advances in the same way as most other Americans are.

E. ALIENATION FROM SELF: THE PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT OF SKID ROWERS

The importance of personal adjustment in American and other societies has received much scientific recognition in recent decades. Concerns for the self, as

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[39] Respondents appeared to accept this whole Kinsey-type investigation of their sexual lives without undue surprise or resentment. By my evaluation only 17 men were at all evasive with regard to the whole sequence of sexual questions.

presented by George Herbert Mead and many others, have pointed to the need for a personal development in which individuals learn to value themselves and direct their own behavior efficiently.[40]

Skid row is often thought to be composed of those who are personality failures. Americans often point to skid rowers to illustrate the conditions which result from not following culturally-prescribed patterns such as those of "hard work" and "moral behavior."

Dees, in referring to the "shelterization" on skid row, saw it as,

> ...the process of personal disintegration....The end product of this process is degradation, meaning the men have been reduced to the level of the bum....[They are] not allowed to think for themselves, even in the matters of personal care and everyday living....[41]

Harris, suggesting that most skid rowers today are "egoless" and despise themselves, stated that,

> Most...Rowers are contemptuous of themselves [and think they are] on Skid Row because they deserve to be. [They are] dyed-in-the-wool fatalists....self-respect is a vanished commodity. [There are] no proud Skid Rowers today ...only a vast mass of egoless and handicapped people.[42]

Harris found support for her opinions in quoting a fairly typical statement made by several psychiatric social workers who arrived at this generalization of personality types inhabiting skid row:

> They are passive...chronic leaners, immature, lacking initiative and self-direction....Some of them are psychotic with marked antisocial behavior.[43]

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[40] See Mead's Mind, Self and Society.

[41] Dees, op.cit., pp. 121-125.

[42] Harris, op.cit., pp. 12, 119.

[43] Ibid., p. 23.

Other types of professionals who encounter skid rowers make similar judgments. Typical of these is a psychiatrist at an "International Institute on the Homeless Alcoholic," who stated that, "In skid row, total failure of the individual is the only common binding force."[44]

In a related consideration many students consider mental illness to be prevalent among skid rowers. Dunham in 1953 predicted that, "...among homeless men...there will be an increasing proportion...suffering from serious mental disorder."[45] Casual observations of the skid row community also suggest that mental disorders are prevalent there. The feeble-minded and psychotic, are frequently encountered "talking to themselves" or addressing themselves to whomever happens to be in earshot and perhaps making incoherent gestures. Thus they are extremely visible, though their actual numbers may be relatively small. Bagdikian suggested that skid row probably has a negative effect on personalities who reside there.

> These men themselves are often looked on as of low intelligence, but I'm not sure their range of intelligence is very different from men at large....When they reach skid row they've had ten to fifteen years of being beaten by life. They're apathetic and sick and appear stupid. ...At this point there's no question a large proportion of them are mentally defective or ineffective and emotionally disturbed.[46]

Even so Bagdikian was able to note that the more he observed skid rowers the more he began to recognize rather neatly dressed normal-behaving men.[47]

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[44] Meyerson, op.cit., p.1.

[45] Dunham, op.cit., p. 43.

[46] Bagdikian, op.cit., p. 63.

[47] Ibid., p. 55.

It is wholly possible that the skid row community, providing as it does a set of understandings for its members, would yield some support to personalities and a meaningful subculture in which mental health might even be enhanced rather than endangered. This writer believes that skid rowers have received little in the way of unbiased personality studies, and thus, though it was not the central concern of the research, a brief investigation of the topic was pursued in this study.[48]

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

Skid row respondents were presented with a statement to the effect that "all people spend some time sizing themselves up" and they were asked whether they considered their lives "successes or failures" and then whether they were "satisfied" with themselves or "not" (See Table 23). No criterion of satisfaction was imposed upon them--any arbitrary definition of "success" would seem to be a presumptuous one--and therefore their judgment was entirely subjective. The respondents were about evenly divided as to whether they felt satisfied or not with their lives. While the criterion which respondents used in providing this response cannot be exactly stated, many, especially those who reported dissatisfaction, referred to what could be taken to be middle-class work and social interaction patterns while others, especially some who reported satisfaction, tended to refer to such criterion as "having done my best." In reaction to a related issue, the largest number (46) judged themselves as failures, but a considerable number (25) were able to claim themselves a success, too.

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[48]The writer found the idea that skid rowers "do not want to talk about their pasts" to be consistently untrue. It is probably more likely that they are reluctant to discuss their past when listeners are only interested in hearing the story of skid rowers as personality failures.

TABLE 23. RESPONDENTS' ESTIMATES OF THEIR SELF-SATISFACTION AND SUCCESS

a. Are you:	N	b. Do you consider yourself:	N
Satisfied	46	A success	25
Dissatisfied	49	A failure	46
Don't know	5	Don't know	29
Total	100	Total	100

In this study some preliminary estimates of certain personal attributes of respondents were made at the end of each interview by this researcher. These estimates were obviously done in an impressionistic manner and without the diagnostic techniques which the clinical psychologist might use. Though many writers suggest that skid rowers are mentally and physically deteriorated persons, such descriptions were found to be generally inaccurate in this study (See Table 24). Over one-third of the respondents were judged to be "normal" in their mental adjustment though a majority of the men (53) did seem to have odd habits or beliefs. Few were judged as neurotic, and none who completed the interview seemed psychotic (although two men who quit after the first questions showed what could be taken as paranoid symptoms). The majority (67) seemed to be normal or above normal in intelligence. Almost all were neat or fairly clean in appearance, though a few (13) showed severe physical deterioration.

Another question which was posed was clearly related to self-adjustment and mental health. Informants were asked to respond to the statement, "There are so many decisions that sometimes I could just blow up." Forty three of the skid rowers agreed with this statement, 48 disagreed and nine failed to answer. If this served as a

measure of mental stability, it would seem to indicate that skid rowers are about evenly divided between those who face personal crises of this kind and those who do not.

TABLE 24. INTERVIEWER ESTIMATES OF FOUR PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

a. Mental adjustment:

	N
Normal	38
Aberrant, odd habits or beliefs	53
Neurotic	4
Psychotic	0
Unclassified	5
Total	100

b. Intelligence:

	N
Normal	61
Above normal	6
Marginal	28
Definite deficiency	3
Don't know	2
Total	100

c. Appearances (clothes and cleanliness):

	N
Quite neat	36
Fairly clean-not too dishevelled	59
Very dishevelled	3
Don't know	2
Total	100

d. Significant physical deterioration:

	N
No	87
Yes, probably due to drinking	5
Yes, other reasons	6
Don't know	2
Total	100

One last concern was the issue of age as it might affect personality. Skid row constitutes a relatively old population. Eighteen of our respondents were younger than 40, but 60 were aged 40 to 65 years and 22 were over 65. Usually the older persons appeared to be the poorest, most lonely and alienated as the following case suggests.

> Edmund MacIntosh was depending on the theory that hard-boiled eggs and opened cans of Spam need no refrigeration. And he was sick. He had also...the theory that if you work hard, live frugally and mind your own business, you'll get by without help. And now he was seventy-four years old and needed help. (And he knew loneliness) "...Maybe if I just had some good company I guess that would be all right, too. I ain't had a letter in twelve months and that was from the bank about my account." /He died of "natural causes" three months after this interview./[49]

[49] Ibid., pp. 83-89.

Asked in this study whether they "worry about the idea of getting old," 51 respondents agreed, 39 disagreed and ten did not know. The response suggested that the population of skid row, which tends to be an older aggregate of American males, is concerned with problems of aging. Some of the older men did represent, both in appearance and in what they said, cases similar to Edmund MacIntosh.

In concluding the treatment of various personality characteristics, it would seem that skid rowers cannot be described as men who have predominant personality problems which set them off from other Americans. Though life in the skid row community seems to encourage the development of superficially "odd" personality types, the men who were intensely interviewed here gave many evidences of being fairly similar to other Americans.

SUMMARY

1. The Family

Men in the skid row community showed positive attitudes toward the family and expressed no predominant alienation either with regard to their family of orientation or of procreation. A lack of family or wife and loneliness was the fifth most mentioned response in regard to the open-ended question about "problems" and "complaints" of skid rowers (See Chapter Six). While the norms of family life were evidently understood and accepted, a notable amount of powerlessness was expressed with reference to present failure in maintaining families. Only in a very few cases did skid row appear to serve as any kind of retreat from families, nor were other non-conforming adaptations such as innovation in sex life often suggested by respondents.

2. Friends

Skid rowers sought and maintained friendships in and outside their community while avoiding "undesirable

people" in a manner not unlike other Americans. The literature which suggests that their friendships are impersonal and short-lived must, according to our findings, be highly suspect. Most of the respondents' attitudes toward friendship appeared quite normal, though some distrust was indicated and about one-fifth exhibited powerlessness in that they felt that they had not "succeeded in having friends." Retreat from friendship or any other nonconforming behavior such as ritualistic interaction with peers did not appear to be a significant mode of adaptation in skid row.

3. Women and Sex

Though men in the skid row community are limited in their interaction with women, various encounters do occur; and respondents expressed no patterned alienation regarding women or sex. Likewise, most men favored heterosexual activity and many at least occasionally engaged in it. If anything , powerlessness with regard to women and sex was more predominant than any rejection of American norms regarding them. Though skid row may be thought to be a retreat from particular women, no such case was supported; and a desire to return to particular women and to active sex lives was reported much more often than any rebellion or retreat from this activity.

4. Self

Though this area of investigation was not given as intensive a treatment as would be necessary for any definitive statement, the respondents showed no great alienation from self, even though about half of the men expressed some "dissatisfaction" and nearly as many felt that they "had not succeeded in life." Alcohol problems (which can be taken as personality problems) were mentioned third most often, 22 times, in response to questions about "problems" and "complaints;" and concerns for health were mentioned fourth most often (18 times)

(See Chapter Six). Powerlessness regarding control of self was more prominent in the overall response of men than was normlessness (i.e., in knowing how they should maintain themselves). A good deal of interest in self and self-examination was apparent in their reaction to these questions and their interest served to refute the idea of skid rowers trying to retreat from self. Skid row as a community appeared to offer some personal status, at least in being above lower-status skid rowers, but certainly also in being an accepted member, to nearly all its men.

CHAPTER NINE: WORK, FINANCE AND RECREATION

In this chapter some important aspects of the skid row community, which center around economic institutional behavior are examined. Work is given most extensive consideration, but attention is also addressed to finances and to work's complement, free time and its use. Each of these elements obviously exists in well-established patterns in the American cultural system. Each also appears in rather unique patterns in the skid row subculture and provides further evidences for conceiving of skid row as a community. Finally, various observers have contended that skid row alienation is especially marked in regard to these institutions.

A. WORK

Work patterns of a particular sort, favoring regularity and heavy commitment, especially in terms of time, are well-implanted in the American way of life.[1] Such values as efficiency and hard work are assumed to have made the United States a great country and, when they result in material prosperity, they are even taken to be a sign of God's approval.[2] To most observers, such values and the activities that attend them are absent in skid row. An important part of the stigma attached to skid row men is due to their alleged violation of the American work ethic. Outsiders often presume that skid rowers do not work, that they are eager to retreat from such involvements and that they are even in rebellion against capitalistic work values. References are made to men who refuse jobs or quit them and to high relief rolls in skid row, and skid rowers are thought to be men who have chosen poverty

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[1] Robin Williams, op.cit., pp. 417-421.

