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Typologies of Homeless Youth

Orion Isis Gray

Editor's note: This version of Orion's thesis is significantly smaller than her original work. If you would like to read this work in its more comprehensive form, please contact the Honors Program at the address given in the front of this issue.

Introduction

Homeless youth are a disturbing phenomena; who are these children on the street, and why are they there instead of at home? It would, I believe, behoove us to find out: as of 1986, more than 5,000 teenagers in the United States a year, most of them street youth, were buried in unmarked graves; who knows how high that number is now (McGrath, 1986 as cited in Kennedy, 1991). Typologies of homeless youth help researchers and service providers understand who they are working with. However, most of the work on "homeless and runaway youth," as they are often referred to, does not take into account the subtypes within this vast population. Instead of taking such distinctions for granted, I have decided to focus on them.

Presented in Chapter Two are descriptions and analyses of the typologies that have been created to map differences in street youth. The creators of these typologies approach the issue from a number of different perspectives, including socio-emotional, behavioral/cognitive, systems, scholastic, developmental, mental health, and legal. What they all have in common is a desire to make sense of a diverse and sensitive population, in need of understanding and aid.

In addition to reviewing these typologies, in Chapter Three I will present work that allows us to question whether the separation of runaway/homeless youth from their stay-at-home peers

has as much utility as has been assumed. With the reader so far informed, Chapter Four embarks on the somewhat more complex matter of distinguishing between youth who have run away, and those that have been thrown, or “pushed” out of the home. The chapter, and the thesis, ends with a brief comment on the difficulty of categorizing lesbian/gay and abused youth according to the runaway/throwaway dichotomy.

Typologies are useful to examine when designing service for street youth, because the labels we use must, at some level, guide our conceptualizations of the population we are working with. Our labels should therefore be based in solid thought, and be carefully chosen. In addition, occasional re-evaluation of terminologies and typologies can aid researchers in better defining the questions they ask, especially as the nature of the issue changes over time. This introduction will briefly discuss some of those changes over time that have redefined our terminologies, and the ways that those terminologies have guided policy.

By the conclusion of the thesis, the reader should be able to form an educated opinion on the utility of some of the different typologies used with homeless youth, and the implications of these typologies. I hope that this examination might aid future researchers in developing new typologies, and spur discussion on conceptualizations of this population and the ways those concepts guide service.¹

History of Youth Homelessness

Researcher Thomas Gullotta (1979) claims that in the colonial and post-independence United States, running away was

1. Author's note: the terms “youth,” “adolescent,” and “teen-ager” or “teen” are used interchangeably throughout this review, and generally refer to a person between the ages of 12 and 21 unless otherwise specified.

not viewed a social problem, but rather was considered indicative of "the vitality and opportunity awaiting Americans who seized the moment." Similarly, social historian Craig Libertoff (1980; 147-150) reports how children of poor European families ran away to become indentured servants aboard ships sailing to the American colonies, seeking both their fortunes and an escape from misery.

Between 1870 and 1930 in the United States, however, a different attitude about the place of children arose, paralleling urbanization and industrialization. The move from an agrarian-based economy to a technology and manufacture-driven one required families to be increasingly dependent on work-places outside the home; children were no longer required to assume responsibility at very young ages for the achingly hard struggle for survival on the family farm (Gullotta, 1979). Hence, the end of the agrarian-based society is often cited as the cause of the prolonged childhood we today call adolescence (Ehrenreich & English, 1978; 183-210). The creation of this prolonged childhood was further rooted in the anti-child labor movement beginning in the 1830's, which was brought about by humanitarian, middle-class "child-savers," as well as increasing competition among adults for work (Libertoff, 1980).

As social historian Bakan (*Adolescence: Contemporary Studies*; 5-20) reports, "by the year 1900 more than a third of the population was living in cities and more than half the population of the North Atlantic area lived in cities of more than 8,000 persons." With this new urban concentration came an increase in crime, and, for many middle-class and working parents, a decrease in perceived "morality." Historian Constance Nathanson (*The Transformation of Women's Adolescence, 1850-1960*; 75-102) asserts that frighteningly rapid social changes in America caused many anxieties about violence and

changing sexual mores to be projected onto young people. The reason that secondary school became such a large draw for girls in the mid-1920's, she asserts, is not only because it provided them with an occupation to replace declining farm work, but it afforded them a safe place to spend time away "from the immediate supervision of their families" in the dangerous city. It is not long after this, Gullotta (1979) points out, that compulsory education laws and "status" offenses (actions that are only violations for people under 18, such as violating curfew, running away and truancy) were created.

Parental anxieties, along with the new roles young people were assuming in the workforce and the increased time they spent outside the home, were early on reported as the cause of serious conflicts between parents and adolescent children. For example, in her review of families referred to case workers in turn of the century Boston, social historian Gordon ("Only to bring my children up good") asserts that most of the problems of domestic abuse within immigrant families were due to the unusually high degree of upset in the family structure that the migration experience caused:

Immigrants experienced adolescence in particularly concentrated form, for they had so recently experienced the loss of a family economy, in which children worked with, learned from, and were dependent on their parents. Many of their family conflicts were caused by parental rage at loss of economic power over children, and children's quickness to exploit that parental weakening. (Gordon, 179).

