HANGING OUT IN MELROSE:
A CASE HISTORY OF COMMUNITY CONTROL

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

University of Missouri-Columbia

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

Maureen E. Kelleher

James L. McCartney Dissertation Supervisor

December, 1979

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ABSTRACT

Often in communities there are youths who are not delinquent in any formal sense, but who still resist structured youth programming and seek natural settings where they express their autonomy. In the community under study, Melrose, that setting was Jelly's, a commercial games establishment. However, because of concerns with youthful activities, community adults sought to impose upon Jelly's the very restrictions and limitations which the youths were seeking to avoid. In doing so, community adults overlooked the fact that Jelly's was actually contributing to the social control of the community.

This dissertation focuses on two main issues: interaction and control. Traditional subcultural literature sees adolescent groups as estranged and isolated from mainstream society. This study highlights instead the interactions both among the youths at the setting and also between Jelly's and the community at large. While much of the interaction within the setting involved young people seeking companionship among their peers, some of the interaction also involved delinquent behavior. And much that went on within Jelly's grew out of the interactions between the patrons and staff of Jelly's.

The activities within Jelly's were ruled by an observable set of social controls which also grew out of a series of interactions. Some interactions involved not only patrons and staff, but also direct and indirect contacts between people at the setting and members of the adult community. The young people at Jelly's were, in other words, not an isolated or alienated group.

Staff members found it necessary to balance their closeness to Jelly's youthful patrons with the demands of running a business. Regular patrons provided a degree of control because they served as authority figures within the setting. Game playing also provided controls within Jelly's by introducing the values of competition and sportsmanship. Traditional sex roles were brought into the setting by the game playing itself and through the attitudes of both patrons and staff. Lastly, community adults provided a degree of control within the setting. Staff members attempted to meet the expectations of downtown Melrose merchants and imposed some of those expectations on their clients.

What is crucial to understand about the nature of the interaction between Jelly's and the community is that all controls flowed downward. While Jelly's and Melrose adults were interacting, the adult community was in the position of making the demands while the staff could only respond to them. While the participants at Jelly's could either accept or reject community demands, they could not make any demands of their own because of their limited power within Melrose. Such inflexibility on the part of downtown merchants helped pave the way for the closing of Jelly's and the arrests of dozens of Melrose young people shortly thereafter. By seeking to impose more control, adult leaders had actually undermined the controls that already existed within Jelly's and helped bring about the

further disruption of downtown Melrose.

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Chapter I

WHY STUDY JELLY'S?

This study focuses on the fundamental process of social control of youth and how this process is negotiated in a community setting. The vehicle for illustrating this process is a case study of Jelly's, a commercial fussball parlor, the youths who go there, and the response of the adult community to this particular setting.

This setting is explored from an interactionist perspective. Inherent in this perspective is the emphasis on "human interaction and society in terms of strategic adjustments and readjustments" that is accomplished through the process of negotiation (Turner, 1974:178). Included in this perspective is a reliance on the researcher "taking the role" of the people studied so that she is more "sensitive" to the interactive process (Turner, 1974:183).

This study will explore the following questions. How does a community attempt to assert control of settings? What are the pressures for control that operate naturally within a setting? How do these processes -- both external and internal -- combine, mesh, accomodate, and conflict with each other? What are the consequences of this process? These questions will be answered keeping in mind that, in dealing with a youth setting, control is more problematic than with an adult setting because there is more at stake. If adolescents are not controlled when they are young, they will not be able to be controlled when they reach adulthood.

In any community setting, a degree of social order is maintained. Goffman (1968:8) defines social order "as the consequence of any set of moral norms that regulates the way in which persons pursue objectives." Implicit in that definition is the assumption that members of society will consent to the same set of moral and social obligations. Additionally,

> Public order traditionally refers more to the regulation of face-to-face interaction among those members of a community who are not well acquainted than it does to interaction occurring in private walled-in places where only families meet (Goffman, 1966:9).

Thus, order can be maintained in public settings through an emphasis on public decorum. Accepted norms tell community members how to fit into the social organization of community life. Community members learn to adapt their behavior to the varying requirements of different public occasions and settings.

But what happens in a community when individuals do not present themselves within social gatherings in what Goffman (1966:12) terms their "situational harness" -- fitting in by acting properly in different situations.[1] Certain minority life-style groups, such as prostitutes and homosexuals, are often able to negotiate a bargain with other members of the community. That bargain establishes both tolerance for their beliefs and social-behavioral boundaries that should not be crossed (Becker and Horowitz, 1970). Those established bargains are not always ideal, to be sure, and often break down. Nonetheless, frequent negotiations take place between adult members of diverse groups. Even adults who appear to have no business in mind when they are at a setting are frequently tolerated. Lolling and loitering are not always prohibited. People "passing the time of day" can be found in many public settings, including street corners and

in front of community stores (Goffman, 1966:58). Their presence does not threaten the balance of community life.

However, social balance is typically perceived as threatened by adolescent usurpers. On the one hand, because adolescence is a time of exploration, youths do not know how to "play the game" of community negotiations. Adolescents do not have much experience in the skills necessary to "create, maintain, and change the rules of the game" (Turner, 1974: 178). For instance, adolescents are denied access to the labor market where they might better learn such strategies. This lack of sophistication places them at a disadvantage in their dealings with adults. On the other hand, unlike many adults, adolescents are effectively isolated from obtaining an insider's perspective so important to understanding precisely how the game is played. Youths are barred from access to settings because of their age, lack of money, or lack of mobility.

In order to better understand how the drama of adolescent - community relations is worked out, it is important to gain an insider's view of both the establishment of adolescent territories and the community response to those territories. Adolescent territories, such as drive-ins, head shops, and record stores, are community spaces dominated by adolescents (Lofland, 1968). Thus the focus of this study -- Jelly's -- is a likely candidate for the interactionist perspective. This point of view allows the researcher to see the action around Jelly's as an emergent event to be studied over time in a natural situation (Denzin, 1973).

What is it about Jelly's that makes it an important focus for sociological research? The answer is that Jelly's was a natural setting where middle-class males and females interacted together in a wide range of activities. This answer has three key elements:

1. Jelly's was a natural setting, one generated, populated, and largely controlled by a youthful population free from adult supervision.
2. The population of Jelly's included a mixture of interacting, middle-class, males and females. Middle-class youths are often ignored in favor of their lower-class counterparts. And females are ignored in many youth studies no matter what the class emphasis. Those studies that do deal with both males and females usually treat them as separate entities instead of interacting ones.
3. The youths at Jelly's participated in a wide range of activities from non-delinquent to delinquent, including competing, flirting, idling, and using drugs. Community adults most feared Jelly's potential for generating delinquent activities, although most of the action there was decidedly non-delinquent. Adult fears set the stage for the emergence of tension between the community and the population at the setting.

In order to place the analysis of adolescent action at Jelly's into perspective, it is important to review some of the traditional literature on adolescents and some of this literature's limitations. Included in this review is 1) adolescent-institution literature; 2) delinquency literature; and 3) youth organization literature. This literature emphasizes, to a significant degree, a subcultural approach.

Traditional Juvenile Literature

Much of the sociological research on youths and their relationships with the adult community focuses either on young people in formal, adult-

controlled institutional settings such as schools, or on juvenile delinquents and voluntary youth-serving agencies. Such literature, however, can contain three very important restrictions or limitations to our understanding of adolescent activities. First, by looking at youths within adult organizations such as schools or youth agencies, we are seeing youth interact only within adult-imposed restraints. Left unanswered is the question, how would these youths act if those adult-imposed restraints were absent?

Second, by emphasizing delinquency, the literature serves up a highly selective population from which to draw conclusions about other types of youthful activities. The delinquent population of this literature tends to be disproportionately male and lower class. In addition, such literature leaves the impression that unsupervised adolescents in youth-generated settings engage primarily in delinquent actions, almost to the exclusion of all other types of behavior.

Third, whether youth research focuses on either adult organizations or delinquency, the literature usually analyzes youth action from a subcultural perspective. The subcultural perspective emphasizes the "insulated, autonomous milieu in which they (adolescents) may with impunity practice their anti-adult rites" (Berger, 1963:323-24). As a result of that emphasis, the subcultural perspectives overlook the interacting "process by which cultural content is created, modified and diffused" (Fine and Kleinman, 1979:6).

1. Adolescent-Institution Literature. Although researchers have examined the impact on adolescents of all major social institutions, none has attracted more attention than the educational institution. Adolescent

action within a school setting is often presented in terms of the development of a subculture. Coleman's The Adolescent Society (1961), for instance, develops the subcultural theme by arguing that schools and extra-curricular activities isolate the adolescent society. He states that adolescent society has limited communication with the outside world, and this isolation leads to the creation within the adolescent society of its own value system and language. Gotlieb's The American Adolescent (1964) reinforces and adds to Coleman's subcultural argument. Schools do isolate youths from mainstream culture, Gotlieb writes. As a result, adolescents create their own subculture, taking on the characteristics of a small, private society alienated from the central processes of most adult institutions.

But this traditional subcultural approach to adolescent groups (or any subcultural group, for that matter) is static and tends to overlook the possibility and significance of interaction between the youth groups and other groups within society. This treatment of adolescent behavior as an isolated phenomenon under emphasizes some of the important aspects of the interrelationships between adolescents within their subcultural groups and other groups outside of this subculture. There is within the subcultural approach no allowance for the process by which cultural content is changed.

2. Delinquency Literature. Delinquency literature helps to perpetuate the conceptualization of youth action in black and white terms -- either delinquent or non-delinquent. For instance, Short, Rivera, and Tennyson's study on "Perceived Opportunities, Gang Membership, and Delinquency" presents a typology of delinquent action based on a combination of race, class, and gang status -- lower class, black gang members being the

most delinquent. But such a characterization is misleading. The street corner thug is just as extreme a perception of adolescent actions as is the image of the all-American youth.

The overwhelming image of the youth involved in delinquent activities is narrowly conceived: lower class and male. Such classics of the literature as Cohen's Delinquent Boys (1958) and Cloward and Ohlin's Delinquency and Opportunity (1960) lend credence to that delinquent image. Cohen's delinquent subculture was perceived in terms of a male, working-class phenomenon, a phenomenon stressing mainly non-utilitarian, malicious, and negativistic activities. Cloward and Ohlin's delinquency subcultures result when lower-class youths realize the disparity between what they are led to want and what, in fact, they can obtain.

A fundamental flaw in the analysis common to Cohen and Cloward and Ohlin is that it tends to segregate delinquent behavior for the purpose of analysis. Such a rigid methodological approach fails to capture the flavor of the day-to-day interaction of adolescents with one another and with their community. Matza (1964) supports this critique by arguing that adolescent norms cannot be categorized as either conventional or delinquent. In place of this, Matza argues that conventional values include a variety of subterranean traditions such as radicalism and delinquency.

Delinquency literature also mentions females only in passing. Adolescent females are perceived as sexual appendages to the delinquent male action cycle. Because the literature focuses predominantly on the actions of the male juvenile, both the interaction between male and female and the action of delinquent females on their own are overlooked.

Another shortcoming of delinquency literature is that lower-class delinquency is stressed to the virtual exclusion of delinquency in other

classes. Cohen (1955) argues that social classes are the training grounds for adolescent action and that those who succeed as non-delinquents in the lower classes do so only because they have modest ambitions and are unwilling to strive for middle-class goals. Such presentations, however instructive, support the impression that delinquency is mainly a lower-class phenomenon.

However, Chambliss (1977) and Vaz (1967) both point to the regular delinquent engagement of middle-class males. Wise (1967) takes their point one step further by arguing that middle-class females also play an important role in middle-class delinquency because they often engage in such activity regularly.

A final criticism of the delinquency literature is that it tends to focus on just one aspect of group activity, whether it be on the street corner or in the club house: delinquent activity. As a result, it is difficult to place that type of action into perspective. The context of the delinquent act is neglected, and the range of other activities that occur and influence the delinquency of the adolescent are left unexplored.

3. Youth Organization Literature. A final speciality in adolescent literature is the exploration of adolescent relations with youth-serving agencies. This literature notes that such organizations both protect adolescents from adult society and give adults a sense that such organizations "are building a mysterious something variously called citizenship, leadership, or character which will keep the boy or girl from being 'tempted by the pleasures' of adult life" (Hollingshead, 1975:108). As such, these organizations are an integral part of white, middle-class American life styles -- supporting the values of home, church and state (Lipsitz, 1977).

Another aspect of these organizations is that many are characterized by their service to one sex -- Young Women's Christian Association, Young Men's Christian Association, the Boy Scouts -- which "sharply reduces their appeal to youth beyond early adolescence" (Report of the Panel on Youth, 1975:164). And often, these organizations are not effective in dealing with the pressing needs of today's urban and suburban youth (Report of the Panel on Youth, 1975). Yet adults in community settings still turn to such organizations as appropriate sites to guide adolescent action.

Currently, such organizations appeal to fewer and fewer adolescents, in part because of an organizational confusion of purpose:

> Although in our rhetoric, society still seems to believe that organized youth groups are "avenues to character development" and useful in keeping adolescents out of mischief, the decline in membership . . . indicates . . . the value systems of these agencies, with a few exceptions, are largely outmoded (Lipsitz, 1977:173).

Many youths find such organized activities childish and boring, particularly because of the strict supervision of adult leaders (Lipsitz, 1977).

As a result of this lack of appeal, adolescents are interested in alternative action sites that offer them flexibility, freedom, and the opportunity for experimentation. Many youths resist the traditional limitations of community adult control and instead seek a setting where they can be free of such adult restraints. Gans (1965) calls such youth "action-seekers" and describes their search in his book, The Urban Villagers. For the Italian youths of Gans' study, action settings often were the tenement hallways of the Italian slums of Boston. The space, i.e., the setting, became important to these youths. Alternative settings provided by the community settlement house workers were not acceptable to the adolescents, although the actual quality of the settlement house space, in

terms of room and resources, was a better one than the youths had made for themselves.

Why this space was unacceptable is an important issue. Karp, Stone, and Yoels (1977) argue that it is critical to look at the meaning of space, since people relate to space not only in economic terms but also sentimental or emotional terms. Thus Gans' adolescents were rejecting one space because they felt that adults were in control there and choosing a setting where the youths themselves could be in control.

But adults attempt to control this adolescent behavior by trying to restrict youth access to certain settings. This is particularly true of popular, youth-generated settings which do not come under direct adult control. Adults fear the secretive goings-on of such locations and seek to restrict youth access (Goffman, 1959). Part of that fear rests on the potential for deviance of uncontrolled adolescents. Also adults often attempt to generate wholesome supervised alternatives to such facilities (in marked contrast to their response to minority life-style adults). Adolescents appear to have little bargaining power to bring to bear on the negotiations.

Few have considered that natural youth settings can and do make a contribution to community stability. Whyte, in Street Corner Society, finds that even youth gangs can reflect a community's organization rather than its dissolution. Whyte's street corner society accurately reflects the hierarchical organization of the community, including "people's positions and obligations to one another" (Whyte, 1965:269).

Despite the stability of some youth settings, adult community members assume the right to shape the organizations that affect the developing adolescent. And therein lies the basis of the struggle that often flares

between young and old community members -- a struggle that reflects adult efforts to control adolescent activities.

The Issue of Control

Social order requires that people must fit into established social norms. However, in certain situations, there is tolerance for adults who deviate from community expectations. Becker and Horowitz call this phenomenon the "culture of civility." They maintain that for this civility to operate, all parties involved must accommodate. But there are limits to that accomodation. Firstly,

> parties involved prize peace and stability enough to give up some of what they want so that others may have their desires satisfied as well (Becker and Horowitz, 1970:18).

Secondly,

> mechanisms and procedures must exist by which the conflicting desires and resources for bargaining can be brought together to produce a temporary stable working arrangement (Becker and Horowitz, 1970:18).

But the accomodation present in most adult-adult interactions does not exist in adult-youth interactions. Therefore, such interactions are not successful. One of the reasons for this lack of success is the unequal distribution of power in adult-youth negotiations. It is important to evaluate "the hard realities of power and politics" and how they affect the negotiation process (Day and Day, 1977:134).

Adult control is often presented under the guise of the best interests of adolescents. Note, for example, the tradition of the juvenile court, child labor laws, and compulsory schooling. All have been established allegedly to help adolescents and to protect them. Yet, in reality, all set out to limit and control the actions of adolescents. Berger (1963:326) describes the actions being controlled by such institutions as

youthful. By that, he means action that is "impulsive, spontaneous, energetic, exploratory, venturesome, and vivacious." He states further that such actions may take on ideological overtones:

> Clearly, they are dangerous: from the perspective of the major institutions of social order, youthfulness is excess; it is implicit or incipient disorder; for society, it is a problem that requires handling, control, cooptions, or rechanneling in socially approved directions (Berger, 1963:327).

Berger further states that although most adolescents grow out of "youthful qualities,"

> the fact that they do is testimony not only to the power of adult agencies of socialization but to the vulnerability to cooptation of 'teenage culture' -- to its lack of resources to sustain it in crisis and insulate it from attack (Berger, 1963:330).

Implicit in this statement is the understanding that adults become vehement about controlling adolescents because their "youthful qualities" may well continue into adulthood, turning these "youthful" adults into long-range control problems. To prevent such a threat to social order from materializing, adults logically attempt to maximize their control over community adolescents. After all, it is must easier to control adolescents than adults. Adolescents are more dependent than adults for economic support and for power within the community. In general, they have fewer options. When these adolescents become adults, the community can exert less control over their behavior, whether that behavior is "youthful" or not, because as adults they are more aware of alternatives and negotiation techniques.

At the same time that community adults are trying to maximize their control over adolescents, territorial links between adults and adolescents are weakening. That is, fewer and fewer adults and adolescents spend time interacting in the same or overlapping space. Lofland (1972) states that

this weakening is part of a process that he calls age segregation. Age segregation is, in part, a result of the separate adolescent action that surrounds the school and other "specialized keepers of teenagers" or voluntary youth organizations. But also, adolescents are "achieving a rather well defined and dominated set of territories spread throughout the community" (Lofland, 1972:245).

While Lofland concedes that these special territories of youth cannot formally exclude people of other age categories, they do take on overtones of what he labels "youth ghettos." This segregation or ghettoization leads to poor communication with other community territories. And,

> when low information flow occurs in the context of a measure of suspicion, fear, and mistrust, the information most likely to be noticed, remembered, and circulated by persons of extra-ghetto territories is that which is discrediting or defaming (Lofland, 1968: 132).

This distorted communication is particularly likely because of what Lofland (1968:132) describes as the "imputed ghetto personality of youth" -- loud, boisterous, disrespectful, etc. -- similar to Berger's "youthful qualities." Adolescents become the "objects of specialized processes of social control and recognition" and sometimes "a special corps of helping and rehabilitative personnel are recruited and deployed into the (youth) areas...to reduce the number of horrendous things that go on there and to make the residents straighten up and be good citizens" (Lofland, 1968: 134-35).

The sum total of such a process is that the physical and social sense of separation leads to distrust and fear on both sides. As a result, adults and adolescents either do not negotiate at all, or enter into negotiations without any good will. Consequently, negotiations often break down, and the steps necessary for the development of community civility

are thus unfulfilled.

It is apparent that traditional adolescent literature often deals with youth activity as an isolated phenomenon. The subcultural approach found in much of the literature emphasizes the degree to which adolescents establish their own culture, often estranged from the adult community.

Yet, Fine and Kleinman argue that this traditional subcultural perspective overlooks the importance of interaction by which "cultural content and identification change through direct or indirect contact with /community/ outsiders" (Fine and Kleinman, 1979:14). Part of this information and influence "can spread through individuals who perform particular structural roles in intergroup relations" (Fine and Kleinman, 1979: 11). According to Fine and Kleinman, the concept of subculture should be viewed "as a process which involves . . . creation, negotiation, and diffusion" (Fine and Kleinman, 1979:18).

This perception of adolescent action allows for the discussion of the various negotiations that take place not only within settings, but also between settings. Thus, as Maines (1977) points out, an interactionist perspective may deal with the issue of control; for example, what can or cannot be negotiated and who has the most power in individual negotiations (Maines, 1977). And Day and Day (1977:132) conclude that, via negotiations, "individuals play an active, self-conscious role in the shaping of social order." It is important to evaluate not only the types of negotiations that can and do take place between adults and adolescents, but also what effect these negotiations have on the nature of interaction. In the absence of formal negotiations, or even if negotiations break down, adolescent behavior within a group is still influenced by adult community control expectation.

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The dissertation is presented in four parts:

Part I. Why Study Jelly's?

What kinds of youth organizations does traditional youth literature look at? What are the limitations of traditional youth literature? (These questions have been dealt with in Chapter I.) What kinds of organization am I going to study? How will I go about studying Jelly's?

Part II. Why Were Youths Attracted To Jelly's?

What kind of setting was it? What kind of youth came to Jelly's? What went on in Jelly's? What benefits did Jelly's offer its patrons? What kinds of controls were established at Jelly's? Who and what established those controls? How did community values influence the interactions within Jelly's?

Part III. What Was the Community Response to Jelly's?

How did the community view Jelly's? What problems arose between Jelly's and downtown merchants? What steps were taken by downtown merchants to deal with Jelly's? What community powers were brought to bear against Jelly's? Why did Jelly's close? What alternatives were provided by the city government?

Part IV. What Can Be Learned From a Study of Jelly's?

What are the theoretical implications of the study of Jelly's? What are the practical implications of the study? What conclusions can be drawn?

Chapter II

HOW DID I STUDY JELLY'S?

This chapter describes some of the steps involved in the study of Jelly's. The method used for this study is field research; that is, participant observation and interviews. For reasons suggested in the first chapter, I wanted a setting that was natural. Finding voluntary or natural settings without adult restrictions becomes an issue when dealing with adolescents because, in many settings, they are acting and reacting under adult restraints.

I also wanted a setting that dealt with middle-class males and females engaged in a wide range of activities. Much of the juvenile literature focuses on the problems of the lower-class adolescent to the exclusion of the middle-class counterpart -- a gross oversight (Cohen, 1955; Short and Strodtbeck, 1965; Cloward and Ohlin, 1960, etc.). I decided a suburban population would be my target group. I was also particularly interested in the problems of the adolescent female and the role she plays in delinquent action. Nancy Wise (1967) argues that in a middle-class setting, girls and boys engage in a more similar kind of delinquent activity than they do in a lower-class setting. Last, and perhaps most important, a middle-class setting seemed a good choice because of my own personal background and experience. I have worked as a street counselor for over two years in a middle-class suburb in the East. I am, therefore, familiar not only with some of the problems in which youth are involved, but also with some of the mechanisms employed by communities to deal with

their adolescents. So, in that way, I felt that I would be attuned to the action of a middle-class site and able to enter into that action more quickly.

I eventually narrowed the potential site to two alternatives. The first was a location created as a social service agency by the local government and established primarily to deal with problem youth. It was open to all adolescents in the area, and any youth could use the recreation facilities located in the building. But the orientation was unmistakably therapeutic. Many of the youths were referred to the program by school or church personnel for specific adolescent "adjustment" problems. This site appealed to me for two reasons. First, the setting was located in a community where recently there had been a number of well-publicized drug raids. As a matter of fact, on several occasions members of the community had met together to discuss their local youth drug crisis. Second, the facility was an ongoing operation and records were kept of the individual adolescents who used the locale. Such records would have made data-collecting a relatively simple process.

However, after I discussed the possibility of working at that site with the staff, it became clear to me that I would be closely supervised. And I perceived the likelihood that constraints were also being imposed on the adolescent population, restraints that affected their action at the facility. For example, because of the elaborate record system, youths were defined as having certain types of "problems" that needed to be dealt with.

At the same time I was visiting this therapeutic locale, I was also becoming acquainted with Jelly's. It was apparent that, although Jelly's was a commercial establishment open to the public, it catered to a select

group of young people who visited there several times a week. In doing so, they had managed to establish a sense of private space in this commercial setting. Privacy was accomplished by establishing a "home territory" (Cavan, 1966) by the Melrose youth population. Such public/private space seemed a likely setting for the types of interaction in which I was interested. Because of its commercial nature, the site also appeared more accessible to a wide population than did the first location. Because of the public nature of Jelly's, there was no need for formal staff approval of my project prior to entry, and it was evident that this site had the advantages of a natural setting. Adolescents entered and left the facility freely under the supervision of staff who were close to their own age.