[2] Max Weber, Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.

rather than responsibility.[3] Skid row is, in short, taken to be a nonwork subculture.

Work, even when it is available, is considered to be quite unrewarding. The low pay, the lack of job stability and other unsatisfactory features of the available jobs could easily be taken as a cause of alienation on the part of workers. Wallace added to this argument stating that,

> The nature of his employment has further isolated the skid rower as his jobs offer him no advancement, no security, and no social integration through work. Organizing activity on the part of labor unions, even when based exclusively on the migratory worker, has been singularly unsuccessful. Thus the skid rower has never become a part of the labor movement. His only protest against outright exploitation and bad working conditions has been, as we have seen, an individualized response--simply to walk off the job.[4]

Thus the attitudes of skid rowers might be conceived to be totally negative with regard to work. They might be considered to possess an alienation concerned with frustrated aspirations to achieve better work circumstances. It was thought useful, however, to examine the issue of work by means of our survey before accepting any such conclusions.

FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

Before examining the question regarding attitudes of alienation toward work among skid rowers, attention should be given to the generally held belief that skid row is filled with people who refuse to work. It should be pointed out, in the first place, that skid row has a high population of persons who are ordinarily defined as

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[3]The writer has collected cartoons about skid rowers, "bums," etc., and these tend to support the above contention. One, for instance, pictures a bum at a commuter station cheering departing workers with, "Have a good day."

[4]Wallace, op.cit., p. 148.

falling outside the "labor force." Among these are men beyond retirement age and those who are physically or mentally handicapped.

Although skid rowers over 65 years old are not usually employed, some of them find light work in their hotels or nearby--often as janitors or dishwashers--in order to earn a little money and be occupied. Many other elderly men also do such tasks as "portering" in their hotels (which amounts to light janitoring and helps defray lodging expenses) or junk collecting (especially wine bottles and scrap metal).

For many men, alcoholism or other mental or physical handicaps interfere with work patterns. While these men may hold jobs like those held by the elderly, they are more likely to have heavier "spot (or temporary) jobs." Despite their handicaps, some of them will work for a day or two at fairly strenuous labor and then stay on skid row for a few days. Others even manage to work for longer periods, even entire seasons, and perhaps quit only when employment ends.

Among those who are regular workers, (and who might be defined as falling in the regular labor force) day-labor is most common. Some men are able to find work nearly every day; others, especially the less able, are infrequently hired. Some men have regular employment with salaries adequate enough to permit them to live elsewhere. They continue to stay on skid row, however, for the sake of convenience to work, economy, satisfying companionship and tolerant surroundings (especially with regard to drinking patterns).

Skid rowers have been said to be concerned only with a pattern of "getting by,"[5] (i.e., living from day-to-day especially with regard to finances), and this is no doubt a frequent pattern. Still, getting and keeping jobs are day-to-day aspirations and endeavors for many. Along with the probability that jobs will be temporary, they are

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[5] See, for example, Anderson, op.cit., pp. 40-41.

usually low-paying and accompanied by hazard, dirt and other conditions which make them some of the least desirable jobs in American society.

The employment agencies, which skid rowers commonly refer to as "slave labor offices," with their high fees, practice of favoritism and frequent lack of jobs, are important institutions with which skid row workers must deal. Each day these agencies hire hundreds of men to perform a great variety of jobs for employers who pay the agency. From the pay, usually $1.25 or $1.50 per hour, a high fee and taxes are deducted, often leaving less than $1.00 remuneration per hour. As already discovered, illegal practices by the agencies are periodically uncovered.[6] Though the men complain, they seem to prefer the private to the public agencies since they avoid "red tape" and offer daily pay. (Employers, too, seem to prefer to list their jobs with private agencies, perhaps because they feel that greater flexibility and less paper work is involved.)

As already documented, the skid row day begins at about 4:30 a.m. when many workers awaken and start toward employment agencies or their jobs. The agencies are especially busy until seven o'clock. As time passes, many men who are not hired go to other agencies or quit looking. Some men remain at the agencies even into the afternoon though there is very little hope for work by then. Those who are able to obtain jobs may, in addition to time at work, spend hours getting to the job. Returning late, they may do little more than have a drink, watch TV and go to bed.

As to the issue of skid rower alienation regarding work, work was viewed as "an important part of life" by 99 of our 100 respondents. If they were alienated with

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[6] See discussion and footnote on p. 160.

regard to the norm of work, they might have been expected to utter rebellious comments about work conditions or to show no interest in work. They expressed no strong criticisms of the American work situation except as it limited their full participation. They were chiefly concerned with factors--some their own fault, some not--which limited their opportunity. Sixty-one men, using their own definitions, felt that they had "succeeded in" their work lives, while 36 said they had not. Thus over a third, while ascribing to the importance of work, felt that they had personally been powerless in their work careers.

Thirty-two men had worked from four to six months in the first half of 1964 (the year of the study), 21 had worked up to four months and 47 had worked less than one month. Most of the last category were not qualified to be in the labor pool, being old or handicapped.[7]

Skid row men in this study held only lower-status jobs (as was shown in Table 12, Chapter Seven), and received low pay although this pay would probably be sufficient to maintain them if the work were regular and high employment fees were avoided. To further substantiate this, a question was asked about average hourly pay. Among 41 men who had held jobs recently, the usual pay reported was $1.25 per hour. Eleven men received less and just one claimed more than $2.25 per hour.

Seventy workers were asked to state any complaints they had about their jobs and 48 mentioned none. This lack of complaint would seem to demonstrate the acceptance of the conditions and norms which characterize skid row jobs. Among 22 complaints that were made, seven concerned

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[7]In a slightly different investigation, Bogue (op.cit., p. 100) found that 40 percent had worked during the "previous week," about half of them at part-time jobs. He found (pp. 306-308) that 63 percent had first come to skid row seeking work.

"hard work;" six, "low pay;" four, "work conditions;" two, "not enough work available;" two, "cheating and favoritism;" and one, "long hours." All of these would appear to be valid criticisms of most skid row jobs, but, since they were mentioned by a minority of respondents and since they showed no chief focus, they did not seem to reflect an overall alienation toward work. If anything they seemed to suggest a generalized powerlessness regarding work.

Other attitudes regarding work were measured in a number of items presented to respondents, some of which have already been treated. It should be recalled that respondents did not react in an alienated fashion to items concerning the importance of "practicality and efficiency," the value of "activity" and the salience of "immediate gratification" (pp. 136, 138, 147).

Slightly less than half of the respondents, 44 men, agreed to a Dean item stating that, "There is little chance for promotion on a job unless a fellow gets the breaks," thereby expressing a feeling of powerlessness as to occupational mobility. The 51 men who disagreed with the statement commonly remarked that men could succeed if they tried and some blamed themselves for not having done so. In response to the same measure, 59 percent of our student sample agreed and only 31 percent disagreed (while 10 percent did not know) thus indicating a higher alienation among students in this regard.

Another item, assumed to refer to economic and political issues, was: "Despite what people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better," and 37 men agreed to it while 45 disagreed, often adding that "things are pretty much the same as ever." Thus in this, and the previous statement, powerlessness was expressed by a sizable minority of skid rowers. In response to this item, as opposed to the previous one, students showed a lower alienation. Just 22 percent agreed that "things

were getting worse," while 62 percent disagreed and 16 percent did not know. Also, in a fairly similar measure applied to a national sample by the American Institute of Public Opinion, 55 percent agreed that, "Life for people generally will get better," while 23 percent thought that, "Life will get worse."[8] The similarity of the responses of students and the AIPO respondents should be noted.

In summary, the findings of this study in regard to work attitudes, as well as related value-orientations, make it clear that skid rowers tend to accept American work norms though they experience some powerlessness with regard to work.

The question that follows was presented to only five men. Their responses, while concerned with the low pay and legality of a potential job, seem to suggest normal rather than definitely deviant and alienated patterns of thought with regard to accepting employment, e.g. expressing the opinion that "work is only for suckers."

Q. You receive an offer for a job. You must report at six the next morning five miles from here. The pay will be $1.25 an hour and the job will be steady as long as you report on time 5 days a week and work steadily. You are not sure how difficult the work is and there is some question as to whether you will have to do something you think is wrong. What will you tell the employer? Why do you react in this way?

A. 1. I would not accept the job until I was sure it was legal. I would not want to be involved in something morally wrong. I react this way because of childhood training.

2. There is no question on my part of accepting any employment that I know I cannot do or, if there is anything with the job that I think I cannot do, I will not accept that job.

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[8] "Roundup of Current Research," Transaction, July-August, 1966, p. 3.

3. As long as it is steady, I would take it.
4. I would not go 5 miles to a job for $1.25 an hour.
5. The pay is not enough. You can't live on $1.25 an hour.

Though skid rowers exist in unfavorable circumstances regarding work, the ones in this study showed evidence of wanting to do what was necessary to improve their position by obtaining regular, higher-status occupations rather than escaping from or drastically changing the work system. They faced increasingly difficult work careers. Still they did not express any noticeable strong alienation with regard to America's work system and its demands for regularity and personal commitment. Respondents here expressed an approval of values which are supposedly held by middle class people. While they seemed to concur with the norms of the American work structure, they did express some powerlessness in reference to their wishes to obtain better work circumstances. The values that bolster the work habits of middle class Americans appear to be present in skid row; other factors or handicaps, such as illness or a lack of skills, seem to limit the carrying-out of such work habits. The popular belief that skid rowers deliberately flaunt American work ethics was clearly contradicted in this study.

B. FINANCES

The "Spirit of Capitalism," as demonstrated in financial behavior of most Americans, has seemed to result in patterns of careful long-range saving and considerate but willing spending especially for what are thought to be wise investments. And the "affluent" American society is vastly richer than most nations and has now launched its well-advertised "war on poverty." Nevertheless, skid row men remain extremely poor. This is true despite myths of hidden money and miserly behavior which are bolstered by occasional reports of skid rowers dying with large sums of money under their mattresses or in banks. Such

rumors tend to support a theme of skid rowers who, because they are alienated, retreat from society and hoard their money. They supposedly choose to escape society and, as misers, lose the ability to use money as an instrument in their socio-economic dealings.

A counter image of skid rowers, also reflecting a belief that they deviate from the norms of society and are alienated with regard to them, is that they are profligate spenders--money "slips through their fingers," the desires of the moment guide their spending decisions.

Because of these conflicting themes about skid rowers, both representing a belief that skid rowers suffer alienation with regard to the way they handle financial matters, an attempt was made in this study to explore aspects of the way skid row denizens handle money and possessions and their orientations regarding them.

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

With regard to the first of these ideas about skid rowers--that a number of them have lost their ability to treat money instrumentally and amass it for itself alone--the writer interviewed only one man who indicated that he kept a large sum of money in his room. It is questionable whether he might be viewed as a miser, however, since he was a chronic invalid who could not get to the bank and knew of no one who could serve as a bank messenger. It is interesting to note, in passing, that he seemed to feel safe enough with his money in the skid row community and willingly showed it to the author, a stranger.

