

New England Journal of Public Policy

Volume 8
Issue 1 *Special Issue on Homelessness: New
England and Beyond*

Article 72

3-23-1992

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Recommended Citation

Hopper, Kim (1992) "Counting the New York Homeless: An Ethnographic Perspective," *New England Journal of Public Policy*. Vol. 8: Iss. 1, Article 72.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.umb.edu/nejpp/vol8/iss1/72>

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Counting the New York Homeless

An Ethnographic Perspective

Kim Hopper, Ph.D.

Significant ambiguities inhere in the operational definitions of “site” and “selected components of the homeless population” used in the 1990 S-Night Count. Ethnographic methods offer a useful corrective. This article, covering research that was part of a larger project evaluating the S-Night count, describes a brief ethnographic inquiry into the ecology of public spaces occupied by the homeless poor in New York City. Problems in implementation, surprising ease of access, patterns of mobility and prevailing norms from site to site, and the tenuous character of the street sites are reviewed, as are implications for future enumeration efforts.

The Census Bureau's interest in the numbers of demographics of homeless, and in the institutions catering to them, dates at least from the time of a special enumeration of Minneapolis's skid row in the mid-1950s.¹ The bureau stimulated renewed interest in the problems of enumerating such populations by funding several pilot studies preceding the 1990 Decennial Census² and a set of assessments of the 1990 S-Night street and shelter enumeration effort in sections of Chicago, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, and Phoenix. Several companion studies were undertaken as part of the New York effort.³ This article reports the findings of a brief ethnographic inquiry into nighttime habitats of the street-dwelling homeless.

Ethnography in the Annals of Homelessness

Historically, American ethnographers have made signal contributions to the documentation and interpretation of the lives of homeless men and women, in Chicago and New York especially. The pathbreaking — and for the most part, unpublished — work of Nels Anderson⁴ and Charles Barnes⁵ on the municipal lodging house in New York; Anderson's earlier work⁶ on “hoboemia” in Chicago; the later, Depression-era studies of “shelterization” by Sutherland and Locke in Chicago;⁷ Stiff's vade mecum for the road;⁸ Caplow's study of “transiency as a cultural pattern”;⁹ and Wallace's analysis of the “subculture” of skid row¹⁰ — all charted territory that would repay scholarly forays for years to come.

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An urban misfit of unusual fascination, the "skid row man" was closely scrutinized by sociologists — and the occasional anthropologist — in the postwar years, usually "for reasons that [had] nothing to do with the relative urgency of homelessness as a social problem."¹¹ A team of sociologists headed by Bahr¹² descended on the Bowery in the 1960s for an extended examination of the vagaries of "disaffiliation" practiced there. At about the same time, an anthropologist who set out to study the developing culture of a new alcohol treatment center wound up doing an exposé on the abuse of tramps in the Seattle jail.¹³ In the early 1970s, it was still possible to find rich dissertation material in the timeworn life ways of "fruit tramps" in the orchards and on the railways of the American northwest.¹⁴ But already, a new variant of homelessness was emerging, one that would define its urban niche not by work or absence of ties, but by residence in the "interstices" of public space.¹⁵

In the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, ethnographic studies were undertaken in New York,¹⁶ Phoenix,¹⁷ Syracuse,¹⁸ Los Angeles,¹⁹ Santa Barbara,²⁰ Albuquerque,²¹ Connecticut,²² and Austin.²³ Ethnographers participated in larger, mixed-methods studies in Los Angeles,²⁴ New York,²⁵ and Baltimore.²⁶ Most recently (1990–1991), a full round of research demonstration projects, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health to serve homeless men and women with severe psychiatric disorders, each included one or more ethnographers as part of its evaluation component.

Contributions of Ethnography to Understanding Homelessness

The earliest and still most distinctive feature of the ethnographic approach is the reconstruction, "from the native's point of view," of what is often a highly charged and badly misunderstood cultural niche. Spradley²⁷ and Wiseman²⁸ mounted careful studies of homeless men and their interactions with agencies of social control (the police and alcohol treatment centers, respectively) and took pains to craft a distinctive view that was in each case at striking variance with the official perspective on jail or treatment. Competing perspectives on the utilities of public shelter and, earlier, the almshouse can be documented as well.²⁹ Closely allied with the shift in vantage point is the attempt to situate particular practices or beliefs within a larger context, difficult as it may be to determine the proper boundaries of that "whole."³⁰ Other features of the ethnographic turn that are only now appearing in studies of contemporary homelessness: a commitment to the rigors of sustained fieldwork and to the seasoned version of street lore that only the long view can offer; an insistence that, rich as the heuristic value of the "adaptation" premise has been, it is also essential to assess its limitations and to show how patterns of accommodation change over time and across contexts; and closer attention to the perils as well as the benefits of participant observation.³¹ Finally, a comparative perspective is beginning to take shape, as in the question of how distinctive a group within the homeless the habitually street dwelling may constitute.³²

Study Description

It was this domain of the street we undertook to study. Mindful of the strengths of the ethnographic method, namely, close documentation and extended periods of

observation and interview, but working under very real time constraints, we designed a “brief ethnographic” inquiry into some of the informal shelter devised or appropriated by the homeless poor in public spaces. On five successive nights, a small corps of participant observers was dispatched to seven assigned sites, there to pass the night as if homeless themselves. The research group was made up of graduate students in sociology and anthropology from the New School for Social Research and Rutgers University, a number of whom were international students; a physician’s assistant; an out-of-work musician; a graphic artist; two shelter workers; and two homeless women who received special permission from a city shelter director to participate in the study. Their charge was simply to describe the nighttime use of public spaces by homeless individuals as well as any competing uses of those spaces.³³ Our aim was twofold: to “disaggregate the street” — to document with as much precision and local color as we could muster the differences in numbers of apparent homeless people, mobility, rules of conduct, and textures of life in these half-forgotten byways; and to derive implications for the assessment of attempts to enumerate the street-dwelling homeless population.

Design

Sites were chosen to yield a mix with respect to size, stability of population, and location (indoor versus outdoor). For purposes of minimizing the intrusiveness of our observers, all the sites but two were in the moderate (at least twenty-one) or large (fifty-one plus) size range. The exceptions were both outdoor sites: a plaza with, it turned out, very few occupants, and a small cardboard box, tarp, and sleeping bag “settlement” with between fifteen and twenty occupants (see Map of Site 6). The other sites included two large transportation terminals — one of which was actually a conglomeration of a number of distinctive subsites — and three subway stations (see Table 1).