I observed activities at Jelly's over a period of eighteen months. During that time I visited the facility regularly, sometimes several times during the course of a week. The length of those visits varied considerably, anywhere from one to seven hours, depending on who was there and what was going on.

After each visit I made entries into my field journal. At the conclusion of the observation period I developed a coding system in order to organize my notes for analysis.

During the observation period, both staff members and patrons were informally interviewed. After Jelly's permanently closed I interviewed several former staff members at their homes. In these interviews, I sought not only to obtain background on the staff, but also to collect the recollections of the staff members concerning the history of the facility, their perceptions of the patrons, and their attitudes toward the game of fussball. These interviews were valuable not only as supplements

to my own observations, but also provided a degree of verification for my observations.

After completing my contact with both the staff and patrons of Jelly's, I arranged a series of formal interviews with community adults. In that capacity I interviewed four key downtown merchants, two members of the police department particularly involved in youth affairs, the city's youth recreation specialist, and the mayor who had been in office during Jelly's existence. In these interviews I tried to explore adult perceptions of adult-youth community relations, what adults thought youths should do with their leisure time, and adult perceptions of specific Melrose youth problems.

Entry

There are several issues of entry to be faced when establishing the field site. Among those problems were how to introduce myself and how to establish a rapport with the participants on the scene. One of the most significant difficulties I faced initially was that no one seemed to acknowledge my presence at Jelly's. Upon entry I was almost totally ignored by the youthful clientele, and that isolation caused adjustment problems. I felt awkward, uncomfortable, and quite conspicuous. So I began to play what I eventually dubbed my "entry games." I was able to pursue the interior of Jelly's from outside on the street because the storefront of Jelly's had a large glass window. If there appeared to be no females at the location, I would not enter. I justified that tactic by telling myself that I was interested in both males and females. And I was more likely to enter if the facility was crowded than if it was nearly empty. Often I would find myself driving by Jelly's without stopping because the

clientele did not seem to meet my artificially constructed standards.

I justified some of those tactics on the grounds of self-preservation -- being ignored is disconcerting. But I eventually became more aggressive about introducing myself and initiating conversation about the table games. Initiating conversations was not always a successful tactic. On one occasion, I was left talking to myself when several patrons moved their game to another table. Eventually I had the opportunity to explain to a few staff people that I was a sociology student interested in learning how young people spent their time. I told the staff that I was working on a degree and they seemed to accept that explanation, at least superficially.

My entry was also hampered by the fact that I was one of the few married participants at the scene and also one of the oldest. Only one staff member and a few irregular customers were in my age bracket. Most of the females there were considerably younger. Although several married men came in periodically to play games and one married female regularly accompanied her husband until her baby was born, I was the only married participant who frequented Jelly's with any regularity.

My marital status even became a minor curiosity. After learning that I was married, several youths expressed interest in the nature of my relationship with my husband. After all, they wondered, how many husbands would allow their wives to hang out at a fussball parlor, particularly on a weekend night? I am not sure that I ever explained that situation to the satisfaction of most patrons, but eventually my presence became more taken for granted and therefore less interesting.

I know that I stood out as an unusual participant at the scene. And because of that, I tried to adopt a fairly low-keyed, non-abrasive manner.

But an additional problem complicated entry even more. Although unaware of it at the time, I had entered the setting just after rumors circulated among Jelly's patrons that the Melrose police department had just hired a female staff person. Since obviously I was old enough for that position and suddenly had begun spending time in a youth hangout, I naturally became an object of suspicion.

I first learned that I was suspected by some youths as being affiliated with the Melrose police in a chance conversation one evening. After spending some time in Jelly's, I had headed outside and was strolling around the downtown area. After fifteen minutes, a young man whom I had met previously parked his car in front of me and began a discussion:

HARRY: Hey, nobody talking to you?

M.K.: I guess they must think that I am a chaperone.

HARRY: No, they think you're a cop.

M.K.: Oh, isn't that delightful, although it isn't really that surprising. Hey, how are things going?

HARRY: Pretty good -- quiet tonight.

M.K.: Do cops always carry badges? Maybe someone will steal my purse and see if I carry one.

HARRY: I wouldn't be a bit surprised.

Several nights later, I observed what appeared to be an elaborate drug transaction staged for my benefit. The action was so obviously structured that I assumed the participants were setting up a test to see if I would show my suspected police affiliations:

I was in the process of sitting down on the lawn when a young male came up behind me.

MALE: Say, have you got any papers?

M.K.: No, I sure don't.

MALE: That's too bad. I just got some stuff and need some papers. I really haven't done any for a long time, but a friend had some, so I thought I'd buy some.

He proceeded to plop down on the ground beside me.

M.K.: Nice night.

MALE: Yeah. I've been working, so it's nice to relax.

We chatted for a few minutes, then some kids yelled out something to him.

MALE: Well, I don't usually have any, but I might as well make some money at it.

He returned with a big wad of money that he held up for me to see.

MALE: Guess I did pretty good on that one.

Because his marijuana "sale" was so blatant, I suspected that it was a performance rather than a real drug transaction.

After several months in the setting, a staff member informed me that he had investigated the possibility through a friend of his on the police force that I was somehow connected with the police. The officer eased his suspicions by assuring him that I had absolutely no connection with the Melrose police department. Gradually I became quite friendly with the original owner. Because he was well-respected by the adolescents, his friendship added to my acceptance. Also, after participating in the scene for a while, I started teaching on a part-time basis at the local college. On several occasions, I accidentally ran into patrons of Jelly's on campus, and that also lent verification and credibility to my participation.

Another unanticipated problem of entry arose when I was recognized at Jelly's by a former student. One evening while standing outside Jelly's, a young man approached me:

JACK: Hey, is that you Maureen?

M.K.: Yeah. Do I know you?

My memory was a little weak. The guy walked closer to me.

JACK: Yeah, I had you for intro. sociology.

M.K.: Oh, sure, I'm sorry. I can't remember your name.

JACK: Jack. What are you doing here?

M.K.: I hope to do a community study and Melrose is the area I hope to work in.

JACK: Say, I got a "C" in your course. Do you think that it was a mistake? I thought I was going to do better.

M.K.: I'm sorry. I don't remember what your grade was. I could check my grade book if you want me to.

JACK: Naw. Say, why are you here?

M.K.: Maybe you remember that I was interested in youth and what they are thinking. I thought that this might be a way of studying it. You know, fieldwork, like you did in class.

At the end of the conversation, Jack returned to a friend and remarked, "Watch out for her, she's into women's liberation." The liberation stereotype plus the unfair grade complaint made me a bit nervous. I quickly terminated the conversation and headed home. I avoided the site for several days after that and never ran into Jack again.

Problems in the Field

I believe that initially my presence at Jelly's was at least mildly disruptive to the action there because of my obvious outsider status. However, I was willing to discuss my personal background and my general interest in the site when questioned by several participants. For instance, one evening, I gave Vivian a ride to a friend's house. Her friend came out to greet us in the car, and after a short conversation asked, "Hey, are you married?" "Yeah," I replied. "I thought so," she answered. While very little significant information had passed between us, my easy willingness to talk about myself seemed to put some of the youths at ease.

And as the word on my marital status spread to other patrons, I became just a little better known and better accepted.

But what I believe to be the most significant factor about my entry was not the degree of disruption I caused, but rather the lack of disruption. The only participants who seemed to make accommodations to my presence were the staff members and several older customers.

The reaction of participants to the field researcher and the issue of "how the characteristics of the ethnographer may indirectly and inadvertently affect the process of research" are explored by a number of researchers (Golde, 1970:2). For instance, one serious question raised by Laud Humphreys' research on "tearooms" (public restrooms) was whether or not his appearance altered the behavior at the tearoom, thereby invalidating his observations (Ritzer, 1972). Yet, in my setting there did not seem to be a significant modification of the action as a result of my presence.

There are several possible explanations for the lack of modified patron action. The staff appeared effective at protecting the interests of patrons. As a result, the patrons seemed to abdicate responsibility for protecting themselves from outsiders. Perhaps the participants at Jelly's did not find a female student particularly threatening. My main problem at Jelly's was gaining access to the action. I was essentially ignored. For example, one evening I was watching several youths playing a game of fussball. At one point, they simply stopped the game and abruptly moved to another table, just to get away from me. I felt very uncomfortable and left. I was invading a protected local youth territory and not all of the local youth were appreciative of the fact.

Of course, any participant observer would experience the sensation

of being an "outsider" in a setting where a variety of activities -- including delinquent ones -- were taking place (Becker, 1970). That uncomfortable feeling is not unusual for fieldworkers:

> If the fieldworker expects to engage in some variety of participant observation, to develop and maintain long-term relationships, to do a study that involves the engagement of his own understanding, the best things he can do is relax and remember that most sensible people do not believe what a stranger tells them (Wax, 1971:365).

Once inside the setting there are other field research problems, including over-identification with the respondents and reciprocity. Over-identification with the respondents may result in biased observations (Glazer, 1972). I found that my former experience as a youth counselor tempered any tendencies on my part toward the problem of over-identification. I had already gone through that process in a different setting.

Reciprocity was only a minor issue. Periodically I paid for table games and, on occasion, I gave people rides to a particular destination. Such reciprocity flowed easily and naturally in the setting. One evening, for example, I was watching Vivian play a game. Stan, a staff member, soon joined us:

STAN: How are you, Vivian?

VIVIAN: Pretty good, Stan, but this is my last ball. Shit!

STAN: Here, let me play a game.

He puts a quarter in the machine.

VIVIAN: (turning to me) Watch him, he really plays well.

Stan proceeds to win a free game and turns it over to Vivian. She does pretty well but doesn't win a free game.

VIVIAN: Wish I had a quarter.

M.K.: Here, I'll sponsor you in turn for some technique tips.

Vivian gives me some pointers and lets me play the last ball.

On another occasion, I loaned my tape recorder to Jelly, the owner of the establishment. He wanted the recorder because of an incident that had taken place at the facility on the previous evening. The police had entered Jelly's and questioned several of the patrons:

JELLY: Can I ask you a favor?

M.K.: You can ask.

JELLY: Can I borrow your tape recorder? I want to interview the people who were in the store when the cops came in.

I lent him the recorder and allowed him to keep it for as long as he needed it, which turned out to be several weeks. But in return, Jelly agreed to sit down with me for a formal interview.

Of course, less tangible but equally important forms of reciprocity regularly took place. For instance, some people were quite supportive of me while I was in the field. In return I was able to give them attention -- a valuable pay-off.

I discovered that many problems in the field were directly related to the fact that I had anticipated a more pleasant and less difficult experience. The whole process of preparing a lone researcher for problems in the field is sadly overlooked in the literature on research methods. It is difficult not to personalize rejection. It took awhile to get my feelings of anxiety under control. Small wonder that early anthropologists underwent psychoanalysis before leaving for their lonely islands.

Jean Briggs' Never in Anger: Portrait of an Eskimo Family (1972) gave me the clearest grasp of the sensation of being an isolated field worker. When facing problems in the field, I consoled myself with the vision of Briggs sitting alone in her tent because she had been ostracized by the Eskimo community.

During my periods of anxiety, it was impossible for me to be relaxed at the setting. But all of this anxiety cannot be blamed solely on the direct pressure from the field and the problems I was encountering there, although they were certainly a significant source. My status as a graduate student made me feel sometimes that this project was a make-or-break situation, certainly no an anxiety-reducing thought. Nonetheless, it was difficult to distinguish one anxiety source from another. And it was not until I had progressed on the project and had a few friends in the field that I was able to relax.

Ethical Issues

Several ethical problems inherent in the method of participant observation arose during the course of my research. Any field research is seriously affected by new federal guidelines, particularly "the blanket requirement of written informed consent from all participants" (ASA Footnotes, 1977:5). In the case of minors, parental approval must be obtained before formal interviewing. I handled the issue of parental permission by eliminating its necessity through two steps. First, I decided to use a commercial setting open to the public at large. Thus, the question of my right to access was handled informally. Second, I decided to eliminate formal interviewing of minors -- eliminating the need for parental permission. All of my discussions with minors would involve informal and spontaneous conversations arising from my presence at a public site.

Because I was interested in delinquent behavior, I was concerned with the possibility of my data being requested by local law enforcement authorities. Therefore, I had to determine to "protect" the identities of my subjects. I decided not to reveal to the police the names of any juveniles I observed engaged in delinquent activities.

But I tried to head off the possibility of adult community intervention in several ways. First, I maintained a low profile within the community where I did my research. In fact my field work was over for a number of months before I ever approached members of the city recreation staff, the police department, or the business community regarding their attitudes concerning young people. Second, I decided to avoid involving myself in any illegal activities -- although the opportunity presented itself on a number of occasions. While at Jelly's I was asked to purchase liquor for minors, to aid in a drug purchase, and to join a group smoking marijuana. By declining those opportunities, I hoped to avoid any confrontation with local authorities. But I also lost the possible opportunity for a more intimate relation with Jelly's patrons.

Several steps were taken to insure the integrity of the researcher-subject relationship. I informed all the individuals whom I contacted of my own academic background and interests. I explained that, as a sociology student at the local university, I was interested in how young people spent their time. I did not deceive the participants about either myself or what I was trying to accomplish. At no time during the project did I formally interview a minor. Instead, I relied on a series of interviews with older participants and informal discussions with minors within the natural context of the interaction pattern at Jelly's. Because of the public nature of the facility, it was relatively easy to accumulate informal data.

I also made a point of assuring individuals of the confidential nature of the discussions. I explained that I would not name the community or use the real names of any of the individuals with whom I spoke. Only one academic advisor knew the exact location of the research site. The

pseudonym for the site became Jelly's. The community was described as a large Midwestern metropolitan area.

During my fieldwork, none of the participants ever expressed any concern over the issue of confidentiality. When I eventually interviewed community adults, only one person expressed any hesitation about talking with me. She was the replacement for a recently fired city employee. I managed to assure her that the interview would remain confidential. A possible explanation for the overall lack of concern surrounding confidentiality may be that the participants knew that the research was a school-related project, and thus the project seemed less threatening to them than research intended from the outset for publication.

Summary

There are a number of questions with which a sociologist must deal when beginning any research. In this chapter I have explored some of the unique demands of field research and the problems I dealt with in order to conduct my study.

Also, I cannot underestimate how these problems affected my activities within the setting and how I viewed the situation. But, because field researchers gradually have become more open about their actual problems in data collecting, I realize that my experience is hardly unique. And in the process of becoming more sensitive to my own limitations, I became more sensitive to the interactions that took place at Jelly's.

Chapter III

WHAT KIND OF SETTING WAS JELLY'S?

Jelly's was a commercial games establishment that existed in the Midwest community of Melrose for three years. During that time, it relocated twice and was reorganized in several different ways. It was staffed by young, male fussball enthusiasts who related well to their patrons. The patrons themselves were white, middle-class adolescents -- both male and female. Those youthful patrons can be categorized into three types: regulars, occasionals, and characters. This chapter will provide a description of Jelly's, the community of Melrose, and the Melrose youth who frequented Jelly's.

The community of Melrose is a not-so-unique blend of small town and thriving suburb. It began its history with the railroads in the nineteenth century and remained mainly a commercial center for agriculture until the 1950s. At that point, the economic base of Melrose shifted to industry and suburban life began to encroach on what had traditionally been a small, rural community. Between 1950 and 1960 the population grew 223.7 per cent; between 1960 and 1970 it increased another 96.3 per cent.* As a result, there were a number of community problems that included crowded living conditions, poor parking facilities, and downtown traffic congestion.

Melrose is a solidly lower-middle income community. The population

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*In order to protect the identity of the community, no formal citation for the census data will be given.

is overwhelmingly white, although a small number of black families moved in after lower-income housing was built in the area. Most of the population still lives in single family dwellings -- 92.5 per cent. The average family income in 1970 was between $7,000 and $12,000 a year. Approximately half of the population has a high school education, but less than 20 per cent is employed as either professionals or in business. The bulk of the population -- 40 per cent -- is employed in clerical and kindred occupations. Almost 30 per cent is employed in skilled and unskilled labor.

As of 1970, 30 per cent of the population was in school. Although recreation facilities are limited for adults, there are even fewer available for adolescents. There are no movie theaters, for example, and no downtown soda fountain shops, no downtown record stores, and only one aging bowling alley. It is hardly surprising that Jelly's became popular so quickly.

Jelly's was located in the original downtown area of Melrose. When Melrose began its rapid expansion in the 1950s, several shopping centers sprang up on the outskirts of town, leaving the downtown area a little less busy than it had been previously. Despite these changes, the downtown area remained the town's central business district and the seat of the city government.

Jelly's was established in 1974 by a young man in his early twenties, to be called Jelly. He was soon joined by a partner to whom he eventually sold the business. After a nine month absence, Jelly returned to the facility, buying his way back in as a co-owner. The facility offered a variety of table games as well as a social atmosphere where informal and uninhibited behavior could take place. Essentially Jelly's was a location

where adolescents could go to spend their leisure time without being supervised by adults. The adolescents made the facility their own. And for several years Jelly's was quite popular. It closed in March 1977 because of declining popularity and community pressure.

Jelly's was a place where young people could loiter without playing any of the games. Welcoming loiterers into an establishment such as this one is sometimes advantageous to the owner because, as Patricia Nathe (1976) has found in her study of the Prickley Pear Coffee House, loiterers help create a hangout atmosphere. Their presence lent support to the reputation of the Coffee House as a lively and attractive facility -- attracting paying customers in the process.

The owners of Jelly's were never disturbed by youths hanging out there because loiterers helped establish what Erving Goffman (1967) has called an "action" atmosphere. On one occasion, in fact, Jelly remarked to me that it actually helped business to have people hanging out. Other youths, he explained, would be attracted by the crowd.

Jelly's was a place where young people not only could play games, socialize, and loiter, but also make connections for a number of additional activities. These connections included arrangements for parties, rides around town, and drug or alcohol purchases. This excerpt from my field notes illustrates a young man's attempt to make a connection for a drug purchase:

> Rob, who is a short, chubby blond (and appeared to be the bane of everybody's existence) came up to me and said, "Give me a kiss, Mom." I turned to him and told him I was not his mother. During the course of the evening, he kept flitting back to me, giving me a hard time. At one point he asked me to give him a ride to go and find some dope because, he said, he had some money and wanted to buy some drugs.

An individual was rarely allowed the indulgence of being a bystander. Usually she was swept up into whatever was happening at a particular time. That personal involvement is part of what made the spot such an exciting place for local youth.

Jelly's was normally open from noon until midnight during the week and until one a.m. on weekends. However, this schedule was flexible and was often altered, depending on how busy the center was at any one time and how strongly an employee wanted to go home. If business was extra lively, the staff would often extend the hours. This disregard for formal hours was employed at both ends of the day. Many times the facility was not open until much later than noon. And many times, as I soon discovered, the facility did not open at all:

> When I arrived at Jelly's, the place was closed, even though it is supposed to be open at noon. There was quite a bit of sidewalk torn up and there appeared to be some newly laid cement in front of the store. The yellow shades were down and I ended up walking in the cement -- accidentally -- leaving a footprint. Jelly's is closed -- no sign.

The staff relied on an informal network of contacts to keep regular patrons informed about the facility's hours, although no notice was placed in the window explaining the situation to non-regulars.

What Did Jelly's Look Like

Over a period of three years Jelly's was located in three different downtown storefronts. The reasons for this transiency were twofold. The first move was made because more space was needed. The second move was made because of pressure from the landlord and general dissatisfaction with the location. Joel, a staff member, explained those relocations this way:

> He /Jelly/ moved out of the store next to the sports store because of the size. Then he moved out of the one /in the center of town/ because he didn't like the glass /window/ out there. People would say they felt like they were on stage. He tried to please the customers, so he moved down to another location.

The relocations are important to discuss because the various settings affected both the nature of the action within the setting and the community response to Jelly's. I spent time only in the second and third locations (Jelly's II and Jelly's III).

Jelly's II. Jelly's II was located on a busy corner in the center of Melrose. There was diagonal parking on both sides of the street that ran in front of the facility. Directly across the street was a small park where youths often would gather. The facility had glass windows across the front and down one side. The only shield from outside observation was provided by clear yellow sunshades that were pulled down most of the time. The shades gave a smokey and yellow tone to the action in the interior. Few passersby openly scrutinized the interior. And if outsiders did look in, inevitably they would be confronted by at least one pair of curious eyes gazing directly back at them. However, the police and adjacent business owners scrutinized the facility regularly.

During the field research period there were constant improvements at Jelly's II, as if the owner could not quite decide what to do with it. Because the ownership of the facility was in flux, the improvements may have represented the initial burst of new-owner energy. For instance, when I first visited Jelly's II, the walls were painted a motley combination of pink, purple, and gold. Eventually all the walls were painted a dark blue with an elaborate fussball logo on the wall. Because of the constant decor changes, the facility always seemed to be in a state of transition.

Staff people often sat behind a counter where they made change and surveyed the scene. Originally the counter was located at the rear of the store, in front of the entrance to the office. Eventually, it was moved to the front of the store by the entry doorway. In that position, the staff person on duty could greet all the patrons as they entered and left. Mirrors with gold flecks were placed on the wall behind the counter and a variety of fussball paraphernalia -- gloves, spray, caps, halter tops, tee shirts -- was taped to the mirrors and offered for sale.

The office in the rear doubled as a storage area and was always kept locked. The staff entered it only infrequently to resupply the vending machines. The owner had a desk in the back room where he kept his ledger and did his bills, but otherwise, I never saw him use the room as an office.

At various times the facility had quite a few electronic coin-operated games, including tennis, war, and racing games. All were complete with sound effects and, together with the omnipresent blaring radio, added to the loud symphony of noises from the pinball, fussball, and pool tables. There were three pinball machines, although they were not always in working order. For a brief time there was a "safe-cracking" game that rang out a burglar-style alarm whenever a patron broke the combination.

Although there were additional table games at Jelly's, fussball was the main table sport. Initially there were eight fussball tables; several more were added as the sport became more popular. At the front of the store a fussball table was often on display with a "For Sale" sign dangling from one of the rods. The owner hoped eventually to become a full-time fussball table salesman.

School auditorium chairs flanked one wall. Customers often would sit in these chairs, smoke, watch games, and comment on the action. Eventually the chairs were removed and replaced by a more elaborate bleacher stand. The owner decided that the bleachers would be a good place for tournament spectators to sit and view the action.

Jelly's II was equipped with two phones which were used frequently for both incoming and outgoing calls. One was a pay phone, used mainly by the customers. The second phone was located at the counter and meant for staff use. Incoming calls rang at both phones, however, and often messages were left for patrons.

Jelly's III. Jelly's III was physically smaller than the second location, although it possessed some advantages. First, the facility itself was a nicer one, with good carpeting and paneled walls. Located only half a block from Jelly's II, Jelly's III was still readily accessible to the center of town. The big advantage of this location was its air of privacy. As Joel noted, the glass front of Jelly's II gave patrons an uneasy feeling that they were on stage, on display for casual passersby, not to mention the police. Jelly's III offered both patrons and staff an important sense of being protected from such easy invasions of privacy.

Jelly's III was located in the middle of a block, while Jelly's II sat on a busy corner. The third location made it harder for cars -- police cars, for example -- to slow down in front of the store and peer in without blocking traffic. However, Jelly's III's most interesting asset was a dark brown curtain which hung down from the ceiling at the front of the store and was drawn across the front windows so that the only way to see what was happening inside was by walking right up to the glass doorway. Literally, Jelly's had drawn down the stage curtain in order to

allow its patrons backstage privacy.

Youths could not congregate as easily outside Jelly's III as they had been able to do outside of the second location. Parking in front of the store was at a premium and no grassy area for lolling existed across the street as had been the case with Jelly's II. Jelly insisted that he found this arrangement advantageous, since it worked to confine the action of his patrons to the interior space. As such Jelly's maintained a lower community profile and, so Jelly hoped, he might avoid some of the complaints about loitering from downtown business people which had plagued Jelly's II. On the other hand, the curtain added to the air of mystery surrounding the action at Jelly's III and may have added fuel to the community's suspicion that there were secret "goings-on" within.

The staff office-supply room was used more frequently in this location than before. A pass-through was cut into the wall and sometimes a staff member would retreat through the passway to the rear and watch the scene from there. Extra operating supplies were visible -- additional fussball equipment for the game tables and soda for the machines. Also, the staff made change for the tables from the back room.