With thousands of parents not only losing the dignity and security of their family's traditional craft, but experiencing culture shock, adolescents' newly-hatched rebellion seems to have been more than parents could handle. Adolescents themselves, however, were also trying to conform to a new

society, where there were no clearly defined roles mapped out for them. Gordon tells us the story of a sixteen-year-old would-be runaway girl whose southern Italian family was referred to a Boston social-work clinic as the result of her father's violent and irrational attempts to control her, including beating her and threatening to kill her with a knife when she stayed out too long. During case management, it became apparent that her Old World father was under extreme stress, as he was unable to find steady employment in Boston's North End, and the family was having to rely on his wife's meager work for support. Mark Poster also cites the cause of undermined parental control over children as economic: "No longer a proprietor with significant property to pass on to his children, the father does not even have skills to teach them, since each generation must adapt to a rapidly changing technology" (166-205). Factory jobs, and eventually, formal educations, replaced the apprenticeship and wisdom of youths' parents.

With family roles and structure thus redefined, the stage was set for the runaway problem as it is conceptualized today. Youth who did not see themselves as getting the support they came to expect from the nuclear family could now (or so they perceived) turn to the city and the job market for support instead. Suburbanization and its related transportation networks made this all the more possible, and further served to fragment and alienate family members from each other (Orten & Soll, 1980). Television, Orten and Soll suggest, may also have contributed to the alienation of family members from each other, and the breakdown of communication within the family; they also suggest that the media may have demoralized parents and encouraged young people to run through extensive and irresponsible coverage of runaways (Orten and Soll, 1980). They contend

that these factors made the social and familial relationships too weak to hold youth at home if they were unwilling to stay. Unfortunately, they note, the same industrial and societal shifts which brought about such changes in the family—child labor laws, mandatory education, and the automation of labor—also rendered it nearly impossible for youth to make it successfully on their own (Orten and Soll, 1980).

It was not until the counter-culture youth movement of the 1960's that the homeless and runaway youth issue became publicized in the U.S., Libertoﬀ (1980) claims. It was then that the first homeless youth service programs originated, concerned with aiding the thousands of young people that flooded into urban areas. Youth continued to leave home in great numbers in the 1970's, with the United States Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency estimating the total number of runaway children in the year 1972 to be in excess of one million (Libertoﬀ, 1980). Some of these youths counted as "runaways" by the Subcommittee were probably actually thrown out of their homes or abandoned. What is clear, however, is that the phenomenon was not quietly fading away, as some believed it would: by 1976, The National Directory of Runaway Programs listed 130 runaway houses operating in 42 states (Brenton, 1977, 359-373, as cited in Adams & Munro, 1979).

In 1974, President Richard Nixon approved the Runaway Youth Act, written in response to the "substantial law enforcement problem for the communities inundated and significantly endangering the young people who are without resources and live on the street" (U.S. Congress, Senate, 1972, as cited in Libertoﬀ, 1980). Another piece of legislation aimed at the street youth population, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, was also introduced in 1974. Although this act

was intended to decriminalize status offenses such as running away, critics contend that its application was erratic, and its objectives unmet (Libertoff, 1980). However, what both of these acts did do was spur the formation of a vital and ever-growing body of psychological literature on runaways and homeless youth, that continues to better our knowledge of the causes, characteristics, and solutions associated with this issue (Adams & Munro, 1979).

The historical perspective on youth homelessness, Libertoff concludes, lends evidence to it being "a natural reaction to certain predictable societal forces and even as a positive response to serious problems" (Libertoff, 1980). Supporting this notion, Orten and Soll (1980) contend that the failure of "the promise" is in part responsible for the rise in youth homelessness. The "promise," they contend, is the notion that if young people stay in school, be good, and do the things they are supposed to do, then success, status, income and power will be theirs in adulthood. Rising unemployment among the young, even among college graduates, has largely disabused adolescents of this notion, thus lowering the incentive to "tow the line" (Bakan, 1971, as cited in Orten and Soll, 1980). Indeed, using probabilistic sampling techniques, Nye and Edelbrock (1980, 275-281, as cited in Young, Godfrey, Matthews & Adams, 1983) estimated that one out of every eight adolescents will run away from home at least once before his or her 18th birthday.

"The Promise" Orten and Soll refer to is related, I believe, to the low-income housing crisis in the United States. Although not specifically related to youth homelessness, I feel that it would be inappropriate to leave out mention of this major problem in *any* discussion of homelessness, and it would certainly be unfair to try to describe any historical perspective of homelessness without a brief discussion of it.

A researcher who has extensively studied the housing crisis and the homeless is Kim Hopper (1988), who writes, "the impaired capacity model of homelessness...assumes that the disorder is responsible for the displacement...It is argued, instead, that individual failures to secure stable housing have their roots in larger developments in housing, employment, household composition, and government assistance programs." (155-167). Of course, Hopper is referring mainly to the adult homeless; one of the biggest reasons that homeless youth remain homeless is that they have incomplete educations, are too young to work, too young to receive benefits, and are more vulnerable to the dangers of the street than adults (Whitbeck and Simons, 1993). Because of my work with homeless youth, I know the majority of them are always on the lookout for inexpensive housing, and amenable people to room with. Likewise, Palenski and Launer (1987) have found that runaways who try to make it on the street are always trying to improve their condition, including finding secure lodging. It is apparent, then, how the lack of affordable housing could contribute to homelessness in youth as well as adults (Sosin, 1987, 22-28).