With few exceptions skid rowers have little money with which to make the choice between saving and spending. In fact, their total possessions seldom added up to a substantial amount. Asked to estimate the total value of their savings and all goods and possessions, 59 of our 100 informants claimed a total of less than $20, (See Table 25). Only seven estimated their total worth at

$1000 or more. The typical material possessions reported were such items as an extra set of clothes and perhaps shoes, a change of underwear, an additional pair of socks. Only a few respondents listed watches and rings, items which would be fairly commonly reported by American men in general.

In addition to income from employment, slightly more than half of those interviewed received some kind of "non-work income." Social Security, railroad and other retirement pensions, and some form of welfare payment accounted for nearly all of these.

In general, then, one can say that skid rowers are not money- or possession-hoarders. Their income is small and, with a few exceptions, their total worth is exceedingly meager. And, even among the exceptions there were instances where most of their "material worth" was tied up in litigation or was otherwise beyond their direct control.

As to the charge that skid rowers are wasteful with money, one must begin by making clear, as the data above indicate, that they have little with which to be wasteful. And, as shown in Table 25, about three fourths of those interviewed spent less than $30 the preceding week. Nevertheless, the popular image of skid rowers as profligate spenders, was exemplified to the writer by the suggestion of an employment officer and several others who work, but do not live, in skid row that its inhabitants should be observed "at the first of the month." It was contended that when pension and welfare checks were received, men would be "spending it all," and "the taverns would be crowded." Though the writer on several occasions sought to verify these generalizations, his observations did not seem to bear out the charges. It is possible that, with many people receiving pay at the end of each day's work, the flow of money into the pockets of community inhabitants is somewhat more even through the month than in other

communities. If this is true, then one must assess whether skid rowers are "easy" with money by other means.

TABLE 25. FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

a. Total Material Worth:

	N
Up to $5	27
$5 - $9	19
$10 - $19	13
$20 - $39	7
$40 - $59	7
$60 - $99	3
$100-$299	7
$300-$999	10
$1000 - $5000	7
Total	100

b. Nonwork Income:

	N
Pension	27
Welfare	21
Pension and Welfare	3
Estate or Trust Fund	2
None	47
Total	100

c. Weekly Spending:

	N
Up to $5	6
$5 - $11	3
$12 - $19	32
$20 - $29	33
$30 - $39	6
$40 - $49	13
$50 - $69	5
$70 - $99	1
$100-$150	1
Total	100

The typical impression of the skid rower is, perhaps, represented by Bendiner, who says,

> There isn't much money on the Bowery but what there is is readily available. A man receives his pension check, and once it is cashed he does not dream of saving anything....Bowery men are easy people to deal with. They rarely bargain.[9]

Some men doubtlessly spend their money rapidly and rely on charity when they run out. These and others usually

[9] Bendiner, op.cit., p. 28.

find themselves living on a day-to-day basis. There are pressures to spend what one has in some skid row groups. For many men there is a pattern of sharing which involves the spending of what small funds one has for drinking and other purposes knowing that those who share at the time will reciprocate on other occasions. Nevertheless many of the men appear to be quite careful with their money presenting only what is necessary for predetermined needs. Since some fear their own misuse of money, as well as the attack of jackrollers, a number of men entrust their monies to such individuals as hotel managers, social workers and tavern operators for safe-keeping, and a surprising number use banks, even for very small savings.

Our findings substantiated the expectation that skid row is a poor community, poverty in itself seems to offer more reason for the residence of men in skid row than any interpretations of these men as financially-able, even rich, alienated retreaters from other social classes or as heavy squanderers of financial resources. Skid rowers seemed to obtain, keep and spend little money and owned few valuables, but they did show an interest in "getting ahead." Thus they cannot be assumed to be an alienated population which spends its money with total abandon, neither is there evidence to suggest that they form an aggregate of men who hoard their money as an end in itself. Their financial affairs seem to further document skid row as a low-status community composed of men who have some interest in improving their status but find themselves powerless to do so. (Though the writer did not pay any clients or reward them with food or drink, four of them bought him beer or coffee.)

C. FREE TIME AND ITS SKID ROW USES

The logical counterpart of work is free time and it can be used in various recreational activities or in idleness. The "Protestant Ethic" has been taken to demand the careful husbanding of this as well as working time,

and "activity" as opposed to contemplation has been shown to be an approved American pattern in using free time.[10] Problems arising from the increasing presence of free time among most occupational groups has received much treatment in contemporary "mass culture" literature, and some are ready to despair of the ability of human beings in using their free time well.[11] With a decreasing need for workers, shorter work hours and mandatory retirement, the use of free time is becoming an increasingly important issue for Americans.

Skid rowers appear to be faced with a chronic abundance of free time. Some of them complain that a major problem in their lives is "killing time," and some seemingly have perfected an art of "waiting." Others, however, claim to be "too busy," working long hours or caught in patterns of job or drink searching. As opposed to these extremes, a large number of men probably occupy their time in the same activities as other Americans.

With an obviously large amount of free time available on skid row, many observers are content to assume that it is used in drinking and idleness. If such observers do not look systematically, however, they are not likely to notice some of the more typically American activity patterns. They are more likely to notice the busy saloons and large numbers of men who appear to be drinking or loafing on the streets. From such stereotypic viewpoints, an image of alienated men, disengaged from all interest and activity in normal cultural patterns, is easily constructed. If skid rowers are alienated with respect to American uses of free time, they would be expected to avoid involvement in normal recreational patterns and to express

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[10] See discussion on pp. 138-142.

[11] For example, see Robert MacIven, "The Great Emptiness" in Josephson and Josephson, op.cit., pp. 144-149.

hostility toward such activities thus indicating their dissatisfaction with the American culture. It is to this question that the following section is addressed.

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

A careful look will make it clear that the skid row community provides various recreational facilities. While the street offers a place to "kill time," it also allows for much socializing, a setting for hiring, and an opportunity for spending time observing such events as construction, police arrests and visits by tourists. Hotels and bars rather uniformly provide television and room for games, and the Reading Room and hotels also provide reading materials. Other facilities in or near skid row allow for a wide variety of recreational activities.

In direct question of our 100 subjects, free time was taken as "a very important part of life" by 91 men and only six disagreed. Significantly fewer, only 56, were able to agree that they had "been able to use [their] free time well," while 37 said they had not. Thus once again skid rowers were normatively agreed on a value, but expressed powerlessness with regard to their ability to achieve it.

The range of free time uses by the skid rowers interviewed is shown in Table 26. Two types of questions were asked: the first was open-ended and the second consisted of a check-list of items. The first, while inviting the skid rowers to name "a few" uses of free time, seldom elicited more than one or two. This may reflect the attitude that "there is little to do" on skid row, a view which may, however, parallel attitudes in many other communities. It should be noted that the first four categories listed in Table 26 concerning such activities as reading, going to parks, watching TV and, in effect, "killing time" were most frequently mentioned.

The second approach to measuring leisure time use--the check-list of specific activities--obtained many more

Affirmative responses, suggesting that respondents were particularly active in reading and watching TV and spectator sports.

TABLE 26. PARTICIPATION IN VARIOUS RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

a. Nowadays most people have some free time. We'd like to know more about how you use yours. Would you name a few of the most important things you do with your free time? (First choice listed only.)

Activity	N
Read, write, play table games	22
Sit, loaf, relax, wait	18
Go to park, talk, travel around	13
Watch television	15
Go to movies, ball game, races, church	10
Take walks	7
Drink	5
Work, look for work	5
Bowl, play pool	2
Nothing	3
Total	100

b.

Do you:	Yes	Sometimes	No	Total
take walks	42	6	52	100
read	83	2	15	100
watch TV	81	9	10	100
watch spectator sports	73	5	22	100
play cards	25	10	65	100
drink	57	5	38	100
go to movies	42	6	52	100
play checkers or similar games	29	7	64	100
gamble	16	8	76	100
go to missions	46	13	41	100
go to Reading Room	41	8	51	100

The evidence that a majority of skid rowers participate in several of the above activities is rather clear proof of their involvement in the skid row community and American culture. The great majority who showed interest in television and spectator sports would probably suggest that they are generally as accepting of mass culture in

those forms as are most other Americans. The absence of movie-going as a leisure time activity was, according to respondents, the result of financial limitations. The large minority who went to missions and to the Reading Room respectively showed their acceptance of these institutions. The large number who claimed to do some amount of reading would seem to demonstrate their interest in and acceptance of American culture. The proportion who indicated that they did not drink and the vast majority who denied gambling activities, as well as many who "didn't have time to play cards," seemed often to represent the same negative moral judgments on such "wasteful" activities as one would find among many middle class respondents.

Taking walks is an important activity for many skid row men, some of whom cover many miles in their daily journeys. In this study 87 men indicated places, close and distant (sometimes over five miles), in which they walked at least occasionally.

TABLE 27. PLACES WHERE RESPONDENTS WALKED

	N
Within skid row	29
The Loop (central business district)	4
Grant Park and Lake Michigan shores	17
Lincoln Park and the Northside	12
The parks	5
Southside	3
Westside	1
Mostly skid row, sometimes in the Loop and parks	16
Nowhere	13
Total	100

Almost one-third of the men who took walks confined them pretty much to skid row and most of the men probably did a large share of their walking there. Those who did not report taking walks were almost always kept in their hotels by sickness or physical handicaps. Many of the

walkers specified visits to Chicago parks. Very few visited the downtown area. A few visited the North, South and West sections of Chicago because of friends and relatives and home there. Some of these persons showed little identification with the skid row community. In summary, however, some additional support was gained for conceiving of skid row as a community since many stayed there for their "walks" and most of those who did not saw their walks as "stepping out" from their community and took appropriate precautions, for example, with regard to dress and appearance.

The recreational activities of respondents did not seem to reveal a pattern of alienation from American culture with the exception of some evidence of powerlessness in not being able to fully participate. All the observations made by the writer tended to show that skid rowers were quite ready to take part in typical American free-time activities and many of them did so.

D. DRINKING AND ALCOHOLISM IN SKID ROW

The fact that skid row life is not synonymous with alcoholism has become increasingly recognized. A very small proportion of all the alcoholics in a typical city live in skid row, and many skid rowers are not even drinkers. While various studies have verified these statements, there is some disparity as to exact statistics.

> ...Straus found that only seven of 201 /skid row/ men reported no use of alcohol....Sutherland and Locke estimated that alcoholics among homeless men during the Depression ran to about ten percent of the total group. Straus reported 57.7 percent of his group of homeless men as steady excessive drinkers with no attempt to estimate the percentage of true addicts.[12]

Bogue found these proportionate groups among his skid row respondents: teetotalers, 14.8 percent; light drinkers,

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[12] Dunham, op.cit., p. 19.

