



141580
141584

QUESTIONS
DECEASED

92215-00157
1-5-91

GRAY'S
ANATOMY

DECEASED

March 1993
Volume 62
Number 3

United States
Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of
Investigation
Washington, DC 20535

William S. Sessions,
Director

Contributors' opinions and statements should not be considered as an endorsement for any policy, program, or service by the FBI.

The Attorney General has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business required by law. Use of funds for printing this periodical has been approved by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

The *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* (ISSN-0014-5688) is published monthly by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, 10th and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20535. Second-Class postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D.C. 20535.

Editor

Dr. Stephen D. Gladis

Managing Editor

Kathryn E. Sulewski

Art Director

John E. Ott

Associate Editors

Andrew DiRosa

Karen F. McCarron

Kimberly J. Waggoner

Assistant Art Director

Amelia J. Brooks

Staff Assistant

Darlene J. Butler

Cover photo by
Jeffrey Miller

FBI Law Enforcement

B ♦ U ♦ L ♦ L ♦ E ♦ T ♦ I ♦ N



Features

141580

Unsolved Homicides Team

By Henry Poole and
Stephen Jurovics

1

The North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation uses a special team of investigators to solve unsolved homicides throughout the State.

141581

Police Response to Street People

By David L. Carter
and Allen D. Sapp

5

A recent survey reflects current attitudes of police administrators regarding the homeless.

141582

Forensic Examination of Money Laundering Records

By James O. Beasley II

13

The Racketeering Records Analysis Unit of the FBI Laboratory assists investigators and prosecutors in developing money laundering cases.

141583

Asset Forfeiture Units

By Robert Lombardo

20

Asset forfeiture units assist agencies to realize the full potential of asset forfeiture law.

141584

Pregnancy and Maternity Leave Policies

By Jeffrey Higginbotham

27

Under Federal law, employers cannot discriminate against female employees based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.



Page 10



Page 13

Departments

4 Crime Data
Hate Crimes

10 Police Practices
Community Volunteers

12 Video Review
Missing and
Exploited Children

NCJRS Point of View
Effective Supervision

MAR 25 1993

**U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice**

141580-
141584

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice.

Permission to reproduce this copyrighted material has been granted by

FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin

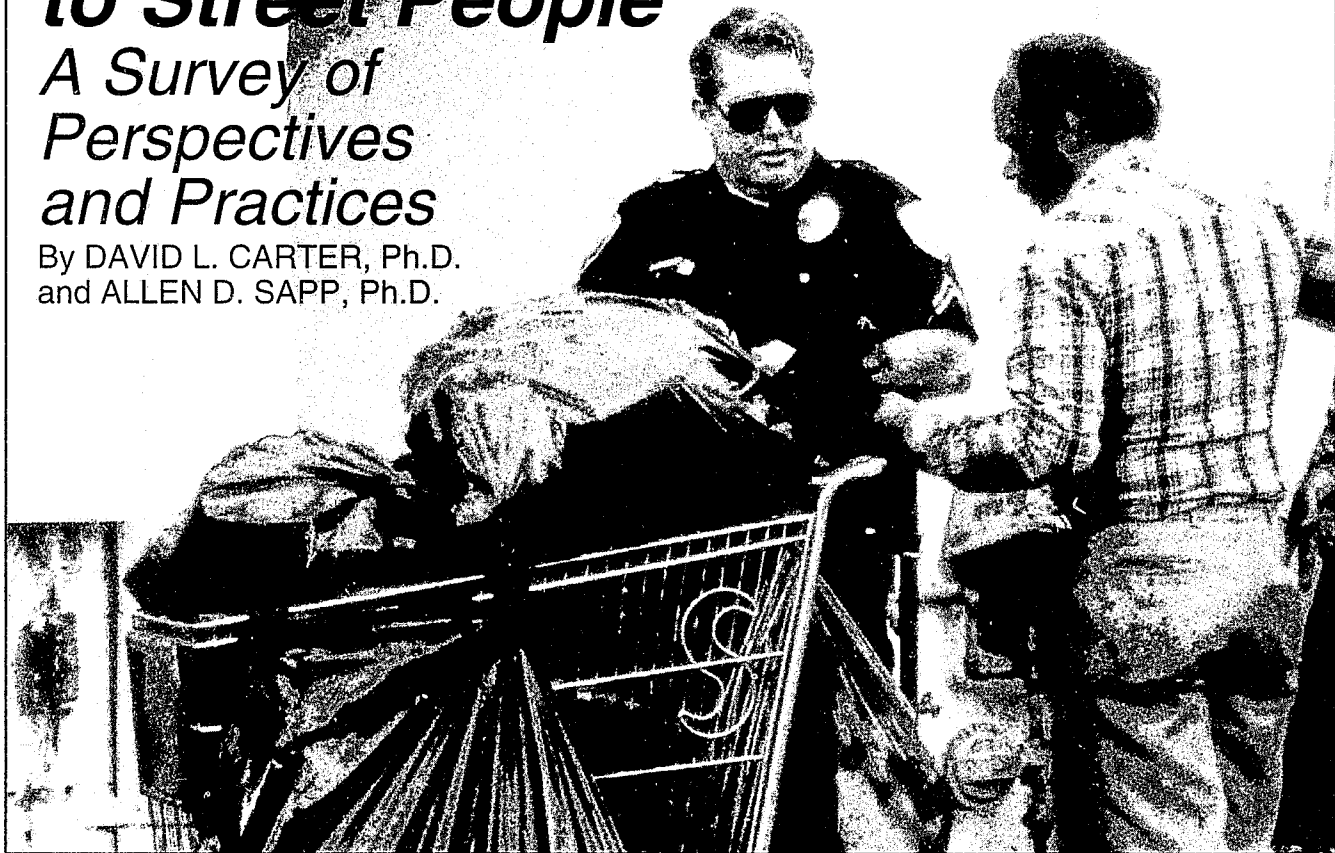
to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Further reproduction outside of the NCJRS system requires permission of the copyright owner.