Unlike the previous location, there was no pay phone at Jelly's III. The owner had decided that pay phones were just not worth installing. Instead, there was one store phone in the front which customers used to make local calls. Although physically the third location was nicer than Jelly's II, the lighting was not nearly as satisfactory. As a matter of fact, a number of clients complained of poor lighting, stating that it adversely affected their game. The dim lighting also affected the atmosphere of the location, making Jelly's III a less wholesome looking place than had been Jelly's II, and more in tune with traditional bar environs

or pool halls.

When Did People Go There?

The regular patrons of Jelly's congregated at the facility during certain periods of time. Although the facility was open Monday through Thursday from noon until midnight and on weekend nights until one a.m., the most popular times were fairly concentrated. The busiest times were after eight p.m., although many of the regulars spent most of their leisure time there.

Most young teens visited during the afternoon and early evening. Yet, on a number of occasions, I saw very young patrons stay until almost closing time on the night of a tournament, even though they had school the next morning. On one occasion I drove a 14-year-old tournament player home at midnight. I asked if his parents seemed to mind his late hours and he implied that they did not. Whether his assessment was accurate or not, he did not suffer from any restrictive curfew during the rest of the week.

Weekend hours were the most popular. For many youths, Jelly's was the place to go if they had no formal plans for the evening. Youths who had no evening plans were often included in spontaneous excursions, as this field note excerpt indicates:

> Eventually they decided to go out and smoke some dope, and Charlie asked me if I wanted to go along with them. I declined. Kathy said that she had to go out and get it down pretty quickly because she had a curfew.

If no outside connection was made, youths could always pursue the action taking place at Jelly's. And for youths who did have plans, Jelly's was a place to meet friends and head out for the evening.

Who Went There?

There were no formal restrictions of any kind on the people who were allowed to patronize Jelly's. That was true of all of its locations. Yet despite that apparent freedom, the clientele consisted of only a select group of Melrose adolescents.

The population of Jelly's was almost exclusively teenage. Adults rarely entered. And when a few adults did show up from time to time, it was usually an attempt to check up on the goings-on. According to Jelly, for instance, the Melrose mayor visited the facility on one occasion. The mayor purchased a package of cigarettes, looked around for a moment, and left. The mayor's own business was located near Jelly's, and it is not surprising that he was interested in checking out the scene from the inside. The only other member of the city's hierarchy to visit Jelly's was the Melrose police chief. He dropped in several times also, so he told Jelly, just to buy cigarettes. Additionally, a local Marine recruiter dropped by every once in a while. It is not difficult to guess that he might have been interested in talking with a few potential recruits. Several times, the recruiter successfully signed a few people up. According to Jelly, one day the recruiter was talking to Rob, a patron who was always bragging about how "experienced" and "world-weary" he was. Rob dropped a hint that he was old enough to enlist and the recruiter hussled Rob to the Marine recruiting office nearby. As it turned out, Rob was underage and the recruiter's effort had been in vain.

Periodically, a minister from the town would drop by on a weekend evening to talk with the patrons and hand out religious literature. On several occasions parents came by to retrieve their offspring. Those parents were not always in a friendly mood.

So, of the adults who happened into Jelly's on an infrequent basis, none were there in hopes of becoming part of the action. The mayor and police chief were naturally interested in learning just what was happening inside. The Marine recruiter was aggressively pursuing his job. Preachers were seeking a ready audience for religious talk and information. Irate parents were hunting their children. But, although it was a place open to everyone, the action within Jelly's was strictly for Melrose adolescents.

Patron Types

For Melrose youth in search of action opportunities, the commercialized game atmosphere of Jelly's was an ideal attraction -- a place where "'a piece of' the action" (Goffman, 1967:186) was likely to result after entry, if only through the operation of a game table. Similar to locations like bowling alleys or pool halls, Jelly's provided "arrangements where the cost of the play and the value of the prize generate a mildly fateful context for displaying competence" (Goffman, 1967:196). Jelly's was a place where youths could mingle with their peers. Just being in Jelly's provided excitement, as their

> mere presence in a large, tightly packed gathering of revelling persons.../brought/ not only the excitement that crowds generate, but also the uncertainty of not quite knowing what might happen next, the possibility of flirtations, which themselves could lead to relationship formation, and the lively experience of being an elbow away from someone who does manage to find real action in the crowd (Goffman, 1967:197-198).

During the peak of Jelly's popularity, the daily walk-in trade numbered upwards of fifty patrons, with close to one hundred appearing on the night of a tournament. During the course of a week, approximately two hundred youths would come through the doors of the facility. The ratio of

male to female was roughly three to one.

There were three basic types of patrons who participated in the action at Jelly's: the regulars, the occasionals, and the characters. Each group, at least to a small degree, had distinguishing group characteristics including age, attitude, and the frequency of visits. Also each contributed to some degree to the social control of the setting.

The Regulars. About twenty five youths were regulars -- patrons who came to Jelly's almost daily. They were divided male to female at about the same ratio of the general population of Jelly's; that is, three males to every one female. These youths spent a significant amount of their daily time at the facility; socializing, playing fussball, killing time while waiting for something to happen. It was not unusual for a regular to spend five hours a day at Jelly's. Most of the regulars knew one another. The male regulars ranged in age from thirteen to twenty two. Females ranged from fourteen to eighteen. Regulars dressed in the uniform of the scene -- jeans.

The process of becoming a regular was not complicated. The process rested on two factors: frequency of visits, and amenability. Youths who became regulars frequented Jelly's constantly. Frank, one of the staff members, stated that a person became a regular by "just coming to Jelly's all the time." Most regulars spent at least part of each day checking out the action, even if only briefly.

Youths also became regulars by presenting an amenable personality to other regulars. This presentation was accomplished in part by not rushing in and immediately trying to gain the status of an insider. Youths who were sociable and skilled in the arts of small talk, fussball, and killing time made good companions. These good companions, who were willing to

invest time and energy into the action at Jelly's became regulars. These regulars were willing to make an investment of themselves.

There was a definite cliquish atmosphere at Jelly's. Being known as one of the regulars was important. However, the staff members denied that there was any status involved in being a regular. In doing so, the staff forgot all the special services and benefits that came with the position of being a regular.

Regulars, for instance, were often especially friendly with the staff people. As a result, regulars were often invited to staff parties, filled in for absent staff members or assisted staff, and were selected as opponents for staff members for numerous "on-the-house" fussball games.

Regulars could also borrow small amounts of money from the staff. Joel, a staff member, admitted extending credit to a select group, "just to Jelly's friends and mine or somebody I knew would pay it back." Regulars were assured that messages would be relayed. A regular knew that she or he would always find someone to talk with at the setting. And in many ways Jelly's became a "home-away-from-home" for the regular participants of the scene. This feeling affected their attitude toward Jelly's, an attitude that was at the same time both proprietory and protective.

Because of this proprietory attitude, the regulars assumed a significant role in how the day-to-day action at Jelly's operated. For instance, by filling in for staff members on a temporary basis, the regulars supervised the activities at Jelly's in a rather formal way. But the regulars also exerted control in less formal, more subtle ways.

First, because the regulars were, on the whole, the best fussball players at Jelly's, they helped to establish the procedures and rituals surrounding the game and the rules to be followed during game playing.

The influence which the regulars exerted over game playing became particularly evident during and immediately after tournaments. The formalization of the importance of the skills connected with fussball, skills made more evident during a tournament, added more stature to the regulars. The athletic grace and control which the regulars displayed during a tournament became highly prized commodities among the general population at Jelly's.

Second, the regulars had control over the style of behavior that occurred merely because they were held in esteem by other patrons. The behavior of regulars established the pattern of behavior for other youths who might be anxious to join the regular group.

The Occasionals. Youths who were occasional visitors to Jelly's did not contribute in a significant way to the action. For the most part, occasional patrons visited the setting infrequently -- at the minimum, once or twice a week. They were less likely than regulars to spend large chunks of time at Jelly's on any one day. Occasional patrons tended to use the facility to fill in gaps of time, to play a quick game, or to explore possible connections.

Most of the occasional patrons shared the same physical characteristics of the regulars: that is, they were between the ages of twelve and twenty two and dressed casually. But some of the occasionals were older than the general population, working men who occasionally dropped by during their lunch hour, or on break, to play a few fast games.

The main difference between regular and occasional patrons was one of attitude. Occasional visitors used Jelly's as a means to obtain certain goals. They did not give of themselves enough to add major dimensions to the action at Jelly's. For instance, many of the occasional patrons were

young and visited the facility only on a weekend night or a Saturday afternoon. Occasional patrons often did not know any of the regulars or the staff by name. Also, they usually had few game skills, an important asset for acceptance at Jelly's.

The main contribution of occasional visitors to the action at Jelly's was a passive one. By their mere presence, occasional visitors inflated the patron population and added to the impression of Jelly's as a popular action spot, making Jelly's a more exciting place for both regulars and occasionals.

Another contribution made by occasionals was in fleshing out the population. The youth who made up the regulars were a fairly homogeneous group; the occasionals added variety and diversity. Thus, they allowed Jelly and his staff members to argue that Jelly's enjoyed a wide appeal among Melrose youth. I had this conversation with Jack, a staff person, when I was newly arrived on the scene:

JACK: See that tall girl?

M.K.: Yeah.

JACK: Her dad is the director of /a senior citizen's/ Village. Do you know what that is?

M.K.: Yes.

The fact that this girl was only an occasional visitor to Jelly's was less important to Jack than the fact that she represented a different population than usually frequented the place.

That brief exchange with Jack was also an effective way of insisting that Jelly's catered to a "nice" clientele. And to a degree, "nice" clientele made an important contribution to the reputation of Jelly's. By the presence of a diversified clientele, the occasionals helped to dimin-

ish the effectiveness of typing Jelly's patrons. This contribution was particularly important in terms of the reputation Jelly's had in the Melrose community. If "nice" youths participated in the action at Jelly's, then those youths might provide a degree of positive influence and control.

Characters. Like any other location that becomes a home-away-from-home for a certain population, Jelly's had its share of characters. These people drifted in and out of Jelly's. Their attendance was too infrequent to even fit into the occasional category. And their behavior seemed eccentric or unusual in comparison to the typical Jelly's population.

Some of these characters made nuisances of themselves and were eventually asked to leave. "Richard the Preacher" was one of those recalled by Joel:

> He was the biggest nuisance we had. He would just come up -- nothing against anything he was doing -- but that's not what everybody wants to hear.

Simply, Richard was literally preaching at Jelly's patrons.

> That's why I had to tell him, "We just can't have you in here." People just walk away from him, saying, "Leave me alone!"

Other individuals -- Joel called them "cut-ups" -- were seen as characters in the setting and were just ignored. They were, however, excluded from any of the invitations that frequently flowed between the youths to join a part or drive somewhere. Jelly discussed the characters:

> Oh yeah, there's lots of people in here that appear to be strange. Not just young people. There's a lot of people who are older than myself come in here who I feel are quite, maybe "not playing with a full deck" would be a good way to put it. They don't do anything, act like a normal person, maybe a little not quite altogether there. I don't say nothing to them.

Despite Jelly's glib assertion that there were "lots of people" who were not attractive to have as participants at the scene, few were ever

strongly discouraged from spending their time at Jelly's. Such a policy just would not have made good business sense.

Staff members were not the only ones aware of the character population. Patrons also saw some of the unusual attributes of the characters. One young male character had acquired quite a reputation as a fabricator of elaborate tales about himself. And even occasional patrons like Mary commented on his behavior:

M.K.: Rob seems like something else.

MARY: Yeah, he's full of it. Does he look 18 to you? That's how old he told me he was.

M.K.: Gee, I don't think so. If he is, he's awfully young looking. He told me he was from New York.

MARY: He told me he was from California.

After such discussions, a patron was quickly perceived as a character by other patrons.

However, whatever their peccadilloes, the characters at Jelly's not only helped to fill up the scene, but also added a special dimension to the action spot. For instance, the characters often provided a sense of comic relief and levity to the setting. The characters often participated in selective outrageous behavior which relieved the tension during tournaments. On the other hand, at times the behavior of such characters was so outrageous that both staff members and patrons openly disapproved. In that way, the characters inadvertently helped to illustrate the parameters of acceptable behavior at Jelly's.

Summary

Jelly's was a commercial games establishment located in a suburban community. Melrose provided scant opportunities for youthful leisure-time

activity, and as a result Jelly's became a popular spot. Although a public place, Jelly's had the atmosphere of a hangout or home territory where backstage behavior was a natural and everyday occurence. The drawn curtain at Jelly's III heightened, both symbolically and literally, the backstage nature of the action.

Youths came to Jelly's for conversations, games, music, information, connections, and exchanges of a variety of goods and services. All of these different activities could at various times become the major form of action or involvement at the setting. Even the fact that Jelly's moved twice did not discourage its patrons who had no place else to go and nothing much to do in Melrose.

Essentially, youths could unwind and enjoy themselves at Jelly's. They were fairly well insulated from outside pressures. Yet within the setting, there was a clear hierarchy of patron types. The regulars were those who spent many of their days at Jelly's and presented an amenable disposition. They set the atmosphere and pace within Jelly's and, when they sat in for staff members, participated directly in maintaining order and control. Other youths -- occasionals -- did not use the facility as frequently as the regulars. But their presence added to the number of people in Jelly's and thus the excitement of being there. They also brought with them a diversity missing from the group of regular patrons. Finally, the characters provided color and a sense of the unexpected. They also delineated the range of acceptable and unacceptable behavior. All of these youths contributed to the popularity of Jelly's as a community hangout.

Chapter IV

WHAT WAS THE APPEAL OF JELLY'S?

For the youth of Melrose, Jelly's held many appeals. Jelly's was a natural setting unhampered by adult restraints. Therefore, adolescents could engage in a wide range of relatively unrestricted activities. Adolescents could also play the local game rage -- fussball. In addition, youths could make connections for delinquent actions such as drug or alcohol use. The final appeal was that Jelly's was a place where both male and female adolescents interacted. In fact, youths were attracted to Jelly's because of a unique combination of benefits that were not available elsewhere.

Significance of Setting

To better understand the success of a particular locale like Jelly's and its attractiveness to adolescents, one must consider the difficulty of sustaining relationships in contemporary society. As society becomes more complex, the opportunity for intimate, primary relationships becomes more difficult (Durkheim, 1933). We have less and less opportunity of knowing the people around us. As a result, the contemporary world becomes a "world of strangers" (Lofland, 1973).

The urban dweller especially relies on appearential and spatial order to lessen that strangeness and bring some sense to day-to-day interaction (Lofland, 1973). Appearential ordering allows an individual to know something about another through body presentation -- clothing, hair

style, or special markings. Spatial ordering allows an individual to know something about another because of the "type" of person found in a particular setting -- i.e., roving singles in a disco bar. Lofland feels that spatial ordering is more prominent than appearential ordering in defining individual types within contemporary society. Emphasis on spatial location helps to explain interaction in urban areas by establishing certain types of behavior expectations for different settings.

The urban dweller seeks a sense of community, or a feeling of belonging, in a variety of ways. For one, she seeks out others who share the same or a similar world view, who act, look, and talk like one another. This search for community is partially a defense against the isolating nature of modern society. Once found, the group becomes a support system for the seeker. Thus, homosexuals seek out other homosexuals and win support for their own life style from that group. Blue-collar workers find commiseration with others of the same employ. And, as in the case of Jelly's, youths gather among themselves to seek a sense of solidarity and support. And all are involved in the search for a setting, a place where they can act in a relaxed manner. The behavior that occurs in such a setting often has a backstage quality to it (Goffman, 1959).

Goffman uses dramaturgical terms to describe individual and group behavior. For instance, "performance" describes the activities which occur "before a particular set of observers" (Goffman, 1959:22). "Front" is

> that part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance (Goffman, 1959:22).

The "backstage" is a place where the front performance "is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course" (Goffman, 1959:112).

Certain areas in the modern city have become identified as backstage settings. To some extent, this identification is the result of the development of specialized space usage. Activities are increasingly segregated. The work place, for example, is separated from the educational place; people are spatially segregated by class, caste, age, race, sex, and moral categories (Lofland, 1973; Stone, 1970). Each location imposes different "physical and symbolic limitations upon behavior" (Bennett and Bennett, 1970:190).

As a result, we often rely on spatial ordering to identify individuals for the purpose of interaction. An individual is identified, in other words, by where she is located. For both adults and adolescents, an attractive location is one where a wide latitude of behavior is tolerated. And for adolescents, that wide latitude is particularly attractive because it is difficult to find.

As activities become conspicuously segregated, the locations for activities, including leisure ones, become more specialized. Each setting gains a set of characteristics, including the sexual composition of the group, the size and stability of the population, and the variety of activities which take place within the group (Cheek and Burch, 1976). A given location gains a reputation that is perpetuated by providing a haven for individuals who are effectively segregated from other settings and by attracting those individuals who have feelings of solidarity with that reputation (Lofland, 1973).

Lofland and Cavan, for instance, both discuss the transition by individuals as they become more intimate within a setting. When a person becomes a regular participant of the scene, he is immersed in the everyday activities of the setting and becomes highly knowledgeable about the

comings and goings of the scene. For regulars, a familiar locale becomes a "home territory" (Cavan, 1966; Lyman and Scott, 1967).

> He not only knows where everything is, he also knows when the locale will be full, when empty; when certain of its facilities will be most in demand, when ignored. In addition, he is fully aware of all other users of the setting and is likely to be able to determine who is the first-timer, who is the irregular customer, who is the regular patron, or who is the fellow resident (Lofland, 1973:122).

The regular is also the recipient of a certain set of privileges within the home territory. For example, the locale is molded to meet the particular needs of regular rather than occasional patrons. Jelly's is a prime example of that. Within that setting, the music played, the games available, and the food served all reflected the desires of the adolescent regulars. Then too, the regular is allowed easy access to what Goffman calls the "backstage language of behavior":

> The backstage language consists of reciprocal first-naming, cooperative decision-making, profanity, open sexual remarks, elaborate griping, smoking, rough informal dress, "sloppy" sitting and standing posture, use of dialect or sub-standard speech, mumbling and shouting, playful aggresivity and "kidding," inconsiderateness for the other in minor but potentially symbolic acts, minor physical self-involvements such as humming, whistling, chewing, nibbling, belching, and flatulence (Goffman, 1959:128).

Finally, the regular deals with the setting in a possessive manner similar to the one an individual may have toward her own property (Lofland, 1973).

In her ethnographic study of bar behavior, Sheri Cavan (1966) saw the development of a certain style of behavior when participants in a bar scene began to treat the locale as though it belonged to them. Calling that type of setting a "home territory" bar, she maintains that "ownership" activities became routine. For instance, telephone calls or messages may be left or made, money deposited, and even items pawned. In the extreme, patrons may use the bar facilities for eating and sleeping. Cavan agrees with Goffman that a "backstage style of behavior" takes place

in a variety of forms. She expands the scope of that behavior.

> Joking relationships, topics of interest, noteworthy events of the past in the bar or in the life of the collectivity may all gradually come to be defined as part of the culture of each particular home territory bar, and for the habitues they may come to stand for the characteristic features of their bar (Cavan, 1966:216).

In addition to the opportunity for backstage behavior, certain settings like Jelly's are attractive because they offer a chance to be "where the action is" (Goffman, 1967). Those adolescents attracted to a particular setting are often looking for action. And action, according to Goffman, is "usually something one can obtain 'a piece' of" (Goffman, 1967:186). Action can be found in a number of ways, including participating in commercialized, competitive sports and fancy milling where one can rub elbows with prestigious persons. Action may also be found in commercial locales such as bars, bowling alleys, pool halls, and arcades -- all places where the individual may pay for the opportunity to show competence in a game (Goffman, 1967).

> Looking for where the action is, one arrives at a romantic division of the world. On one side are the safe and silent places, the home, the well-regulated role of business, industry and the professions; on the other are all those activities that generate expression, requiring the individual to lay himself on the line and place himself in jeopardy during a passing moment. It is from this contrast that we fashion nearly all our commercial fantasies. It is from this contrast that delinquents, criminals, hustlers, and sportsmen draw their self-respect. Perhaps this is payment in exchange for the use we make of the ritual of their performance (Goffman, 1967:268).

For adults, action settings affording the opportunity for backstage behavior are many. Most prominent among such settings is the neighborhood bar. There, an adult may engage in convivial interaction, place a bet, and make ribald asides. The adult patron does not relate to the space in strictly economic terms but rather also in emotional terms. The setting becomes imbued with a special meaning by the individuals who interact there.

But adolescents have limited access to backstage space. Adults demand access to such settings and all try to exclude others. Adolescents, by their lack of power, are unable to make similar demands (Lyman and Scott, 1967). More often than not, open settings are forbidden to adolescents. Their opportunity for participation in the action life of a community may be further hampered by limited mobility and money. As an alternative, youths often just hang out -- whether it be on a street corner, in a local park, or on the steps of city hall. Essentially, adolescents often actively seek a setting where "one can exercise liberty and license . . . /and/ be cause rather than effect" (Lyman and Scott, 1967: 247).

The Allure of Jelly's

In the community of Melrose, youths did find, indeed helped to create, a facility that allowed them access to an exciting hang-out spot. That place was Jelly's. Jelly's provided a number of action opportunities for its youthful patrons. On the most obvious level, Jelly's was an arcade, and thus offered many games to be played. Special services were also available to youths including the sale of cigarettes, food, and soda. Phones were readily accessible. Jelly's staff even provided patrons with small loans. In addition, bathroom facilities were available. Youths driving around town frequently stopped in just to take advantage of that service. During the cold winter months, Jelly's was a place where people could keep warm: just as during the hot summer months, the patrons could cool off in Jelly's. Just as with adult patrons in neighborhood bars, Jelly's became a "home territory" for a certain youth population of Melrose, offering some of the basic amenities that any "home territory" must provide.

To adults, the attraction of any "home territory" is that it allows them the freedom to let down their "fronts" and engage in backstage behavior. Likewise, the freewheeling behavior system at Jelly's allowed youthful activities with the same backstage quality. Loud noises, courting, betting, and raucous game playing occurred on a regular basis. Because of the resulting constant high noise level, conversations and interactions could take on a curiously private nature. Whether it was the binging of the pinball machines or the cracking of a ball in the fussball machine, the games effectively masked much of the verbal interaction (Mackenzie, 1975).

The high noise level at Jelly's allowed for private conversations at what was clearly a public place. Added to the game noise was the constant, high volume background music from a local rock-and-roll station. The radio was turned up so high that verbal communications sometimes had to be aided by lip reading and gestures. Far from being bothered by such constant frenzy, the patrons seemed to find a certain comfort in the noise. Here was a place for youths to gather in the evening and talk about personal private matters. This masking worked so effectively that unless I was standing very close to someone, I could barely distinguish what was being said.

The motives of patrons, whether male or female, for coming into Jelly's were similar. Youths who frequented the facility often had nothing else to do and were looking for some companionship, someone to talk to, something to do. One girl, a regular, came into Jelly's frequently even though she insisted to me that most of the time she spent there was "boring." To her, life in general was "boring," her only excitement being "getting high." And yet she came to Jelly's regularly.

The action that she found there was not always blatant or particularly active. Often it seemed she, like other patrons, spent most of their time engaged in idle, meandering chit-chat with other patrons. This is probably what she meant by "boring." By romantic standard of action, little was taking place. Yet, such a view overlooks one of the fundamental services provided by Jelly's. Jelly's was attractive precisely because it provided youths an opportunity to engage others with whom they shared a sense of community and solidarity in conversation. After school, away from the pressures of home life, young people met and talked with other young people about topics that were of particular interest to them. Where else, other than Jelly's, could Melrose youth go to enjoy such an opportunity?

Any topic was an excuse for a conversation to fill time and to make connections with other youths. These conversations were one of the strongest appeals of Jelly's. As a result, not only were mundane topics tolerated, but so were seemingly dull adolescents. For instance, one evening Rob -- a newcomer -- turned to Linda and struck up a conversation:

> Rob: You know me. But I just had my hair cut so you probably don't recognize me.
>
> Linda: (Blank stare and a mumble.)
>
> Rob: Yeah, I had hair to my shoulders, but I had it cut off so I could get a job. I wish the fuck I never had.

That simple, seemingly mundane conversation contained all the ingredients of a successful interaction. Linda had met a new patron, a new member of her community. Rob had not only been able to express his displeasure over a matter important to a great many youths -- how far to go in compromising their personal life styles in order to find success in the job market -- but, more to the point, had been able to share those feelings with a

fellow member of his own community.

Conversations were so critical to the action at Jelly's that sometimes patrons brought along props to help initiate conversation. Not all youths found it easy or comfortable to strike up a conversation with strangers, so carrying something around with them like a little puppy could bridge the conversation gap.