28.4 percent; moderate, 24.4 percent; heavy, 19.9 percent; and derelict, 12.6 percent.[13]

The number of those who do not drink is surprising when consideration is given to pressures to drink in the skid row community. Not to drink would seem to be an active denial of important skid row norms, although total abstinence appears to be a norm for certain skid row groups especially those closely integrated into mission programs. Abstinence, however, probably occurs just as often among older and physically ill men. Otherwise,

> The skid row denizen is in an atmosphere which is shot full of positive encouragements to drinking. Being sociable, avoiding aloofness, drinking with the boys, holding one's liquor, getting drunk to forget, going on a spree, "shooting the wad," and one's got "to drink to live like a man" are all positive values among homeless men.[14]

> Drinking is overwhelmingly a social activity.

> Straus observed that ninety percent of his sample did their drinking with others, while exactly the reverse obtained in a sample of Alcoholics Anonymous where ninety-two percent reported solitary drinking.[15]

The bars and saloons have previously been pointed out as centers of sociability and community. While Bendiner and others have suggested that drinking in skid row is related to the alienation there, (e.g., "It is a drunken street and each man aspires to a chemically-induced tranquility."[16]), there is much evidence for the opposite argument, that is that drinking provides an activity around which many forms of social interaction are centered.

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[13] Bogue, op.cit., p. 92.

[14] Dunham, op.cit., p. 20.

[15] Ibid., p. 20.

[16] Bendiner, op.cit., p. 182.

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

In this study respondents were asked to classify themselves as to their drinking behavior. Twenty-four men claimed to be nondrinkers and 31 light or moderate drinkers, while 17 said they were heavy drinkers. The rest, 28 men, admitted that they were alcoholics who either drank as often as they could or went on drunken binges. Additional support for the accuracy of this information comes from the response to another question, far removed in the interview, which indicated that 28 claimed that they did not drink in their free time, 15 that they drank "sometimes" and 57 that they drank regularly.[17]

Table 28 suggests the limited amount of drinking and the variety of drinks which respondents claimed to have consumed the previous day. It certainly suggests that images of skid rowers as universally preoccupied with drinking are quite false. Many respondents made it clear that they did not care to drink or that they simply could not afford the monetary or physical costs of regular drinking.

TABLE 28. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES CONSUMED THE PREVIOUS DAY

	N
Up to 4 beers	16
4 to 8 beers	4
9 or more beers	6
1 or 2 glasses of wine	4
3 or more glasses of wine	8
1 glass of liquor only	2
Combination of a few glasses of beer and wine	1
Nothing	59
Total	100

[17]There is a possibility that, since most interviewing was done during the day, men who spent most of their time in taverns drinking were under-represented in this study. A number who had just come from taverns or went to them immediately after the interview were, however, included in the study.

The men were also asked why they drank (See Table 29). The overwhelming number of responses were concerned with personal enjoyment of sociability. This response, as interpreted in this study, would suggest a good deal of conformity in "drinking to be sociable" and the many responses of "I like it," certainly do not suggest any rebellion, retreatism or ritualism in the drinking behavior of respondents. Only a few responses suggested any ritualism if "It's a bad habit" can be construed as such and similarly only seven men suggested drinking "to forget someone or something." None mentioned the rebellious purpose of "getting even" as a reason for drinking.

TABLE 29. REASONS FOR DRINKING AND POSSIBLE ADAPTIVE INTERPRETATIONS

Reasons	N
To be sociable	23
I like it:	41
(Beer)	(18)
(Wine)	(7)
(Whiskey)	(16)
It's a bad habit	7
To forget something	7
To get even (with someone/something)	0
No answer - not applicable	22
Total	100

SUMMARY

1. Work and Finances

Skid row is a community where only limited, low-status occupations are available for men, and a large part of the population cannot even hold these. In this study, work and financial problems were mentioned most often in response to questions about "problems" and "complaints" skid rowers had (See Chapter Six). Though 99 of 100 men agreed to the importance of work, only 61 were able to say that they had succeeded in that area. What was

observed in this study attested to skid rowers' acceptance of various work norms and their sense of powerlessness in regard to such. Their steady pursuit of day-labor and, avowedly, of better jobs, seemed adequate evidence against stereotypes of their retreat from or rebellion against work motifs. Whether skid rowers prefer day-labor or full-time work cannot now be stated. However, respondents who treated this issue repeatedly pointed to their eagerness to escape their present circumstances and to the barriers unskilled men without references, credit or temporary finances face in trying to obtain jobs in occupations where unemployment is already chronic.

Poverty was clearly a problem for nearly all respondents, and 74 men lived on less than $30 a week. This study found no pervasive patterns of either heedless spending or miserliness as symptoms of alienation characterizing skid row men.

2. Free Time and Drinking

Skid row community life presents a good deal of "free time" to its inhabitants. Although this time is probably accompanied by much inactivity and boredom, the uses of it by respondents in this study attested to their acceptance, to the extent their poverty would allow, of American mass culture. TV, for example, was very popular, but movies were too expensive for most men. In "using free time well" powerlessness was more prevalent than normlessness. Skid rowers showed no prevalent rebellion or other nonconforming activity in using free time. Most, for example, claimed that gambling and even drinking were not major activities for them, and narcotic drugs apparently get little use.

Alcoholism was mentioned third most often, 16 times, in response to questions about "problems" and "complaints" of respondents (See Chapter Six). But drinking patterns for most men were related to group activities and to

community institutional patterns rather than to alienation, and the motivations for such appeared to be closer to conformity than to retreatism, rebellion or ritualism.

CHAPTER TEN: OTHER VALUE-RELATED INSTITUTIONS; POLITICS, RELIGION AND EDUCATION

This final chapter of findings deals with three more institutional areas of American life which are pertinent to sociological study. Each of the three institutional areas now examined--politics, religion, and education--has a constellation of activities and values which seem to be distinctly American. Moreover these three institutional areas have developed in certain patterns within the skid row community, and, again, many observers have considered skid row alienati n to be manifested in these particular institutions.

A. THE POLITICS OF SKID ROW

In a democratic society, political activity and power are, at least in theory, distributed equally. Obviously there has been a traditional denial of the vote to certain categories, for instance to women, Negroes and migrants. Nevertheless current social changes in the United States appear to be toward more democratic practices.

The skid row community is one in which there seems to be limited participation in government. Skid rowers are not apolitical but such political activities as voting have sometimes, for various reasons, been neglected. Many skid rowers move too frequently to make it possible to meet residence requirements, others do not understand procedures for registering and voting or are even illiterate, others are probably simply uninterested but, finally, some do vote and seem politically informed. While an unknown number of these voters are said to do so for a one or two dollar payoff by party machines, many others, by voting, reading and discussing news and politics, seem to show a rather genuine interest in political affairs at all governmental levels.

The skid row community has a somewhat unique political character. As part of Chicago's "First Ward," it has rather closely supported the Democratic political machine

for many decades. It has not in recent decades been affected by "reform movements" which might indicate rebellion.

While this community has generally if not very actively supported local, state and federal systems, many skid rowers have seemed to feel that they have received little in return. Reforms on skid row, in terms of concessions from the Mayor and others, directed toward general community improvements, crack-downs on businessmen, investigation of police brutality and so forth, have been accomplished when outsiders with political power, rather than skid rowers themselves, applied pressures.[1]

The political powerlessness of skid rowers has probably always been a fact. In 1920 Anderson described the political lot of the skid rower thus:

> He seldom remains in one place long enough to acquire legal residence. His work, because of its seasonal character, often takes him away from his legal residence just at the time when he should be there to register or vote. Whether he has a desire to cast his ballot or not, he is seldom able to do so.[2]

Nevertheless skid row prior to 1930 demonstrated some political power at least in various attempts at rebellion. During the first quarter of the century, skid row was affected by certain radical political ideologies that included labor organizing, socialism and anarchism. A utopian union, The International Workers of the World, emerged as the most significant of these forces. Despite its radicalism in those years, many of its programs have been accepted in recent decades. As Anderson described it,

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[1] See for example "Skid Row Folk Approve Gift Reading Room," Chicago Daily News, April 21, 1952.

[2] Anderson, op.cit., p. 151.

> The I.W.W. was formed in Chicago in July, 1905. Its headquarters are /there/ and its conventions have almost invariably been held /in Chicago/ because /Chicago/ is a transportation center and because of its tolerant attitudes toward street speakers. Theoretically /it was/ an organization of all industrial workers, but it has been most enthusiastically supported by the hoboes. It was conceived on the "stem." Some of the "Wobbly" spokesmen boast of 100,000 members....Probably about a third of that number /exist/.[3]

Their constitution's preamble was clearly Marxist.

> The working class and the employing class have nothing in common, /therefore/ a struggle must go on /for/ abolition of the wage system /and/ capitalists..../We can/ carry on production when capitalists /are/ overthrown.[4]

Though the I.W.W. never approached its goals, it had great appeal for the hobo with his "spirit of unrest." Other such enterprises, including the Migratory Union and such enterprises as Hobo College, flourished at least briefly on skid row. They and the "Cooperative Hotels" reflected distinct political motives.[5]

The I.W.W., which was strongest of the skid row political organizations and lasted longest, is disappearing today.

> As the lights went off in Seattle's Wobbly Hall for the last time last week, only a few pensioners who have used it to pass lonely hours reliving the old days will miss it. The secretary here ...declared, "A lot of fellas got hung and murdered and threw in the can because we pulled outlaw strikes, and that was the unforgivable sin." As the AFL and later the CIO gained in

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[3] Ibid., p. 230.

[4] Ibid., p. 233.

[5] Ibid., p. 247.

> strength, the more radical I.W.W. began to fade...."/We were/ hoping the younger fellas would take over, but it didn't materialize."[6]

The actual strength of the I.W.W. and other radical groups remains difficult to assess, but certain comparative information, such as that offered by Dunham on Detroit cited below, suggests that radicalism and rebellion were much more prevalent in earlier skid rows than now.

> In 1912 there were in "third party" votes /Socialist, Prohibition and National Progressive/...forty-five percent of the votes cast /by skid row men/. In 1952...third party candidates received approximately one percent of the total votes. The conclusion is inescapable that the homeless man is of a different vintage today--he has no political face, and with its loss all of his old fight and protest have disappeared.[7]

Wallace too has argued that modern skid rowers are removed from political involvement.

> The skid rower is isolated from political life... more than formerly. At the turn of the century the homeless man came to skid row on election day in order to sell his vote, again and again. ...When the golden era of the political machine passed he could still get his name on the list for municipal jobs like shoveling snow by registering with the party. Today there is nothing in politics for him and so he takes no part. Why should he take any interest in the affairs of a community from which he is outcast?[8]

These evaluations of skid rowers assume that they are alienated because they are no longer interested in radical parties or because politics no longer has any immediate

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[6]Charles Dunsire, "The Books Close on Hectic years for the Wobblies," The National Observer, June 15, 1965, p. 5.

[7]Dunham, op.cit., p. 36.

[8]Wallace, op.cit., p. 148.

rewards for their participation, and they are partially true. At the same time it is to be expected that skid rowers might hold some attitudes typical to those of other Americans favoring interest and involvement in politics and that they therefore might not be completely alienated with regard to politics.