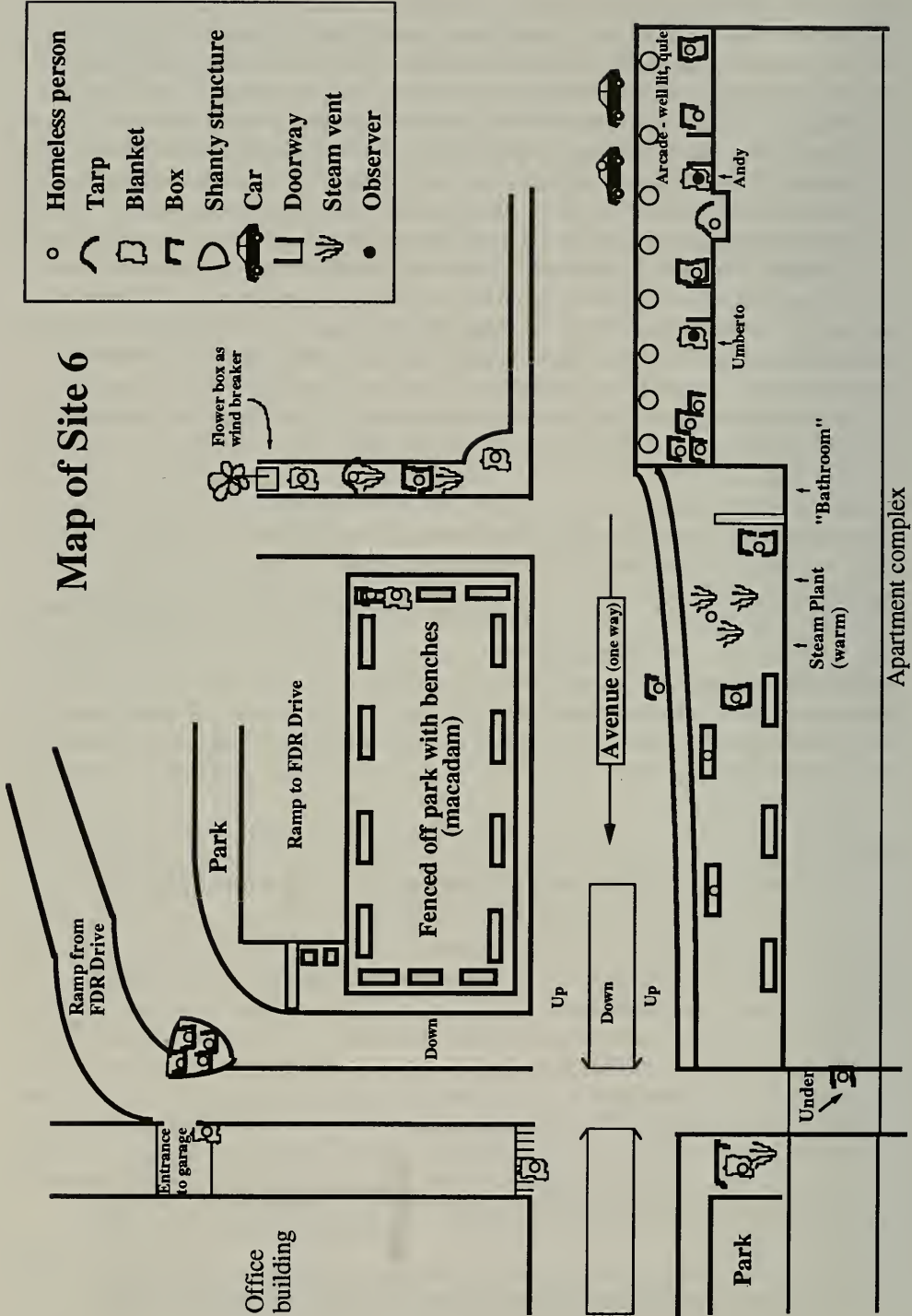
Table 1

Location of Ethnographic Sites by Size and Census District
(Entry in table is study identifier of site)^a

Size ^b	District			
	DO2201	DO2203	DO2204	DO2206
0-6				7
6-10				
11-20			6	
21-50	2a and 2b	4	5	
51+	1a and 1b			
	3			

^aSite descriptions: Site 1a and 1b = two separate “zones” in large train station; 2a and 2b = two separate “zones” in large subway station in financial district; 3 = ferry terminal; 4 = west village subway station; 5 = midtown subway station; 6 = shanty settlement, East Side; 7 = outdoor square, midtown.

^bBased on “best estimates” acquired during repeat enumeration study, as described in K. Hopper, “Final Report: Repeat Enumeration, Structured Interview, and Brief Ethnographic Studies of the Street Census Project” (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Center for Survey Methods Research, 1991b).



Participant observers typically arrived on site around midnight and stayed until 6:00 A.M. or morning wake up. Several teams found it useful to vary their routine, sometimes arriving earlier, sometimes staying later, in order to observe and interact with residents as they bedded down for the night or awoke in the morning. At sites where occupants were frequently awake throughout the night, observers made efforts to speak with them. Field notes were kept surreptitiously — hastily scrawled during trips to the bathroom or concealed by a blanket or piece of cardboard — and were formalized as soon as possible after observers left site each morning.

The Problem of Artifice

As the scope of work grew progressively more detailed and the demands on observers mounted, the research team found itself beset by a host of doubts about the quality of the data likely to be obtained with brief ethnographic methods. Most of these misgivings turned out to be unfounded. The fundamental problem was not, as the principal investigator had anticipated, the provisional character of the “ethnographic validity”³⁴ to which these observations and reports could lay claim. Enough rough corroboration was obtained from the various observers, who logged and documented uninterrupted hours in diverse but kindred settings, to permit some preliminary judgments about what was idiosyncratic and what characteristic about the street sites. Nor did the problem arise from restricted access. Indeed, project participants were uniformly of the opinion that the degree of access they were accorded would have been difficult to achieve in any other way, especially in so compressed a time period. Rather, the problem had to do with the terms and conditions under which such access was obtained.

Although strictly instructed to respond to direct inquiries about their purpose with an accurate thumbnail sketch of the study (“I’m part of a study of the nighttime use of public space in the city”), *without exception* the participant observers found themselves unable to drop the pretense of homelessness. Each of them, even those confronted by sometimes surly accusations of fraud, maintained the fiction of being homeless. On occasion, this meant going to great lengths to devise intricate narratives as to how they had arrived on the street. Throughout most of the study, this spontaneous strategy proved unproblematic; on the contrary, it became a matter of pride for some to be able carry off the impersonation successfully. Toward the end, however, a different response began to surface, one that would dominate postproject discussions on the ethics of field technique.

Put simply, a number of participants came to feel that the artifice was unjustified, that whatever might be learned about the gritty particulars, or even the unexpected grace notes, of street life would be tainted by the method of acquisition. Not surprisingly, the active deception required in direct personal interaction proved more troublesome than the passive version exercised in on-site observation. There may be no better way of documenting spontaneous offers of aid on the street than to be a recipient of such aid oneself, for example, but that doesn’t rid one of the sense of having cheapened the gift by virtue of the counterfeit appeal. Moments of shared intimacy, of personal revelation — even when they had been honestly reciprocated by research workers drawing upon their own personal histories — were especially likely to provoke guilt and discomfort. A number of study participants were nagged by the sense of having tricked people out of what was, for many of them, among their few remaining possessions: their capacity for connecting with another in distress.³⁵

The project improvised a number of methods for dealing with this issue after the fact, ranging from extensive group discussions and dissections in a graduate level "field methods" seminar to one-on-one consultations with the principal investigator (P.I.). Most common were informal discussions among project participants themselves, for many of whom this was their inaugural field experience. The most effective preventive measure would have been close monitoring and supervision, along with regular debriefing of field workers as the project progressed. Given the operational structure, namely, the demands on the P.I. of running three separate but simultaneous studies, this was infeasible and, in retrospect, such a structure was a mistake.