Rubin, Wright and Devine point to eight years of Reaganomics as the cause of our crisis today (1992, 11-147). Former President Ronald Reagan's policy of leaving the problem of housing low-income groups to the caprice of the private market was consistent with his push to deregulate, privatize, and liberate the "Invisible Hand" of the free market. "Sadly," reports Rubin et al. (1992), "the private market has few if any incentives to provide low income housing; there is much more money in housing the rich than in housing the poor." Thus gentrification, the process whereby low-income housing is remodeled into a high price-bracket, leaving its former denizens "high and dry," has become a real problem in many cities. The "trickle-down"

that Reagan espoused would occur as new money poured into a "revitalized" area never reached the lower echelons it had displaced (Rubin, et al.) The loss of affordable housing seen in the 1980's, combined with a widening income gap between the wealthy and the very poor, are the major contributors to the crisis today, Rubin contends. The privatization of the low income housing market, she and her colleagues assert, represents a shameful delinquency of the federal government in its duty to insure that all its citizens have access to safe and adequate shelter. I would hold that it is even more shameful to fail to secure such access to shelter for our youth.

Whatever factors combined to create the problem, such a crisis today exists in almost every city in the United States. I have looked into the extent of the problem that faces the homeless youth with whom I work in Portland, Oregon. What I found was shocking, especially because I know that the problem is much worse in larger cities such as New York and Boston. A pair of articles focusing on the low-income housing shortage in Clackamas County, Oregon, in the January, 1996 Oregonian brought some surprising figures to light. Last year, The Oregonian reports, about 800 people were on a closed waiting list for 570 units of public housing, a wait that would take one-and-a-half years; about 1,700 people were on a waiting list for 1,200 available housing vouchers, with a wait of at least two years. The report set the number of families at risk for homelessness in Clackamas County at 4,434; "at risk" was defined as a household earning less than 30% of the median income of 40,700 for a family of four *and* paying more than half of their income for rent and utilities. In addition, less than a third of all housing in Clackamas County today is considered low rent, that is, under \$400 a month. By comparison, the 1980 census found that more than three-fourths of the apartments for rent

went for less than \$400 a month (Taylor, 1995). The result? An estimated 3,000 people are homeless today in Clackamas County. The County claims it cannot afford to build low-income housing; a lobbyist for the Association of Oregon Housing Authorities reports that over the *past ten years*, the federal government has provided the county with money enough only to build nine housing units, and to provide only 100 more rental vouchers (Taylor, 1995). It is clear that the youth of Portland, declared one of the country's "most livable" cities, are faced with a serious dilemma, even if they could potentially afford the most basic housing.

The historical perspective, including political and social contributions to youth homelessness, emphasizes the social construction of both the issue, and of ways to define and categorize the issue. This brings us to our next topic, concerning the ways that perceptions of the issue of youth homelessness and the youths themselves guide social policy.

Typologies, Directly and Implicitly, Guide Policy

Throwaway youth can have much the same problem when they attempt to utilize services designed with runaways in mind. Shane (1991, 73-82) reports that in his sample recruited from seven agencies serving homeless youth, six of those agencies were "specifically designed and federally funded as short term shelters or host home facilities with a stated goal of reuniting families, i.e., returning runaway kids to their families." Ironically, however, he went on to find that only a quarter of his sample were reported to be runaways by agency staff members; the majority were adolescents who had been thrown out, removed from their homes, or had agreed to their parents' suggestion to leave. Shane concludes that the short-term shelter and programs designed to return youth home are not

appropriate for the majority of youth on the street, who “do not seem to have families to which they can ‘go home’” (1989, 208-214). Instead, he advocates new approaches to dealing with homeless youth by agencies and legislators, including emancipation (in appropriate cases), the extension of social benefits to homeless minors, and the creation of non-traditional educational and job training programs aimed at such youth.

Another example of how labels guide service relates to the designation “status offender.” Chase, Crowley, and Weintraub report that in a Maryland county treatment center for delinquent youth, clients are often referred by the juvenile court system for behavior such as truancy, running away, breaking curfew, and incorrigibility (1979, 538-546). Rather than being criminal acts (felonies), these behaviors are considered “status crimes,” behavior illegal only for minors (persons under 18 years). However, these offenses often end up criminalizing homeless youth; for example, a youth with a “run report” filed by parents or police with the Juvenile Justice Division is usually not eligible to stay at any shelter that receives public monies. In the course of my work with homeless youth, I have repeatedly seen youth be denied shelter when their parents filed a run report as an act of anger or desperation.

However, the issue of status offenses can also work against the favor of homeless youth who are *not* minors. Agencies often receive special government funding to provide food, shelter, and other services to homeless youth under 18, because they are considered dependents (as stated above, this is often not the case for registered runaways). Therefore, homeless adolescents over 18 are sometimes out of luck when it comes to obtaining these services, because funding language assumes them to be self-sufficient adults (JAMA, 260(3), 311-312).