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

Skid row is a community with such apparent political characteristics as low voting registration and a lack of municipal or national influence. Nevertheless, two-thirds of the respondents in this study held that "it is very important to be interested and informed in politics" while only 30 men denied this. Just 39, however, felt that they had "maintained an interest and been informed in politics," while 58 did not. This and further evidence provided below suggest that, while skid rowers are willing to support the normative system of American politics, they experience a large amount of powerlessness with regard to doing so.

Fifty-one respondents had voted in the 1960 presidential election. (Among registered American voters, 64.5% did so.[9]) Other respondents indicated that they would have voted if they had been registered or informed on proper procedures. Sixty-nine men claimed to have been interested in that election. Two-thirds stated that they intended to vote in the 1964 election and 29 said they did not. Among these who intended to do so, about four-fifths said they would because "it was a privilege," and most of the rest indicated "responsibility."

Forty-seven said they were "interested in local elections" and 50 that they were not. Sixty-five claimed to be Democrats, 17 said they were Republicans, while 12

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[9] Theodore H. White, The Making of the President-1960, p. 419.

called themselves "independent" and six declared "no interest in parties." No one claimed to be socialist in orientation (a revealing fact when compared with the strong socialist representation which once characterized skid row). Skid rowers here seemed to hold what are typical working class stereotypes of the parties similar to those found by Bogue.[10]

In order to probe their knowledge of politics, respondents were asked to name certain public office-holders (The U.S. President, Illinois' governor, one Illinois senator and Chicago's mayor). Forty men were able to name all four office-holders, 33 named three, 17 named two, five named one and five named none. Thus they showed a fair knowledge of government officials (considering the fact that many of them were relatively new to Illinois and Chicago), and this knowledge might not be greatly inferior to that of most Americans. Evidently skid rowers maintain some degree of interest in and knowledge of politics.

Six attitudinal items focusing on political issues were investigated in this study (See Table 30). It should be noted that the first five items are concerned with the ability (or power) to influence political affairs and politicians and, on all but one of these, the majority of respondents expressed alienation. The sixth item, which was concerned with a normative evaluation of the politicians' professions elicited much less alienation.

Certain other normative issues related to politics have already been treated (pp.136-142) and the reader is reminded that two-thirds of the respondents supported the

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[10] Bogue (op.cit., pp. 267-268) found the following common images held by most skid rowers. Democrats are "for the common people, keep the prosperity, take action when depression strikes and rescued the desperate in the 1930's." Republicans are "for wealth and power, the privileged few, and cause depressions."

values of "equality" and "democracy" while almost all agreed to the importance of "freedom." The attitudes of these skid rowers regarding politics, therefore, showed them to support important political norms of this society, but as was evidenced in Table 30, they also revealed an acute sense of powerlessness with regard to a perceived lack of political influence.

TABLE 30. ATTITUDES OF RESPONDENTS REGARDING POLITICS AND POLITICIANS

	Agree	Disagree	DK	Total
Politics and government are so complicated that the average man cannot really understand what is going on.	71*	20	9	100
Does the average man or people like yourself have much say in politics?**	65	27	8	100
In the long run, who gets elected, or doesn't, hasn't the slightest influence on social welfare.	46	43	11	100
Are most politicians more interested in the public's welfare (or in themselves)?**	59	24	17	100
There's little use writing public officials because they are not really interested in the problems of the average.	61	32	7	100
Politics is an honorable profession.	62	30	8	100

*Responses which were taken to reflect alienation are underlined for each item.
**Responses of yes or no to these statements were taken to reflect agreement and disagreement respectively.

B. RELIGION AND MISSIONS IN SKID ROW

Certain religious institutions, including some Christian practices (e.g., Sunday behavior), and the Protestant Ethic are important parts of American culture and are observed in some fashion by most groups of this

society. Religious associational activities are most practiced in the middle and upper class, but they are encouraged on all social levels (take, for example, slogans such as "Worship in the church of your choice" and the practice by judges of sending delinquents to church).

Skid row men, like other lower class people, might be expected to be less active in religious associations than most other Americans, but they seem to have a rather unique activity pattern with regard to "rescue missions." In addition, there is evidence that their belief systems are at least as orthodox and fundamentalistic as those of most other Americans.[11] Nevertheless, some observers, especially those connected with religious causes, frequently testify to a religious alienation among skid rowers. In this regard many Christians take skid rowers to be unregenerates who are trying to hide from God or rebel against Him. Skid rowers are thought to be among those most alienated from God, and, as evidence, their "miserable and drunken sinful life on skid row" is pointed out. They, therefore, are taken as extremely important objects for missionary attention.

The rescue missions were established very early as ways of helping the "down and out" to a spiritual and physical recovery. Most of them continue to perform a role of fundamentalistic evangelism but an increasing number stress a "social gospel" role.[12] Some observers are extremely critical of the missions' function in the community and argue that the missions, in their unrealistic approaches to skid row problems, do a disservice and further alienate men. An investigating minister reported candidly that,

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[11] Bogue, for instance found that 95% of his respondents believed in God, (op.cit., p. 264).

[12] Rev. C. K. Meyer, "Four Days as Skid Row Bum," Detroit Free Press, Jan. 23, 1965, p. 4A.

> ...the men who sit passively in the church enduring the services really hate /the evangelists/. Many times they expressed their hatred, but I can't tell you what they told me. It's unprintable....I was certainly disillusioned with these gospel missions....when people slept, they got poked. One night an evangelist threw a man out and manhandled him and left him in a lot across the street....I went to check on the man, but found some of his skid row friends were already taking care of him. /Emphasis mine./[13]

The mission workers, in their concern with the need to "save men for eternity," put on a rather consistent ritualistic performance which would appear to have a very negative effect upon the men. In its extreme versions, it occurs much as follows:

> 'We're sinners like you. The only difference is that we've got grace.' The workers revel in the sins which might be those of skid row men. Men and women who know little of the Bowery life are naive in their approaches toward the men....The pain /the mission worker/ promises...is the licking of hell-fire on the soles of feet....The /men's/ coughing, groaning, sneezing and wheezing continue. Some...have bent their heads as if in prayer during the sermon ...their heads fall lower and lower /but/ he will not rest until he has saved a soul....A few hands are raised....A thanks is said for this and "for the food we are about to eat." /The workers/ troop off to the staff kitchen for coffee and cake while ...the men, rescued and unrescued alike, troop downstairs...for a black brew ladled out by an attendant rescued but recently from the street /and/ two pieces of white bread.[14]

As compared to that of skid rowers, the perspective of the mission workers, who maintain their unique pattern of interaction with skid rowers everyday, is certainly

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[13] Meyer, op.cit., p. 4.

[14] Bendiner, op.cit., pp. 106, 110-113.

different. While "scoffing rowers call them 'Hallelujah Boys,' they define themselves as 'people who are sent to deliver those who need us from actual or impending calamity.'"[15]

Although the missions certainly do perform important functions in supplying food and lodging (without governmental "red tape") along with psychological and religious help to the most needy and dependent skid rowers, their service is generally ineffective because of a general factor which Bagdikian makes clear.

> There's one trouble with the religious people down here....[While there is] no question that their own feelings bring them here...their appeal is a narrow one. There are relatively few men who can accept the kind of special, fundamentalistic commitments to religion which is the only salvation they are offered. It's alien to most of the men, especially the men who are really looking for a way out.[16]

Despite such limitation, and though some skid rowers despise missions and "mission stiffs," many men use the missions intensively. Some do so for religious reasons and others because they are in material need. Some of them develop a chronic dependence on the missions. Many skid rowers appreciate the missions' ameliorative and religious purposes. There is some truth to the assertion of one mission worker that even the most disdainful of skid row men are careful not to insult the missions since "they realize they may need us some day."[17]

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

Eighty-nine men agreed that "religion is a very important part of life," while the rest disagreed; but

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[15] Ibid., p. 138.

[16] Bagdikian, op.cit., p. 63.

[17] From a personal interview.

fewer (75 men) felt that they "had succeeded in" their religious lives, while 23 thought they had not. Thus religious activity as a normative part of life was strongly approved and though powerlessness occurred more often, a large majority still expressed a sense of power and achievement in their religious experiences.

As Table 31 shows, most respondents did participate regularly in religious activities and had done so recently. Moreover, they claimed religious motives for doing so. In addition they often traced some membership in religious denominations though this did not necessarily reflect any present activity or identification in regard to those denominations.

TABLE 31. RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES AND MEMBERSHIP OF RESPONDENTS

a. Do you attend the missions?

	N
Yes	46
Sometimes	13
No	41
Total	100

b. Do you participate in the religious services?

	N
Yes	61
Sometimes	13
No	26
Total	100

c. When did you last attend?

	N
Today or last night	24
2-7 days ago	25
1 to 2 weeks ago	5
2 weeks to a month ago	9
1 to 6 months ago	10
6 months to a year ago	5
1 to 5 years ago	5
Over 5 years ago	7
Never	8
No answer	2
Total	100

d. Why do you attend?

	N
Services	66
Meals and/or bed	22
To pass time	1
No answer	11
Total	100

e. Are you a member of any religious group?

		N
Fundamentalistic:	Baptist, Nazarene, Christian Scientists	13
More established churches:	Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist	14
(More general specification)	Protestant, active	8
	Protestant, inactive	3
	Catholic, active	11
	Catholic, inactive	12
	None	39
	Total	100

Respondents were further asked, with an open-ended question, what they thought of religious organizations.[18] Eighty-nine men made generally positive statements about religious organizations and some of these referred specifically to the missions' religious and social roles. Religion as an institution in American society, therefore, was neither something against which skid rowers rebelled, nor was it something from which many were attempting to escape. Their response to the first two items in Table 32 shows an involvement in traditional beliefs. A greater but still minority alienation was expressed with regard to the last three items which seem to treat more abstract and relative questions about life.

Such issues of morality, clearly related to Christianity and derivative humanistic forms, as have been treated (p.138) again suggested a conformity and lack of alienation among skid rowers since 94 men accepted the "Golden Rule," and 91 agreed to the idea of man bringing about a better world (the human programs theme). It was also noted (p.139) that tolerance of other religious groups was greater than tolerance of other social groups. Finally, while norms of morality were held to be understandable in that 72 men felt that it is usually easy to know "the right things to do," a majority expressed their own powerlessness in maintaining morality, that is only 45 claimed that they had "been able to do the right things in life."

In summary, religious alienation does not seem to be an important characteristic of the skid row community, although there are important limitations as to the functions of missions there. Most skid row men seem to understand and

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[18] Bogue (op.cit., p. 262) in a similar pursuit asked, "Since these men are at the very bottom of the social scale and can hope for little, do they tend to have mutinous ideas about religion." He cited 92 percent as "sympathetic toward religious organizations in general.

feel successful with regard to traditional religious ideas, but about half admitted some failure in regard to their moral or humanitarian relationships with other people.

TABLE 32. ATTITUDES OF RESPONDENTS REGARDING CERTAIN RELIGIOUS ISSUES

	Agree	Disagree	DK	Total
Life is the result of chance and evolution rather than divine purpose.	18*	72	10	100
Religion is mostly myth rather than truth.	15	78	7	100
I often wonder what the meaning of life really is.	55	31	14	100
Everything in life is relative and there just aren't enough definite rules to live by.	40	46	14	100
With so many religions around, one really doesn't know which to believe.	45	52	3	100
(Response of students to the final item	70%	22%	8%	100%)

*Responses which were taken to represent alienation were underlined for each item.