Police Response to Street People

A Survey of Perspectives and Practices

By DAVID L. CARTER, Ph.D. and ALLEN D. SAPP, Ph.D.



A growing awareness concerning the homeless in our society prompts questions concerning government responses to the problem. However, this quickly reveals a kind of paradox, since few jurisdictions operate government agencies with the responsibility or resources to deal adequately with the diverse needs of the homeless. These unfulfilled needs range from the obvious—food and shelter—to the more subtle but no less serious—mental and physical rehabilitation, substance abuse treatment, physical safety, child care, education, and skills training.

Yet, except for the police, many locales have no 24-hour social service agency that can provide even rudimentary assistance to the homeless. Moreover, because a police department represents the only municipal agency that spends significant time “on the streets,” it will most likely encounter the homeless on a regular basis. For these reasons, police managers should work to understand better the problem of homelessness, and departments should develop comprehensive strategies to deal with the social, economic, and constitutional issues surrounding treatment of the homeless.

EARLY RESEARCH

Previous research on homelessness addressed a wide range of issues, including one particular area of concern to criminal justice officials—the extent of criminality among the homeless.¹ On this point, most research indicates that although the homeless have higher overall arrest rates than the general population, the vast majority of their offenses do not involve violence or even threats of violence against others.² Rather, the police most often arrest the homeless for public intoxication, followed by theft/shoplifting, violation of city ordinances, and burglary.³ The

findings also suggest that criminality among the homeless varies with amount of time spent on the streets.⁴

For example, a 1988 study concluded that the *chronically* homeless were more likely to be dysfunctional and to become involved in the criminal justice system. This research further found that the chronically homeless tended to experience severe social dysfunction in early adolescence and would most likely be arrested when they appeared "...threatening in their behaviors and exhibited these behaviors in public places."⁵

Other research identifies the positive correlation between serious personal problems, such as chemical dependency, chronic bad health, or mental illness, and homelessness.⁶ Similarly, another study suggests that temporary homelessness remains predominately an economic issue, while chronic homelessness involves mental illness

and substance abuse.⁷ Therefore, responses to homelessness should take an integrated approach of mental health treatment, substance abuse counseling, social service, and employment assistance.

This brief look at previous research affirms several important issues. The pervasive problems of mental illness and substance abuse—not simply extreme poverty—underlie the conditions of the chronically homeless. For this reason, *economic* support programs alone will not resolve the problem. Therefore, when law enforcement agencies develop policies and practices to respond to the needs of the homeless, cooperation with mental health agencies and substance abuse centers is an integral key to success. Effective programs require cooperative efforts from a wide range of fields—the police cannot and should not be expected to do it all.