A case demonstrating how youth can definitionally fall through the cracks of service recently occurred involving a delinquent youth in Portland, Oregon (Trujillo & Vader, 1996). This case involved an "incurable" 14-year-old boy, Josh Rennells. His family, unable to deal with his delinquency and violent temper, turned him over to become a ward of the state. But because the foster care program would not take him, and he was not diagnosed as mentally disturbed and had not committed criminal acts, there was nowhere the Children's Services Division of Oregon could put him. So, as Trujillo and Vader (1995) of the Oregonian report, they gave him "a list of agencies that cater to teens, a map of downtown Portland and a bus ticket, and sent him on his way" (Trujillo & Vader). After months of wandering the streets of Portland, Josh participated in a murderous robbery with two other youths, and was convicted of slashing a man's throat. Since the incident in March of this year, Trujillo and Vader report, he has been locked up in the Donald E. Long home for violent youth. Contends Patricia Edge, director for Portland's Parry Center for Children, a non-profit agency for children with behavioral problems, "As long as you're not in any extreme danger, until something bad happens the system isn't going to be able to help or do anything in the way of prevention" (Trujillo & Vader).

One last example of how labeling affects service is actually positive. In Portland, 1982, a Special Housing Needs Task Force was established by a joint effort of the city of Portland and Multnomah County in order to look at the housing needs of the "homeless and hard to house populations" in the city and the larger county area (Ritzdorf & Sharpe, 1987, 184-198). Because they chose to identify homeless adolescents as one of six types of "special housing needs" people, this group

became the focus of several recommendations for "safe and decent" housing proposed by the Task Force.

These represent only a very brief description of how typologies and labels can affect the real-world provision of service. There are, no doubt, countless systems that service providers use in order to make decisions about who receives service and the content of what they receive, both at an official level and a personal one. However, academic psychology should be expected to be more rigorous than that, and one hopes, to conduct sound research on which service providers may, in part, base their systems.

Chapter II: Characteristics of Runaway/Homeless Youth

"The development of typologies and other assessment instruments provides a beginning illustration of how we can link research to practice with runaways." (Roberts, 395).

**Brennan, T. (1980). Mapping the diversity among run-
aways: a descriptive multivariate analysis of selected
social psychological background conditions.**

Four years after Brennan and Dunford's effort to develop a careful and objective typology, Brennan created a still more comprehensive typology based on several of runaways' characteristics. Again bespeaking the need for good classifications to understanding and the development of theory, Brennan complains of a lack of useful and descriptive classification systems. Those that have been created for runaway youth are, he claims, "inadequate, rudimentary, and misleading," and do not satisfy the requirements for a good taxonomy. He levels four main criticisms at existing classification systems: first, he contends that they are based on intuitive and subjective ordering and comparison

instead of statistical multivariate methods. Secondly, the samples of runaways these taxonomies are based on have been too small and limited to accurately represent the diverse runaway population. Thirdly, most taxonomies have a small "descriptive domain," that is, they are based on a small number of behaviors, motivations, etc., or that descriptive domain is very vague. Lastly, Brennan complains that most taxonomies have not been tested for reliability or validity.

Brennan therefore seeks to address these shortcomings. In this, he is guided by a social psychological theory of runaways which integrates deviant behavior-strain theory and control theory, and postulates that two bonds are critical for understanding running away, integration (social) and commitment (personal) bonds. Integration bonds are those involved in the fulfilling of conventional social roles in the family, at school, and with peers, and the "presence or absence of effective sanctioning networks in these social contexts." Commitment bonds include such factors as commitment to parents and peers, powerlessness, tolerance for deviance, self-esteem, importance ascribed to norms, and societal estrangement. Attenuation factors, or those that serve to weaken family bonds, are also important in Brennan's framework, and include failure to achieve personal needs and goals, negative labeling, and social crisis and disorganization at home.

Brennan's wide descriptive domain covers the areas of family relations, school and peer relations, delinquent behavior, personal characteristics, beliefs and attitudes, and behavioral descriptions of the last runaway episode (length of time gone, spontaneous or premeditated departure, mode of travel and return, and companionship and victimization during the episode).

He then used taxometric methods to analyze his data. Ward's minimum variance method of clustering was used, fol-

lowed by the interactive relocation procedure to improve upon the results of the previous, hierarchical method. Two samples were used in this study. The first was a probability sample gleaned from randomly interviewing adults in 2400 households to find if there was a runaway youth present in the house. Some of those households containing a non-runaway youth were used as a control group. The second, or "institutional" sample was drawn from a list of households known, through the cooperation of various social service agencies, courts, and runaway houses, to have had a child run away during the past year. A total of 44 youths was recruited from the random sample, a total of 139 runaways was recruited through the institutional sample, and the control sample contained 312 non-runaway youth. Interviews were done in private, one-on-one sessions in the respondent's home. "Runaway" was defined in this study as youth who had gone from their homes without permission for more than eight hours, and youth who had left home with the specific intent of running away.

Brennan ended up with two classes of runaways, which together contained seven types. Class One, he calls the "Not highly delinquent, nonalienated runaways." Class One includes three types of runaways, that share the following characteristics: they are not highly delinquent, they have relatively high self-esteem, they do not generally have feelings of powerlessness, normlessness, and societal estrangement, and their friends are relatively nondelinquent. Type One Brennan calls "Young, over-controlled escapist." This group of runaways is mostly boys (60%), and is fairly young (mean age 13.2 years). Their runaway behavior can be attributed to a wish to escape from their over-controlling parents. Their parents deny them autonomy, are not nurturant, and negatively label their children. They use a great deal of social isolation, physical punishment, expressive rejection.

tion, and deprivation of privileges in punishing their children. Although these youth report being well aware of their parent's overcontrolling and autonomy-denying behavior, they also report a relatively benign and accepting attitude towards their parents, and a low degree of alienation. Brennan attributes this to these runaways' youth and still-heavy psychological reliance on their parents. In addition, these youth have high self-esteem. They are relatively successful and involved in school, and seem to enjoy it. Their friends are not highly delinquent, and neither are they.