C. EDUCATION: SKID ROW AS A COMMUNITY OF "DROP OUTS"

Education is one final, and important, institutional pattern which will be examined in this study. Formal education, that is attendance at approved schools through the early years of life, is a consensually-approved and legally-enforced aspect of American culture. The failure of persons to follow this pattern, even beyond legal requirements, is often cited as a chief cause of such social problems as unemployment and crime.

Despite stereotypes of skid rowers as highly educated men living in skid row as a result of alcoholism or

alienation, men of the skid row community have relatively little education. Bogue reported that, "Although they appear to have been entirely capable of completing high school, most of these men [he found 78 percent] dropped out during grammar school or early high school."[19] Likewise, this writer, in a small 1963 study, found 61 percent failing to finish high school.[20]

FINDINGS IN THIS STUDY

It should be recalled that skid row at one time fostored its own distinct kind of education which, though limited, had a "Hobo College [providing] the rudiments of natural and social sciences," and a variety of other forums for the exchange of ideas.[21] Today what formal education there is for skid rowers is completely under outside auspices and often takes place outside of skid row. A few of the men take "adult education" classes run by the city, usually in order to learn various trades. Various rehabilitation agencies provide even more specific kinds of training, for example in machine operations.

The Reading Room might be considered the educational center of skid row today for it is the one place in which major facilities for reading are provided, but if such is the case, skid row education would appear to be of an extremely minimal nature. Few of the men seen in the Reading Room are engaged in reading or study. Not only might there be little interest and poor educational background among the men (as well as poor eyesight), but the rooms are poorly lit and the materials offered seem to be inferior by any usual standards. The few hundred books are cast-offs from other collections and even the best of these are probably missing. Magazines and

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[19] Bogue, op.cit., pp. 109-110.

[20] VanderKooi, op.cit., pp. 13-14.

[21] Anderson, op.cit., pp. 218-229, 237.

newspapers are usually out-of-date, and the writer found that some popular magazines he contributed were hoarded by staff members so that skid rowers probably never saw them. The hotels sometimes provide shelves of novels and magazines which some tenants use extensively, and these, with the Reading Room, seem to provide what educational facilities skid row has. Therefore it would seem that education, even by broad definition, seems of little importance in the skid row community. Whether this lack of educational and intellectual facilities and activities indicates any educational alienation among skid rowers raises certain questions which were briefly investigated in this study.

Skid rowers, like other Americans, have received an increasing amount of education in recent decades, but their education remains less than that of most Americans. The data here do appear to weaken contemporary beliefs about education as a means to economic success, since the education of skid rowers is adequate for better jobs than they hold. As Table 33 shows, 28 of the men had at least finished high school and thus could have qualified for a great many kinds of work which would be superior to those they held in skid row.

TABLE 33. RESPONDENTS' FORMAL EDUCATION

	N
No education	1
1 to 3 years	5
4 to 7 years	27
8 years	24
High school:	
1 to 3 years	15
4 years	14
College:	
1 to 3 years	10
4 years	1
Graduate or professional school	3
Total	100

Despite their limited education, 27 men felt that schooling had done them "much good" and 54, "some good." Only four felt that it had done "little good," and 13 that it had done them "no good." Thus they expressed little alienation with regard to their own educational experiences. Likewise, as shown in the treatment of lower class values, (p.146) only about a third showed any disillusionment with education in agreeing that "people in universities and colleges don't know what the real world is like." And less than a fourth disagreed with science as "the best thing to solve our problems."

Finally, 42 men agreed that "our public education is in pretty bad shape," (a sentiment which is probably shared by many other Americans in this era of civil rights and other educational problems) while 22 disagreed and over a third could not comment. Only a few of those who agreed to the statement had personal grievances about education, and most of the rest made comments typical of other Americans, about the failure of American education in maintaining this country in the "arms" and "space" races with Russia or about "delinquency" and "drop-out" problems. They seemed to have gained these attitudes from the mass media rather than from personal experiences. Thus, in the consistent pattern which has characterized our finding in general and now with regard to education, skid rowers showed a normative integration into American culture rather than alienation and isolation from it.

SUMMARY

1. Politics

The skid row community, while appearing to be politically isolated, at least provides for some political activity and for the interchange of information and attitudes among its members. Though politics were not predominantly mentioned among problems and complaints of skid rowers, a certain degree of powerlessness was manifested. While respondents tended to accept various

political norms about the importance of politics and activity therein, they showed an alienation with regard to their own influence on politics and politicians. They showed considerable adherence to consensual politics in the United States supporting only the two major parties; and little was expressed in terms of retreatism, rebellion or other nonconforming behavior regarding politics.

2. Religion

Skid rowers have a range of religious facilities in their communities available, and orthodox religious beliefs were held by most men. They showed little alienation toward religious ideologies or institutions. Though they did not tend to be active associational members, they did make extensive use of missions and generally showed their appreciation for the missions' functions. They accepted the normative importance of religion in life and generally felt successful in practicing it. They also accepted the idea of morality in regard to "doing right," but most respondents expressed some powerlessness with regard to so doing. Though some of the literature suggests that skid rowers avoid missions and religion and other sources assume that skid row is an escape from moral obligations, few respondents expressed any retreat, rebellious hostility or other alienation with regard to religious and moral objects.

3. Education

Skid rowers come to that community with little formal education and receive almost none there, although an important acculturation into life on skid row does occur. While ascribing to the importance of education, respondents often voluntarily expressed some powerlessness in having failed to obtain enough. They expressed a feeling of satisfaction in having obtained what they did. They did not seem to have consciously retreated from educational experiences and certainly were not in rebellion against the American educational system.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The skid rows of America began to develop after the Civil War and soon became clearly-recognizable areas in most major cities. They served as gathering places for unattached male workers who contributed much to the development of the American industrial economy over the past one hundred years. While skid rows served as employment centers, they also provided recreational areas for unattached males, and their drinking and "red light" activities soon earned skid rows a negative, even notorious definition in the perspective of most Americans. Since the Great Depression, the large numbers of mobile workers have not been as much in demand as before and, consequently, skid rows, along with their inhabitants, have become increasingly condemned. Skid row has seemed to recruit increasingly more alcoholics and other handicapped men rather than the "rough and ready" workers it formerly drew.

This study investigated the general belief that skid row is today populated by men who are alienated or estranged from American society thus either choosing skid row as an escape from society and/or being alienated as a result of their experiences in skid row. No pervasive evidences of such a high alienation was found (Hypothesis A). Although only limited data could be brought to bear upon this problem, some comparisons which were made with other populations, especially students, seemed to show relatively similar, rather than unique, attitudes for skid rowers.

The respondents in this study did express more alienation regarding certain potential objects than towards others in that they mentioned problems related to work, the skid row community and alcoholism more often than other problems (Hypothesis B). Likewise they tended to express more powerlessness, as an inability to succeed at certain activities, than normlessness, as a denial of the importance of the goals per se (Hypothesis C). Since

normlessness seems to represent the most basic type of alienation and powerlessness suggests an actual interest in the relevant norms, it would seem that this finding provides added evidence of the lack of a complete skid row alienation.

The "adaptive behavior" of skid row men as classified in conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion received some exploratory considerations and, although many observers claim that retreatism is the prominent characteristic of modern skid rowers, no evidence for such an interpretation was obtained in this study (Hypothesis D). Conformity to major American activity and attitudinal patterns was evidenced much more often than any of the nonconforming patterns, and retreatism was no more prominent than rebellion as they were observed here.

A large number of statistical tests were made in order to observe the relationships between a rather general "Meaning of Life" alienation and more specific types of alienation, and of each of these with certain activity patterns and personal attributes of skid rowers. The general alienation was related to the more specific kinds in about one third of the subhypotheses tested (Hypothesis G) and to many specific, usually negatively-valued, activities or personal attributes in about the same proportion (Hypothesis E). Specific kinds of alienation were related to specific, usually negatively-valued, activities or attributes in a slightly larger proportion of cases (Hypothesis H). Specific kinds of alienation were related to time spent in skid row in a much smaller proportion of cases (Hypothesis F).

In the body of descriptive findings, Chapters Seven through Ten, attention was given to various social relationships of skid rowers as well as to the institutions of work, recreation, politics, religion and education. In all of these the respondents in this study exhibited what appeared to be rather typical American attitudes even

though their circumstances in regard to these institutions were clearly disadvantaged as compared to the circumstances of most Americans. These unfavorable circumstances did seem to result in some feelings of powerlessness as a form of alienation, as compared with normlessness, i.e. while the respondents of this study tended to concur with American norms regarding these institutions, they often admitted their inability in fulfilling these norms. While some care must be taken in interpreting these findings, it would seem that they could be helpful in providing an understanding of the skid row community and subculture and the functions these serve.

Since about 1955, American skid rows have been experiencing increasing change. While the personal rehabilitation of its men has received growing attention, the more important change affecting skid rows has resulted from the physical destruction of many skid row facilities and, sometimes, of whole skid row areas. Carried out both by government (usually urban renewal agencies) and private enterprise, this destruction has been motivated by the deteriorating nature of skid row areas and their anticipated higher earnings in non-skid row uses.

A common saying that, when skid rows are demolished, their inhabitants simply move on to form other skid rows is partly true. At the same time some of the men are diffused into other parts of the city or to other cities, a phenomenon not greatly appreciated by the residents of these other locations. Within a short time some businessmen decide to cater to these men, converting their lodging places, taverns and other service institutions into the inexpensive, heavily-used establishments similar to those which were found in the original skid rows. While the original facilities, located near the central business district, may have been unacceptable to the cities, the modified versions of them which appear in new areas tend to be less complete, more expensive and less functional.

No longer available are the kind of settings which provided basic comforts and a feeling of companionship to unattached men even to such persons as those over 65 and those with missing limbs.

This study has demonstrated the existence of skid row as a community, and has suggested that this community is functional for the types of men that inhabit it. It would suggest that urban renewal plans for skid row areas should also include plans, not simply for relocating the men, but also for a carefully conceived relocation (and considerable upgrading) of the community. The new community would be a voluntary one, just as the old one was; and the agencies of personal rehabilitation would continue, with increased effort (and financial backing), in giving alcoholics and men who are otherwise handicapped the assistance necessary in routing themselves back into other American communities.

For those aged men and others who would prefer to remain in a skid row or unattached male community, however, it would be important to provide adequate housing, eating and drinking places, employment agencies, workingmen's clothing and supply stores, missions, physical and mental health clinics, and other facilities. Besides these, the writer would urge that adequate information centers be established in order to provide basic knowledge (e.g. regarding Medicare), as well as information concerning "ways out" of the skid row community for those who are motivated to leave it. Considering the governmental "war on poverty" and the fact that good programs for unattached men can be profitable for businessmen, there is now considerable incentive for developing all these facilities in a way which radically upgrades the skid row community while it continues to provide the services skid rowers need and want.