> A girl I had never seen came in the other night. She was standing by the counter holding a puppy. I had never met her, so I used the puppy as an entry to make small talk.
>
> M.K.: Oh, what a cute puppy. What kind is he?
>
> Jody: A mixture, I think . . . Collie and German Shepard. I hope he is a German Shepard. His nose is pretty snub, not like a Collie.
>
> M.K.: How old is he?
>
> Jody: About five weeks.
>
> She keeps nuzzling the dog with her nose . . . he is sitting on the counter getting a lot of attention. I begin to tap my finger and he starts biting my hand, which happens to hurt, but no sacrifice is too great for field research. Jody and I continue to coo at the dog and just shoot the breeze about dogs in general.

The table games also provided conversational props. A youth could lean over someone's shoulder, ask about scores, playing techniques, and any number of other questions which often led to a successfully opened discussion on many topics.

Jelly himself recognized that, for at least some of his patrons, the opportunity to just hang out in their own setting was more important to them than the games that were played in Jelly's:

> Well, I like to think that somebody who wants to play fussball comes. That's not always the case, though. Sometimes, somebody has nothing to do. In the winter time, a lot of people want to get out of the cold.

The staff members often participated freely in the conversations. According to Frank, patrons talked "about the same thing everybody else does:

if it was hot, the weather; if it was cold, the weather." But Joel recognized a deeper significance to the talks. What young people were talking about were things that had a particular impact on their lives:

> As far as fussball, they would ask where a tournament was at, talk about parties and what went on last night, or who they went to bed with. Just everything. What the police did.

The impact of conversations cannot be underestimated. Conversations were the main form of interaction for the adolescents at Jelly's who were in the process of sorting out their lives.

Unsurprisingly, parents frequently dominated as a subject for discussion. Youths shared tales of problems and confrontations. School life, another dominant part of youthful existence, quite often found its way into conversations. The police, often seen as the enemy, came up regularly. Naturally, discussions about friends, particularly those of the opposite sex, were important ones.

> Judy: (Looking at Michael) He is really good looking, don't you think?
>
> M.K.: Yes.
>
> Judy: (She gazes over at Michael and smiles. He smiles back.) He's treating me better now.

Judy, in that same conversation, then brought up another topic of frequent concern to youths: part-time work:

> Judy: I've got to find a job. I really hate mine!
>
> M.K.: Where do you work?
>
> Judy: McDonalds. And I get so bored.
>
> M.K.: Have you graduated from high school yet?
>
> Judy: Yeah, in June. I don't want a typing job, but anything would be better than being a waitress.

Certainly the conversations at Jelly's were more than just frivolous

measures to fill the time. Youths used the verbal interaction as a means to evaluate sex and love, relationships with negative authority figures -- police -- and ambivalent ones -- parents -- and even used the time to explore and eliminate career prospects.

As part of the everyday action at Jelly's, youths were allowed to develop and explore relations with the opposite sex in an atmosphere which was separated from adult interference and monitoring. The back-stage quality of the setting led to both subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle displays of interest and ownership. There seemed to be a never ending variety of adolescent courtship patterns in an open and loose fashion. And this courtship was an integral part of male-female interaction.

Whatever the patrons' motivations for frequenting Jelly's, the staff knew that it was important to make the location as appealing as possible. Even youths who had no money to spend were never encouraged to leave. Jelly denied that they just "hung around," but rather stated that patrons would spend all their money on games and continue to stay at the facility in hopes of being picked as a partner of somebody who still had some game money left. Although never stating it, he seemed to sense that allowing youths to loiter in his facility would eventually pay off in increased business. It served ultimately to make Jelly's a more popular place to go.

Game playing was an ideal way for biding time without looking like one was waiting for "some action." Under these circumstances, the key side of the game table was the one facing the door. In that way, one could visually pursue what was happening on the outside of the facility and also see who was entering and leaving.

Although a large degree of the action took place around the game tables, not playing was also an important and legitimate activity.

Jelly's offered the opportunity to enter into lounging or relaxing. Youths would spend a great deal of time gazing out the windows, sitting on the pool tables or chairs and chatting, clustering around the vending machine or money counter, and gathering in the bathroom alcove. These spots allowed youths the opportunity to socialize, make decisions about parties, negotiate for alcohol or drugs, and comment on the scene. Although all game and non-game activities took place within the same room, the arrangement of the tables served as room dividers to section off parts of the room for different activities.

Patrons at Jelly's could be assured of a welcoming atmosphere that catered to their need for a place to call their own. This hangout offered home territory assets. And within the homeyness of the setting, youths could discuss some of the issues that affected their lives.

The Allure of Fussball

The game action at Jelly's centered around the fussball tables The game of fussball (sometimes called table soccer) can be played with either two or four players. The fussball table is approximately three feet high, four-and-a-half feet long, and two feet wide. Each team controls four rods spaced evenly across the table. Each rod has several "men" attached to it who can be spun freely to make points or block opponent's shots. At the center of each end of the table is an opening which serves as the goal. A plastic ball is placed in the middle of each game as the players face off for the opening. There are eight balls to a match and the team that scores the most goals with those balls wins.

Fussball can be played with any number of accessories. Serious players don special fussball gloves or spray their hands with a special cohe-

sive product known as "power grip." The gloves or spray allow them better control over the rods. Rosin, rod lubricants, even tee shirts, jersies, and jackets add to the competitive aura of the game.

An integral part of the game of fussball in Melrose was its reputation as a game requiring a high degree of skill. As a result, youths could build a standing among regulars by becoming an accomplished player. And if a youth wanted to become an accomplished player, he had to play numerous games -- which was good for Jelly's business. According to Joel, "The serious fussball player tries constantly to improve his game, to learn from other people by letting mind and body flow with the game."

Not all of the players at Jelly's were equally skilled, of course. Many of the patrons were not considered even average players. As a result, there was a potential range of people with whom an individual could play, no matter how skilled that individual. And because the game often was played with a partner, responsibility for a game loss either could be accepted or ducked by blaming the loss on a weak partner. Even though there was considerable competition around the game, it could be played in a friendly manner. If a game was going poorly, an individual could start playing in a more light-hearted manner, even blow points, in order to relieve the tension surrounding the game table. Nonetheless, many players took the game seriously and spent a considerable amount of time trying to improve their skills.

What was especially interesting to the patrons about the game action was the fact that females as well as males could become skillful in fussball. The main requirements of the game were good coordination between eyes and hands rather than pure, brute strength. Because both males and females frequented the place, it was not at all unusual for a male to find

himself pitted against a female player. Therefore, the game was not only a chance to show off skills, but also a chance to be beaten by a female -- a non-traditional expectation in most games. And as a result, male-female competition enhanced the stakes of the game.

If play between sexes enhanced the stakes involved in winning or losing, then tournament play expanded the stakes of the game even more. Huizinga, in his study, Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture, argues that an important essence of game playing is to have something at stake. Where there are stakes in a game that has been successfully concluded, a player receives satisfaction. This satisfaction is increased when the game is a highly skilled one, and further enhanced when the game is played in the presence of spectators. For Huizinga, winning shows that an individual is superior to others. An individual wins not only the game itself, but also esteem and honor (Huizinga, 1955).

The highest stakes at Jelly's came on the nights of organized tournament play. The first tournament took place in March of 1975. The games commenced at midnight Saturday and ran well into the next morning. As patrons, fussball fans, and newcomers jammed into the facility to catch a glimpse of this new action, the stakes for the game increased considerably. The greater the number of spectators, the greater the stakes. Then, Jelly himself boosted the stakes considerably by offering $500 in prize money.

From Jelly's own point of view, tournaments made good business sense. They were a way of promoting interest in fussball. Jelly's was, after all, the first fussball hall in the area, so the owners were constantly on the lookout for new ways of promoting the game. Then too, tournaments brought in new and steady customers, particularly customers from outside of Melrose. Also, as Jelly saw it, tournaments necessarily hyped the

stakes involved in the game, or as he put it, tournaments provided a chance for players "to see how good everybody was." Good players could compete with other good players, and beginning players could "just come with the intentions of learning something." Unmentioned but obvious was the fact that all of the players, good and bad alike, would come to Jelly's to spend money.

A significantly different group patronized Jelly's on tournament nights. Joel pointed out that, on those nights, many of the patrons were "more serious fussball players" than those who usually frequented Jelly's. The tournament players tended to be older -- in their late teens or early twenties. Frequently, the patrons were from outside of town and some even from out of state. A new action atmosphere was created at Jelly's on tournament nights. More skilled players placed greater emphasis on the game itself. Idle chat and conversations slacked off. All attention was focused on the game tables, on the winners and losers.

There were three types of tournament games: singles -- a one-on-one competition; doubles -- a two-on-two competition; and mixed doubles -- a male and female team versus another male and female team. Thus, females were carefully segregated within the tournament action. Their place was clearly defined: one half of a mixed-doubles team. Females rarely played in any category besides mixed doubles, and no two-female team ever won a regular doubles match. The tournaments were unquestionably a male domain and few females ever successfully broke that barrier. A partial explanation for the male domination, a domination not nearly so blatant or rigid on non-tournament nights, was the presence of "outsiders" (Becker, 1966). Non-regulars poured into Jelly's on these nights. Although females had obtained a positive position in the everyday action at Jelly's, the tour-

nament action changed not only the population but also the attitude of the players. And this more serious approach to fussball did not allow much flexibility for either amateurs or females. The females may have wanted to compete, but an unwritten rule effectively barred them from the competition, or at least segregated them into one specific category.

There was a more serious demeanor at Jelly's on tournament nights than on non-tournament nights. Individuals would often practice for at least an hour before a tournament, working on trick shots and honing techniques. On occasion, a good player was approached before a tournament and asked a technical question about such things as the placement of the fussball on the face off. On such occasions, small groups of players clustered around a table for pointers. One evening, after such an exchange of tips, one of the female players came up to me and remarked about the "player-teacher," saying, "He's got a big mouth." I replied, "Don't most of them?" and she nodded her agreement. Such a put-down expressed her dissatisfaction with being excluded from the key competition on tournament nights. No such complaints were heard from male competitors.

Because of the serious nature of the tournaments, youths also surrounded the game of fussball with a series of game rituals. While those rituals took place to a degree on non-tournament nights, the ritual became a part of the very fabric of the tournaments. Those rituals included a variety of preparatory activities. For instance, if a youth had long hair, he would tie it back or tuck it under his collar so that it would not be in his way during a game. In order to prevent their hands from slipping on the rod handles, youths would either put on a special fussball glove or spray their hands with "power grip." The rods were frequently spun to see that they were operating smoothly. Youths would spray the

rods with wax to enhance the spin. Flecks of dust or other materials were brushed off the top of the game tables. Lighting was checked and rechecked to make sure it was satisfactory. By participating in such elaborate pre-game rituals, the youths were offering their recognition that tonight, the stakes are higher. And, by formalizing the rites of the game, they were themselves heightening the meaning of the game of fussball.

Finally, before a formal game was started, opponents were assigned. This was done randomly, by drawing names from a hat. What followed was another ritual as opponents engaged each other in an elaborate handshake. Then the game began.

The tournaments added a competitive edge to the game of fussball that had been previously missing. Patrons and staff alike took the tournaments seriously and not only because of the money that could be won. Local fussball prestige was also at stake. Often before a game, somebody from out of town could be heard to remark, "We have to beat Melrose tonight." Likewise, Melrose patrons lined up behind their hometown favorites to defend the "honor" of their community against outsiders. The atmosphere was not unlike a high school basketball game.

The fact that the stakes increased considerably on tournament nights grew from several factors. First, on such nights, the population at Jelly's increased considerably in numbers. Sometimes, close to one hundred players and observers showed up. With so many people looking on, the notion of winning and losing gained a great deal of emphasis.

Second, the formula for running the tournaments became quite elaborate, the net result being more formal methods than normally existed for distinguishing winners from losers. Jelly would set up an involved "flow

chart" with the competitors' names on it. Youths would check the chart throughout the course of the evening. The charts provided a highly visible method of delineating winners: their names stayed in view, while those of losers disappeared.

In a competitive atmosphere of a tournament, youths risked considerable disappointment. As a result, losers often became quite angry. One night, a young opponent who had just lost became visibly angry and began kicking the floor, cursing, and mumbling under his breath. Jelly tried to calm him down by putting his arm around the boy and quietly talking with him. At the end of the evening, Jelly drove the young patron home. Such temper displays over losing rarely occurred on non-tournament nights, when the stakes involved in winning and losing were considerably lower.

Because of the tension surrounding the tournaments, there often were arguments concerning the rules of the game, another phenomenon rare on regular nights. During the course of one tournament game that I witnessed, for instance, two separate and rather nasty disagreements flared. Both involved a blond fellow whom I had never seen in Jelly's before, and both of the disputes concerned rules. The first argument concerned the placement of the ball on a face-off and was settled rather easily when a more experienced player intervened and explained the rule to the satisfaction of both opponents.

The second argument occurred over an apparent accusation of cheating hurled by the blond boy. He felt that his opponent had begun the game before he was properly set and yelled, "Fuck! I wasn't ready." His opponent retorted, "Why don't you start paying attention?" Once again, the ball was put into play. Once again, the blond accused his opponent of unfairly beginning too quickly. Finally, the opponent asked, "Are you call-

ing me a cheater?"

In an attempt to keep the argument under control, Jelly hastened over to mediate. After Jelly gave his opinion, the blond announced, in a tone that implied that his opponent was stupid, "I win because I'm smart." Finally, his opponent gave up and walked away to play some shots at another table. The blond triumphantly repeated, "I'm smart" over and over again.

The nasty comments of the blond signaled the higher stakes involved in tournaments. With the increased stakes -- stakes that involved both money and prestige -- players were more on edge. Tempers flared. And nasty behavior was sometimes the result.

For the patrons, the game of fussball was one of the reasons they were attracted to Jelly's in the beginning. It was a new and exciting game that had never been played locally before. As a result, the game molded other action for the patrons. The game became a platform for testing physical skill and confidence. Youths could test and, to some degree, affect their personal reputation within this setting through the game. The game helped clarify the roles of males and females -- at times allowing the divisions to be blurred, and at other times throwing those differences into stark contrast. And the increased stakes of tournament night added to the atmosphere of excitement and action that attracted Melrose youth to Jelly's.

The Allure of the "Forbidden"

Adolescents have fewer setting than adults where they can act in a backstage manner (Goffman, 1959). At the same time, they are passing through an age where they are exploring a wide range of behavior. In this

process of exploration, adolescent backstage behavior focuses periodically on delinquent action. And Jelly's became the center of a good deal of action centering around drugs and alcohol. The illegal, marginally dangerous nature of such delinquent activities added to the romantic aura of Jelly's.

There were regulations at Jelly's concerning the use of alcohol, but the staff rarely enforced them. The lack of rigorous enforcement grew, at least in part, from staff indifference. Further, there seemed to be a general if unspoken agreement that the use of alcohol added a special allure, a sense of daring and action, to the setting.

For the most part, only a select portion of the population actually drank at Jelly's. They were the older, regular clientele. Periodically, a member of this population would bring in an unfinished drink disguised in a Coke cup or soda can. Attempts to sneak in alcohol occurred more frequently on weekend nights as patrons came in to check out other local action opportunities. On other occasions, youths would make arrangements with some older patron to purchase alcohol for them. One evening, for example, Kristin came into Jelly's with two other young girls. They approached one of the older guys in the place -- he was about 25. Within a few minutes, the girls left with him. The whole group arrived back at Jelly's about half an hour later, and the three girls were carrying soda cups. It was obvious that there was alcohol in the cups. When another male patron saw them return, he went up to the girls and jokingly said, "I'm going to tell your Mamma you're out late." Everybody seemed to be enjoying the modestly delinquent behavior of the young girls.

Some youths were less discreet in their use of alcohol than those three girls. Such indiscretion was considered to be unacceptable by both

the staff and the regulars. For instance, one evening a young male brought in a bottle of gin and in the open began to sip straight from the bottle. Although sipping alcohol out of soda cups was perfectly acceptable, drinking from a bottle was frowned upon. The young man was told to leave.

A more typical pattern was for youths to come into Jelly's after having had alcoholic drinks elsewhere. Youths who had been drinking sometimes acted belligerent or silly, and they were either ignored or asked to leave. Quite frequently, these youths used Jelly's as a sort of pit stop. They would rush in, use the bathroom, then play a quick game or two. All the while, they checked out party connections and other possible ways to spend their leisure time.

Part of the delinquent action at Jelly's centered on drug use. Youths used Jelly's as a setting where they could make connections for the sale or purchase of drugs. But drug related conversation was usually discreet and muffled by the noise from the other action. On one typical night, I picked up bits and pieces from various drug related discussions. At one point, I heard a drug transaction. Someone casually turned to another fellow and asked, "How much is it going for?" Later as I walked through the facility, I overheard a couple of fellows talking about going out and smoking dope together. One of them understood the other had some good dope. Such action was usually quick, quiet, and to the point.

I never noticed anyone smoking marijuana in the facility although an occasional youth came in either stoned or on pills. Although for the most part, Jelly's patrons were discreet when it came to drugs, some of them were not. One young male asked me to give him a ride so that he could buy some drugs. On another occasion, a rather dramatic pill scene was played

out. Mary, a young patron, pulled out a bottle of pills and wondered aloud whether or not to take some more. The guy who took over her place in the fussball game asked her if she was taking the pills to "get high." She replied that she did not know. They were pills her mother got, she explained, after the mother had been in an accident. Rob leaned over and asked her if they were "Empirim 4." He advised her, "You could sell those two for a dollar." She did not take the pills, but in continuing their discussion, Rob pulled out and displayed a vial of small pills. By then a small group had gathered, and while I could not hear all the words, the group seemed to be discussing money and pills. A bit later I heard Rob say to one kid, "Five for a dollar."

Later that evening, I gave Mary a ride to where her mother worked. As we headed toward my car, she said, "I shouldn't have taken those pills." When we got into the car, I had to put the seat belt around her myself. She kept on talking, kept on saying that she should not have taken those pills. She then started talking about a fellow named Jack:

Mary: I love him so, and he doesn't want to have anything to do with me. It hurts so bad. We had such good times.

M.K.: How long did you go out?

Mary: Three months.

M.K.: How long have you been broken up?

Mary: Three weeks. He hates me. I'm so unhappy. I wish I hadn't taken those pills.

While the incident of Mary and her pills was fairly involved, it unquestionably was the exception rather than the rule when it came to drugs at Jelly's. Strictly from a practical standpoint, the facility would have been closed by the community had such blatant incidents occurred frequently.

Drug and alcohol talk was a regular part of the action at Jelly's. Yet neither discussions about drug and alcohol nor their use dominated the conversations there. Rather, these activities were just an integral part of the entire network of action at Jelly's.

Such discussions and use are not unusual among adolescents generally, so it is not surprising that these activities would take place at Jelly's. After all, Jelly's had a reputation as an adolescent action spot. Yet, because Jelly's was known as a facility that catered to the young, it was subject to regular and severe scrutiny by the community at large.

The Allure of Male-Female Relationships

What helped to make this action spot unusual and appealing was the fact that it was a place where participants of both sexes could and frequently did intermingle. Traditional action spots usually are highly segregated, with the major action dominated by males. Females often find themselves relegated to a minor role, if they are welcomed at all.

Goffman argues that in Western cultures, adult females are rarely found in action spots. When present, females usually play a role defined "as an object to initiate sexually potential relationships with" (Goffman, 1967:210). However, Nancy Barton Wise points to a significant modification in that role, particularly among middle-class teen-aged girls. In her 1967 study of delinquency, Wise discovered that middle-class boys and girls did, in fact, engage in similar kinds of behavior. The similar pattern apparently is the result of changing expectations concerning roles played by middle-class girls:

> In contrast to the past, contemporary boys and girls in the middle class are expected to engage on an equal basis in a wider variety of activities. They are encouraged to compete directly in the world of work and scholarship, and in leadership and social activities such as

> dating, parties, and other unique social events. With these changes taking place in role expectations, a role convergence may be occurring among these youngsters which includes both non-delinquent and delinquent kinds of activity (Wise, 1967:187-188).

Melrose is a predominantly middle-class community. In keeping with Wise's observation, young women played an active role in Jelly's. They did more than merely provide an object with whom to initiate sexual relationships. They actively contributed in a major way to all the action at the setting. Yet, despite this convergence of roles, the males at Jelly's continued to segregate and stereotype the actions of female patrons in both subtle and not-so-subtle ways.

The female regulars significantly contributed to the ambience of the setting in a number of ways. Like their male counterparts, many females had close relationships with one another. Male participants were also good friends with the female patrons. Females entered into the regular ebb and flow of the setting, joking, gossiping, socializing, and flirting. They also actively participated in the central action of Jelly's, playing the game of fussball.

Yet, even though there were strides toward more equal footing between males and females within the setting, it is important to evaluate how similar and different were the roads to male and female popularity among their peers.

Probably the most critical asset for personal popularity within Jelly's was skill at the game of fussball. The most popular males were regulars who became highly skilled in the game. These male players were constantly sought after, either as partners or opponents. This game related popularity was especially evident on tournament nights, when good players were often surrounded by youths seeking pointers before the com-

petition commenced:

> I proceeded to play pinball and watch what was going on. The tournament hadn't started yet, even though it was after eight p.m. and was supposed to start at 7:30. One of the older regular males who is a good player finished a practice. Somebody came by his table and said:
>
> Male: We have to have somebody from Melrose win tonight.
>
> The other players agree. The good player is asked a question about ball placement on the game table. He went over to another table trailed by several other males who gather around him to get pointers. The good player talked loudly and confidently.

Females as well as males placed a great deal of importance on game skills. Young males who wandered into Jelly's for the first time and demonstrated an obvious lack of sophistication toward the game had a difficult time striking up a friendship with female regulars. One evening, for instance, I was playing with a female regular, Marilyn, when a young man who had been playing poorly at a nearby table approached Marilyn. Her indifference became quite clear. Rob was his name and he asked Marilyn if she would join him in a game:

> Marilyn: No.
>
> Rob: (He grabs a hold of several of my game rods and spins them.)
>
> Marilyn: Back off, turkey!

Marilyn was judging Rob solely on the basis of his lack of game skills. "Turkey" meant that Rob did not have an asset highly esteemed in the setting.

For the male population, game playing was an opportunity to show off skills, sportsmanship, flashes of derring-do, and a means of attracting the opposite sex. But that opportunity was not limited to male patrons. Females also placed a high premium on game skills. Many females became good competitors and were sought after either as partners or opponents by

males and females alike. For a number of female regulars, game skills became important in and of themselves and not just as a means of attracting male attention. For example, several females showed extreme patience when trying to convey the fundamentals of the game to me. They were obviously flattered to be called upon to share their expertise and skill with another female. And often, four females would pair up and play a highly skillful match. One evening, two of the best female players paired up with friends to play a game. Several other females watched the game's progress. During the contest there were no gyrations, humming, or singing to the music. They were taking the game seriously. And right in the middle of the game, the teams switched positions so that the more skilled player had easier access to the goal shots.

The traditional reliance on attractiveness as a criterion for judging the opposite sex still played an important role in male-female relationships. Young male newcomers were usually subjected to a quick appraisal as to their attractiveness by female regulars. One evening, while I was playing with Judy, a new young male came into Jelly's, played a few fast games, and left:

> Judy: Wasn't he gorgeous? (Sighs, puts her hand over her mouth, and giggles.) I shouldn't say that.
>
> She looks in the direction of Michael, her boy friend, who was then playing pool.
>
> M.K.: He certainly wasn't bad. I've never seen him before, have you?
>
> Judy: No, but he sure is cute. He kept looking at me. I wonder why?

Female regulars felt that their being attractive was, despite their game skills, a crucial aspect of their popularity. While all of the female patrons dressed in the unisex uniform of the setting, jeans, they

obviously spent time before coming in with their hair styles and make-up. As a result, the female patrons on the whole looked less unkempt than the males:

> Jane has on jeans and an over-blouse; Kennera -- jeans, a blouse tied across her stomach and a sweater vest; the third female player -- jeans and a short sleeve jersey which has some gold metalic stripes on it. When the fourth girl takes off her coat, one of the males began to stare.

Joel, a staff member, recognized that it helped a female become popular if she was attractive, but admitted that being skilled at the game of fussball augmented that popularity:

> M.K.: What if the girl was attractive? Would that make her popular?
>
> Joel: Oh yeah!
>
> M.K.: Was it more important for a girl to be attractive or to play good fussball?
>
> Joel: It would help to have a little of both. . . /but/ I think . . . more attractive.