Type Two runaways Brennan calls "Middle-class loners." At first glance, there seems to be no reason why these older, middle-class youth run away (mean age 16.1 years). They have good relationships with their parents, who see them in a positive light and support them in their educational aspirations and their autonomy. They do well in school, have high self-esteems, and are not alienated. A significant issue for these youths may be that they are very isolated from their peers: they have fewer friends and spend far more time alone than any other of the six types of runaways. The friends they do have are not delinquent, and do not apply pressure towards antisocial attitudes.

The third type of runaways under Class One Brennan calls "Unbonded, peer-oriented runaways." These youth are also an average of 16.1 years old, and are from mostly lower-class families. They also do not report familial rejection and mistreatment. They do, however, report low companionship levels, and minimal achievement demands, as well as high levels of freedom and autonomy. Nurture levels are also found in very low levels in this group. In addition, they dislike school, and have no aspirations of success in it. They spend most all of their time with their few friends, who are non-delinquent relative to other runaway types. The youth themselves are also relatively

non delinquent, and report fairly high self-esteem, as well as a low degree of alienation.

Class Two Brennan calls "Delinquent, alienated runaways." Class Two runaways have in common high conflict with parents, rejecting parents, high delinquency in self and peers, severe trouble with and alienation from school, and low self-esteem. The first of these is Type Four, "Rejected peer-oriented runaways." Girls make up 57% of this group, and they are mainly lower-class. These runaways have in common failure in school, low academic and occupational aspirations, and high delinquency. In addition, they are highly committed to their peers, who are highly delinquent and who exercise pressure towards deviant behavior and attitudes. Their relationships with their parents involve a great deal of conflict, characterized by negative labeling, high punishment, denial of autonomy and expressive rejection. They reject their parents far more than nonrunaways, but less than some other runaway types. They have low self-esteem, high normlessness, powerlessness and social estrangement.

The second type of runaways under Class Two is Type Five, "Rebellious and constrained middle-class drop-out girls." This group of primarily girls (86%) has a mean age of 15.2. They are similar to Type Four runaways in having delinquent, non-conforming peers, experiencing high rejection at home and school, and reporting high levels of social alienation. In addition, they are characterized by greatly disliking school, and exhibiting a great deal of anger and rebellion. They experience high failure and severe negative labeling by their teachers in school. They exceed all other types of runaways in perceptions of parental rejection, and in rejecting their parents. They bitterly report extremely high levels of rejection, isolation, alienation, powerlessness, punishment, physical abuse, marital conflict, low self-

esteem, and differential treatment of siblings. They have many highly delinquent friends whom they are highly committed to, and these friends exert great pressure towards delinquent behavior and attitudes.

Type Six runaways Brennan calls "Normless, rejected, unrestrained youth." Males make up 62% of this group of middle class youth. They are characterized by moderate delinquency, and the great commitment and time they give to the few, delinquent and non-conforming peers they have. These peers exert a great amount of pressure towards delinquent behavior. They experience withdrawal and alienation in school, and have a mutually rejecting relationship with their families, with whom they spend very little time. They perceive their relationship with their parents as involving differential treatment of siblings, negative labeling, and low levels of affiliative and instrumental companionship. They do not report their parents as being over-protective, rather, they are given a high degree of autonomy. They do not report especial levels of powerlessness or societal estrangement, and their self-esteem is only marginally lower than average.

Type Seven, a new group since Dunford and Brennan's 1980 typology, Brennan calls "Rejected push-outs." This group reports the highest level of parental rejection, and the lowest levels of affiliative or instrumental companionship of all the seven types. These parents are extremely dissatisfied with their children, and unconcerned with their academic progress. The youth feel this rejection, and in return feel very rejecting towards their parents. These incidences of rejection are what leads Brennan to refer to them as emotional "push-outs." In addition, this group performs dismally in school, having almost completely withdrawn from it and being extremely negatively labeled by their teachers. They report wishing for a good job as

adults, but do not expect to ever reach this goal. Brennan reports that perhaps the only bright spot for this group is that they have many friends, to whom they are highly committed. Unfortunately, these friends are "extremely" delinquent, and exert strong pressure toward antisocial behavior. These youth report low self-esteem and high levels of powerlessness, normlessness, and delinquency.

When Brennan examined concurrent validity of these types—that is, looked at each typology's ability to relate to external variables—he found that the types differed significantly on many external variables. For example, he found that factors of the actual runaway behavior differed from type to type. The Type One young overcontrolled runaways were much more likely than any other type to be back within a day, to not be out overnight, to travel shorter distances away (90% traveled less than 10 miles), to stay with a relative or friend when they ran away, and to walk to their destination. The Type Five rebellious and constrained middle-class drop-out girls were more likely than any other type to plan their exit instead of leave spontaneously, to fully intend to run away (95%), and to organize transport prior to running. Type Seven rejected pushouts were found to have had many and lengthy runaway episodes, as well as high intentionality to their leaving. Their parents adopted a "do nothing" approach to their child's absence, and were minimally involved with locating them and bringing them back home.