THE PERF STUDY

To provide some additional framework for law enforcement agencies in this area, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) recently conducted a comprehensive nationwide study of police policies concerning the homeless.⁸ Researchers mailed questionnaires to chief executives of all municipal, county, and consolidated law enforcement agencies serving populations of 50,000 or more, or having 100 or more sworn officers.⁹ Perhaps owing to the relevance and importance attached to this issue, the survey benefited from an unusually high response rate of over 80 percent, with 521 agencies returning completed survey forms.

Perceived Problems

Somewhat surprisingly, data from the PERF study revealed that police executives do *not* see the presence of homeless persons as a very significant problem in their communities. When asked to rate the presence of "street people" as a *police* problem, nearly one-half of the respondents (49.8 percent) indicated that homelessness was only a cursory problem.

These findings may appear somewhat puzzling given the extent of media coverage and public discussion regarding the homeless issue. The findings are also enigmatic in light of the distinct trend in American law enforcement toward problem-oriented and community-oriented policing, both of which broaden the traditional scope of policing responsibilities into public service areas.¹⁰ Yet, these survey results suggest that these precepts have not influenced



Dr. Carter is a professor of criminal justice at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan.



Dr. Sapp teaches criminal justice at Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, Missouri.

perceptions of homelessness as a policing problem.

Referrals

While the police see the need for more general referral resources to provide social assistance to the homeless, the majority of respondents (61.2 percent) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the number of street people is too high to deal with effectively. This reinforces the findings that law enforcement executives do not perceive the presence of street people to be a problem of any magnitude. And, though respondents clearly favored establishing more social referral agencies, the police executives indicated that their departments enjoy good relationships with those agencies that already exist.

Police Concerns

Still, two areas of broad concern did emerge among the respondents. First, police executives overwhelmingly agreed (92.7 percent) that the presence of street people increases the fear of crime among citizens. Second, a majority of respondents (74.6 percent) believed that the conditions in which street people live pose a public health hazard.

While the strength of these concerns may seem to contradict the overriding belief that street people do not pose a serious police problem, one respondent's comments may provide further insight:

"[This] is not strictly a police problem and requires, like domestic abuse, a multidisciplinary approach. Police are strictly a stopgap measure dealing with immediate problems and are not equipped to deal with root causes."

This suggests that police responsibility in this area is transient. Yet, reality dictates that the police are generally the first, and many times the only, resource available to provide aid to the homeless.

“
...the respondents consistently declined to rate the presence of street people as a significant problem....
”

Police Policies and Procedures

Still, respondents revealed that fewer than 10 percent of the surveyed departments established formal policies that specifically addressed the homeless. Nearly one-quarter of the departments adopted specific policies dealing with *juvenile* street people—predominately directed toward runaway and “throwaway” youths. However, police typically dealt with the other street people as a function of custom under peripherally related issues, such as substance addiction referral policies.

Given that the majority of law enforcement executives did not view the presence of street people as a major police problem, it is not surprising that one-half of the responding agencies had no training programs in place dedicated to handling the homeless. Where specific instruction did exist, the most common form was roll-call training (25 percent), followed by a training session for new officers (20 per-

cent), with 11.5 percent of departments offering inservice training concerning street people. The average length of training sessions for new officers on homelessness-related issues was 6 hours, while the average for inservice training was 4.9 hours.

For both recruit and inservice training, departments tended to use trainers from both the police department staff and other sources, such as social service providers. Training typically dealt with basic procedures and referral policies.

On a related issue, 65 percent of the departments reported that they were regularly informed concerning the availability of shelters for street people, while fewer than 30 percent of the shelters informed officers concerning *capacity*. Again, roll-call training was the most common method of informing officers about shelter availability.

Working with Other Service Agencies

Overall, the respondents expressed satisfaction with community resources available to assist street people on matters related to food, shelter, medical assistance, clothing, and related factors. Still, respondents did identify several important shortcomings, e.g., the general lack of skills training, job referral, and psychological assistance available to the homeless.

An average of 6.6 shelters existed in each responding jurisdiction, with religious organizations and charities sponsoring the majority (as opposed to governmental sponsorship). Most of these shelters provided short-term housing for 1

week or less. A number of shelters "specialized" to address unique social needs, such as battered women, runaways, and substance abusers.

Over 80 percent of the responding police departments provided transportation for individuals requiring shelter, although the circumstances under which they transported street people to shelters varied. Yet, despite their reliance on shelters, fewer than 5 percent of police departments reported having a formal agreement with these organizations to make referrals.