Joel's comment seemed to support the fact that the most popular females at Jelly's, even those who displayed considerable game skills, had to rely on attractiveness in their appeals to the opposite sex. Although the emphasis on skills seemed a somewhat new way for guaging female popularity, ultimately the popularity of female patrons at Jelly's still rested on their attractiveness to males.

There certainly were more apparent distinctions than similarities in the male and female roads to personal popularity within Jelly's. One obvious difference between male and female regulars was the way each could achieve special power and prestige within the setting. Females could achieve certain power by dating some of the staff members. For instance, both Judy and Kay dated staff males and as a result had a certain prestige. Kay in particular held a special position within the setting and sometimes

flaunted that prestige by refusing to acknowledge the presence of others:

> Kay's boyfriend Mike, a staff member, comes into Jelly's and stands in front of the store talking to another staff member. Kay walks to the front to be with him. As she walks down the outside aisle, a young man looks up and says in a friendly way, "Hi, Kay." She does not even turn around but grunts, "Hi," and proceeds on her way. The young man looks at his partner, shrugs, and says, "Hi," imitating the way Kay had voiced it. Both males shake their heads and continue with the game.

Kay and other females who dated the male staff had achieved power within the setting, but their power derived solely from their relationship to males. Male regulars, on the other hand, had a more direct access to special positions. Every once in a while, some staff member would ask a male regular, never a female regular, to sit in for him, to run Jelly's for a while. On rare occasions, male regulars became regular employees of Jelly's. Such an option was never held open to female patrons.

Differences between the males and females within the setting became most apparent around the game itself. Even though playing fussball provided a degree of equal access to the action at Jelly's, there was never any doubt that, ultimately, fussball was a "man's game." The equipment used to play the game enforced the image, since the plastic players used to shoot and block the ball were definitely male shaped figures. These plastic players were called fuss men and they really looked like men. So even when it was a female spinning the rods, it was the "men" doing the scoring.

The attitudes held by Jelly's staff members toward male and female players demonstrated this assumption that fussball was really for men. Jelly, for instance, insisted that males took the game much more seriously than the female players. Male patrons, he reasoned, came to Jelly's "to play fussball," while female players used the game tables merely as a

means of killing time when they had nothing better to do. Frank concurred, maintaining that on the whole females were less serious about the game than males:

> Yeah, well, girls never really try that much. I can think of a couple of girls that really got good because a guy would teach her how to play better fussball.

Again, Frank assumed that good fussball playing lies in the male domain.

While insisting that girls just did not try very hard to become skilled players, staff members were faced every day with what might be considered contrary evidence. After all, there were a considerable number of skilled female players at Jelly's. Frank admitted that such was the case, estimating that roughly twenty per cent of the females who came into Jelly's were "really skilled," as compared to about thirty to forty per cent of the male patrons. Joel expressed considerable skepticism concerning that figure. He guessed that only five per cent of the females were skilled, explaining, "A girl would get into a game and play one and then lose interest." From my own observations, both Frank and Joel were considerably underestimating the number of skilled female players. But more significantly, the staff people denigrated the skills of even the good female players.

Good male players got that way because of skill. On that there was general agreement among the staff. They practiced, they took the game seriously. Whatever success they achieved at the game table was directly under their own control. Such was not the case for female players, however. To Joel, if a female player won, it had little to do with her superior skills. Instead, "Lady Luck" had intervened. That opinion seemed to be shared by all the staff. Since females did not take the game seriously,

they reasoned, and since females were never highly skilled, a victory by a female must be attributed to luck. And luck was nothing that the female player could control in any meaningful way. It was a force that happened to affect the play, and mostly affected female players.

Luck connoted lack of individual control, and thus responsibility. Often male players took harsh offense when on of their shots was called lucky. That label denied them the credit that comes with skill. That feeling came to light in a game I played with one male against two other males. My partner and I were doing poorly and he kept up a running dialogue about how lucky our opponents were. Finally, following a streak of good shots, our opponent angrily yelled back at him, "You call that luck?" Luck might be used to explain female success at fussball, but males felt they themselves relied on skill.

This male perception of females as less than serious players was cemented by other examples besides the issue of luck. As previously mentioned, females rarely competed in formal tournaments, and when they did it was only as partners with males in mixed doubles. On tournament nights, females were just as likely to play the role of "handmaiden" -- assisting their boyfriends who were competing for prize money:

> Sherry is standing up against the wall at the back fussball table on the left. Her arms are folded and she is concentrating on her boyfriend, fairly oblivious to everyone else. When he takes a breather, she goes to his side. He hugs her and gives her a kiss, as if to find strength and encouragement for the remaining games. Later on during the game, she gets a soda, opens it up, and hands it to him. Only afterwards did she take a drink.

After the tournaments became a regular thing at Jelly's, most females did not even bother showing up on those nights.

But even on non-tournament nights, female game playing had its own set of distinctions from male playing. For instance, some betting went on

around the game tables. Usually the wager was for a small sum such as a dollar a game. Even so, small bets still worked to increase the stakes in a real way and this to sharpen the competitive edge. Betting provided tangible evidence that this was a serious game. Something important is riding on winning this game.

Betting at Jelly's was an entirely male activity. Female players never placed bets on their games. By segregating this aspect of the game, all players -- both male and female -- seemed to add their voice in support to the consensus of the establishment. Fussball, that is to say, serious game playing, was for males.

Another difference between male and female players was that males usually paid for the games when their opponents were females. At least, this was the procedure in the initial game. However, if a male patron ran out of funds after playing for a while, his female opponent was likely to start putting money into the machine.

Females also actively challenged male players to games. This was done in the customary method of Jelly's. The challenger placed a quarter on the table rim during an ongoing game. That gesture signaled that the challenger would take on the winner of that game and pay for the game with the quarter. So, while males usually followed the traditional paying role at the beginning of the game, as one of the staff members observed, in the long run "girls put in as much as the guys."

There was a final difference in male-female game playing that had to do with accounting for winning or losing. People usually seek an excuse or justification for not meeting expectations (Scott and Lyman, 1968). Male patrons felt a need to account for a loss to a female player, since such a loss would traditionally be considered untoward. After all, part

of the accepted lore at Jelly's was that females just did not take the game of fussball nearly as seriously as males.

Males accounted for a loss to a female in several ways. As already discussed, males often belittled the accomplishments of a victorious female player by attributing the victory to "Lady Luck." Such a notion implied that, based on skill, the male would have won. Also, males dealt with the possibility of losing to a female opponent by going on the defensive. For instance, sometimes one male would play two female opponents. If he won, the victory confirmed the game skill superiority of the male. If he lost, he could feel that the females had an unfair advantage over him -- two against one -- even though he had structured the game that way himself. I never saw a female play against two male opponents in Jelly's. Another way to ward off intimidation by being beaten by a female was to start fooling around with the game when it became evident that he was outmatched. In this manner, the game was relegated to the status of "fun" rather than "competition" and, therefore, his pride was not at stake.

When a female was beaten by a male, however, she had less a need to present an accounting of her failure. Joel understood precisely why that was so when he stated, "Not too many girls expected to beat the guys." In traditional game settings, men are expected to win, women are not. In this sense, Jelly's was quite traditional. Male players assumed that they were more highly skilled than females. Therefore, males felt called upon to rationalize or excuse a loss to a female player.

Of course, female players considered themselves to be skilled as well. But -- and here lies a critical difference -- they had less stake in winning. The very structure of Jelly's made that so. The formal competition at Jelly's, the most important way to demonstrate game skills, was at a

tournament. In the tournaments women players were tightly segregated and restricted. Without access to those public displays of skill, female players -- even the good ones -- placed less emphasis on game skills than males. And thus having less stake in demonstrating skills, they had less stake in winning and losing and less need to rationalize or account for their loss to a male. If a female lost to a male, whether she was personally disappointed or not, the simple fact was that she was not expected by the male regulars to win in the first place. Thus, there was little need to account for that loss.

While there was stereotyping of sex roles at Jelly's in a number of ways, this stereotyping did not detract from the appeals of Jelly's. Because of the higher status of male game playing -- particularly tournament playing -- male patrons felt that they were in charge of the setting. Females did achieve some recognition of game skills and thus enjoyed going to Jelly's to play fussball. Females willingly accepted a more restricted role than males as the price of admission to a male dominated setting.

The Irony of Control

Controls were a part of the setting at Jelly's. Patrons and staff alike accepted the necessity for rules and regulations in order to keep Jelly's operating. Ironically, youths who frequented Jelly's in part to escape adult restraints on their behavior managed, nonetheless, to set up internal controls remarkably similar to the restraints they were seemingly ducking. The control of Jelly's was somewhat democratic. The young people who went there made their own rules, a degree of control over their own lives denied them in the community. In establishing those rules, youths echoed many of the values of the adult culture they were seeking to

escape. The youths created their own hierarchy in which regulars dominated non-regulars, males dominated females, and the values of competition dominated the recreational activities of the youth.

Fine and Kleinman discussed some of the issues raised in the traditional perception of adolescent groups as isolated subcultures. They argue that although adolescents in small groups "can be studied as a closed system, it is erroneous to conceive of group members as interacting exclusively with one another" (Fine and Kleinman, 1979:8).

Subcultures emerge from group cultures via the process of interaction. This interaction with group culture is facilitated because "individuals may be members of several groups simultaneously" (Fine and Kleinman, 1979: 10). And thus, an interactionist perspective argues that youth groups or subcultures are not isolated from mainstream society as many of the early studies of adolescent subcultures imply (See Cohen, 1955; Short and Strodtbeck, 1965).

At the same time that the regulars were establishing Jelly's as a legitimate action spot, they were also influencing the type of action that took place there and illustrating by example the style of behavior rewarded within the setting. Thus did the "elites" of the setting establish the setting's order (Day and Day, 1977). For instance, staff members provided the services demanded by the regulars. Essentially, the regulars became the core group of youths who had the power to negotiate for these services (Maines, 1977). The staff members took and gave messages for the regular patrons and even loaned regulars small amounts of money. Jelly's changed the stock in his vending machines which sold food to reflect the desires of regulars, going from sandwiches and drinks to candy bars and cigarettes. And it was to cater to the regulars, who were taking the game of

fussball with increasing seriousness, that Jelly's began carrying fussball paraphernalia for sale. Of course, Jelly would have sold almost anything for which there was a market. But the regulars demanded things like rod spray, rosin, and game gloves; Jelly supplied those products; and the game of fussball seemed to become even more serious and competitive because of the presence of such stock in the establishment.

Since the regulars were the ones who put out most of the money for games, the very kind of games offered at Jelly's reflected their interests. While Jelly's was always a fussball hall, in its early stages, it offered a wide variety of other games. Pool tables, pinball machines, and electronic screen games took up as much room as the fussball tables and were placed as prominantly within Jelly's as the fussball games. However, regular patrons quickly latched on to fussball as the game of importance at Jelly's, and the pool tables, pinball machines, and screens slowly took a backseat position. After a while, there were fewer such games and they were relegated to the back of the store. It was the regulars, rather than Jelly himself, who determined that fussball would become the central action opportunity at Jelly's.

The fact that regulars choose fussball as the popular game within the setting did affect the pattern of control within the setting. Since it was a new game fad the rules were rigidly adhered to, quite unlike other table game rules which have been constantly modified. Fussball also could be played by one to four individuals, plus a number of onlookers could be engaged in the game interaction. There was opportunity for more youths to interact in a fussball game than in a pinball game, for example.

Just as the regulars determined what kind of game action should take place, they also affected the type of delinquent behavior tolerated within

Jelly's. There is little question that community adults were distressed by the relative freedom and ease with which delinquent behavior was discussed, even planned, at Jelly's. Discussions and plans about where and when to buy alcohol and drugs were commonplace. Yet, there were some serious restraints placed on delinquent activities within Jelly's and the regulars played a large role in setting and enforcing such restraints. Regulars had a stake in the continuing operation of Jelly's. So they saw to it that no one within the setting totally ignored any sense of propriety. By their own example, the regulars established the pattern of disguising drinks in soda cups or cans within the setting. Regulars did not drink openly and straight from a bottle, and any newcomer who did such was quickly hauled from the setting by Jelly's staff and regular patrons. Although some youths could be spotted taking pills, nobody smoked marijuana at Jelly's. Such action was just too obvious and thus dangerous. When regulars wanted to involve themselves in either serious drinking or drug use, they left the setting. Such behavior established a pattern which, for the most part, was followed by non-regulars.

Finally, regulars established the pace and topics of conversations at Jelly's. If a non-regular became too familiar or out-of-line, he was quickly ostracized by the regulars. Sometimes, this cooling out was accomplished so effectively that weeks would pass before that non-regular would return. Essentially, the regulars became the controlling social class. They determined what went on in Jelly's and who was admitted to the society of regulars.

Control was also evident in the values of the game of fussball. In an indirect way, the game worked to keep down the amount of alcohol or drug use. The game required speed and coordination, two skills which

would be seriously hampered if the player was quite drunk or stoned. And far from escaping the harsh, competitive values of adult society, the patrons of Jelly's transferred those values into their own community and reinforced them by placing such a high emphasis on improving game skills for the sake of winning matches and tournaments. Even losers were expected to be good sports and just play better the next time.

Relations between the sexes within the setting tended to conform to traditional sex role expectations. This is not to say that there was no flexibility in the accepted sex roles in Jelly's. During the casual game playing that occurred on a day-to-day basis, women could and did compete. They played directly with and against males and achieved a degree of popularity based on their game skills. Stone argues that play is one of the more common "modes of escape from the circumstances of sex which envelopes the act" (Stone, 1970:235). And on some levels, game playing at Jelly's did provide such an escape.

Yet, traditional sex roles had not in any way disappeared. The regulars assumed that good female players were lucky rather than skilled. When the stakes in the game were increased, women simply dropped from the picture. Betting was a male sport. And except for a highly restricted, mixed doubles match, female players were excluded from the most significant game action, the tournament night. On such nights, most of the good female players also dropped from the picture. Most of the females who showed up at Jelly's on tournament night were there to support male players, to serve and cheer the competitors rather than to compete themselves.

Summary

There is no underestimating the appeals of a setting like Jelly's. Community youths have limited access to settings where they can engage in backstage, relaxed behavior. Jelly's was the downtown Melrose spot where youths were guaranteed that access within the security of their home territory.

Jelly's offered youths a wide range of unique behavior opportunities. Just by going there, youths had a chance to participate in one of the most popular settings in Melrose. They could engage in conversations with their peers on matters of immediate importance to themselves -- parents, police, work, and drugs. And because the staff always maintained a high level of noise within the setting, youths could also use Jelly's as a place to undertake private conversations. Patrons could also flirt and gossip with members of the opposite sex.

However, the central action of the setting revolved around the game of fussball. Youthful patrons found a ready excuse for hanging out at Jelly's: they could spend their time practicing the game. As players became more proficient in the game, tournaments were held which gave game players a more competitive atmosphere than they could fine in the everyday games. Males and females alike partook in the game of fussball. Females participated actively in the day-to-day action around the game tables, although their participation was conspicuously absent during tournaments. On those tournament nights, male players had the opportunity to display their skills for a larger audience and compete for higher stakes both monetarily and in terms of status than was the case normally.

The fact that there were some delinquent goings-on heightened the allure of Jelly's. These delinquent activities concerned mainly discus-

sions about buying and using drugs and alcohol. Nonetheless, certain delinquent styles emerged to protect the operation of the facility. Most youths left Jelly's to drink and use drugs. Youths who drank on the premises participated in a ritual of hiding the alcohol in soda cans. Marijuana was not used at Jelly's, although occasional pill taking, a more private form of drug use, could be spotted. Youths who ignored those unspoken restraints were asked to leave.

Naturally, a significant part of Jelly's appeal rested on the fact that it was a setting where members of both sexes congregated. Females actively and ably engaged in the game of fussball, a game that relies less on strength than on hand-eye coordination. And to a degree, the game of fussball served as an equalizer between the sexes. Game skills were an important factor, although by no means the only factor, in determining the personal popularity of males and females alike. However, within the game playing -- particularly tournament games -- female roles were highly restricted. The males considered good female players merely "lucky," although they often took offense at being called lucky themselves. As the stakes for games increased -- betting and tournament play -- female participation decreased.

Ironically, while youths saw Jelly's as a haven from restrictive community imposed restraints, they did in fact set up their own restrictive internal controls which to a large degree were influenced by interaction with the adult community. Regulars influenced the setting in a number of ways, from the kinds of goods sold to the games played there. The imperatives of the game reaffirmed traditional competitive values and clearly delineated winners from losers. And despite working to equalize male-female roles to some degree, females found themselves in a decidedly sec-

ondary and traditionally subordinate role within Jelly's. The values of the outside community penetrated into Jelly's and affected the interactions within the setting.

Chapter V

WHAT DID THE STAFF DO FOR JELLY'S PATRONS?

Essentially the role of staff members was as a buffer between the patrons of Jelly's and the community at large. Within the setting, staff members worked together with the regular patrons in establishing a successful and popular fussball hall. But as community negotiators, the staff members were less successful. Efforts were made by Jelly and his staff to reflect, in terms of internally enforced controls, the concerns and demands of downtown merchants. But ultimately, the "youthful" qualities (Berger, 1963) of the staff, the very qualities which made staff members so appealing to youthful patrons, undermined their effectiveness in dealing with community adults.

Who Were the Staff and What Did They Do?

Jelly's was operated by four main staff members -- Jelly, Joel, Frank, and Michael. There were also a number of part-time or short-term staff members who worked there during the duration of the facility's existence. Jelly and Michael invested in Jelly's at different times, either as sole owners or partners. Frank joined the group through his brother Michael, and Joel was a long time friend of the other three.

The staff members were all high school graduates ranging in age from twenty two to twenty six. Jelly, Frank and Michael had gone to college, but only briefly. Each staff member had held several jobs prior to working at Jelly's. Included among their past work experiences were truck

driving and construction work.

Jelly, the original owner, started the facility in 1974. At the time, he envisioned Jelly's to be a general recreation center. Eventually the interest in one game in particular -- fussball -- grew. Regular patrons turned fussball into the most popular offering at Jelly's. Jelly himself responded to that gradual shift in emphasis and began to place more and more importance on the single game of fussball. Soon, he was insisting that he was running not a recreation center but a "fuss hall," carefully distinguishing the two:

> Well, a recreation center is where everybody is playing at something with no intention of getting better; just something to do. Now, I say the point of playing is to get better -- competition.

Just how aware Jelly was that such a shift in emphasis would help his business is uncertain. Competition means practice which means more game playing; and more profits for Jelly's. But the stress on game skills and improvement and competition had a less obvious but equally significant appeal. It gave youthful patrons a stake in the game action, a reason for hanging out there, and an opportunity to show off their skills. Almost inadvertently, Jelly and his regular patrons had turned Jelly's into an important and exciting youth hang out.

As Jelly's became more self-consciously a fussball center, Jelly himself began taking the game of fussball more seriously. He envisioned an extensive Midwest network of players involved in competition for cash prizes. And he discussed with his staff the possibility of putting together a regional newsletter to encourage and stimulate interest in the game. Of course, at the center of this envisioned Midwest phenomenon of fussball players, leagues, tournaments, and newsletters would sit Jelly's in downtown Melrose. One cannot help but appreciate the existence of a

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shrewd business mind at work behind this youthful "vision."

Jelly and the regular patrons determined among themselves that Jelly's should become primarily a fussball parlor. The other staff members did not share in Jelly's vision of the game of fussball, nor did they share his hopes for the central role of Jelly's in the development of the game. Instead, they saw the game as a form of recreation and little more. They viewed Jelly's simply as a place for youths with spare time on their hands. Similarly, the staff members saw their tasks at Jelly's in an equally mundane light. When asked what he considered his job at Jelly's to be, Joel answered, "Babysitting." Clearly, the rest of the staff did not share Jelly's grandiose vision of the facility.

After Jelly had operated the place on his own for a little less than a year, he sold it to Michael. Jelly had not lost interest in fussball; quite the opposite. He now decided to devote himself full time to the sale of fussball tables and the general promotion of the game in the area. During Michael's tenure as sole owner a few minor changes were made on the interior of the setting, but the general nature of the facility did not change. Michael owned the facility for only eight months when Jelly returned as partner. Michael had retained Jelly's nickname as the name of the facility, so the transition was a smooth one. Jelly had been less than successful on his own and decided he could rely better on the steady income of the facility than on infrequent table sales. Even so, his tenure as fussball table salesman probably added to the popularity of Jelly's upon his return. He was now firmly established in the minds of regular patrons as <u>the</u> regional expert and leading promoter of the game of fussball.

Jelly was not the only staff person to leave the facility at one time or another. But while Jelly's absence had been an integral part of his plan to promote the popularity of this relatively new game, other staff people merely drifted in and out, further evidence that they did not share in Jelly's vision. Joel, for example, left simply because "I was bored working there." Once he left, however, he was sorry he had. "I should have stayed at the arcade," he admitted. What he missed was his own chance at a piece of the action. He reminisced about the opportunities to joke and gossip with other young people. There were also ample chances to flirt and make small talk. Jelly's was, Joel admitted, an exciting place to hang out, for staff as well as patrons.

Joel's discontent with working at Jelly's did raise another important aspect of staff work. However fast the action at Jelly's was sometimes, the facility also had its share of quiet and downright boring times. Often during the supper hour only one or two patrons would be at the facility. Weather also affected attendance; few patrons appeared on either extremely hot or cold days. And some times there was more action at another setting; for example, at a party or rock concert. So the staff devised several ways to combat the tedium of operating the facility during these slow times. One way was by playing endless games of fussball. Sometimes the staff members recruited patrons as opponents. That practice provided a small benefit to patrons who were around during the off hours; they got to play fussball "on the house." Jelly approved of such devices but strongly disapproved of other measures taken by bored staff members, measures that ignored or belittled the central significance of the fussball game. For instance, one afternoon Joel brought in a portable television to help him while away the hours. Jelly quickly and in no uncer-

tain terms expressed his disapproval and the incident was not repeated. Rather than have the place remain virtually unpopulated with only a few people watching television and the game tables sitting idle, Jelly preferred a more direct approach. Occasionally, he would just close the place down early. Periodically, when he felt that there would be few patrons around, he did not bother to open the facility at all.

The staff members enjoyed a special relationship with their patrons. Part of the reason that Jelly's was able to sustain its popularity for so long was because of this relationship. Staff members were only a few years older than many of their customers, so they all enjoyed playing fussball or just chatting with their patrons. The staff also held a degree of status in the eyes of Jelly's patrons. Staff people were a little older, worked in one of the most popular youth hang outs in the area, owned a car, and lived on their own. All those assets contributed to their status.

Yet even though staff people had status they were able to establish a generally open and friendly relationship with their patrons. One of the ways in which the distance between staff and patron was bridged was the occasional use of a patron -- always a regular -- as a part-time staff member. Often a patron could be found doing staff work such as making change for the machines or helping to run a tournament. Sometimes male patrons would be left in charge for a brief period, or even take over a shift for one of the regular staff people. Even very young males took over the management of Jelly's for short periods of time.

But there was a double standard for staff-patron reciprocity. A female patron was never left in charge of Jelly's, even briefly. Female regulars were allowed to help the staff in only a supplemental capacity. The most frequent female assistant was the girlfriend of one of the staff

members. She usually assisted her boyfriend while he was on duty. But it was always clear that it was the male who was running the store; the female did only occasional chores to help him. Although females were allowed to participate in the informal action at Jelly's on a fairly equitable footing with the male patrons, there were certain roles that females were never allowed. One of those roles was as a staff person.

The regular staff allowed a wide variety of behavior to take place at Jelly's. And to varying degrees, the staff members participated in this open-ended behavior themselves. The most obvious example of this participation was that periodically an on-duty staff member would take a quick sip out of a patron's drink. Yet I do not recall any time when a staff member was drunk or stoned while on duty. By this strategic participation -- controlled indulgence -- the staff members were able to maintain their reputation as "good guys" while at the same time retaining a degree of distance between themselves and the patrons.

This distance was especially true in the case of Larry, a part-time staff member. He was significantly older than the patron population, yet he held a good rapport with the youths:

> Jodi pops in and proceeds to come up to the counter and sit down. We -- Larry, Jodi, and I -- shoot the breeze and Larry gets ready to leave. Somehow the subject of antiques comes up. I think that Larry was going to look for some.
>
> M.K.: Larry, do you collect them?
>
> Jodi: He has a ton of them, and anyway, he's an antique himself.
>
> She laughs and looks at him affectionately.