The ethics of "disguised observation" in social research have been debated for some time. The classic positions for and against were laid out by Denzin and Erikson,³⁶ but the issues remain far from settled.³⁷ Anthropological fieldwork that attempts to "study up"³⁸ or to investigate disavowed cultural beliefs and practices³⁹ poses the quandary in especially bold face. This project had hoped to avoid the more troubling of such dilemmas — active deception as opposed to unobtrusive observation or eavesdropping in consensually defined public settings — by directing the research team to respond honestly to any query about his or her presence there. In the press of the situation, that direction gave way to a determined effort to be as honest as possible without blowing one's cover. Further analysis of the ethical issues raised here is beyond the scope of this article but will be reported in a future publication.

Findings

Much attention has been paid in the press to the deficiencies of the "homeless count," which took place on "S-Night" (March 20–21). Critics have complained of inadequate coverage of homeless "congregating sites," the erratic performance of street enumerators, and the sometimes surreal presence of the media monitoring the event. Journalistic accounts of the process suggest a great deal of latitude in the frontline interpretations of Bureau enumeration instructions.⁴⁰ This brief ethnographic study offers an instructive complement to the harried formal count. As efforts have intensified to displace street dwellers from their traditional redoubts (about which, more below), the yield of close observation studies, even on the limited scale mounted here,⁴¹ provides a source of data that could usefully inform policy debates on alternatives to the street and, in the event, enhance efforts to enumerate this shifting population.

Transiency and Stability at the Sites

Not only did the ethnographers prove of variable reliability in assessing relative proportions of stable and transient residents at the sites, but the ecology of the sites themselves was quite uneven in permitting such assessments to be made. Sheer visibility of occupants, and the ensuing difficulties of establishing an individual's identity and tracking his or her presence from night to night, was the most frequently encountered problem. Although some ethnographers managed to do it, making the rounds of the premises from time to time to take an accounting of occupants was totally out of the question for others.⁴² A further problem was the size of the sites and of their resident homeless populations: where we expected large numbers, we divided the site into "zones" and assigned ethnographers to what were, in effect, specific areas of the larger site. Obviously, this introduces difficulties in tracking any individual who,

though he or she may move around within a site from hour to hour or night to night, remains "on site" for the duration. Duplication in some instances was unavoidable, and estimates of transiency and stability are at best rough measures.

With such caveats in mind, see Table 2 for a summary of our conclusions regarding the stability and transiency of site occupants. Note that in all but one of the nine sites/zones covered, at least 60 percent of an average night's occupants were "regulars," present for the great majority of the time our ethnographers were observing that week.

Table 2

Transiency versus Stability at the Ethnographic Sites

Site	Estimate "Transient" ^a	Estimate "Stable" ^b	Range of Occupancy ^c
1a	20 on "party nights"	80% regular	40–60
1b	20–30	approximately 75% "regulars"	80–140
2a		approx. 60% there at least half of nights observed	23–31
2b	1 of 3	2 of 3	3 ^d
3		75%–85% "regulars"	21–40
4 ^e		approx. 64% there at least half of nights observed ^f	7–14
5		60% there for 4 of 5 nights	25–40
6		60%–75% there for 4 of 5 nights	18–30
7	15–19 others observed once or twice that week	approx. 66% ^g	7–15

^aDescriptions and measures vary owing to uneven, nonstandardized, and often incomplete character of fieldnotes; to difference in fieldwork technique (relative emphases on observation vs. interaction); and to differences in visibility, identifiability, and numbers of site occupants.

^bEntries in this column pertain to average night's population.

^cNote discrepancies when compared with repeat enumeration counts; ethnographers counted only those they considered to be homeless and in their immediate sector of the site. For example, observed range of Site 3 (ferry terminal) falls far short of range of 47 to 86 recorded by repeat enumerators; similarly, at subway station (Site 4), range of 7 to 14 contrasts with enumerators' range of 20 to 60. In each of these, obvious commuters (a class especially numerous on weekend nights) were excluded by ethnographers.

^dBetween 6 and 30 observed on passing subway trains.

^eAmbiguities of site definition compounded by practice of some residents to pass at least part of the observational period on the trains.

^fBased on fourth night's tabulations; on fifth night, station was cleaned and a good number of regulars never showed up, slept elsewhere, or boarded subway trains.

^gSeven regulars each night.

The Order of the Street

Notwithstanding the differences observed from site to site, the most salient lesson to be drawn from this brief study can be put simply: "the street" is not now, if it ever was, synonymous with mere anarchy. Even in these lower depths, distinctive orders and routines prevail. Much as the cadre of street dwellers impressed the observers as distinctly "other" — the classic subject of fieldwork — they also met and, in the com-

pressed space of five nights, came to know people who themselves could pass for kin or acquaintances. At several indoor sites, one or two of the "regulars" actively checked out our positioned newcomers and, finding them no threat, offered brief tutorials in the lore of street life. They recounted — at times in painstaking detail — the working "rules" of that space, the schedules and addresses of local soup kitchens, the locations of prized out-of-the-way havens, the names of potential sources of aid. At a train station, a small group of the homeless residents was observed to come to the aid of a commuter suffering an epileptic seizure, while "respectable" passersby passed her by.

Beat cops, security guards, and token booth clerks were seen at certain sites awakening occupants in time for work each day. In places where conviviality stretched well into the night, the observers made the acquaintance of surprisingly well-read conversationalists and found themselves arguing the relative merits of city shelter and housing policies, debating the value of the census, and bemoaning the state of the job market. Two observers shared the bounty when restaurant workers dropped off leftover baked goods on their way home; two others watched as two members of a wedding party, still in formal attire, made their way into a midtown subway station late one night to offer residents the remnants of the cake.