Although what has been written here regarding changing skid rows and suggestions for urban renewal is obviously

supported by the findings of this study and is clearly important--no doubt it is the most important issue facing skid rows today--it must be admitted that the research which was done here had important limitations. Our findings would suggest that further research in certain areas would have considerable merit, and a few of these areas should be briefly treated.

Perhaps the most enlightening findings of this study concerned certain patterns of social interaction that characterize skid rowers. In regard to social relationships in families and with friends and also in reference to women (with the related issue of sex) and finally self, this study managed to advance beyond subjective impressions usually presented in the literature. The evidences that many of these kinds of social relationships are important to skid rowers certainly should encourage much more intensive research with regard to such issues as small group activities within skid row as well as interactions with family members and other persons outside skid row. The evidence should likewise stimulate more careful investigations into the nature of community activities and attitudes in skid row and then hopefully lead to comparable studies in other communities thus making possible the advancement of a more empirically-based theory of community per se.

Though this study seemed to demonstrate the existence of skid row as a community, it did not discover a markedly deviant set of values which distinguish that community. If skid row can be called a subculture, it would appear to arise from the fact that age, alcoholism, lack of vocational skill and other handicaps force the members into the kind of atypical existence which is found in skid row. Residents of skid row have become accustomed to life in a community which outsiders usually label as dirty and unfriendly; and, finding it tolerant of their personal habits and handicaps, most skid rowers will probably

continue to desire such a community. Moreover, skid row will continue to recruit some men as a result of alcoholism, severe unemployment in certain areas of the country and other social problems. Unless massive and perhaps undesirable programs are undertaken to route skid rowers, man by man, into other American communities, skid rows will exist for decades to come; and it would seem best for the agencies concerned to develop well-planned, humanitarian programs maintaining, at the least, the facilities and functions which traditional skid rows have provided.

Finally, brief attention should be paid here to the concept of alienation. While it served as a crucial measure in this examination of the skid row community, it also would seem to be a useful perspective by which social scientists can observe many contemporary social systems. The problems of operationalizing alienation were by no means fully solved in this study and this task must continue. The utility of the concept of alienation as an explanatory tool will be advanced only if many scientists are willing to experiment with it, while consistently working toward a common definition. In this study it was found that alienation could most appropriately be treated as an object-related phenomenon and that, therefore, more specific kinds of alienation were more meaningful than any generalized, personality-bound, kind of alienation. Alienation with regard to various objects could well be dichotomized into two types: normlessness, constituting a denial of or confusion concerning various institutionalized ways of doing things or powerlessness, representing an inability to fulfill these norms. An examination of Merton's "modes of adaptation" led this writer to the expectation that alienation would be related to the behavioral rejection of institutionalized means and goals and consequent innovation, ritualism, retreatism or rebellion, and, while such other possible behaviors as

or perhaps slightly less than is anticipated, there is reason for supposing that alienation is related to what are deviant or nonconforming types of behavior. For the reasons discussed above, the perspective of alienation, fortressed by a careful defining of the concept and its ingredients and its relationship to behavior, should continue to be developed for the valuable assistance it can give to examining significant sociological problems.

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A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX A

In a summary approach, the question of skid row retreatism, rebellion and conformity questionnaires were sent to twelve professional workers and businessmen (especially mission directors and hotel managers) in skid row, and six responded. The majority tended to suggest that skid rowers were retreatists and not rebels, but conformity and other modes were also suggested. While they were not asked about ritualism or innovation, it is expected that they would have given these only limited support.

A. First they were asked generally about "ritualism... rebellion...and conformity," and in their response, four at least thought retreat was the best description of skid row behavior, one argued for conformity and one that skid rowers cannot be categorized.

Q. Some people have written that the average skid row man is one who has "retreated" from normal society. Others think that he is in "rebellion" against society. Still others think that he is simply conforming to a lower class life not too different from that in which he was raised and spent most of his life. What is your opinion and comment with regard to these?

A. 1. He cannot take the pressures of our moral standards which are hypocritic and, therefore, retreats from our double standards.

2. I agree that the average skid row man is one who has retreated from normal society. He has lost his incentive to live as does normal society, (sic.) and therefore he takes the easy way out. Where the standards are lower etc.

3. I definitely feel that the average skid row man is in retreat from normal society. For various reasons, buried in the past, he feels inadequate and is not able to cope with the pressures and responsibilities of "normal" society. He is not a "rebel," in the true sense of the word, as his behavior is not aggressive; he stands for nothing in particular and is not truly anti-social. His is a policy of "laissez faire." He wants only to be left alone and to have nothing expected of him. He is not simply "conforming" to a way of life he has been used to for most of his life, as he is usually quite intelligent and in many cases comes from a much higher strata of society and even in some cases from

the professions. On the contrary, he has "turned his back" on his former environment and fled into a world where life makes only very minimal demands upon him.

4. We think that he is simply conforming to a lower class life, not too different from the environment in which he was raised and spent most of his life.

5. I don't think that you can categorize these men. At this clinic we deal only with alcoholics. These men we have studied intensively and find that there is no way you can categorize them. We find neurotics, psychotics and character disorders among them.

6. The average man has retreated from normal society but does not rebel against it; he just refuses to have any responsibilities.

B. These professionals were also asked about particular modes of adaptation. Asked, "In what ways do you see the skid row men as conformers?" four said that skid rowers do conform to a certain extent, one that they do not, and one answer was inappropriate.

1. There is certainly a conformity by these men to skid row society. Even on "the street" he (sic.) must get along with those around him. They have a "code of their own," uncomplicated but, in its own way, quite rigid. For example, if they borrow or lend small sums of money, they expect to pay or be repaid; if one of their number is intoxicated, he is protected by his friends from arrest by concealment from the police. Also, it is an unwritten law that no one "informs" on another and no one inquires into another's past. These and other "taboos" make for a loose knit type of conformity on skid row.

2. We think the average Skid Row man is not satisfied and would apply himself to better living conditions.

3. As I understand this question - there isn't any conscious conformity. There is an acceptance and respect of each other's anonymity. The men are aware of living as people ordinarily live but this freedom of not caring or not having any responsibility out weighs these pleasures.

4. In order to exist on skid row there have (sic.) to be a certain amount of conformity to the skid row mores.

5. No such thing.

6. They all have prejudices (sic.).

C. They were asked, "In what ways do you see the skid row men as conformers in American society?" and three answered affirmatively, while three did not answer. One of them expanded as follows.

1. His conformity to American society is minimal. He usually conforms to and respects the law, simply because he wants to stay out of trouble and remain anonymous. He works for a dollar because he knows this is the only safe way to get it, but he considers himself responsible to no one but himself and takes little or no interest in the standards, ideals or expectations of a society of which he does not feel himself to be a part, for reasons known only to himself.

2. We think the average conforms to his limited concept of American living.

3. Yes /Evidently he saw skid rowers as conformers, though he did not understand the question./

D. Asked whether they saw "skid row men as rebels in American society," four answered "no" and one did not answer. Their emphatic denial is revealing evidence on the issue.

1. I do not consider the average skid-row man to be a rebel. He is not "fighting" anything or aggressively scorning society. He knows that he is a misfit, but simply doesn't care. He is a man with too little hope or desire for change to fit into any sort of "rebel" category.

2. We do not think that he is a "Rebel" to American society: but was (sic.) dissatisfied with his former environment and drifted to Skid Row. He is still dissatisfied on Skid Row.

3. If they cared enough to rebel - they probably would not live in this manner.

4. The alcoholics are not rebels; they are sick emotionally.

5. None

E. In connection with this, they were asked why they thought "Communism, atheism and socialism (as rebellious movements) have such little effect on skid row men," and of the six who responded, three said that these movements were not meaningful or significant to them, one that they had no spirit to fight for such causes, one that they were "loyal Americans" and one "did't know."

1. These do not effect him as he feels they do not concern him and have nothing to offer him. He sees himself as a sort of "outcast" of society and in his depressed state of mind is content to stay that way. He lives from day to day, is unconcerned with politics or ideologies and would not make any effort to affiliate with any group as this would destroy his safe anonymity and make demands upon him.

2. We think Communism, Atheism (sic.), Socialism etc., have little effect on Skid row man because he believes they promise no immediate alleviation of his need.

3. They are just words and as such are intangible to them and have little effect from any of these dogmas.

4. He has lost interest and takes the easy way out.

5. They are all American First and Always.

6. I don't know.

F. Finally, they were asked, "In what ways are skid row men <u>retreaters</u> from American society," and the three that responded said:

1. ...He sees himself as adrift from the mainstream, reduced to merely existing with as little effort as possible. Due to either tragedy, emotional problems, alcohol or many other reasons, he has "given up." The only way he can live without overwhelming anxiety is to dodge any and all responsibility. He works simply for a place to sleep, a meal ticket, and a bottle and will refuse a job which entails any permanence or responsibility.

2. Because of feelings of inadequacy and inferiority the alcoholic retreats from society.

3. We think the average skid row man "retreats" from the American Society insofar as he finds himself unable to compete.

APPENDIX B

Below are the subhypotheses tested in regard to Hypotheses E, F, G and H ("S" indicates relationships which were found to be significant at the .05 level thus supporting respectively Hypotheses E, G and H and failing to support Hypothesis F. In each significant case, the strength of association is also reported in terms of Pearson's Corrected Coefficent of Contingency.)

1. Hypothesis E: These would express greater "Meaning of Life" alienation than others.

Daily Activities

1. Men who had no plans on rising for the previous day.
2. Men who spent the previous day in ways other than working or seeking work.
3. Men who state that there was nothing particular they did on weekends.

"Faith in People"

S. 4. Men who show less of Rosenberg's "Faith in People" (C'=.48) (This association, a strong one, was especially important in that it was between a five-item scale concerning the significant issue of human nature and the five item scale of the already discussed "Meaning of Life" issue.)

Social Class

S. 5. Men who say that their social position is lower than that of their parents. (C'=.42)

Community Factors

6. Men who have moved more than ten times in the last two years.
7. Men who reside in public shelters, missions and jails, or outside rather than in rented quarters.
8. Men who have been in skid row longer than ten years.