The easy friendship that existed between Larry and Jodi was indicative of the relationship between the staff and most of the regulars.

Because they were looked upon as "good guys" who nevertheless retained some distance between themselves and the patrons, staff members regular-

ly found themselves solicited for advice or given confidences by the patrons. Joel, who once described his main duties as being a "babysitter," added that he also served as an occasional counselor to the young patrons. "Yes, I guess everybody just cried on my shoulders," he explained. "I have a weird thing or something, because a lot of people told me their problems." Joel had a positive image of his role as a handy "shoulder" for troubled young people: "I thought it helped to talk it out."

Joel saw his role as essentially passive. He would listen to problems -- maybe talking out those problems would help. Jelly maintained a more positive view of his role as counselor:

> There's a lot of people in here that feel if I'm around much longer, I might have a big bearing on the rest of their lives, maybe. That's why I try to do the best I can.

Jelly clearly was among those who felt he was affecting the lives of his patrons and his "best" took several forms. Twenty-five-year-old Jelly sometimes took a younger male under his wings and acted as sort of a protector. On occasion, Jelly would give a youth a friendly bear hug or ride home at closing time. Some youths eagerly received his expert tutelage on the art of fussball. Jelly was an excellent player. Jelly described his role as that of an older brother to some of the participants. Likewise, he felt that some of the youths served as, in his words, a "family substitute" for him. "There's one or two that every once in a while I wish he was my little brother," Jelly said. "I'd grab hold of him a little more than I do."

The staff's role as counselor was used almost exclusively in male-to-male confidences. That is not to say that female regulars never confided in the staff people, but the comradery and close friendships that existed between staff and patrons was predominantly a male domain. Female patrons

were never viewed as "younger sisters." Instead, when staff members tried to get close to female patrons, the staff viewed the potential relationship in sexual rather than platonic terms.

The staff's interrelationship with patrons was not limited to the function of counselor. They also served as "matchmakers" for the patrons. Sometimes staff members formally arranged for dates between patrons:

M.K.: Ever fix anybody up?

Frank: Fix anybody up?

M.K.: With a date, like introduce kids?

Frank: Sure, I suppose so.

But for the most part, the staff was not actively engaged in matching up patrons on quite so formal a basis. Instead, it was the nature of the setting itself which provided opportunities for most youths to socialize with members of the opposite sex. As Frank put it, Jelly's was the local "meeting place, a lot of people come here." Additionally, most youths socialized more in groups than in pairs. Although Jelly's had its share of romances, most male-female relationships were less formal and restrained than traditional dating relationships.

Interdating between male staff and female patrons occurred with some frequency:

M.K.: Did you ever date any of the girls who came into Jelly's?

Frank: Oh, yeah.

M.K.: Many?

Frank: Many.

Naturally, female patrons also sought an opportunity to date the male staff members. Some female patrons casually flirted with all staff people, including those who already had more or less regular girlfriends. The

steady girlfriends of the staff enjoyed some extra status within the setting. The steady girls of Michael and Joel subtly established an air of propriety over their boyfriends and, in an indirect but undeniable way, over Jelly's itself. And Jelly, who had no steady girlfriend, was seen as a most attractive "catch."

Staff members were aware of the multiple services they provided Melrose youth in a community where, by common consent, "there was nothing to do." Jelly saw his place, in fact, as the very center of youth activities in town:

> A lot of people are coming in. Lots of different age groups. Lots of different varieties of people. Sometimes it's a centering point. Lots of people meet each other here.

Jelly was sure his place provided the liveliest action in town.

Staff as Agents of Control

While overseeing the youthful action at Jelly's, staff members found themselves exerting certain controls over the setting. In many instances the staff supervised what was going on. Joel stated that he sometimes felt like a babysitter, particularly for the youngest patrons. As a result of this caretaker role, staff-patron relations were characterized by a certain degree of tension. On one hand, the staff was aware of the importance of creating a setting that was attractive to the youth of Melrose. To gain such an atmosphere meant enhancing Jelly's reputation as being at the center of the action. On the other hand, the staff had to present to the community at large an acceptable front in order to be able to continue operations. And the very practical angle of protecting a business investment led the staff to maintain some semblance of order and control at Jelly's.

As a result of the need for some frontstage maintenance, the action at Jelly's was modified by an informal social order. This social order consisted of the rules of behavior which obliged patrons to fit into the setting. The staff clearly had certain expectations. When Jelly was asked to articulate the rules of behavior, he provided the following:

> Well, anybody with any kind of sense at all should know that if they come in here, they should just act like a normal human being without screaming, biting, gorging, cussing. . . this is pretty much the rules of any place of business.

Jelly seemed to make an effort to distance himself from the actual process of making the rules. These were not his rules, he made clear. They were simply common sense matters that should be followed in any business establishment.

Nowhere were the rules written or laid out in any formal sense. Yet patrons seemed well aware of their existence. Patrons, Joel insisted, "learned very fast" how to act in Jelly's. Some of these unwritten rules were divided into major or minor violations. For instance, Frank classified minor violations as "generally horsing around." When infractions of this sort occurred, he simply told youths to "cool it, ease up a little." When Joel was asked directly to describe a minor violation, he mentioned that a young man might accidentally allow a marijuana joint to fall out of his pocket. His response was to ask "him to take care of it, like put it in the car."

Both Frank and Joel agreed that, for the rare major offense, a youth could be kicked out of Jelly's. "I have kicked a few people out," insisted Joel, "and everybody here respects me for it." Apparently that attitude was not shared equally by other staff members. Frank, for example, insisted that banishment should be left entirely in the hands of Jelly.

Everyone seemed to agree that fighting within Jelly's was a major violation, but such fighting in truth rarely resulted in eviction. Frank would break up a fight and then ask the battling youths to leave. This did not amount to banishment, however, since the offenders were welcomed back. Joel did not go even that far. Often, he felt, the combatants were friends who "just had too much to drink." He broke up the fight but did little else.

The same inconsistencies surrounded the use of alcohol at Jelly's. If a youth was openly drinking from a liquor bottle or beer can, he was usually "invited" to leave. "Like this one boy was sitting right next to the counter," Joel explained, "with a six-pack underneath the table, with a beer in the drink rack, playing fussball." Joel kicked him out. However, if young people went to the trouble of disguising their alcoholic consumption, pouring their drinks into plain paper cups or soda cans, drinking was tolerated, even jokingly encouraged. In such a way, staff members struck a delicate balance between maintaining an acceptable front to the community while still allowing a free wheeling atmosphere within Jelly's conducive to backstage behavior.

Jelly tended to be more stringent in his enforcement of the rules. One violation led to immediate and long-term banishment: "If I see anybody kick one of these machines, they go out and won't come back." Jelly felt so strongly about destruction of the equipment, of course, because game machines represented a major personal investment. The other staff members remained remarkably indifferent to possible property damage. One evening, for instance, while Joel was on duty, a young man sat on the wooden benches. He was casually flicking on his cigarette lighter, determined to set the benches on fire. Faced with the distinct possibility of

a firey end to Jelly's, I pointed out what was happening to Joel. I was astonished by his calm reaction. He did not bother even to rise from his seat. Instead, he yelled for the youth to stop. The young man was not banished or even temporarily ejected from Jelly's. In fact, no punitive action was taken at all. The reaction to this potential threat to life and property would have been quite different had Jelly been on duty at that moment.

This staff inconsistency might best be described as a "play it by ear" attitude to enforcement of rules. Of course, part of this inconsistency was because most staff members had less stake than Jelly in maintaining order, they had no financial investment in Jelly's. Also inconsistent enforcement allowed the staff to play favorites. Regulars were allowed more leverage than occasional patrons. It also allowed the balance between order and backstage behavior. As a result, staff members handled each situation as it presented itself, taking into account the circumstances surrounding a particular disruptive event. This individualized approach to control was reflected in a discussion with Frank concerning his perception of informal regulations:

Frank: We use our judgment.

M.K.: Like what?

Frank: It was left up to judgment.

Some of the other staff had more definite ideas, however. Joel clearly stated one of his cardinal rules: "No alcoholic beverages or drugs." Jelly agreed that his place should not become a drinking hang out for young people:

> Even if they're twenty one, they can't bring booze in here. Don't allow any kind of dope in here. In fact, I won't even allow anybody to talk about it if I just happen to hear them. Coming real soon,

you'll have to be seventeen to be in here or have a notarized waiver signed by parents.

But even the rules about drugs and alcohol were seldom enforced. The staff was aware that a setting could quickly lose its reputation as an "action" spot if rules were strictly adhered to. But even with the lack of formal rules and regulations and inconsistent sanctions, the facility maintained a degree of operational decorum. And there are a number of reasons to account for this degree of stability.

First, youths were evicted from the premises, albeit infrequently. Since local youth prestige centered on being part of the action at Jelly's, it was a humiliating process to be evicted.

Second, many youths took the game of fussball seriously. In order to improve their skills, youths spent hours at the game tables practicing, attempting new strategies. This perception of fussball as a game of skill affected behavior in two ways. Since Jelly's was the only accessible fussball hall in the area, youths wanted to avoid situations that would have precipitated negative staff action. In addition, the game required eye-wrist coordination and youths under the influence of either drugs or alcohol simply did not perform as well as they would otherwise.

Although rarely enforced, the "rules" at Jelly's provided several services for the staff in addition to aiding in the maintenance of order. The rules were something to fall back on when a particular individual was unwanted at the scene. For instance, one youth was particularly obnoxious -- harassing the females and buddying up to Jelly. He was a most unwelcome regular. After missing him for several weeks, I asked Jelly what had happened to him. Jelly replied that he had been annoying to both patrons and staff and had been evicted. This particular youth did not reappear

at Jelly's for six months.

Another staff use for the not-so-visible rules was that such rules could be cited in defense of Jelly's when challenged by the community. The staff could insist that drugs and alcohol were not allowed in the facility at any time. Jelly, for example, mentioned prohibition of drugs and alcohol in his discussions with both school officials and the police. By doing so he hoped to deflect community criticism.

Staff as Community Negotiators

Staff members, Jelly in particular, periodically dealt with adult members of the community at large. In these instances, staff people negotiated with the Melrose police department, the business community, and sometimes even parents for acceptance and tolerance of the adolescent activities at Jelly's. And in that way, the staff became a kind of laison between the adult community and the youthful patrons of Jelly's.

The parents of Jelly's patrons occasionally showed up at the doors or phoned in, seeking their children. Frank pointed out that personal visits by parents were infrequent. They more often called in. They were interested in knowing where their kids were:

Frank: They were usually looking for their kids.

M.K.: So parents did come in?

Frank: They also called.

M.K.: Frequently?

Frank: Yeah. If they knew their kids were here, I guess they thought they were safe.

Parents asking a staff member to order their child home created a delicate problem: how to placate the parent on the phone while, at the same time, letting the child-patron know that Jelly's was still a sort of haven for

them. Frank denied outright that parents ever asked to have their kids sent home, but in fact, that was often the reason for parents calling in. On one occasion I answered the phone myself. An angry parent insisted that I warn her son that he better get home quick. The staff achieved this balance by seeming to respond to the parent while, in fact, covering for the child. Joel explained how this was done. If a parent called in asking for a son or daughter, Joel never refused to help. For all appearances, in fact, he seemed the model of cooperation. He simply called out the child's name. If nobody answered the call, he informed the parent that the child was not in Jelly's. The parent would be satisfied, and the youthful patron could decide for herself whether or not to respond to the telephone call. If a youth did not want his parents to know he was there, he simply kept quiet.

The reaction of Jelly's staff to outside pressures, whether it be from parents or community agencies was complex. On one hand, they resented such pressure but felt that they were being singled out for harassment. But on the other hand, they realized that they would have to deal, at least to some degree, with community concerns if they wished to stay in business. That latter realization was complicated by their equal realization that if they gave in to community pressures too much, they would lose their appeal as a setting free from adult constraint. For a while at least, it looked like the staff might be able to arrange and maintain this intricate position.

Jelly's staff insisted that they were being targeted for special community pressure. They insisted, for instance, that downtown merchants were calling in complaints about the facility to the police department.

Aware that one of the most persistent complaints against Jelly's by the merchants was the accumulation of trash in the street directly in front and vandalism caused by patrons after they left Jelly's, one staff member termed such complaints unfair. After all, he insisted, the staff had no control over the youths once they left the facility.

Merchants had indeed pressured Jelly's into its second move, and Jelly got the distinct impression -- a correct one as shall be seen -- that Melrose merchants would have been happy to see Jelly's leave the downtown district entirely. Jelly resented that attitude and insisted on his right to run his business downtown. He stated his belief that the presence of a fussball parlor downtown did not hurt anybody else's business; if anything, it brought a few potential customers to downtown Melrose:

> I don't believe that any business around us feels like this place helps, although the man next door in the appliance center has two people who bought televisions from him who used to come in here all the time.

The Melrose police also caused problems for Jelly with, what to him at least, seemed like constant surveillance:

> They go in spells. For a while, they will really put the heat on, sit right out in front and try to bust everybody that walks by.

He figured that Melrose was a small town with too little action and too many police. To fill their time, he suggested, they simply harassed young people.

The staff also believed that the general public of Melrose did not approve of Jelly's. Joel stated,

> I think at first old people thought it was a drug haven, which it was nothing like that. There were people of all types that went in there. There were people that did drugs, I'm sure. There were some girls in there that were not so respectable. But there were also the other ones; the cheerleaders were in there.

By his very description of the patrons of Jelly's, Joel was giving some credence to the reputation that Jelly's had earned in the community.

But even while feeling resentment for what they felt was undue community pressures, Jelly and his staff realized the need for some accommodation. Concessions had to be made if they wanted Jelly's to remain an operating commercial establishment within Melrose. Through these concessions, community expectations and reactions helped shape the action that took place within Jelly's. One example of this inter-relationship between community expectations and internal controls had to do with age restrictions on patrons within Jelly's. Jelly's maintained no formal age requirement and many of the youths who frequented the facility were quite young. However, Jelly did seriously consider imposing age restrictions and, had the parlor not closed its doors when it did, such restrictions would, in all likelihood, have been imposed.

The notion of age restrictions came not from within but from outside. After a confrontation between Jelly's staff and the police after another incident, the local police chief recommended the establishment of age restrictions. Jelly thought that might not be a bad idea and decided that he would not allow anyone under the age of seventeen to patronize his place without written parental permission. When Jelly discussed with me the possibility of initiating such a rule, he admitted that the suggestion had come from the police chief. But he also took pains to insist that he thought the idea had merit on its own, that he was imposing it because it was right, not because the police had suggested it to him. "There are little kids here who shouldn't be here," he said. "I don't have to do it if I don't want to," he added, "but most of the places like this have some sort of age limit." Finally, he added, he was also doing it for the peace

of mind of the parents: "At least their parents would know they were here."

As further evidence that the notion of age restrictions was really his own, Jelly maintained that he and his staff had always enforced some sort of age restriction on an informal basis:

M.K.: How have you handled age restrictions before?

Jelly: I just keep a very, very close eye on somebody that's very young.

M.K.: Do you have any really young kids come in here?

Jelly: No, not very often. Sometimes, during Saturday afternoons, or something, they'll be a couple in here that are just actually too young to be coming in here to my thinking.

In point of fact, such "informal" restrictions never really existed. The young people that Jelly mentioned were never asked to leave. As Frank admitted, "We try to enforce the age thing, but we never really did." It was not until a strong suggestion came from the police chief that Jelly seriously considered imposing a formal age restriction.

Jelly also tried to accommodate Melrose school officials. When the facility first opened, school officials were concerned over its late closing hours: midnight on school nights. Those officials argued that the operating hours of Jelly's interfered with the ability of young people to work properly in class the next day. Jelly heard about those complaints through his patrons and decided to meet the issue head-on. He invited some school representatives to the facility to see for themselves what was going on there. He insisted that he had never had any further problems with school officials after they had seen the facility and understood what was going on there. Since no direct pressure was ever instigated from the schools, no further accommodations had to be made, although Jelly may also

have been thinking about school officials when he discussed age restrictions.

The most persistent complaints from merchants about Jelly's concerned littering and loitering. On the first point, merchants complained that youthful patrons of Jelly's left trash strewn in front of the store and in the street, creating a bad public image for downtown Melrose. Twisted beer cans and shattered beer bottles bothered the merchants. While Jelly and his staff maintained that such litter was not really their problem since they had no control over the youths once they left Jelly's, they could be seen on many a morning picking up the litter left in front of their facility. That was a good way, they figured, to get along with their neighbors.

The issue of youths loitering in front of or across the street from Jelly's also came up frequently when merchants discussed the downtown youth "problem." Jelly never took any direct steps to stop such loitering. Indeed the possibilities for loitering, meeting friends, and making connections was one of the basic appeals of Jelly's. But he did insist that, if the police wanted to, they could control at least the problem of young people drinking on the street in front of his place of business. If they would enforce the laws against public drinking, and enforce them consistently, such a nuisance would simply disappear. Joel concurred:

> The worst part about it is that the police are inconsistent. If they kept at it, the kids would know that they can't drink here. But sometimes they go weeks without arresting anyone. So, when they do, it doesn't really help.

Jelly's business partner Michael even went as far as to talk directly to the police. If they wanted to stop the drinking in and around Jelly's, he told them, they should enforce the law better.

Furthermore, when he hunted for a location for his third location, Jelly's III, Jelly looked for a spot that might minimize such complaints. He found a place with little parking directly in front. That, he thought, would "stop some of the traffic problem right out in the immediate front." The location was also right in the middle of a block -- Jelly's II had been on a corner -- with less room for young people to hang out in front. So the move itself, although not taken voluntarily, turned into an attempt to accommodate to some of the frequent complaints made by downtown merchants. The move turned into a rather unfortunate one for Jelly from a commercial viewpoint, and, in reality, did little to quell angry merchants.

Ultimately, then, moves to accommodate to local pressures proved unsuccessful. There are several issues that help explain this apparent failure. As Becker and Horowitz state in their explanation of the "culture of civility," adults often enter into accommodation arrangements because the adults are willing to modify their expectations (Becker and Horowitz, 1970). However, this accommodation does not automatically extend to youth-adult interactions since adults assume the right to control youths.

The adolescents at Jelly's had as their community negotiators staff members who typified Berger's image of a "youthful" person: someone who is dangerous or threatening to traditional social order (Berger, 1963). This youthful quality of the staff members was especially apparent in their behavior within the setting. Often the staff members would enforce rules on an inconsistent basis and even participate in behavior of a backstage nature. So staff members' inability in some instances to act as negotiators grew directly from their youthful characteristics.

One example of this youthfulness was their absolute inability to enforce informal age restrictions. There were many good reasons for not

enforcing such restrictions. Enforcement would require extra time and effort on the part of the staff. Throwing out patrons, whatever their age, hardly made good business sense. But basically the problem was the youthfulness of the staff people themselves. Young girls offered a sexual attraction to staff and patrons alike. And, as Frank admitted, he really could not distinguish the younger ones from the older ones. His stated reason -- "Kids are growing old so fast these days, it's pitiful" -- virtually acknowledged the fact that he was just too close in age to youthful patrons to make such distinctions.

What probably upset downtown merchants more than the lack of age restrictions was the fact that, far from putting a halt to delinquent behavior within Jelly's, the staff seemed to tolerate, sometimes encourage, and even participate in such acts. Jelly, for example, claimed to have some reservations about drug and alcohol connections within his place, but admitted he did little to stop it. "Well, I let the alcohol slide a bit," he confessed, "because I did it when I was a kid." He acknowledged that young patrons often tried to find somebody older within Jelly's to buy alcohol for them and he did nothing to halt such practices: "No, I don't see any reason why I should."

Staff members did more than tacitly allow alcohol on the premises if it was discreetly concealed. At times, they joined in the drinking themselves, joking about the accepted procedures of covering the drinks. One evening a young patron by the name of Harry was sipping a drink, obviously alcoholic, from a soda cup. The staff person on duty shouted sarcastically at him, "Hey Harry, what do you have in that cup? Sprite? Coke? Tab?" He leaned over, took Harry's cup, and took a sip. He winked at Harry. "It's root beer!" Everyone laughed.

Unquestionably Jelly and his staff found themselves in somewhat of a dilemma. If they allowed delinquent activities like drinking to take place within their facility, they increased the problems they faced in dealing with the community. If they strictly enforced all rules and regulations of the community, then Jelly's would lose its backstage nature and, as a result, its essential appeal. The ideal solution, it seemed, was to strike a balance. Maintain a front of enforcement while tacitly allowing some delinquent behavior to occur in a discreet manner. But what served to undercut that balance was the youthfulness of the staff itself. The fact was that they found themselves much more closely aligned, in their sympathies and impulses, with the youthful patrons than with the adult merchants. Delinquent behavior such as underaged drinking appealed to them almost as much as it appealed to their customers. They simply did not have the desire to strictly maintain even a front that might have been acceptable to downtown merchants. The fact that they allowed such activities and even participated in them gave credence to community concerns regarding the action at Jelly's.

Summary

The staff members at Jelly's were quite young, ranging in age from twenty two to twenty six. The major staff position was taken by Jelly himself, who together with the regular patrons determined the ambiance of the setting. Jelly also attempted to sell fussball tables and start a fussball newsletter, both of which added to his credibility as a local authority on the game.

The staff members often found themselves in a position that required a degree of balance between the needs and interests of their patrons and

the needs and interests of the community. Essentially, the staff had to strike a balance between being "good guys" within the setting and responsible businessmen outside of it. This balance made for problems.

For example, within the setting Jelly and his staff allowed male patrons the opportunity to temporarily run the operations. Staff also treated patrons to free games, condoned drinking, and encouraged a whole range of behavior, including raucous humor and physical displays of affection. In addition, the staff counseled and fixed up patrons and even provided a cover for patrons if parents called.

On the other hand, staff members also established a series of operating rules and regulations. Drinking was expected to be done in a certain discreet manner. Unruliness such as fighting and kicking a game table could lead to expulsion. One staff member requested the police department to enforce the drinking laws more consistently. Jelly himself made some effort to accommodate to community pressures by attempting to rectify the problems of littering and loitering. He even discussed the possibility of placing an age restriction on access to the setting. All of these measures were designed to ensure smooth operations of the facility itself as well as to assuage the concerns of the Melrose community.

Ultimately, the effectiveness of control demands was undermined by an inherent quality of the staff members -- their youthfulness. Open tolerance and even participation in the action of Jelly's affected the image of staff members as reliable supervisors of the youth action in downtown Melrose.

Chapter VI

WHAT WAS THE COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO JELLY'S?

Despite the efforts of staff and patrons to maintain some semblance of an acceptable community front, Melrose adult leaders came to view Jelly's as a major contributor to downtown youth problems. Acknowledging that Melrose youth had few other places to go, community leaders attempted to offer community sponsored and controlled alternatives to Jelly's.

In the meantime, pressure from downtown businessmen forced Jelly's to relocate on two separate occasions. As social relations between the staff and the adult community became increasingly strained and the popularity of Jelly's slowly eroded, the youth-generated hangout in downtown Melrose shut its doors for good.

How Did the Community View Jelly's?

Social institutions must in some way fit into an established social order. Social order, in this case, can be defined as "the consequence of any set of moral norms that regulates the way in which persons pursue objectives" (Goffman, 1966:8). Community members are required to "fit in" to the social organization of community life and learn to adapt to the needs of different occasions. There are exceptions to this public decorum, of course. Minority life style groups -- prostitutes and homosexuals, for example -- defiantly refused to "fit in" and adopt the "proper" modes of behavior. Yet, they compete for access to the same public locations such as streets. These groups, however, are often able to negotiate a

bargain with other members of the community. That bargain establishes both tolerance for their beliefs and social-behavioral boundaries that must be observed (Becker and Horowitz, 1970).

It is important to evaluate the role that power plays in limiting the negotiations that may take place in a community. While marginal adults like prostitutes and homosexuals may be able to negotiate a certain tolerance for their behavior, this tolerance does not extend to all groups within the community. It is necessary, then, to see the subcultural group within its community context to understand what the limits of their negotiating powers might be. If we look only at the subculture and ignore the community context, "we gain very little insight as to how the larger structural features of American society influence and perhaps predetermine the limits of negotiations under investigation" (Day and Day, 1977:134).