In contrast to what has been reported elsewhere, direct questions of a highly personal nature — Are you homeless? How did it happen? — were frequently asked of our observers in conversation with other site occupants.⁴³ Even fragments of family history commonly found their way into casual talk. Whether this has to do with changing norms of interaction on the street, a diminished stigma attached to the condition itself, or specific variations from site to site, it is too early to say.⁴⁴ Clearly, as a journalistic account of a shantytown in New York also attests, such a picture contrasts starkly with the received and still prevalent image of homeless individuals as "disaffiliated."⁴⁵

These observations of spontaneous aid and companionship offered by people so obviously needy themselves, so grossly at odds with the predatory picture of homelessness popularly portrayed, clearly merit greater attention.⁴⁶ It is worth remarking here that these varied types of assistance were tendered even when it was apparent that the veteran street dweller harbored strong suspicions about the reality of the homelessness our researchers professed. There were a few exceptions, as when a snort of dismissal or expression of real hostility followed upon the realization that what one had taken for the genuine article was a poseur instead. Pressed for money by a young man panhandling at the southwest corner of Central Park at 2:30 A.M., a woman researcher offered a spare set of gloves instead, something, apparently, very few homeless persons are in a position to do. The response: "His eyes became hard and he said in a low, vicious voice, 'Get out of here. Get out of here fast. Just get out.'" The ethnographer further comments: "It's as if the truth were written in neon on my face . . . I am clearly a charade — a person privileged enough to play at being homeless . . . A truly homeless person might, understandably, be furious. (Kennedy field notes, March 24, 1990)

In somewhat greater detail, significant variation was found from site to site with respect to the following.

1. *Norms of behavior and the division of public space.* the dominant site "themes" were three: all-night emporium, stable refuge, party spot. In larger sites, two or

more could coexist in distinct “zones,” as, for example, a clear “no smoking” — of crack — section in one transportation depot. Some areas had highly specific functional demarcations: a cardboard box where a brisk trade in drugs was going on throughout the night; a designated track platform where sex could be traded for drugs or money; a section of a waiting room where it was understood that marathon drinking/conversing could take place; an entire subway station where even the insomniacs took care to keep their voices down so as not to disturb the sleep of their compatriots. There were sites (or zones) where quiet was unattained before 4:00 a.m. and, in the event, lasted a mere two hours; others where straight, that is, nonhomeless, traffic continued all night. There were indoor places where great value was attached to a few hours of uninterrupted sleep. “This place is like a dormitory,” remarked one observer of a midtown subway station. Said of another in the financial district: “This is really a very peaceful station. The regulars keep to themselves and sleep most of the time.” (Grieshof, Stevens, and Tejada field notes) An outdoor encampment was remarkable mainly for the mute witness to homelessness given by the cardboard boxes arranged there.⁴⁷

2. *Support of companions.* regardless of the prevailing site ethos, on any number of occasions acts of mutual support were observed — from the simplest act of throwing a blanket over a companion who had just passed out, to the more risky business of breaking up fights so as not to attract the attention of police, to the common courtesy of “watch[ing] my things” while someone went to run an errand or use the bathroom. At times, it was an articulated ethic of “we take care of [or look out for] each other.” More often, it seemed to be simply a tacit rule of survival. Most perishable foods were readily shared. When midnight soup runs arrived, it was understood that a general reveille would be sounded. Snacks and alcohol especially, but also money and cigarettes, were the most commonly shared items.⁴⁸ Even the yield of panhandling was at times brought back for collective consumption. At present — and a precarious present it may well be — sufficient food appears not to be a problem on the street, given the host of organized and spontaneous charitable sources. Other necessities, less often remarked, remain in scarce supply. For women, it turns out that menstrual pads or tampons, which are difficult to obtain and costly goods, are normally available only in the shelters. One observer stationed near the southwest corner of Central Park said they were a frequently requested item (Kennedy field notes).

3. *Ethnicity.* the ethnic mix was pronounced in some sites — a subway station near Wall Street counted white, African-American, Jamaican, Hispanic, and Indian residents one night — and much less so in others. No clear pattern was observed by geography or type of site. And although casually racist slurs — usually by elderly white men about younger black men — were overheard by our ethnographers, they were generally not made in the presence of members of the offended group. In the few instances of overt fighting observed, participants appeared to be of the same ethnicity.

4. *Gender.* women clearly constituted a minority on the street, but their relative numbers varied from site to site.⁴⁹ Safety and privacy were clearly uppermost in the minds of women residents especially. A number of them sleeping indoors in a vast transportation terminal were observed carefully fashioning their belongings into the shape of a sleeping figure, which they then arranged next to themselves; three elderly Jamaican women assumed regular spots in adjoining toilet stalls in the

women's restroom at one terminal and stayed in verbal contact throughout the night.⁵⁰ Others covered themselves with blankets, shawls, sweatshirts, or overcoats to render themselves genderless in the eyes of potentially predatory observers.

Sex was openly traded for money or drugs at a few sites. Impressions are sketchy at this point, but for the most part, this appeared to be either within group — “You got the wine, you get a ride” (Lambert field notes) — or between residents and their usual suppliers. There were instances (related or observed) when the transaction was clearly commercial.⁵¹ More generally, homeless women appeared to be fair game to all manner of abuse on the street. In the space of five nights, four women on our research team were approached by *nonhomeless* men seeking cheap sexual labor.⁵² Three were promised room and board in return; a mere cup of coffee was held out to the fourth. In each instance, the offer was made insistently, so much so in one case that a male homeless companion intervened on the woman's behalf.

5. *Responsibility for shared space.* the practice of cleaning up after oneself, removing and storing the traces of bedding in particular, was especially strong in public places given over to alternative use during the daytime. Regulars were quite clear that such a practice both ensured continued access and protected their belongings from being thrown away. Clear understandings were in effect in most settings regarding provisions for personal hygiene: public toilets were used (one was kept open by subway maintenance specifically for the purpose); individual containers were filled and discreetly emptied into a floor drain or the street; sections of a space were given over to the purpose (and would-be violators loudly advised of the rule). In only one site — a large outdoor traffic circle/plaza, where residency frequently changed from night to night — was there ambiguity regarding which areas were to be used for relieving oneself.

The issue of personal space and respect for individual territoriality is more complex, ranging as it does from the simple gesture of not stepping on another's strip of cardboard in a transportation terminal to familiar rituals of “knocking” on another's makeshift house in more elaborate settings.

6. *The support and complicity of cops, clerks, and security guards.* standing arrangements were observed in two sites where both token booth clerks and beat cops awakened a few residents for work. It was apparently common practice to ignore the token drops at turnstiles in subway or ferry stations, and residents were not harassed for the infraction. In at least one site, residents were on a first-name basis with a policeman who took it upon himself to ask paying passengers to move on when they verbally harassed the homeless. (On one such occasion, his partner later distributed muffins, obtained at her expense, to those still awake.)

7. *Architecture of improvised shelter.* homemade housing varied: bedrolls and tarps; cardboard, plastic, and wood slatting creations; overturned postal carts; mini-hovels, one fashioned from stacked plastic milk bottle carts (filled with magazines for stability) across which boards are laid and under which two canvas postal carts are parked; and substantial structures complete with electricity and wood stoves, which did not, to our knowledge, appear on the submitted lists of “addresses” to be covered by the standard census. Our observers also noted what has since been recognized as the widespread practice of homeless people camping out in the locked areas housing automated teller machines in the city's numerous banks, none of

which, it is worth noting, appeared on the Census Bureau list of “predesignated” sites where homeless persons congregate.

Violence

But even an observer attuned to the apparent orderliness of much of the nighttime use of public space could not ignore the rough and seamy side of the street. Time and again, the research team found evidence of the traditional furies of street life.