Brennan ends his piece with the suggestion that these findings could be usefully linked up with measures of intrapsychic processes. Even so, he recognizes the useful findings of this work. For example, he points out that two general groups can be separated out based on this research, those who are delinquent, and those who are not (roughly 50/50 in this sample). This is simi-

lar to Edelbrock's (1980) finding that delinquency was a more distinguishing factor among runaways and non-runaways than the actual running behavior itself. Brennan asserts that global generalizations would assume all runaways to be delinquent, overlooking those who are not. Another contrast exists between the overcontrolling, autonomy-denying parents of Type One youth, as compared to the undercontrolling, apathetic "expelling" parents of Type Seven youth. In addition, he has found a group of nonrejected, nondelinquent, relatively emotionally stable runaways, just as he did with Dunford in their 1976 taxonomy of runaway youth described earlier in this review. That group, which they called "Well-adjusted runaway youth," was in fact the largest group to surface in that study. This reoccurring group, Brennan asserts, clearly needs to be studied further.

Although Brennan does not speak to it directly one way or another, his implication is that in the later types, such as those found in Class Two (Alienated runaways), their running is in part due to rejecting, conflictual relationships with their parents. Although outside the scope of this particular paper, it might be interesting and informative to explore the sequencing of the youths' running and their parents rejection. It could be that rejection and apathy on the part of the parents is in some cases actually the end-state of repeated episodes of conflict, and the subsequent running of their children.

Miller, A. T., Eggertson-Tacon, C. & Quigg, B. (1990).

Patterns of runaway behavior within a larger systems
context: the road to empowerment.

Orten and Soll's (1980) typology has been usefully applied by Miller, Eggertson-Tacon and Quigg (1990) in their paper on running behavior and therapist effectiveness in the systems con-

text. Miller, et al. (1990) apply Orten and Soll's typology of "degrees" to a case study of a young runaway and surveys of nine other adolescent runaways. They go on to recommend therapist strategies from there.

To recapitulate Orten and Soll's (1980) three-degree typology of runaways, "first degree" runners are those who are minimally alienated from their families, "second degree" runners have gained some experience on the street and are ambivalent about returning home, and "third degree" runners are actually older youth who have become assimilated into street culture, and have no motivation to return home. The authors chose to apply this typology is because it incorporates Homer's (1977) "running to/running from" idea, which they claim to hear their clients and co-practitioners using regularly. Its developmental perspective of increasing seriousness also appealed to them.

Miller, et al. propose several hypotheses, three of which link Orten and Soll's typologies with their clinical experience. First, they suggest that first-degree runners are generally running from something, second-degree runners are running both to *and* from something, and third-degree runners are running to something. Secondly, they propose that first- and second-degree runners are running reactively, while third-degree runners are more likely to plan their action. Their third hypothesis is that both first- and third-degree runners see running as a solution, while second-degree runners see it as both a problem and a solution.

These hypotheses are addressed specifically in the nine surveys, and more generally in the case study. The case study involved a 13-year-old girl living in a residential treatment center for youth in Alberta, Canada. She had been placed in the custody of the center when she was judged as being at risk from her repeated running behavior. Placed in foster care as an infant because of neglect, she then experienced a failed adoption, more

foster care, and a group home before winding up at the Alberta center. Therapy revealed that because she (understandably) associated getting close to care-givers with loss, she avoided bonding with any placement.

Miller and her colleagues judged the girl to be a second-degree runaway (both running from and running to), in the process of transitioning to a third-degree runner. It seemed that she ran *from* conflict with the adults in her life at her various placements, and *to* the relative freedom of the street. According to her caregivers, she began running from the group home to resist yet another change she could not control. However, she was ambivalent about staying away, and would return when she needed health care. Miller and her colleagues note that while her ambivalence placed her as a second-degree runner, she was leaning towards the third-degree preference of staying on the street. Her case also tends to support their third hypothesis, that as a second-to-third-degree runner, she viewed running as mainly a solution to finding her niche in the world.

The surveys were administered to nine youth also in residential treatment at this center in Alberta. These youth were aged 12-17, were all male except for one, and had all run away from the unit on at least one occasion. They were administered several structured interviews over a two-month time-period, that dealt with issues they had when still living at home, and issues while living in care. Participants were ranked as first-, second-, or third-degree runners by the therapist administering the interviews. Demographic data concerning the number and length of runaway episodes was also collected.

Miller and her colleagues' first hypothesis was supported by data from this group. It was found that four of the nine participants were first-degree runners while living at home, whereas in care only two were. They reported running from family

conflict at home, and from rules and to go along with peer pressure while in care. They did not have what they were running to in mind. Two participants were second-degree runners when they were living at home, while six were second-degree while in care. Seven of these eight reported that they were both running from rules and consequences, and to their friends downtown. None of the participants were third-degree runners while living at home, which one would expect from Orten and Soll's typology; one was third-degree while living in care. This youth reported both running to and from something. Although this one youth's experience did not confirm Miller and her colleagues' hypothesis, it is hard to extrapolate on the data from one subject.

Miller and her colleagues' second hypothesis that first- and second-degree runners' decisions to run were impulsive was supported in all but one case. Although there are not enough third-degree runners for a comparison, their one subject in this category reported running impulsively as well, contrary to their hypothesis that it would be planned.