On a related point, 17 percent of the respondents indicated that their agencies had personnel assigned specifically to deal with the needs of street people, either on a full-time or part-time basis. Once again, the assignment of personnel to address the needs of the homeless appears to be related to the perception of homelessness as a problem. Though these numbers remain small, they represent a connection between the identification of homelessness as a problem and the decision to designate departmental resources to aid street people.

OBSERVATIONS

The respondents in this survey reflected jurisdictions in which large populations of street people could be expected. Despite this, the

respondents consistently declined to rate the presence of street people as a significant problem in comparison to all police responsibilities. Indeed, this finding was but one of many that challenged widely held beliefs about the homeless.

Impact on Community Conditions

Both the police and the public tend to view street people as a "public nuisance." Moreover, respondents indicated the presence of street people increased the fear of crime and presented a health hazard to their communities.



At the same time, however, respondents reported that the homeless rarely commit serious crimes. Rather, they generally come to the attention of police due to public intoxication, panhandling, or exhibiting behavior that is problematic—but not criminal. It appears that public fear of the homeless as a contributing factor to crime is based predominant-

ly on the mere presence and appearance of street people and not on a quantifiable link between homelessness and crime.

Social Assistance

Respondents consistently reported that with respect to services for the homeless, assistance is available in terms of food, shelter, medical assistance, and chemical dependency. In essence, this may infer that the United States does a better job of dealing with the homeless than has traditionally been thought. This is not to imply, however, that improvements cannot be made, nor is it intended to understate the magnitude of social conditions related to homelessness. Rather, it appears that from a social assistance perspective, the picture may not be as bleak as is widely believed.

Substance Abuse

The survey revealed a strong perception among the police that the homeless population consists largely of substance abusers. While this finding correlates with other research,¹¹ the possibility also exists that police simply have greater contact with those street people who abuse alcohol or drugs.

It is certainly conceivable that chemically dependent street people are more likely to draw the attention of the police and the public. Thus, if the vast majority of homeless-related police contacts are with street people who are substance abusers, the police may then generalize this behavior to all homeless people. Of course, the alternate cannot be

simply discarded: It is similarly conceivable that substance abuse is a significant problem permeating the homeless population.

Police Policies

Given the tendency of law enforcement toward comprehensive recordkeeping, this survey detected a surprisingly limited store of police data on the homeless. When agencies did keep records, the information generally was collected and maintained because homeless persons were either accused of committing or were victims of a crime, or because a report was required for referral to a shelter. Since most departments did not code their records to designate the nature or frequency of contacts with street people, their estimates of the nature of the problem were consequently more intuitive than empirical.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the media's coverage of homelessness, the study's findings draw attention to several important questions. Are police executives misinformed concerning the degree of homelessness in their jurisdictions? Is the magnitude of the problem on a national level less than that inferred by the media? Are regional variations in the number of street people and the availability of services significantly distinct to make homelessness a selective policy issue? Do the police lack sensitivity to the problem because of the lack of good reporting and recordkeeping on matters related to the homeless?

Based on this study, certain factors emerged that require greater

attention. The following recommendations could lead to enhanced policy development in this area. Specifically, law enforcement agencies should:

- Consider conducting a census, perhaps in cooperation with other government or social service agencies, to assess the degree of homelessness within their jurisdictions accurately
- Look closely at the extent of homelessness within their communities and conduct a strategic analysis of actual needs
- Establish detailed recordkeeping procedures regarding contacts with street people, including the outcomes of these contacts

“
...police managers should work to understand better the problem of homelessness....
”

- Work with shelters and social assistance agencies to create formalized policies and procedures regarding referrals and police transportation of street people
- Increase communication and coordination of efforts with social service agencies and shelters
- Instruct recruit and inservice personnel on issues, problems,

and referral resources for the homeless

- Develop record-coding systems to document contacts with street people (including subcodes concerning the nature of the contact), to allow for a more-detailed analysis of interaction with the homeless, which will result in both better service and a more accurate picture of the homeless problem.

In addition, police departments should consider working closely with social service agencies, religious organizations, and advocates for the homeless to enhance access to medical and child care services and to assist the homeless in obtaining skills training and work.