1. *Trafficking* in outlawed substances was commonplace, sometimes done openly and sometimes behind closed doors. All night carousing was the norm at a few sites, and the varieties of substance abuse ran the gamut from teenage “crackheads” to twenty-year veterans of the bottle. The brief bursts of violence — usually clumsy scuffling, though knives and clubs were used on occasion — and staccato rhythms and activity and talk characteristic of some sites were thought by our observers and some of their homeless companions to be directly related to the consumption of drugs or alcohol.

2. *The routine indignities of street life* were readily apparent: the precarious status of most makeshift arrangements; the scarcity of common amenities — tampons for women, toilets and places to wash up, the haven of a private spot; the capricious enforcement of antiloitering laws, whether in forbidding someone to sit or in ridding a subway station of all nighttime occupants; the scorn and verbal abuse of passersby, whether outright harassment or the refusal of a fellow subway rider to acknowledge a polite request for the time of day; the constant vigilance required of an unattached woman. For the most part, these were not articulated complaints, but rather part of the expected costs of business on the street. On occasion, with more regret than bitterness, it was voiced: “You get no respect; [either] people look right through you or they’re afraid.” (Salmon field notes)

3. *Random acts of violence* did make things dicey at times: Two of our observers were dozing on a subway platform not thirty feet from the stairway where another resident’s throat was cut early one morning. They learned of it only when signaled by the commotion attending the arrival of an ambulance. (Dozier, Herrera field notes)

How the Outside World Intrudes

Perhaps most telling — because most unexpected — were the ways in which the outside world, as memory or live presence, intruded. In our preparation of the observers, we had made a point of stressing that such research was not without its peculiar hazards, but had anticipated that the threat, whatever form it might assume, would come from within the sometimes congested ranks of the street dwellers themselves. We had not foreseen that the more vicious and common sources of danger would come from without.⁵³

The most frequent disruption was that posed by routine maintenance, often led and bolstered by security. Would-be sleepers in several sites were awakened at odd times during the night and told to move on so that the space could be hosed down, swept, or otherwise cleaned. At three indoor sites, accommodations had been reached with the residents: at one, they simply made their way onto subway trains for the duration of the maintenance; at the two others, the groups moved en masse to sections of the site that had already been cleaned and back again when maintenance was complete. Some residents regularly took part in awakening others and advising them of the impending

time to move; incidentally, they were the same ones who tended to assume the responsibility of notifying others of the arrival of midnight food deliveries.

Less common were instances of police and "spree" harassment. With respect to the first, several instances were reported of police or security guards awakening, forcing sitting persons to stand, or "evicting" residents for no apparent purpose other than reminding them that their continued presence there was by no means assured. At times, too, enhanced police presence appeared to be intended to reduce use of this particular site. With respect to the second, on several occasions packs of young males ran through the sites where our observers were stationed. One group professed loudly to be conducting a "census count"; another simply made noise to awaken people in a hallway; a third ran through an open square on the Upper West Side; a fourth actually stopped to confront individual homeless men and women trying to sleep on the floor of a train station. One of our ethnographers, Dorinda Welle, described the scene.

At 4:00 A.M., a group of four white teens came through our area, kicking old people, telling them to get a place to live, "get a job," "get a home," "wake up, grandpa," "hey, assholes," "you garbage people," etc. One stole the single roses wrapped tightly in plastic that one sleeping man sells during the day for \$1.00 each. The teen gave the roses to young women standing by, watching. Then these guys came over to us, looking at me (lying down, but awake and paying attention to their movement). One guy stood at the foot of our blanket and stared down at me. I stared back. D. woke up, put his hand on his switchblade in his pocket, but didn't take it out. He looked at me from under his cap brim, signaling me to be cool, be still. I really thought these kids were going to beat us up. Looking the one in the face, I couldn't determine the reason for the hate I saw there — Was it for being homeless? Being female? Being white and homeless? Being white and hanging out with blacks? Finally, I looked at D. again; he seemed to say "Do something . . ." and I said really loudly (but not shouting) so perhaps the cop nearby could hear me: "Get the hell out of my face!" The guy said "bitch," kicking my foot before he slinked off to his friends. D. said: "Good to say it loud. The cops don't want to see anybody get hurt too bad here." (Welle field notes, March 25, 1990)

The second type of interaction has already been alluded to in the citations of assistance and succor extended across the homeless divide. In one subway station, a security guard made a point of addressing the sleeping men there as "gentlemen" when he woke them, so that the night's cleaning could take place. As remarked earlier, token booth clerks routinely turned a blind eye to homeless patrons passing through turnstiles without paying. The solicitousness of cops toward regular residents was far more impressive than the occasional acts of petty harassment.

Eloquent testament to the sort of unexpected kinship that can arise comes from an incident involving the same D. mentioned above. It is voiced in the course of his trying to console a young West Indian woman, not homeless herself but new to the city and visibly distressed at the sight of "all these black folks here." Having established that he also had family in St. Thomas, D. took it on himself to explain.

As much as it breaks my heart to be homeless, it really breaks my heart that you have to experience this shock. Let me tell you that nobody wants to be here, but here is where we're safest for now. . . . It's a terrible thing, but you have to understand that we survive, we take care of each other. You have to understand that this is a condition, this homelessness; it's not who we are. (Welle field notes, March 25, 1990)

Finally and somewhat more tentatively, the presence of the “outside” world was felt in the tug of memory and shape of things hoped for. Anyone who has spent the slightest time talking with street dwellers knows of the loneliness of the street. Nonetheless, our observers were unprepared for encounters with men and women, not much older than they, who told of yearning for intimacy and the privacy to practice it. We hadn’t anticipated how much of a former life would continue to shadow, even haunt, the survival necessities of street life. “You can’t have a relationship when you have no self-respect, no home, no money. You have to take care of yourself, and it’d just drag you down.” Couples were comparatively rare in open street sites (not the shanties) and were seen as peculiarly vulnerable to the manifold threats of the street, male partners being repeatedly warned to keep a close eye on “their” women. One street veteran confided to a pair of observers the location of a safe spot in an abandoned bus tucked away in a little-used area of Central Park, where a few hours of uninterrupted privacy might be had. (Greshof, Salmon field notes)

Implications for Enumeration

The findings of the brief ethnographic study suggest that several modifications are in order if a more accurate estimate of the number of individuals in “selected components of the homeless population” is to be obtained.

First, as has repeatedly been illustrated in the foregoing account, there are immense logistical difficulties presented when a street “site” is taken to be analogous to an “address” and enumerators are dispatched accordingly to do their counting. Descriptive ambiguities abound with respect to the precise location and identifying markers of sites; the boundaries of the area designated by a single site, especially where two or more may be contiguous; the contingencies of access to sites over time; and the still mysterious processes by which congregating sites take shape, are occupied, and the terms of staying or leaving are negotiated with those who have control over such sites. Additional difficulties are introduced by the evidence of mobility on the part of site occupants, even during the relatively small time window allotted for the count. Further problems arise from the sheer complexity of the site ecologies themselves, such as barriers that may render an occupant “invisible” to an enumerator unfamiliar with the details of the site layout or unwilling to explore its further reaches.