Their third hypothesis, that both first- and third-degree runners would see running as a solution, while second-degree runners saw it both as a problem and a solution, was moderately supported. The viewpoints of both subjects living at home and those in treatment were collected on this issue. Four of the six first-degree runners saw running as a solution, one saw it as a problem, and one saw it as both. Three of the eight second-degree runners saw running as a solution, three saw it as a problem, and two saw it as both. The one third-degree runner in their sample reported seeing running as a problem. These findings generally support the idea that as running increases in severity, it is seen as more of a problem. The experience of the third-degree runner may not support this

hypothesis because he had stopped running at the time of the interviews.

Overall, Miller and her colleagues were able to successfully apply Orten and Soll's typology to this clinical sample. However, it is useful to remember that because of the relatively loose structure of Orten and Soll's typology, the method of its application was necessarily quite subjective, and thus susceptible to experimenter bias. The application of this typology would be welcome on a larger sample in order to make stronger inferences.

Liddiard, M., & Hutson, S. (1991). Homeless young people and runaways—agency definitions and processes.

Liddiard and Hutson (1991), in an attempt to examine the social construction of the problem of youth homelessness, analyze the definitions social service agencies serving homeless youth use. They divide their examination into two discussions, the first on the external definitions these agencies present to their perceived audience, and the second on the internal definitions of the problem they use themselves within the every-day application of their programs. They suggest that definitions both of the population and the problem are not fixed, but are created and altered by agencies to suit different situations and different needs. This discussion was based on information gleaned both from interviews with "key workers" in several agencies serving the homeless youth population in North Wales, Britain, and also from the youth these agencies serve.

Liddiard and Hutson begin by noting that while runaway and homeless youth are often blurred together in the press, and for many practical purposes are indistinguishable, they have important legal differences. They cite De'Ath (1987) in asserting that because a young person cannot legally live away from a parent or other guardian before they are 16, runaways are usu-

ally under the age of 16, and, "by reason of their age, have left home illegally and without permission." On the other hand, Liddiard and Hutson assert, homeless youth "are usually 16 or over and have thus left home, for whatever reason, legally." This legal difference can translate practically: Willamette Bridge, an agency serving homeless and runaway youth in Portland, Oregon, must ascertain that clients under the age of 18 do not have a "run report" placed with the police by their parents before they can be given shelter. Although this definition does not help clarify the "pushout" question raised by Nye (1980), it does provide some way to operationalize a distinction between homeless and runaway youth.

Liddiard and Hutson introduce their discussion of external definitions by describing a major dichotomy that separated out in the early stages of their analysis. The descriptions of runaway and homeless youth given by the agency workers they interviewed usually fell into one or the other of two distinct themes, one of the youth as "ordinary/normal" youth who were just going through one of the stages of gaining independence, and another of "vulnerable/problematic" youth in which homelessness was only one of their many problems. Although Liddiard and Hutson acknowledge that in reality these two themes must be part of a continuum, they maintain that after looking carefully at their interview material, the dichotomy remained boldly delineated in the minds (or at least the words) of the agency workers. Liddiard and Hutson assert that this follows common knowledge about service providers, who must find some simple way to classify the highly complex situations they must deal with. They quote researcher Lipsky (1980) in stating that "people come to street level bureaucracies as unique individuals... (and) are transformed into clients, identifiably located in a very small number of categories."

While Liddiard and Hutson agree that "simplifying and standardizing people before processing them" makes sense, they profess confusion as to why workers dealing with often quite similar situations with similar youngsters come up with such divergent accounts of the problem. They offer several hypotheses as to why this might be so. First, it may be that workers from different types of agencies might be seeing different types of youth. By the time youth reach certain programs, they have already come through a sometimes complex referral system, and have been selected out based on certain criteria. But because they found that workers within the same agencies gave very different responses, they suggest that the difference in response might also be due to interactions between the researcher and the informant. Liddiard and Hutson feel that perhaps different workers were making assumptions about the researchers' own stereotypes, and were attempting to compensate for them. For example, an informant may have tried to portray their clients as "normal" youth just in a hard spot in their life, if they thought the researchers saw the youth as "pathological" or disturbed. In attempting (consciously or not) to project a certain image, Liddiard and Hutson assert, the agency workers may have allowed their more realistic heterogeneous conceptualizations give way to polarization.

Another explanation for such divergent accounts could be that it is a reflection of the aims, structure, and resource base of the agency the worker works within. Experts, Liddiard and Hutson remind us, define clients not only on the basis of empirical knowledge about those clients, but are also profoundly influenced by their political, social, and cultural environments, and where they recruit their economic support from (Scott, 1970, as cited in Liddiard and Hutson, 1991).

In general, Liddiard and Hutson hypothesize, agencies that are offering "universal" services such as bettering their client's access to employment, health care, housing, etc., tend to hold the "normalizing" viewpoint. This viewpoint, that such problems can befall anyone, legitimizes the need for such broad-based services. Also, they note that it is in social-work vogue to normalize clients, therefore avoiding stigmatizing them. They go on to hypothesize that agencies offering more specific services to a more limited clientele tend to expound a more pathological portrait of the youth, which justifies their own special role. It further reflects a desire on behalf of statutory agencies such as governmental housing departments legally bound to deal with such problems, to minimize the problem, making it easier to "solve." For example, it takes less money and effort to "shelter the homeless" when instead of defining "homeless" as just anyone sleeping on the streets, they must also have mental disabilities, or be pregnant, or be over 18.