CONCLUSION

This study simply reflects the prevailing attitudes of law enforcement managers around the Nation regarding homelessness. Understanding the complex issues involved and developing policies to deal with the homeless enable law enforcement agencies to make real contributions to the quality of life in their communities. A well-planned response to the problem of homelessness allows departments to manage significant social problems, while making efficient use of police resources. ♦

Endnotes

¹ Pamela J. Fisher, "Criminal Activity Among the Homeless: A Study of Arrests in Baltimore," *Hospital and Community Psychiatry*, 39:1, 1988, 46-51; Peter H. Rossi, *Down and Out in America: The Origins of the Homeless* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Brent B. Benda, "Crime, Drug

Police Practices

Abuse, Mental Illness, and Homelessness," *Deviant Behavior*, 8:4, 361-375; Andrea Solarz, *An Examination of Criminal Behavior Among the Homeless*, a paper presented to the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, San Diego, California, 1985.

² David A. Snow, Susan G. Baker, and Leon Anderson, "Criminality and Homeless Men: An Empirical Assessment." *Social Problems*, 36:5, 1989, 532-549.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ John R. Belcher, "Are Jails Replacing the Mental Health System for the Homeless Mentally Ill?" *Community Mental Health Journal*, 24:3, 1988, 185-195.

⁶ Martha R. Burt and Barbara E. Cohen, "Differences Among Homeless Single Women, Women with Children, and Single Men," *Social Problems*, 36:5, 1989, 508-524.

⁷ Lillian Gelberg, Lawrence S. Linn, and Barbara Leake, "Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Use, and Criminal History Among Homeless Adults," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 145:2, 1988, 191-196.

⁸ This project was funded by a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). The opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation or PERF. For purposes of this study, the issues studied were somewhat broader than just the homeless. A street person is defined as an individual who spends the majority of time in public for nonjob-related reasons, regardless of whether they have a regular and adequate overnight residence. For readability, the terms "homeless" and "street people" are used synonymously in this article.

⁹ State police agencies were not included in this survey because of the relatively low rate of interaction between State police/highway patrol officers and street people. This survey data does not represent a sample. Rather, results reflect the attitudes, perceptions, and experiences of 80.2 percent of the total defined research population.

¹⁰ Robert C. Trojanowicz and David L. Carter, *The Philosophy and Role of Community Policing* (East Lansing, Michigan: National Foot Patrol Center, Michigan State University, 1988); Robert Trojanowicz and Bonnie Bucqueroux, *Community Policing* (Cincinnati: Anderson Publishing Company); James Q. Wilson and George Kelling, "Broken Windows," *The Atlantic Monthly*, March 1982, 29.

¹¹ Supra note 1.

Technical Reserve Program Community Volunteers In Action

By
William F. Brown, Jr.

In these tough economic times, police managers often question how they can maintain a high level of public service with less funding. Obviously, making use of all available resources can be advantageous for a department. Sometimes, however, police administrators overlook an excellent source of talent—the community. In fact, by using citizens in a technical reserve program, police departments gain valuable expertise with minimal cost.

The Technical Reserve Program

Several southern California law enforcement agencies have developed successful technical reserve programs. For example, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department uses technical reserves in its Motion Picture Unit. Composed of over 100 members from the television and film industries, the unit produces high quality training films, assists with covert video taping, and films special events. In Los Alamitos, California, the police department uses technical reserves as evidence technicians. And, the Inglewood, California, Police Department has developed its own technical reserve program, successfully using volunteers in a variety of positions.

The Inglewood Program

The Inglewood Police Department (IPD) implemented its

technical reserve program on January 1, 1992. IPD's program consists of two types of specialists: Technical reserves and technical reserve associates.

Both reserves and associates donate their time and expertise in an advisory or technical work capacity. They have no enforcement authority and do not carry firearms. They do not wear uniforms, although the nature of their work may require their wearing coveralls or other clothing designed for utility or identification.

Technical reserves possess a skill or talent that the IPD needs frequently, such as computer programming or foreign language ability. They work for the department regularly and must donate at least 100 hours of service a year or risk being dropped from the program. This helps to ensure that Inglewood's volunteers are truly committed to the program—and they are. Most technical reserves work more than the required 100 hours a year.

Technical reserve associates have expertise in an area that the department uses only during an emergency or unusual event. Currently, the IPD has more than 20 reserve associates, all functioning as amateur radio operators, who could be used during a natural disaster to broadcast emergency instructions to the public. Reserve associates might also serve on search and rescue teams, where