Many, if not most, of these difficulties could be resolved by appropriate use of sampling methodologies and elimination of the notion of full enumeration. One possibility would be a two-stage process composed of an inventory followed by local counting of sampled sites. A team of research workers would first establish the universe of sites at a time close to that of the subsequent count, preferably stratified by likely numbers of occupants. Statistical techniques analogous to those designed to estimate the number of species in a region would be used to estimate the number of unlocated sites.⁵⁴ The field staff would then draw up detailed maps of those sites actually to be visited, and the same team would be deployed in the actual count or estimation of a sample of the sites identified in the first stage. The results here, combined with those in a companion report, argue strongly for utilizing such statistical approaches to the estimation of the size of fugitive populations in preference to the impossibility of raw enumeration and its implied (but spurious) greater precision.⁵⁵ The significant progress made in the theory of estimating animal abundance and

species estimation suggests that, in combination with statistical techniques specifically designed for the problem at hand,⁵⁶ viable alternatives to head counts exist that would be both cost-effective and accurate.⁵⁷

Second, whatever method — enumeration or statistical estimation — is chosen, if sites are to remain the unit of observation it is essential that the list used be pre-viewed, corrected for inaccuracies, carefully explored to establish the individual areas and boundaries of sites, and that workers be intimately familiar with such areas before the count.

Third, with respect to the problem presented by residents in shantytowns who, although present, were invisible to enumerators on the night of the count, one immediately practical option would be to add such sites to the list of “addresses” in the “List/enumerate” category to be visited by Census Bureau employees during normal working hours, thus ensuring their coverage.⁵⁸

Fourth, with respect to the bureau’s insistence that only “selected components of the homeless population” would be enumerated, given the evidence of significant “contamination” in some sites of what would conventionally be considered a homeless street population, indications that the homeless poor themselves were generally cooperative, and the willingness overall of those approached to admit to being homeless, we would recommend that the bureau consider using a screening question to establish homeless status, at least in areas where this may be in doubt.⁵⁹ The outstanding issue that bulks so large in the enumeration problems presented by poor city residents — What is the incentive to cooperate with a venture from which few benefits appear to derive and to which much suspicion is attached? — did not appear to be a salient feature of 1990 S-Night experiences.⁶⁰ On the other hand, how benign can a “dead-of-night” interview be made to appear?

Fifth, one alternative to dead-of-night enumeration is to engage homeless individuals in places where concrete services are offered under circumstances that are at least more conventional than 3:00 A.M. encounters on the street. But in addition to established facilities as soup kitchens and drop-in centers, in places like New York substantial growth has occurred in mobile services to street populations (food and clothing distribution in particular). An ironic side effect may well be that the utility of day service centers as proxy sites for drawing samples of the street-dwelling homeless is badly compromised. Although tested and found reliable in one site⁶¹ and currently under investigation by the Census Bureau in another,⁶² it was by no means clear that our respondents made regular enough use of stationary services for this procedure to work. It seems especially questionable for the more disabled and shelter-avoiding individuals of the street population.

Finally, about the tenuousness of sites as congregating spots for the homeless, much more will be said below. Suffice it to say here that what may be the case six months before the actual count is by no means assured of being so at the time of actual enumeration. A huge array of largely informal accommodations are at stake in the configuration of street sites at any given point, and the assumption of continuity that underlies the current method of predesignated sites is a risky one.

Reprise

Like “the heath” in Shakespeare’s time,⁶³ “the street” in our own has come to signify a kind of close repository of things evil and alien, and that is a badly damaging mis-

representation.⁶⁴ For every sidewalk Lear — that reckless, ruined king — for whom the street is a public stage for private demons, there are dozens of others for whom it means a rather complicated way of extracting a livelihood from the waste spaces and discarded resources of the city.⁶⁵

The most direct implication this fact has for enumeration efforts is the obvious one: any exposure perceived to compromise an already uncertain existence will be resisted. Contrariwise, the incentive to cooperate with an apparently benign procedure, like a well-publicized census, will be enhanced by provision of resources that ease, at least for the moment, the exigencies of street survival. Hence the prudence of alternatives to wildlife counts that can be linked to desired services and goods.

Shifting Terrain

Ambiguities of site identification and demarcation figured so highly in a companion report on the S-Night monitoring effort.⁶⁶ A few concluding remarks on the unit of observation — the predesignated site — in these studies are therefore in order.

It would be difficult to make too much of the precariousness of the makeshift homes and street sites described here, or of the capriciousness of public policy that determines their fate. A week before the official census count, the police suddenly stepped up round-the-clock surveillance at one of the larger subway stations in lower Manhattan, where in our canvassing forays we had regularly counted sixty people sleeping. On S-Night, project monitors were restricted from observing a team of Census Bureau enumerators by cops posted at the turnstiles. Since March–April, when the observations recounted above were made, a number of other significant changes in the ecology of street homelessness have occurred. Had they occurred but a few weeks earlier, they would have effectively vacated two of the sites in our sample. Here are some of the relevant changes recorded in a *two-month* period; it is by no means an exhaustive list.

Item: On June 1, the Port Authority ordered maintenance crews to keep the pavement outside the Eighth Avenue entrance to the bus station continually wet. Every morning at 6:00 A.M., a team of contract laborers taps into nearby hydrants and begins the operation, ostensibly “to clean the area of debris and urine.” But according to one of the hired workers, the aim is straightforward: “to get rid of the bums.” It is also effective: “They don’t want to sit down and get wet, so they move. It works.”⁶⁷ On July 20, warned by the city’s Environmental Protection Department that the practice violated a local ordinance, the Port Authority curbed the hosing.⁶⁸

Item: On June 3, the M.T.A. began enforcement of its antisleeping regulations in Pennsylvania Station. Upward of 500 people were reported to be staying there at the time.⁶⁹ A night before the scheduled initiation of the new policy, word had circulated among the station’s inhabitants: a count of their numbers around midnight reached only 150; the dozen or so we interviewed had only the vaguest of plans for alternative arrangements. On the designated night, with uniformed police and television media in tow, station officials were able to locate only a single remaining resident.