Community Problems

9. Men who report they have ever been cheated by employers or businessmen.

10. Men who report they have been arrested by police two or more times.

S. 11. Men who report that they have ever jackrolled others. (C'=.32)

12. Men who report they have ever participated in stealing from businesses.

Race

13. Men who are not white Americans in race and nationality.

The Family

14. Men who left their parents before reaching 17 years.

S. 15. Men who left their parents after reaching the age of 28 expressed significantly more "Meaning of Life" alienation than others. (C'=.35)

S. 16. Men who do not communicate with their families expressed significantly more "Meaning of Life" alienation than others. (C'=.32)

17. Men who never married.

18. Men whose marriage was broken by divorce or separation.

Friends

19. Men who were not able to cite a closest friend.

20. Men who had not seen their "closest friend" within the last month.

21. Men who had known their "closest friend" less than eight years.

S. 22. Men who claim they did not "have good friends in life." (C'=.27)

S. 23. Men who claim to spend most of their time alone. (C'=.36)

24. Men whose "last time in a group" was more than a week ago.

Women and Sex

25. Men who state that their most recent encounter with a woman was with a casual or professional prostitute.

26. Men who claim they have not had sex in the past month.

Self

S. 27. Men who are judged by the interviewer as not being mentally healthy. (C'=.29)

28. Men whose intelligence is judged as less than normal.

S. 29. Men whose appearance is judged relatively dishevelled or dirty. (C'=.31)

30. Men who are older than 49 years.

Work Conditions

31. Men who were paid less than $1.25 per hour on their most recent job.

32. Men whose first job was an unskilled or semi-skilled one.

33. Men whose "best job ever" was an unskilled or semi-skilled one.

34. Men who had worked less than four months in the previous six.

Finances

S. 35. Men who spend less than $12.01 per week. (C'=.24)

36. Men who receive welfare.

37. Men who have financial resources of less than $10.00.

Recreation

S. 38. Men who state that they used their free time for nothing, for sitting around, talking, loafing, or just relaxing. (C'=.28)

S. 39. Men who do not participate in mass leisure of television and movies. (C'=.26)

S. 40. Men who do not go to the movies. (C'=.31)

41. Men who do not participate in physical activities (walking, playing pool).

42. Men who do not participate in mental activities (reading, playing cards, checkers and chess).

43. Men who do participate in certain "negatively judged" activities (pool, drinking, gambling).

44. Men who participate in fewer of the recreation activities listed in this study.

S. 45. Men who read less than an hour per day. (C'=.32)

Drinking

46. Men who are not teetotalers or light drinkers.

47. Men who drank more than moderately the day before (more than three beers, 2 glasses of wine, or 1 liquor).

Politics

48. Men who did not vote in the 1960 presidential elections.

S. 49. Men who are not Democrats. (C'=.26)

S. 50. Men who knew fewer than three holders of the following offices: U.S. President, Governor of Illinois and one Illinois Senator, and Chicago's Mayor. (C'=.36)

S. 51. Men who did not vote in 1960 and knew fewer than three of the office-holders. (C'=.37)

Religion

52. Men who do not claim to participate in religious activities.

53. Men who did not attend a mission or church within the past week.

54. Men who claim no membership in the various denominations and Christian religions.

Education

S. 55. Men who received eight or fewer years of education. (C'=.28)

2. Hypothesis F: These will have spent more time on Skid Row than others.

Americans

1. Men who judge "average Americans" in negative ways.

American Value-Orientations

2. Men who do not agree that work is a very important part of life.

3. Men who do not agree that if something is not practical it should not be done.

4. Men who do not agree that man can make this a better world.

5. Men who do not agree that science is the best thing to solve our problems.

6. Men who do not agree that they would rather spend their time in activities rather than in relaxing.

7. Men who do not agree that one should "do unto others as he would have others do unto him."

8. Men who do not agree that all men are equal.

9. Men who agree that it is better for white children to have swimming pools of their own.

10. Men who do not agree that freedom is our most important goal.

S. 11. Men who agree that it would be better to have a government run by a group of experts rather than the people. (C'=.32)

12. Men who do not agree that it is better to go along with others and do things the usual way rather than do things your own way.

The Lower Class and its Alleged Values

13. Men who agree that poor people are more honest and better friends than those who have money.

14. Men who agree that one should share what he has with others.

15. Men who agree that they should tolerate those who are drunk and dirty.

16. Men who agree that they would rather enjoy the present pleasures rather than put off for the future.

17. Men who agree that strict punishment is the best thing for those who get out of line.

18. Men who agree that people in higher positions such as fathers and employers should be obeyed at all times.

19. Men who agree that we should not put up with atheists and communists.

20. Men who agree that people in universities and colleges don't know what the real world is like.

The Family

21. Men who report unhappy childhoods.

S. 22. Men who agree that they would not marry again if they had the chance. (C'=.39)

23. Men who agree that married people lead trapped lives.

Friends

24. Men who do not agree that they have had good friends in their lifetime.

Women and Sex

S. 25. Men who report that sexual actually is not a necessary or helpful part of life. (C'=.37)

Self

26. Men who express dissatisfaction in evaluating themselves.

27. Men who consider themselves a failure.

28. Men who think that average Americans have negative ideas concerning skid row residents.

Work

29. Men who list any kind of job complaints.

Free Time

30. Men who do not agree that they have been able to use their free time well.

Drinking

31. Men who list reasons for drinking other than sociability or personal preference.

Politics

32. Men who do not agree that they have been interested and informed in politics.

33. Men who report no interest in the 1960 elections.

34. Men who state that they have not been interested in local elections.

S. 35. Men who agree that politics and government are too complicated for the average man to understand. (C'=.32)

S. 36. Men who agree that the average man has little say in politics. (C'=.37)

Religion

37. Men who do not agree that they have been satisfied with their religious life.

S. 38. Men who state that they are against religious organizations. (C'=.36)

39. Men who agree that religion is a very important part of life.

40. Men who agree that life is the result of chance and evolution rather than divine purpose.

Adventure

41. Men who state that they have not been satisfied with their education.

3. Hypothesis G: These will express greater "Meaning of Life" alienation than others.

Americans

1. Men who judge "average Americans" in negative ways.

American Value-Orientations

2. Men who do not agree that work is a very important part of life.

3. Men who do not agree that if something is not practical it should not be done.

4. Men who do not agree that man can make this a better world.

5. Men who do not agree that science is the best thing to solve our problems.

S. 6. Men who do not agree that they would rather spend their time in activities rather than in relaxing. (C'=.28)

7. Men who do not agree that one should "do unto others as he would have others do unto him."

8. Men who do not agree that all men are equal.

S. 9. Men who do agree that it would be better if white children had swimming pools of their own. (C'=.37)

10. Men who do not agree that freedom is our most important goal.

11. Men who agree that it would be better to have government run by a group of experts rather than by the people.

S. 12. Men who do not agree that it is better to go along with others and do things the usual way rather than do things your own way. (C'=.34)

Lower Class Values

S. 13. Men who agree that poor people are more honest and better friends than those who have money. (C'=.42)

14. Men who agree that one should share what he has with others.

15. Men who agree that they should tolerate those who are drunk and dirty.

16. Men who agree that they would rather enjoy the present pleasures rather than put off for the future.

17. Men who agree that strict punishment is the best thing for those who get out of line.

S. 18. Men who agree that people in higher positions, such as fathers and employers, should be obeyed at all times. (C'=.30)

S. 19. Men who agree that we should not put up with atheists and communists. (C'=.25)

S. 20. Men who agree that people in universities and colleges don't know what the real world is like. (C'=.53)

The Family

21. Men who report unhappy childhoods.

22. Men who agree that they would not marry again if they had the chance.

S. 23. Men who agree that "Married people lead trapped lives." (C'=.49)

Friends

S. 24. Men who do not agree that they have had good friends in their lifetime. (C'=.27)

Women and Sex

25. Men who report that sexual activity is not a necessary or helpful part of life.

Self

26. Men who express dissatisfaction in evaluating themselves.

27. Men who consider themselves a failure.

28. Men who think that average Americans have negative ideas concerning skid row residents.

Work

29. Men who list any kind of job complaints.

Free Time

30. Men who do not agree that they have been able to use their free time well.

Drinking

31. Men who list reasons for drinking other than sociability or personal preference.

Politics

S. 32. Men who do not agree that they have been interested and informed in politics. (C'=.34)

33. Men who report no interest in the 1960 election.

34. Men who state that they have not been interested in local election.

35. Men who agree that politics and government are too complex for the average man to understand.

36. Men who agree that the average man has little say in politics.

Religion

37. Men who do not agree that they have been satisfied with their religious life.

S. 38. Men who state that they were against religious organizations. (C'=.31)

39. Men who agree that religion is a very important part of life.

40. Men who agree that life is the result of chance and evolution rather than divine purpose.

Education

S. 41. Men who state that they had not been satisfied with (their) education. (C'=.29)

4. Hypothesis H: These activities or personal attributes would be directly related to alienation in these same specific institutional areas.

The Community

1. Men who have had a shorter stay on skid row would claim that they were "not used to life in the West Madison area" more often than others.

2. Men who live in public shelters, i.e. missions and jails, or outside would claim that they were "not used to life in the West Madison area" more often than others.

Community Problems

3. Men who have ever been jackrolled would claim that they were "not used to life in the West Madison area" more often than others.

4. Men who claim that they had been cheated by employers or businessmen would claim that they were "not used to life in the West Madison area" more often than others.

5. Men who state that they had been arrested by police more than once would claim that they were "not used to life in the West Madison area" more often than others.

The Family

S. 6. Men whose marriage had been broken by divorce or separation would agree that they would marry again if they had the chance more often than others. (C'=.35)

S. 7. Men who had married would agree that married people lead trapped lives more often than others. (C'=.42)

S. 8. Men who left home before 17 years of age would report that their childhood was unhappy more often than others. (C'=.30)

Friends

S. 9. Men who list no good friends would state that they had not succeeded "in having friends in life" more often than others. (C'=.35)

10. Men who did not see their friends within the past week would agree that "they had succeeded in having good friends" less often than others.

11. Men who are unable to cite a "closest friend" would score lower (less faith) in Rosenberg's "Faith in People" scale than others.

S. 12. Men who state that they had no good friends would express low "Faith in People" more often than others. (C'=.27)

13. Men who report that they spent most of their time alone would score lower in Rosenberg's "Faith in People" scale.

14. Men who report that the last time they were in a group was at least a week ago would report lower scores in Rosenberg's "Faith in People" scale.

Women and Sex

15. Men who were not sexually active in the past month would agree that sexual activity was a "good idea" less often than others.

Self

16. Men who are estimated by the interviewer to be less than normal in personal adjustment would describe themselves as less than well-adjusted more often than others.

S. 17. Men who are older would agree that they "worry about the idea of getting older more often than others." (C'=.26)

Work and Finances

18. Men who have been employed less in the last six months would agree that they had "succeeded in their work life" less often than others.

19. Men who report lower pay on their current jobs would agree that they had "succeeded in their work life" less often than others.

20. Men who respond positively to an inquiry concerning "complaints about their present job" would agree that they had "succeeded in their work life" less often than others.

21. Men whose "best job ever" had been an unskilled or semi-skilled one would agree that they had "succeeded in their work life" less often than others.

22. Men who have no more than $10 in savings and material goods would more often agree that they would rather work just enough to get by than others.

Free Time

23. Men who list no recreational uses of free time

in an open-end question would agree with the statement, "Free time is a very important part of life" less often than others.

S. 24. Men who are more active in a list of recreational activities would state that they "would rather be active than just relax," more often than others. (C'=.38)

Politics

S. 25. Men who state that they had been interested in the 1960 election would agree that "it is important to be interested and informed in politics" more often than others. (C'=.26)

S. 26. Men who knew at least three of these (President, Illinois' Governor and one Senator and Chicago's Mayor) would agree that they had succeeded and kept informed in politics more often than others. (C'=.24)

Religion

27. Men who did not participate in religious activities would agree that "religion is a very important part of life" less often than others.

Education

28. Men who received less than 9 years of education would express little or no satisfaction with their education more often than others.

S. 29. Men who have less than eight years of education would agree that "public education is in pretty bad shape" more often than others. (C'=.44)