It is clear that adolescents are effectively segregated from mainstream society in many ways. It is also evident that even when segregated, adolescents are influenced by other groups besides their own. Therefore, when it comes to the investigation of social control, it is important "to critically examine the hard realities of power and politics and the influence they exert upon negotiative processes" (Day and Day, 1977:134). More specifically, it is important to investigate the role of community power and how it affected the interactions of Melrose youth.

Although Jelly's was popular with the youth of Melrose, there were a number of problems in the relationship between Jelly's staff and the downtown business community. The staff, particularly Jelly himself, perceived the business community in a negative light. That perception rested on the limited interaction the staff had with downtown merchants. Essentially, staff members felt that they were being unfairly persecuted by the down-

town business establishment. One staff member, Frank, stated that the business community "just wanted to see the place closed." Another staff member felt that one of the reasons business people did not want Jelly's in the area was because of the trash allegedly left behind by the youthful patrons, an apparent affront to public decorum.

The business community viewed the downtown presence of Jelly's quite differently. For the most part, there was a general agreement among the merchants that the presence of youth in the downtown area was acceptable "as long as they behave themselves"; that is, as long as they fit in. The hardware store manager explained that he did not even mind that youths drank beer downtown, so long as they did not break beer bottles on the sidewalk. Another merchant felt that loitering was unacceptable, but otherwise he welcomed youths downtown. The owner of the furniture store (which suffered considerable petty vandalism) even offered the use of a vacant parking lot for city teens to use as an "official" hangout. However, that proposal was not implemented because of insurance complications.

The hardware store manager reflected the consensus of Melrose merchants when he said that "there's just nothing for teen-agers to do. No movies. There's only one bowling alley. There's one fussball parlor, and that's about it." A bond issue for a community recreational building had recently failed. One businessman suggested that such a recreation building would have helped because a facility like that would have given youths a place for activities.

But such understanding of the problems of Melrose youth did not extend to Jelly's itself. The hardware store manager reflected some of the tension in youth-adult relations. Jelly's attracted youth to the downtown

area, he reasoned. When the youths came downtown, the manager was convinced they engaged mainly in destructive behavior:

> Sitting around, drinking beer out in front of the store, and breaking their bottles all over the street, breaking into cars, stealing the batteries, and breaking up batteries.

In discussing such behavior, merchants often claimed it was not the drinking itself that was of concern. Rather they were angered by secondary problems, they insisted, which derived from drinking. "I drank beer when I was a teen-ager, too," explained the hardware store manager, implying that underaged, illegal drinking did not really bother him since he had done the same thing himself. Instead, he focused his complaint on litter: "I just don't like to see them make a mess out of the downtown district."

The "litter problem" cropped up quite frequently when merchants discussed Jelly's, and "litter" took on a symbolic meaning. Litter represented the threat to the harmony of the downtown business community posed by the young people who hung out at Jelly's. Merchants saw the youth "trash" creeping down the sidewalks, edging up to their store fronts, and spilling over into the streets. Litter itself was not the issue. Had similar problems been caused by downtown shoppers, for instance, one suspects that the merchants would have been much less vocal in their objections.

Litter to Melrose merchants represented a threat not only to the physical appeal of the downtown business district, but to the public safety as well. On this point, merchants could become quite emotional. The hardware store manager pointed to beer bottles littering the small park across the street from Jelly's II. Young people play in that park, he said, and then added,

> The first time one of them runs a piece of glass into their foot, I'm going to take one of those teen-agers and take his shoes off and let him walk across that glass without any shoes on to see what it feels like.

To this merchant, the threat posed by litter and the threat posed by Jelly's young patrons were one in the same. Both represented a challenge to order and stability -- even safety -- in downtown Melrose. Both needed to be controlled.

The issue of litter also helps to illustrate the problems that merchants had with the youthful staff of Jelly's. The staff was inconsistent in its clean up efforts around the front of the facility. And this inability to control effectively the litter problem generated by the patrons of Jelly's confirmed to the merchants that the staff was not capable of controlling other types of troubling behavior within the setting. So while litter appeared to be the issue, once again the matter of control was the basis for merchant concern.

Petty vandalism undoubtedly occurred as well as annoying littering. The furniture store was spray painted and hit with beer cans. Its neon sign was broken and even bullet holes marked the side of the building. But who actually caused all this damage? The store owner himself called the damage "minor" and confessed that he was not at all sure who the culprits were:

> I say teen-agers. Who knows? It could have been an adult out there, because I didn't catch them. You say teen-agers, but we don't know.

The distrust which most downtown businessmen shared toward the staff and patrons of Jelly's turned out to be surprisingly general, even somewhat vague. The business store manager stated that he had not lost any business due to local youth problems, for example. Three businessmen, all

owners of stores quite near Jelly's, never even mentioned Jelly's specifically in their complaints about the downtown youth problem. No merchants claimed to have had any direct conflict or confrontation with the staff and patrons of Jelly's. One, the owner of the auto supply store directly adjacent to Jelly's second location, even admitted to having worked out a quite satisfactory business-like arrangement with Jelly:

> The only thing I told him /Jelly/ was I don't mind him being here, but I just want him to know that I didn't want nothing going on in the alley back there, or at the front. We're both in business, and I'd appreciate it if he'd take care of it. He did. I didn't have any problem. I know there were problems in there, but I didn't have no problems (emphasis added).

This lack of specific complaints against Jelly's did nothing to prevent ill feelings between merchants and Jelly's staff. In the absence of specific complaints, merchants instead expressed a general unease. The president of the furniture store repeated stories of alleged "goings-on" inside the facility. He remarked about "drugs in it, and the congestion problems it brings up." The auto supply dealer stated that he had personally,

> seen one boy come out of there with handcuffs . . . /I heard there was/ dope in there. Now, I don't know how true that was, just hearsay. That's about all.

He admitted to having good relations with Jelly himself, but was nonetheless uneasy about such "hearsay" evidence.

This hearsay evidence was obviously damaging. And there was some evidence, such as litter, that supported these suspicions. However, the general unease of the merchants was a result of their distrust of the youthful staff of Jelly's. The rumors of arrests and drug use in Jelly's helped confirm to the merchants that the staff was not in control within the setting. And if the staff could not control the youths, then the

community should. The furniture store manager summed up the attitude of the Melrose business community to Jelly's:

> I personally would rather not see it. No, I don't know where they could be any better supervised than they were . . . I assume that they /fussball parlors/ are all right and they have their place.

That place, apparently, was not downtown.

Downtown merchants had direct access to the community power structure, and they used that access in trying to deal with Jelly's. The hardware store manager brought his problems directly to the police and stated that other merchants had done the same thing. More significantly, he also pointed out that some of his fellow merchants actually sat on the police board. So the feelings of the downtown business community were well known to the department. The police department confirmed that a number of complaints had been made concerning youth loitering on the sidewalk and blocking traffic. The merchants believed that this loitering was the direct result of Jelly's location. Also, the merchants claimed that the youth often became boisterous, and that potential customers sometimes were afraid to enter a particular store because they were fearful of unruly looking youths who were on the sidewalk area. Nobody ever provided, or even offered to provide, evidence that Jelly's patrons were, in fact, frightening away adult shop patrons.

Not only did merchants complain to the police, but they also made their feelings known to the landlord who owned the building in which Jelly's was located. The manager of the bank located down the street from Jelly's had contacted the property owner. That bank held the mortgage for Jelly's building. The bank manager had let the property owner know how downtown merchants felt. In apparent response, the property owner suggest-

ed to Jelly that he relocate his fussball hall. Obviously, the downtown merchants were not overly impressed with Jelly's efforts to be an understanding neighbor.

Most business complaints centered on the potential that Jelly's would become a gathering place for juvenile delinquents in the heart of the central business district. Drugs and alcohol were frequently used in and around Jelly's; of that, merchants seemed quite certain. And the staff "supervisors" at Jelly's appeared to take delinquent activity in stride.

Some merchants shared with the auto parts store owner the notion that "problem" youth, delinquent or otherwise, should not be held totally responsible for their behavior. "I think a delinquent youth," he noted, "could be explained as ninety nine per cent bad parents." He added that such youths should be handled "with kid gloves." On that point, the hardware store manager consented, saying,

> No, they shouldn't be arrested. I just think they ought to be run off, maybe go someplace else, find someplace else to hang out. There's other parts of town. They can go to other parts, or something like that.

When asked if he meant specifically that youths should be run out of the downtown business area, he replied bluntly, "At nighttime, yeah!"

Certainly, merchants' suspicions that some trouble was bound to happen downtown were reinforced by the vigilance kept by the police department over Jelly's. Since Jelly's second location had a glass front and side, the police could slow down their vehicles as they passed by and easily gaze through the windows. Because the police station was located close to the facility, there was a constant stream of police cars in front of Jelly's. Additionally, Melrose also housed the county sheriff's office,

and those county police men would occasionally stop their cars and make the youths who were congregating outside the facility move on. And, of course, all of this police activity outside of Jelly's could not help but reinforce and confirm the general community suspicion and distrust of this location or to cement in the minds of downtown businessmen the notion that something "illegal" was indeed going on in there. The police activity also verified to the merchants that the youthful staff could not be counted on to control youth activities.

Community Sponsored Alternatives

Acutely aware of the shortage of facilities within Melrose designed for young people to spend their leisure time, community leaders sought to create such facilities. Unlike Jelly's, however, such facilities would be closely supervised and controlled by community agencies. Of perhaps even greater importance, at least to downtown Melrose merchants, such controlled facilities might effectively draw youths away from the central business district and isolate them in some other corner of town.

One of the primary supporters for such controlled alternatives to Jelly's was the mayor of Melrose. In Melrose the mayor's position is largely titular and the man who held that position was also a downtown merchant. In this case, the mayor owned a lumber yard within the central business district. Thus, the Melrose mayor served as a spokesman for both civic concerns and the problems of downtown merchants. Those twin roles -- as businessman and civic leader -- added fuel to his concerns.

Prior to his tenure as mayor, there were few city programs earmarked for teens. The police department had taken over a church run youth drop-in center, but that center had quickly thereafter folded. The other pro-

gramming that did exist centered around the maintenance of recreational facilities such as ball diamonds, tennis courts, and a community swimming pool. The mayor was proud that the city, under his administration, had not only continued such recreational programming, but actually increased it. He had overseen the establishment of a separate Parks and Recreation Department (formerly handled by the City Streets Department) and had even donated some of his own personal land to be used as park sites.

But the mayor was hardly committed to the position that city government ought to provide Melrose youth with alternative, leisure time activities. He was not at all convinced that the city government had much of a duty to provide young citizens with places to hang out. "They just say, 'Well, we don't have anyplace to go,'" says the mayor of the youth who populate the downtown streets. Then he continues,

> There is, in the public thinking, an attitude that the government owes us something. "Why don't we have a place to go to the movies?" Well, my recollection and yours is it's more fun to go to a movie someplace else. You have a nice ride.

And yet, the mayor had another problem. Every once in a while complaints from downtown merchants about loitering and littering would reach a peak. When appeals for help came from merchants rather than youth, the mayor expressed no such reticence about the government not "owing" its citizens anything. On this score, he was prepared to respond. "In city government, you do a lot of things by impulse," he explained. "You're pushed into activities. You're fighting brush fires, you see."

The mayor was unequivocal in how he wanted to handle the youth problem. He felt that it was primarily a police responsibility that should be dealt with firmly. But, he reflected, strict government regulations on the treatment of juveniles prevented such action. "You can't knock their

little pointed heads together before they become an adult," he stated. Furthermore, the incarceration of juveniles could lead to embarrassing public relations problems. "You have a terrible exposure if you throw some drunk kid in jail and it turns out he is a diabetic and dies."

Deprived of the alternatives of police force and intervention, the mayor's response to the youth problem came in a piecemeal fashion. He specifically rejected the idea of thoughtful, long-range planning, bluntly asserting that planning was almost worthless:

> You talk about planning, but you can plan your socks off and if the sudden, unforeseen need comes up, you forget about your planning and go to work on that, because the voters are pressing you to do that.

By responding to pressure from "voters" rather than to any pre-established plan, the mayor was virtually eliminating non-voting youth from the consideration of city government. And philosophically, he was commiting himself to responding to the immediate needs of downtown merchants rather than the long range needs of Melrose youth.

Initially the mayor hoped that city parks located on the outskirts of town would lure youth away from the downtown business district:

> We citizens and the city government and the Park Department tried to find places of congregation that would be remote and perhaps easier to keep under surveillance.

The dual advantages of remoteness and ease of surveillance appealed to the mayor and the rest of the downtown business community.

Pressure continued to build from downtown merchants. The parks, it was clear, were not enough. The mayor declined to initiate any specific youth programming on ideological grounds. No church group stepped forward with an offer to help out. School officials stayed meticulously clear of the dispute. Meanwhile, Jelly's still offered Melrose youth a place to go

and enjoy the company of their peers, but it offered the city neither direct supervision nor remoteness. Finally, under pressure from the Melrose police department to act, the city hired a Teen Activities Specialist. Although the decision to hire a Teen Specialist was made while Jelly's was still operating, the position was not actually filled until several weeks after Jelly's closed.

The woman hired for that position lasted less than a year, from May through February. She initiated a variety of programs, including disco dancing classes, dance parties, pool parties, and a Teen Drop-In Center, located in one of the city parks (far from the central business district). However, she apparently had difficult getting along with other community agencies, most notably the Melrose Police Department. The mayor also was not very supportive of the Specialist. He did not bother to monitor her programs and admitted to having little idea how successful any of the teen activities actually were. In fact, when pressed on the point of programming success, the mayor could offer only attendance figures from the city's swimming pool. Perhaps this lack of enthusiasm and support from the mayor and police led the Teen Activities Specialist to resign after ten months.

The position was quickly filled and the job was retitled a Recreation Supervisor. That new title reflected the changed emphasis of the job. The city had in reality abolished the position of Teen Specialist and replaced it with a Supervisor whose primary duty did not even involve young people. The new Recreation Supervisor would spend most of her time working with the elderly. The new Recreation Supervisor herself admitted that only about twenty five per cent of her time and energy would go to young people.

For teens the new Supervisor anticipated sponsoring movies and special dances and little more. Additionally, her program would not even run during the summer. While young people had a great deal of idle time, the community center would be closed. "It's too hot, it's not air conditioned," she explained. Then she added, in apparent although not conscious contradiction, "And plus, they rent out the building for other community activities during the summer."

In fact, her lack of commitment to working with teens was quite apparent. The city did not really need a Teen Specialist, she insisted, because "you know, teens do not take up that much time." Besides, she added, there are just too many problems in working with adolescents:

> There's too many personality types. We've got the jocks and the freaks and the real religious. There's just so many types of people. It's kind of hard to hit, you know, have programs that would hit them all.

The philosophy of the Recreation Supervisor allowed little opportunity for the establishment of a successful community youth program. For instance, the "open parks" program, established expressly for teens, lasted a total of three weeks, hardly enough time to evaluate its possible impact. Plus, her conception of the types of youth attracted to a community center was extremely restricted. She was convinced that a community youth center would be populated mainly by one type of person: "basically, juvenile delinquent." While it was true, she admitted, that problem youth -- the "marijuana smoker," as she phrased it -- were exactly the kind of people the police wanted her to deal with, those were not really the kind of young people she <u>wanted</u> to work with:

> I would like to see the type that's real shy, that doesn't do anything but sit home and watch TV after school. I like to see the ones that are almost juvenile delinquents participate too, because they need the positive reinforcement that we can give them in a group setting.

She just did not want problem youth -- "juvenile delinquents" or "marijuana smokers" -- in the community's recreation center, because, she explained simply, "I was not going to be held responsible."

Her main laisons in the community were with the school and the police department. She sent out weekly fliers to the schools, requesting that recreation programs be broadcast over the schools' intercom systems. But the fear of attracting problem youth restricted the kinds of activities in which she was willing to engage:

> So far, we have not planned any trips, and I don't in the immediate future foresee any trips for teens because of the fact that it is hard to control them when they are out.

Maybe high school teachers or Melrose police men could act as chaperones for hard to control teen-agers, she figured. The opportunity for even minimal unsupervised behavior would be destroyed under such an arrangement.

The Recreation Supervisor confessed that the idea of using police officers as supervisors for youth programs held a special appeal to her. They "understand the situation" of young people better than the average citizen, she asserted. When asked whether youths might be hesitant to involve themselves in leisure time activity run by the police, she responded:

> They may at first, I would think. But once they get to know them as a person and not a policeman, I don't think that that will be much of a problem. Also, the ones that will not like the police being there will not come. Those are the types of kids that need to grow up by themselves.

The city was looking for a program to attract problem youth out of the downtown area. The Recreaction Supervisor, who was supposed to supply that program, wanted nothing to do with those same youth:

> This program is for recreational activities. We want things to be a success. But those kinds of kids don't want recreational activity. They just want to come and cause trouble usually. So, if they are weeded out, we can probably have a more successful program.

So a program designed initially to deal with problem youth actively sought to weed out problem youth from participation. The program supervisor went so far as to define the success of her program in the extent to which she was able to prevent these youths from participating. And the youth program originally established to combat the attractiveness of Jelly's could not even entice adolescents away from the downtown area after Jelly's had closed.

The Closing of Jelly's

Jelly's closed in March of 1977 after almost three years of operations. The closing was due to a number of factors. The location of Jelly's III was never as popular as the second site. Jelly's II was located on a corner with plenty of parking in front of the store and a small park directly across the street. All of this allowed for a good deal of space; youths could easily hang out in and around the facility. The location also provided youth people with a central spot in the downtown area from which to witness the comings and goings of a central Melrose area.

The third location was not nearly as attractive from the point of view of action opportunities. There was little space in front of the facility in which to spend idle time. Parking was at a premium. Furthermore, a number of the regulars from Jelly's II did not transfer their allegiance to the third location. As a result, there was a significant decrease in the regular population. One of the reasons some of the old-time regulars did not make Jelly's III their home territory was that they had fewer needs for such a facility. They were now a few years older than they had been when Jelly's I had opened. Because they were older, other, more attractive opportunities for leisure time activity were now accessible to them for the first time.

At the same time that few regulars were transferring their allegiance to the third location, the appeal of Jelly's to a younger crowd had considerably diminished. Jelly's had proven to be somewhat of an unstable hangout. It had, after all, been in three locations within three years. Also Jelly's III with its heavy curtain and its dark interior was just not as attractive a facility as the first two places had been. It conformed too closely now to traditional pool halls in its environment. And of course, the game of fussball no longer presented the novelty it once had.

The physical layout of the third location proved to be disadvantageous from another point of view as well. It was true that the curtain which ran across the front of the store allowed for even more backstage behavior than had been possible at either Jelly's I or Jelly's II. It also had some negative effects. Youths passing by could no longer easily look in and see what was happening inside. That made them less likely to stop and join in the action. Likewise, youths on the inside could no longer use Jelly's as a place to hang out, killing time while they watched the passing action on the streets. Finally, community adults saw the curtain and the hidden action in the interior as further evidence that something suspicious was going on inside. Since passing adults could no longer easily see what was going on inside of Jelly's, they grew even more curious and concerned than ever before about the action inside Jelly's.

Once again, Jelly grew tired of operating the facility. With fewer clients, he found himself working just as hard as before but making less money. As Jelly's began to lose its reputation as an action spot, Jelly found it difficult to hold on to staff people. Several of his long time regular staff people left and he had to rely more heavily than ever on new

and part-time help. Jelly talked again about selling tables on a full-time basis. He would start his own table business, he thought, and maybe start a regional fussball association complete with elaborate competitions and a newsletter. He had become increasingly disinterested in the problems associated with the daily operations of a small business like Jelly's and finally decided to close Jelly's down.

When Jelly's finally closed in March there was evident disruption in the social life of the Melrose youth population. This disruption could be seen most immediately in the accelerating tension between youth and police. Without the haven of Jelly's, more and more teens took to hanging out on the street corners of downtown Melrose. The fact that the closing occurred just as warm weather returned exacerbated that problem, as youths became increasingly visable on the streets and in downtown parking lots. Police urged loitering youths to move on. Before this young people could always seek refuge in Jelly's. Now they had no such readily available haven. Less than a month after Jelly's closed, following a series of confrontations between Melrose youth and city policemen, fifty seven young people were arrested for loitering in a downtown parking lot. They were all charged under a city "no-trespassing" code, which had been added to the city charter precisely to combat youthful loitering in downtown parking lots.

When Jelly's closed, community adults felt that the most visible sign of the downtown youth problem had been erased. Maybe now, some thought, the problems with young people in the downtown area would gradually fade away. But far from solving the potential delinquent problem, city police had formally added the names of fifty seven Melrose young people to the official ranks of the "delinquent," and in the process, formalized

community adult perceptions of downtown youth as delinquent.

There were several connections between the closing of Jelly's and the mass arrests. With all the complaints about supposed youth problems in the downtown area, there had never been such a mass arrest of youths while Jelly's was in operation. But when the fussball parlor closed in the spring, the adolescents naturally sought another spot at which to congregate. Since the weather was warm, that site became a downtown grocery story parking lot. It was at the parking lot that the fifty seven arrests took place.

Prior to the mass arrest, adolescents in the downtown area could always rely on Jelly's to serve as at least a partial buffer between their needs and the expectations of downtown merchants. Now with that buffer gone, Melrose youth found themselves directly confronting representatives of the adult community -- particularly downtown merchants and police. The ensuing tensions culminated in the mass arrest.

That arrest boded for a long summer filled with numerous teen problems. City officials responded by hiring a Teen Activities Specialist to develop programming for community teens. They also established a Teen Action Council to help generate even more teen programming. The goal of both efforts was to encourage youths to engage in vigorous activities such as organized sports and outings. All such activities would be closely supervised by representatives of the city and kept well isolated from the downtown business area. Not only would such community sponsored activities keep young people off the streets but also out of locales like Jelly's where they might interact with delinquents.

However, community adults underestimated the dimensions of the situation. Facilities such as Jelly's traditionally have been perceived as

contributing to the disruption of community life. But it can be argued that, far from contributing to delinquency and community disruption, Jelly's provided a degree of control for the local adolescent population.

Shortly after Jelly's closed a new fussball parlor opened in a Melrose shopping center well removed from the downtown business district. Merchants and police may have succeeded in running Jelly's out of the downtown area, but what really had been accomplished? A new group of merchants, those who operated shops in the shopping center, would now complain about loitering, littering, and vandalism. It is likely that a new group of adolescents made this fussball parlor their home territory. And once again the inevitable struggle between youths and community adults would begin.

Summary

Within a community setting, members negotiate bargains which establish expectations for actions that will allow people to "fit in." Even when community groups have conflicting needs, often they are able to negotiate a bargain because of the culture of civility. This cultural expectation, which works well with minority life style adults, establishes the social-behavioral boundaries to be observed. Each bargaining group modifies its expectations in order to maintain peace and civility within the community.

But this notion of effective negotiation breaks down quickly when the negotiations take place between adults and youths. In such negotiations, the participants are not equals. In Melrose the adults had direct access to the community power structure. Not only did they have access, but they were actually a part of that structure. The mayor himself was a downtown merchant and other merchants were on the police board. One of

Jelly's neighbors was the banker who held the mortgage on the building in which Jelly's II was housed. He brought direct and effective pressure to bear on Jelly's landlord. And there was little that Jelly, his staff, and the patrons could do to offset this power.

Compounding that problem was the fact that the young people who frequented the downtown area did not exhibit the qualities which would allow them to fit into the life of the downtown business district. These youthful qualities of the adolescents also characterized the staff members at Jelly's. As a result the staff, who acted as buffers between downtown merchants and the young patrons of Jelly's, were not always effective in their negotiations.

Merchants complained about litter, loitering, and vandalism in the downtown area. Although they were never really sure that all of these problems were being caused by Jelly's or its patrons, they nevertheless felt that Jelly's presence in the downtown area did nothing to help solve such problems. They also expressed a vague fear of the types of activities that allegedly took place within the facility. So, while they were not sure that Jelly's was causing all their problems, they were sure that they would be happier if Jelly's were not in the downtown area than they were with Jelly's sitting directly in their midst. And the half-hearted efforts of both Jelly and his staff confirmed their youthful image to the merchants and failed to calm the concerns and suspicions of a fussball hall in the downtown business district.

Neither was the bargaining process between merchants and youths aided by the local city government. The mayor's main concern was quieting the complaints of the merchants. He was, it should be remembered, a downtown merchant himself. The police department did little to quell the concerns

of the merchants. In fact, the constant surveillance of Jelly's by the police worked to accelerate merchant concerns. And the merchants themselves, by indirectly pressuring Jelly's to relocate to its third location, drove Jelly's into a more secretive, suspicious setting. Now all the action took place behind a heavy brown curtain.