Item: In early June, the New York City Parks Department cleared out a small encampment of homeless men at the Seventy-ninth Street Boat Basin. Most regrouped in a nearby pedestrian tunnel under the West Side Highway, where they improvised rough sleeping accommodations. Several groups set up camps in adjoining Riverside Park. Just below them, dozens of inhabitants of a long-unused railroad

tunnel, running the two-and-a-half-mile length of the park, were rousted and warned to move on, as construction on the abandoned line resumes.⁷⁰

Item: Ever since the destruction of the elevated sections of the West Side Highway in the midtown area, the numbers living in some improvised dwellings nearby have grown. One substantial waterfront shantytown⁷¹ was located at the end of a recreational pier⁷² next to the *Intrepid* Museum. On July 9, the dozen or so residents were warned that given the imminent start of a construction project to repair the shoring under the pier, they would have to vacate their homemade premises. Human Research Administration outreach workers arrived to offer, without obvious success, the alternative of the municipal shelters; they further advised residents that they would be allowed to return after the construction work had been completed. On July 27, the shantytown was razed by city officials. Residents given two hours' notice, were told not to expect to rebuild and were not allowed to salvage any building materials. Two of the men have found temporary quarters in a storage facility nearby; the rest have scattered.⁷³

Item: On July 15, the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) began enforcing a new policy that prohibits sleeping on the subway trains, especially as they dock in the stations at the end of the line to be serviced.⁷⁴ Sleeping persons allegedly interfered with the maintenance crews assigned to clean the trains. On a single line targeted for the initial enforcement, the MTA reported that some 135 people had regularly been using the trains as home.⁷⁵

Item: On July 25, arson leveled a shantytown built under a remaining elevated stretch of the West Side Highway, at Fifty-eighth Street. According to press reports, roughly a dozen people were living there. One woman accepted a referral to a city shelter; another couple was directed to an emergency assistance unit; with respect to the fate of the remainder, little is known.⁷⁶ Three days after the fire, officials of the New York City Department of Transportation announced plans to check beneath the 846 city-owned bridges, as well as other viaducts and ramps, for homeless people in potentially "hazardous" dwellings. Homeless settlers will be removed, officials said, only where "there could conceivably be a problem" to the structures.⁷⁷

Reference was made earlier to a notional "ecology" of street-level homelessness. But as the foregoing list of actions demonstrates, there is nothing "natural" about the configuration of survival niches on the street. All but one of these disruptions was the product of a deliberate policy decision.⁷⁸ With few exceptions, which were largely ineffective, no provision was made for the resettlement of the more than 700 homeless people displaced in the process.

Little wonder, then, that experienced service providers received the announcement of a street census with a healthy measure of skepticism. As census takers of *housed* populations in New York City were soon to discover, people with a vested interest in remaining undetected — those who are doubled-up, for example, may see little reason to cooperate with an official effort to count their numbers, no matter how strong the reassurances of confidentiality.⁷⁹ How much more so, then, for people whose habitat itself is suspect. Indeed, it must seem a strange endeavor to some for a government so late in acknowledging their presence to be so bent on enumerating it. ♪

The texture of the ethnographic notes contained here owes everything to the conscientious work — hours of observation, detailed notes, and maps constructed — of the field workers on the project: Helen Arsenidou, Umberto Blumati, Sheila Dozier, Jennifer Dush, Jon Edwards, Dorien Greshof,

Milton Herrera, Karen Kennedy, Tracy Kustwan, Dayton Lambert, Sanghui Yoo Son Lee, Neida Medina, Jan Meeus, Adina Melik, Lenna Nepomnyaschy, Ionnis Rigas, Barry Salmon, Stephanie Stevens, Carlos Tejada, Andy Van Kleuven, Roland Vazquez, and Dorinda Welle.

For critical reading and close editing of earlier drafts, which spared this one from many an error, a special thanks goes to Rheta Bank, Mary Brosnahan, Sarah Conover, Dave Giffen, and Dorinda Welle.

Notes

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3. K. Hopper, "Final Report: Monitoring and Evaluating the 1990 S-Night in New York City" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Center for Survey Methods Research, 1991a); and "Final Report: Repeat Enumeration, Structured Interview, and Brief Ethnographic Studies of the Street Census Project" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Center for Survey Methods Research, 1991b).
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28. J. Wiseman, *Stations of the Lost: The Treatment of the Skid Row Alcoholic* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970).
29. K. Hopper, "Public Shelter as a 'Hybrid Institution': Homeless Men in Historical Perspective," *Journal of Social Issues* 46 (1990): 13–30.
30. Episodic homelessness, for example, has been interpreted as just one manifestation of more enduring poverty; see K. Hopper, E. Susser, and S. Conover, "Economies of Makeshift: Deindustrialization and Homelessness in New York City," *Urban Anthropology* 14 (1985):183–236.
31. P. Koegel. Presentation at the Interdisciplinary Symposium: "Broadening Perspectives on the Problem of the Homeless," University of California at Los Angeles, December 1990.
32. Compare, for example, D. Dennis, "Exploring Myths About 'Street People,'" *Access* (published by National Resource Center on Homelessness and Mental Illness) 2, no. 2 (June 1990), with Hopper, "Final Report: Repeat Enumeration," Table 7.
33. Curiously, if one consults a recent study of the *Night As Frontier* (M. Melbin [New York: Free Press, 1987]), in a chapter entitled "Who is Active at Night?" one finds but one mention of "vagrants" or the homeless poor seeking shelter outdoors. For a different impression, see the April 30, 1990, edition of *New York Magazine*, entitled "A Night in the Life of New York."
34. That is, the degree to which these reports accurately captured or recorded what they purported to be capturing or recording, and the relative representativeness of such reports (cf. R. Sanjek, "On Ethnographic Validity," in R. Sanjek, ed., *Fieldnotes* [New York: Cornell University Press, 1990], 385–418).

35. It may not be too much to suggest that for some of the (more privileged) participants a good deal of the felt artificiality may be traced to a realization recently voiced by the poet and literary critic Paul Zweig: "When I was a boy, I used to wonder what would keep me from sinking to the level of a bum on the street. Every tramp, every stinking hulk of a drunk, was a possible destiny. Later, I saw it wasn't so easy to sink. You had to dive, you had to work your way down. Society buoyed you up to your level; family and friends, the structure of needs driven into your flesh and psyche, do not let themselves be easily betrayed" (*Departures* [New York: Harper and Row, 1986], 207).
36. K. Erikson, "A Comment on Disguised Observation in Sociology," *Social Problems* 14: (1967): 366-73; N. Denzin, "On the Ethics of Disguised Observation," *Social Problems* 15 (1968): 502-4; and Erikson, "A Reply to Denzin," *Social Problems* 15 (1968): 505-6.
37. See, for example, J. Cassell and M. L. Wax, eds., "Ethical Problems of Fieldwork," *Social Problems* 27 (1980): 259-377; and most recently, Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, ed., *Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991).
38. L. Nader, "Up the Anthropologist — Perspectives Gained from Studying Up," in D. Hymes, ed., *Reinventing Anthropology* (New York: Random House, 1974), 284-311.
39. J. Favret-Saada, "About Participation," *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry* 14 (1990): 189-99.
40. D. Hurley, "The Homeless: Are Less More?" *New York Newsday*, July 23, 1990, 42.
41. A further caveat: not unexpectedly, given their varied origins, huge differences in education and orientation to field methods, and very limited training, the quality of the field notes submitted by the ethnographers was uneven. I have drawn on the best and most comprehensive for illustrative purposes and made the best I can of the entire set in arriving at generalizations and describing salient patterns. Any numbers reported in the section are obviously provisional.
42. As noted above, this difficulty was accentuated by the ethnographic team's uniform decision to pass as homeless.
43. M. T. Salo and P. C. Campanelli, "Ethnographic Methods in the Development of Census Procedures for Enumerating the Homeless," *Urban Anthropology* 20 (1991): 136.
44. In some sites, getting as much sleep as possible was the norm for the majority of residents.
45. J. Lardner, "Shantytown," *The New Yorker*, July 1, 1991, 67-76.
46. M. Magnet, "Homeless: Craziness, Dope and Danger," *New York Times*, January 26, 1990, A-31.
47. If there is a single index to the relative security many street dwellers felt about their sites, it may be the widespread practice of taking off their shoes before bedding down for the night. Unlike most residents in the public shelters, these men and women do not always make a point of securing their shoes (under bedposts, under their mattresses, as part of their pillows).
48. Though the rules of exchange are a bit tricky here: At one site, giving away cigarettes, when the going rate is 15 cents, was clearly viewed as an indicator of naiveté by the residents; sharing food, which could be obtained from merchants or charity kitchens, was not (Dush and Lee field notes).
49. With the difficulties of visibility firmly in mind, the rough fractions of women at the sites derived from field notes are as follows: Site 1a = 5 of 40; 1b = 5 to 10 per 80-140 residents, almost all women in couples; 2a = 2+ per 23 to 31 occupants; 2b = 0 of 3; 3 = 7-10 per 21 to 40 occupants; 4 = 2 of perhaps 21 seen over five nights, both in couples; 5 = 3 per 30; 6 = 5 per 25; 7 = at least 4 per 30 occupants (half of whom were transient). See footnote to Table 1 for site descriptions.
50. Throwing perhaps another wrench into the operationalization of "homeless person" in the S-Night enumeration.
51. Subsequent investigation of a rather large (some 15-20 residents) midtown shanty settlement disclosed that at least two of its regular women residents did "drive-by" street sex work along the avenues fronting the settlement itself. Their income was probably the most reliable of the group.

52. Two others fended off more casual advances. Several women were approached as well by other homeless men seeking companionship or sex, but other than the usually implicit offer of protection there was no quid pro quo involved. Note that unattached nonblack women in particular, who do not manifest obvious psychiatric disorder, remain a novelty on the streets — two (one of whom was Asian) were explicitly and repeatedly asked whether they were there as part of a class project or protest (Dush, Lee, and Kustwan field notes). A pair of Hispanic women passed the five nights undisturbed, but this may say more about the site than the rarity of their presence.
53. Note, too, in this connection the sources of sexual harassment recounted above.
54. G. A. F. Seber, *The Estimation of Animal Abundance and Related Parameters*, 2d ed. (London: Ch. Griffen, 1982).
55. Hopper, "Final Report: Monitoring and Evaluating."
56. E. M. Laska and M. Meisner, "A Plant-Capture Method for Estimating the Size of a Population from a Single Sample," *Biometrics*, in press.
57. Nor, apparently, is "counting," rather than "estimation," the only practical or logical meaning that the bureau has historically or may legally attach to the term "enumeration." (See [Note], "Demography and Distrust: Constitutional Issues of the Federal Census," *Harvard Law Review* 94 (1981): 841–63; P. Starr, "The Sociology of Official Statistics," in W. Alonso and P. Starr, eds., *The Politics of Numbers* (New York: Russell Sage, 1987), 31; K. K. West and D. J. Fein, "Census Undercount: An Historical and Contemporary Sociological Issue," *Sociological Inquiry* 60 (1990): 134.
58. Like Latin American "squatsments" in this regard, such settlements "are not docketed in the city registries either as individual houses or as aggregates of houses, or places." See A. Leeds, "The Concept of the 'Culture of Poverty': Conceptual, Logical, and Empirical Problems, with Perspectives from Brazil and Peru," in E. B. Leacock, ed., *The Culture of Poverty: A Critique* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971), 237.
59. As noted earlier, however, persons posing this question had identified themselves as working with the Coalition for the Homeless, an advocacy and service organization with a good reputation on the street. As Hainer and his colleagues have pointed out, much of the suspicion with which Census Bureau enumerators are met in low-income neighborhoods particularly is tied to general perceptions of "the Government . . . as a monolithic, remote and hostile entity which uses information to hurt the people who provide it" (P. Hainer, C. Hines, E. Martin, and G. Shapiro, "Research on Improving Coverage in Household Surveys," *Fourth Annual Research Conference Proceedings* [Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1988], 522) — a fact of life over which the bureau has no control, but to whose chilling effects the coalition is largely immune. Willingness to identify oneself as homeless may well vary with the respondent's perception of the trustworthiness of the questioner.
60. M. Salo and L. Schwede, "Analysis of In-Place-Observer Debriefings on S-Night Procedures in Five Cities during the 1990 Decennial Census." Presentation at the U.S. Bureau of the Census Annual Research Conference, Arlington, Virginia, March 18, 1991.
61. Farr et al., "Study of Homelessness," 17–57.
62. Salo and Campanelli, "Ethnographic Methods."
63. M. Ignatieff, *The Needs of Strangers* (New York: Viking, 1984), 40–44.
64. J. Toth, "N.Y.'s 'Mole People' Shun Society in Transit Tunnels," *Los Angeles Times*, September 2, 1990, A-1.
65. Scavenging has not always been their lot: for nearly two thirds of those interviewed in the companion study, a job was given as their last source of steady income.
66. Hopper, "Final Report: Monitoring and Evaluating."
67. *New York Post*, July 19, 1990, 5; *New York Daily News*, July 20, 1990, 12.

68. *New York Times*, July 21, 1990, 25.
69. *New York Daily News*, June 1, 1990, 4.
70. *New York Times*, June 13, 1990, A-1.
71. One of the few that was actually enumerated during the street count of S-Night.
72. Taking a leaf from history: in January 1915, the city opened a "recreational pier" on the East River to accommodate the overflow from the Municipal Lodging House; up to 1,500 lodgers slept on cots, and three quarters of the staff were drawn from the ranks of the homeless men.
73. Dave Giffen, Coalition for the Homeless, personal communication.
74. Earlier in the spring, the MTA removed five new benches from a subway platform in Grand Central Station, part of Operation Enforcement designed to "discourage the homeless from living in the subway" (*New York Newsday*, February 27, 1990, 1; *New York Times*, February 28, 1990, B-1). The move was met with a chorus of disapproval, most of which pointed out that it was the riding public who would suffer most. Shortly thereafter, the "experiment" was discontinued and the benches restored.
75. *New York Daily News*, July 13, 1990, 29.
76. *New York Times*, July 26, 1990, B-3; Mary Brosnahan, Coalition for the Homeless, personal communication.
77. *New York Newsday*, July 30, 1990, 6.
78. The exception, of course, is the shanty settlement that burned down.
79. *New York Times*, March 16, 1990, A-1; cf. Hainer et al., "Research on Improving Coverage."