The closing of Jelly's and the mass arrest of Melrose youths which following quickly after the closing indicated the final breakdown of community negotiations. City government responded with a program, the hiring of a Teen Specialist who proved incapable of providing an acceptable alternative to Jelly's. That this position was filled twice in a year and had broad modifications made in its mandate only serves as further evidence of how little clout adolescents had in the bargaining process.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

This ethnographic study focused on the activities of a group of adolescents at a commercial games establishment known as Jelly's. I have discussed the characteristics of Jelly's that made it so attractive to a portion of Melrose's adolescent community, who patronized the setting on a regular and occasional basis, and what kinds of activities took place there. I have also evaluated the kinds of benefits that adolescents gained from patronizing Jelly's and what kinds of measures, in terms of control, they would take in order to maintain the operation of the setting. Finally, I have investigated the interaction between the patrons and staff of Jelly's on the one hand, and the downtown merchants and community leaders of Melrose on the other.

After completing a field study such as this, what conclusions and implications can be drawn?

Theoretical Implications

Analysis of youth action such as that which took place within Jelly's is often presented from a subculturalist perspective. Adolescent society is depicted by subculturalists as being alienated from mainstream culture. But as seen in this study of Jelly's, such an analytic approach is inadequate to explain the interrelationship between adolescents within their subcultural groups and other groups outside of the subculture.

Sociologists have noticed and commented upon the particular weakness of subculture theory, especially as it applies to adolescents. For example, Matza (1964) in his study of juvenile delinquency points out that norms cannot be presented rigidly as either conventional or delinquent. Such a strict dichotomy misses the fact that there is constant interaction between conventional and delinquent norms. As a result, the values of adolescents, even those involved in delinquent behavior, drift between conventional and anti-conventional expectations, depending on the particular situation. Finestone (1976:183) argues that investigations of delinquency can and should place their "central emphasis upon self-other relationships."

An interactionist approach allows for the "changes in culture over time" (Fine and Kleinman, 1979:6). Group members interact not only with one another, but also with representatives of other groups with which they might also be members. Certain members of the group may play critical roles in such inter-group relations. In this way, groups that may not have other types of "direct or indirect ties" still know and understand something about the other group (Fine and Kleinman, 1979:11).

This is not to deny that adolescents, say, will identify with their subcultural group. Of course they will. And in doing so, they will come to share "values, norms, behavior, and artifacts" with that group (Fine and Kleinman, 1979:13). But there is more to be said on this point, for the degree to which that subculture identification takes place is directly affected by interactions between the subgroup and outsiders. The way a community responds to a group may thus change the content and identification patterns of subcultural participants. This change often is precipitated by interactions between the subgroup and agents of social control

who attempt to influence the activities of members of that subgroup. Such interventions by outsiders can bring about either stronger identification with the group by individual members or withdrawal from the group (Fine and Kleinman, 1979).

Before looking at the penetration of community values into Jelly's, it is important to understand the interactions among adolescents in Jelly's which made it such a popular spot.

The Appeal of Jelly's. What made Jelly's so attractive to some of the adolescents of Melrose was that it was a place where they could congregate without direct adult supervision. Because it was a commercial setting, Jelly's depended for its very existence on its appeal to adolescents. The setting was not approved of by any adult sponsored group or community agency. Youths were able to enter the facility solely on their own choice, without adult sanction or approval of that choice. As a result of the lack of adult sponsorship or community sanction, adolescents were free once inside to establish their own mode of interaction.

Interaction within Jelly's took place on two levels: interrelationships between patrons themselves, and interactions between patrons and staff. The patrons, particularly the regulars, turned Jelly's into a "home-away-from-home" where they could develop a sense of solidarity and support. Here they felt free and comfortable to interact with their peers away from the strict controls of other community settings. The game of fussball itself served as a critical prop to aid these interactions. Fussball gave young people an excuse for patronizing Jelly's. They were not going there merely to hang out; they were going to play the town's latest game fad. Once around the game table, patrons had ample opportunity to

interact with each other. They could chat about matters of personal concern -- school, family, dating, jobs. And when there was nothing else to talk about, the players and bystanders could discuss the game itself. By trading game strategy or arguing skills, young people who had previously been strangers could meet, strike up conversation, and become friends.

Such interaction among patrons was an essential part of Jelly's appeal. Because interactions flowed so freely, here was a place to go to meet new people, particularly members of the opposite sex. With no formal plans for a weekend night, Melrose youth could wander down to Jelly's, latch on to a group with relative ease, and go off to a party or concert. There was also ample opportunity there to become involved in delinquent activity. Always at least part of the interaction at Jelly's included discussions of where, when, or how to buy alcohol or drugs. Those illegal possibilities heightened the appeal of Jelly's to many young people.

Much of what went on within Jelly's involved interactions between Jelly's regular patrons and staff members. A particularly appealing aspect of Jelly's was the youthfulness of the staff, their willingness to treat patrons as friends and to cater to patrons' needs. Thus, the fact that Jelly's became almost exclusively a fussball parlor rather than a general arcade was not a unilateral decision made by ownership. Instead, Jelly quickly responded to the interests and wants of his regular patrons. Jelly's became a fussball parlor because Jelly together with his regular patrons decided that it should be one.

The close relationship between patrons and staff involved more than the game of fussball. Jelly and his staff became friends, confidants, sometimes substitute family members for the patrons. They offered advice upon and listened to problems. Young people liked going to Jelly's because

they felt close to staff members. The staff, in turn, did what it could to make the patrons feel welcomed. Staff members allowed, or at least tolerated, the kind of behavior in which the patrons wished to engage, frowning upon only the most blatant kind of offense. They delivered messages to and for their patrons, periodically left male patrons in charge, and occasionally shielded patrons from irate parents. The appeal of Jelly's lay as much in the interaction between patrons and youthful staff members as anywhere else.

Controls at Jelly's. Virtually all of the controls within Jelly's grew out of a series of interactions. Some of these interactions involved mainly participants at the scene. Thus, staff members exerted controls over patrons by enforcing, or not enforcing, certain rules and regulations. Regular patrons found themselves in a position of controlling much of what went on within Jelly's and thus became agents of control over occasional patrons and characters. But many of the controls within Jelly's were not exclusively generated from within. Many involved direct and indirect interaction between participants in the setting and the larger surrounding society. Jelly's staff and patrons, in other words, were not an isolated, alienated subgroup, but rather part of a larger community.

1. Staff Control. Staff members enforced a certain set of rules and regulations. These rules were neither written down nor enforced in any consistent manner. Nonetheless, Jelly and his staff realized that, while aiming toward offering an attractive, exciting setting for adolescents, they also had to maintain an acceptable business front in order to continue operating in the downtown business district. Jelly, after all, was himself an entrepreneur earning his living from the fussball hall. He

needed the patronage of young people in order to survive financially. But he also needed to be able to maintain a certain degree of order to be able to operate his place in an efficient and profitable manner.

The unofficial but necessary rules tended to be narrowly defined. Jelly expected his patrons to act "normal" within the setting; that is, like they would in any business setting. That meant that the youths had to keep their interactions within certain bounds. Fighting was frowned upon and kicking the machines was quickly punished, at least by Jelly himself. If patrons did not keep their interactions in check, staff members had several options. They could ignore the action and not censure the patrons in any way. For minor infractions, that was often the case. Or, staff members could ask the participant to leave the facility. This request was rarely made. But when it was made and enforced, it was an effective way to discourage unacceptable behavior.

The decision of staff people as to when and how to use their discretionary power of control depended to a large extent on their interaction with patrons. Staff members realized that they had to maintain order and stability within the setting. They were also aware that they could not do so in such a way that would seriously impose upon their interactions with young patrons. Freedom, after all, was an integral part of Jelly's appeal. The way the staff resolved that apparent conflict between appealing to youths and maintaining an acceptable business operation was through the process of discretionary rule enforcement. Regular patrons were never thrown out of the facility and, in fact, were rarely criticized for their behavior. Those regulars reciprocated by establishing a mode of behavior that met the needs of staff. Thus, regular patrons implicitly accepted the need to hide alcohol consumption and staff accepted the fact that

patrons were drinking illegally.

Staff members, particularly Jelly, played key structural roles in the process of interaction between Jelly's youthful patrons and the Melrose adult community. Fine and Kleinman (1979:11) argue that such critical roles allow for the "diffusion of cultural traditions" even among people who "have no other direct or indirect ties." Staff members played a major role as mediators within the setting among the patrons and mediators outside of the setting between Jelly's and the rest of the downtown business community. Jelly and his staff, for example, negotiated with the police and school officials in an attempt to deflect some of the criticisms of Jelly's coming from those two quarters. When dealing with personnel from the police or the schools, Jelly was always sure to cite his "strict" rules against alcohol and drugs. If they did not believe him, Jelly invited them to come to his place and check for themselves. Every once in a while, the staff would attempt to meet the common complaint about litter by picking up trash on the sidewalk and street in front of Jelly's. What Jelly and his staff were doing, of course, was attempting to fit into the downtown business community.

This is not to say that interaction between Jelly's and the rest of the downtown merchants led to understanding or acceptance. Sometimes staff members failed to control the action within the setting, thus weakening the front appearance they were aiming for. But another part of that failing rested with the fact that, when dealing with the issue of control, some matters cannot be negotiated. Even when community negotiations do take place, one of the bargaining sides may have considerably more power than the other (Maines, 1977). When it came time to influence the community power structure -- the mayor and the police, for example -- Jelly's

staff found themselves at a considerable disadvantage compared to the bargaining position of other downtown merchants.

2. Regulars as Control. Within the setting, staff members were not the only agents of control. Community values penetrated the setting through the regular patrons. This penetration was evoked by the implementation of a status system that gave the regulars a high degree of control within the setting. As a result, the regulars helped shape the action that took place at Jelly's and the limits of that action.

The regulars established Jelly's as a legitimate youth action spot within the Melrose community. Through their actions at Jelly's, they illustrated the type of behavior rewarded within the setting. Within any setting, a certain elite group helps to establish order (Day and Day, 1977). For Jelly's, that elite group was composed of the regular patrons. Part of this order was reflected in the services that youths could expect to find upon entering Jelly's. Messages, small cash loans, food, fussball equipment were all made available because of the needs of regular patrons. And such services were modified and altered depending on whether regulars wanted to continue to support them.

Since regulars also spent money consistently on games, they directly influenced the type of games offered at the facility. Jelly's originally was intended as a general games emporium. It was the regulars who made it into a fussball parlor. And of course the type of game playing directly affected the nature of the interaction within the setting. The regulars also played a role in controlling delinquent behavior. Since they had a stake in the day-to-day operations of the facility, they wanted to work with the staff to establish a pattern of covert delinquency. Regulars

disguised their alcohol when they drank at Jelly's. Non-regulars followed suit; those who did not were asked to leave. Thus, the disguised drinking became an established pattern of delinquent behavior. Additionally, regulars would not tolerate certain types of outrageous behavior. Youths who persisted in such unacceptable activities were labeled "characters" and isolated from the group interaction. Finally, regular patrons became formal agents of control within the setting by assuming the role of staff member for brief periods of time.

3. Game Control. By encouraging the importance of fussball as a game of skill, regulars introduced traditional game values into the setting. Game rules not only provided a degree of control over the patrons, but also reflected community norms. For instance, because of the way fussball is played, it can be a team sport rather than an isolated table game like pinball. Therefore, youths learned the value of working together as a team. In order to win, teammates needed to coordinate their strategies. Youths also needed to practice and hone certain game skills. The winner was a highly valued individual within the setting, and patrons felt certain pressures to exercise discipline and control in order to improve their game. A part of that discipline included self-restraint. Game skills suffered if the player was under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Thus, the game mitigated against certain delinquent behavior.

Never were traditional values as important as during fussball tournaments. Tournaments even managed to turn patrons into community boosters. Since youths from outside Melrose came to Jelly's on tournament nights, Jelly's patrons cheered on the Melrose team, urging them to beat the outsiders. Certainly, the stakes of a tournament, together with the tradi-

tional delineation of winners and losers, emphasis on skills, sportsmanship, and competition reflected many of the values prized in the community at large. The elaborate flow chart that marked the course of winners and losers on tournament nights, the complexity of tournament competition, the ability to work as part of a team, to deal with tension, and to be a graceful loser were all integral parts of the interaction at Jelly's. And all of these elements, together with the elaborate rituals surrounding tournament games heightened the importance of the game itself.

4. Sex Role Controls. The game of fussball was also particularly significant in clarifying the position within the setting of female participants. Jelly's had clearly demarked sex role divisions. In everyday interaction, the roles of males and females were often quite equitable. Game playing, it seems, can serve as a way in day-to-day interactions to escape the circumstance of sex, at least for a brief time (Stone, 1970). Such was the case at Jelly's, at least to a degree. Females contributed to the interaction patterns in many ways: friendship, joking, gossiping, and playing the game. There was a general consensus among both males and females that game skills were something to be valued, and players of both sexes sought to improve their skills. Nonetheless, lines of distinction were clearly drawn. Females just did not have access to as much status and power as male patrons. Only male regulars ever became staff and thus achieved status. The best females could do in order to gain extra status was date a staff member.

The game itself established sex lines. Males saw themselves as more serious players than females. They developed "skills" while females were often "lucky." It was, of course, "Lady Luck" that made females

good players. The fact that the stakes were higher for males than for females was seen in betting patterns. Males placed wagers on games; females did not. Females entered tournaments only under highly segregated conditions: as one-half of a mixed doubles team. The tournaments showed that, when the stakes were highest, fussball became a man's game. On those nights, females who did show up at Jelly's -- and there were significantly fewer than on non-tournament nights -- became "handmaidens" for the male players. They were there to serve the males and watch them play. That role both accurately characterized the ultimate limits of power for females within the setting and the role of women in other settings that have traditionally been male domains such as the work place.

4. Community as Control. While adult values and norms filtered into the interaction patterns at Jelly's in an informal way, in a number of instances there was a more direct and clear-cut penetration of adult community norms which modified adolescent interaction. This penetration was illustrated by the interaction that Jelly had with members of the downtown business community. Probably the most frequent complaint of the downtown merchants was that Jelly's patrons littered the streets of downtown Melrose. Merchants admitted that they did not mind Jelly's patrons drinking. What upset them was the beer bottles and cans left behind. That litter came to symbolize to the merchants all the potential for disorder that the participants in Jelly's could carry into the downtown business district.

As a result of merchants' complaints, Jelly made an occasional effort to pick up beer bottles and other litter that had accumulated in front of his store. And staff members grumbled about the youths who left such a

mess behind. The staff members felt that picking up litter was one way to show the community that they were good business neighbors. Unfortunately, such efforts tended to be sporadic. Accordingly, Jelly failed to build much credibility for himself among downtown merchants as an orderly and good neighbor.

Within the setting staff clearly tried to maintain the community expectation of no drugs and alcohol by encouraging patrons to disguise such behavior. They knew that merchants would have had the place closed down if there was blatant use of either drugs or alcohol there. And one of Jelly's staff members even complained to the local police about the inconsistency of their liquor enforcement on the premise that consistent law enforcement would solve many of the problems Jelly's had in dealing with merchants.

Ultimately Jelly's was severely affected by the pressures of downtown merchants. The business community did not hesitate to contact the police and complain about the goings-on at Jelly's. Merchants on the police board used their influence more directly by airing their grievances about the downtown youth problem at board meetings. The neighboring bank pressured Jelly's landlord into requesting that Jelly find a new location. Merchants had clear expectations about how they expected downtown youths to behave and not behave. They would not tolerate litter, loitering, or even the rumors of illegal drug activity. In what they thought was the absence of control within the setting, they mobilized their political power and community clout against Jelly's.

By pressuring Jelly's II to move, the merchants limited the appeal of Jelly's to Melrose youth. In Jelly's III youths now interacted behind a dark, brown curtain. While such interaction could be more secretive than

it was in Jelly's II -- behind large, plate glass windows -- the interaction was hidden from the view of adolescents who might have been passing by on the street in front of Jelly's. They could not look in to see what was going on, and were less likely to enter. Also Jelly's was no longer on a street corner, no longer across the street from a small park, and no longer had easy parking for its patrons. The location of Jelly's III was not conducive to the kind of easy hanging out that took place at Jelly's II. The move, brought upon by merchant pressure, seriously hampered the popularity of Jelly's and eventually aided in its demise.

In discussing the interaction between the merchants and Jelly's, it should be remembered that Jelly himself was a merchant. As a result, he was also part of the downtown business community. Because Jelly was an entrepreneur, he shared some of the entrepreneurial values of his business neighbors; particularly, the importance of maintaining some order and making a profit. Jelly himself brought some business values into the setting.

What is critical to understand about the nature of the interactions between Jelly's and the community is that all controls flowed downward. While Jelly's and the Melrose community were interacting, the adult community was in the position of making demands and Jelly was in the position of responding to those demands. He could either accept or reject them. But he could not make any demands of his own, since the power resources he had were minimal. If there was any fitting in to do, Jelly would have to do it all. Such inflexibility on the part of downtown merchants helped pave the way for Jelly's ultimate demise.

Policy Implications

I have presented the natural history of a fussball parlor. Now it is important to discuss a number of policy issues raised by such an ethnographic study. I will focus on two separate areas: commercial versus community sponsored settings and order versus disorder.

Commercial Versus Community Sponsored Settings. In most communities there are a limited number of settings where adolescents can gather apart from direct adult supervision. School, church, and community sponsored activities are dominated by such adult supervision. Bars and other more natural settings are off limits to adolescents because of age restrictions. Alternative settings, when they do exist, almost have to be of a commercial nature.

Community sponsored programs carry with them a code of acceptable behavior, a code over which adolescents have little say or control. This code of behavior allows scant room for exploration and experimentation which, in turn, severely limits the possibility that such programs will ever become home territories for young people. The combination of free-wheeling behavior and home territory were critical aspects of the appeal of Jelly's. The absence of these factors seriously cripples the chances of community programs ever gaining similar appeal.

Part of the problem of youth programming like that developed by the Melrose community is that adolescents are rarely involved in the shaping of the programming. So such programs often miss their chance to provide responsive alternatives and services to adolescents. When community youth programs have been in existence for a long period of time, they are often unable to keep abreast of the quick changing needs of their potential

audience. It is reasonable to question whether the appeals of Jelly's can, or for that matter should, be replicated in any type of community sponsored program. Gang clubhouses or tenement hallways might meet the needs of the adolescent's quest for excitement, but community sponsored or approved settings cannot offer the freedom from control that is so attractive to adolescents. Such freedom goes against the basic assumption of such a community sponsored setting, that assumption being that adults should guide the interactions of young people.

When Melrose finally offered a program designed specifically for the city's youth, that offer grew out of a crisis situation. Such a response raises several questions about local community problem solving. Do communities respond to problems only when they reach a crisis point? Is this response an illustration of a long-term commitment to problem solving, or a commitment only to smoothing over matters until the next crisis comes along? Should adolescents be involved in the shaping of community responses? Would adolescent involvement result in programming that is responsive to adolescent needs? What kind of staff is best suited for community youth programs?

Given the restrictions and limitations of community youth programs, it is inevitable that settings like Jelly's will become popular adolescent hangouts. By its very nature, a commercial setting will be quick to respond to the needs of its patrons. Adolescents are attracted to such settings if and only if the setting provides a lively and welcomed alternative to adult sponsored activities. While adults should not encourage such facilities -- such encouragement would imply approval and thus undercut one of the basic reasons for its popularity -- neither should they discourage such settings. Within a community there should be tolerance

for places like Jelly's which meet the needs of a particular group of adolescents.

Order Versus Disorder. The existence of Jelly's in the downtown business district of Melrose seemed to neighboring merchants to threaten the order of community life. A certain code of behavior was expected for the city streets, but youths who loitered outside of Jelly's, cruised the streets in their cars, and threw beer bottles in the park flaunted this code. Because of their age and lack of political clout, youths were not extended the civilities allowed to non-conforming adults in community settings. The litter particularly symbolized a palpable threat to the fabric of the downtown business district. Over and over again, merchants cited litter as the gravest problem for the downtown area posed by Jelly's. Litter thus became the symbol of potential disorder that could overtake community life.

Adults also were concerned with the youthfulness of Jelly and his staff. Merchants did not feel that their own interests could be properly protected by this youthful staff. In this matter, Jelly's is by no means unique. Communities have expressed concern over other settings that have a youthful population of staff and patrons. Local "head" shops -- stores that cater to young people by selling drug paraphernalia and related items -- are often forced to close. The values implicit in such an operation, although they are at base capitalistic, present a direct challenge to adult ethical and legal codes regarding drugs. Perhaps it would be useful to explore what types of commercial settings are condemned because of the youthfulness of their proprietors. What other qualities help to establish settings as threats to community stability? Is the only possible resolu-

tion of these supposed threats eviction from the business district? Cannot such settings contribute to community life and not just disrupt it?

All the pressures on Jelly's from the community contained a certain irony. By encouraging Jelly's to close, downtown merchants inadvertently added to the disruption of Melrose community life. Instead of solving the downtown youth problem as they had wished, the merchants helped to create a new, more serious one. With Jelly's closed, youthful loitering escalated to such an extent that the police arrested fifty seven young people. The problems associated with a commercial youth facility like Jelly's simply moved to a nearby shopping center. One cannot help but conclude that downtown merchants might have been better off allowing Jelly's to remain where Jelly wanted to remain, in the downtown business district.

Field Research

The exploration of Jelly's was accomplished through the method of field research. But recent federal restrictions established for the protection of human subjects have hampered the implementation of such methodology. My own project, for example, was modified in order to follow current guidelines. Although there was a change in my goals, I feel that I was able to complete the study satisfactorily. However there were certain matters in which I was interested which were shut off to me by the new federal mandates. These mandates have the potential of restricting future participant observation studies, particularly studies involving minors or groups involved in secret or deviant activities.

It is important to raise some questions about the new federal guidelines and their implication for field research. Have other researchers

who engage in participant observation found themselves hampered by these federal restrictions? If so, how have they modified their work? Did the modification affect the integrity of the research project? Do the federal guidelines affect different methods of research to varying degrees? How have other social scientists accommodated themselves to these federal restrictions? Will the federal guidelines result in fewer researchers seeking federal support for their work?

It is clear from the history of abuse in human subjects research that some standards are needed. However, the requirements of particular methodological techniques should also be considered. The possible ramifications of these federal decisions are many and it is critical that sociologists evaluate ways of dealing with these issues.

Conclusions

Communities can establish successful laisons between adults and youths. But this relationship will exist only when adults realize that there are limits to the degree of control they can expect to exert over adolescents. We do not expect to control all adult behavior. Rather we have learned to accept, or at least tolerate, behavior that does not meet with our approval. This toleration must be extended to adolescents.

Certainly, there is ambivalence about how to approach youth problems. Adults have every right to express concern about serious drug and alcohol problems. Vandalism can be considered a legitimate threat to a community. But in the process of attempting to protect community interests and the "best interests" of the adolescents, sometimes small problems are not tolerated. Such was the case in Melrose where merchants could not accept littering and loitering from adolescents.

Jelly's provided Melrose's youth with a sense of freedom, and this freedom was its basic source of appeal. At the same time, Jelly's offered a surprising degree of stability and control to the downtown business district. Every type of behavior cannot be controlled if a setting is to meet the needs of community young people. Having no control valve within communities can lead to a total breakdown in relationships as exemplified by the arrests of fifty seven youths.

What is critical for community members to understand is that a setting like Jelly's provides a place for interaction, interaction which adolescents perceive as free. Community adults failed to understand the facility also provided the best type of control in the downtown business district. And in his negotiations with community adults, Jelly himself did not show enough understanding of the service he was actually providing to the community. As a result, Jelly and downtown merchants became adversaries rather than cooperative neighbors.

The basic assumption of "community" is that there is an interrelationship between all members of the community. If we continue to insist that all adolescents be segregated, that they be removed from our places of business because they may cause minor irritations, we may well be shaping a future generation of adults who will continue to perpetuate this intolerance. And intolerance of any one minority group such as was expressed in Melrose toward its own young people can have a devastating impact on any minority group that aspires to a meaningful, well integrated role in community life. If we do not allow youths on the streets of our own communities, where and when will they be allowed to fit in? And if communities do not allow their own children such rights, what can be expected for the old, the non-white, or the handicapped?

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