In discussing internal definitions, those definitions that agencies use everyday to sort and treat clients, Liddiard and Hutson review the undeserving/deserving dichotomy analyzed in the literature. They note that although this debate has been previously aimed at the treatment of homeless families and vagrants, it had not been developed toward the issue of homeless and runaway youth. There are, according to Liddiard and Hutson, two types of "undeserving" youth, those who are "low risk," and those who are "high risk." Low risk youth are those whose problems are deemed insufficient to warrant intervention. High risk youth are those whose problems are so severe that they are considered out of range of most intervention. Youth somewhere in between, who are needy but not too needy, are preferred, Liddiard and Hutson report. Agencies discourage low-risk clients from attempting

their services by making the benefits of their programs very restrictive and basic. They do this to make strained resources go farther, and to avoid stigmatizing the youth. On the other hand, agencies often flat-out deny high-risk youths service, on the basis of violent histories, drug-use, etc. In addition to disruptive youth necessitating undesired police assistance and endangering funding, most agencies, such as housing agencies, do not have 24-hour staff trained to deal with such disruptive youth. Liddiard and Hutson note that one agency's undeserving youth is another's deserving one: for example, some agencies specialize in dealing with high-risk youth, instead of turning them away.

In addition to the deserving/undeserving basis for service, Liddiard and Hutson report that agencies may occasionally select clients on the basis of gender or race: young women may therefore be more likely to gain shelter than a young man in exactly the same situation, or minority youth may be targeted for service. In the same way, youth may be judged deserving or not, based on their age. Some shelter agencies exclude youth under 25, or under 18, because they are deemed too low risk to service. On the other hand, there are agencies that exclude older clients, on the basis of their being too high risk. Liddiard and Hutson point out that these categorizations can cause frustration in social workers who must routinely turn needy youth away, and serves as a good example of how important typologies can be in real-world applications.

Morgan, O. J. (1982). Runaways: jurisdiction, dynamics, and treatment.

Although not an exploration of a typology per se, Morgan's work is a thoughtful exploration of how type-casting the runaway as a criminal adversely affects the youth and the youth's

family, and actually hinders the problem-solving process. Morgan argues that the "status offender" label given to runaways, which covers "noncriminal misbehavior," is inappropriate. Morgan sees running as a family affair, into which courts of law should not get involved unless a criminal act is involved.

Social historian Libertoff (1980) reports that since the root of juvenile court and status offenses resides in the moral crusading "child-saver's" movement of the turn of the century, it should not come as a surprise that they severely cut into youths' rights and privacy.⁴ He quotes Judge Julian Mack, one of the early proponents of the juvenile court system, to demonstrate the attitude that forms the basis of today's system:

The problem for determination by the judge is not, Has this boy or girl committed a wrong but what is he, how has he become what he is and what had best be done in his interest and in the interest of the state to save him from a downward career. (Mack, 1909, 119, as cited in Libertoff, 1980).

Libertoff agrees with Morgan that this attitude is unnecessarily authoritarian, allows for a too-wide discretion of judges to deal with youths' problems, and formalizes increased power of the state in family matters.

After studying the applicable statutes and the runaway phenomenon, Morgan comes to several conclusions. First, he contends that such cases of "ungovernability" and family conflict are unbenefitted by legal and judicial intervention, which he asserts is akin to "doing surgery with a spade." Secondly, he asserts that legal intervention in runaway cases violates the integrity of the family, both in regards to privacy and autonomy. This intervention can often end up scapegoating the youth and the parents as well, and can increase the level of tension in the family, as well as serving to retard dialogue and trust. Thirdly, Morgan notes that it can also greatly reduce the availability of important commu-

nity services, who often shun youth who have been involved in the justice system. His fourth conclusion is that status offense jurisdiction "further racial, sexual and economic discrimination, particularly in urban centers." Lastly, he holds that non-criminal ungovernable children (runaways) are essentially treated the same as their criminal peers in the dispositions of their cases, and are denied basic rights of due process (including wider ranges of admissible evidence and broad use of language necessary to declare ungovernability.)

Instead of juvenile court adjudication of status offenders, Morgan advocates crisis-oriented and long-term voluntary community intervention for runaway youth and their families.

Palenski, J. E. & Launer, H. M. (1987). The "process" of running away: a redefinition.

Palenski and Launer (1987) turn away from legal and individual motive definitions of the runaway, and instead focus on the "social process" that creates a runaway. Instead of creating a typology based on the youth's characteristics, they describe the process of action and reaction by which youths come to type *themselves* over time. The authors do not view running away behavior in itself as aberrant behavior, but rather similar to other types of adolescent boundary/self-testing behavior. They view the transition to becoming an actual "runaway" as very dependent on the social encounters the youth has with family, friends and others while living out of the home. These encounters can, Palenski and Launer assert, serve to move a youth from a "conventional" lifestyle to an "unconventional" one. They conceptualize the becoming of a runaway as a "career," some of the stages of which have been identified by Palenski (1984). The term career not only applies to the actu-

al steps in progressing though increasing involvement in the final objective, but also the person's total self-concept and perspective on things that happen to them.

This piece of research was completed over a two-year time period, during which the senior author served as Research Director for a major youth advocacy agency in New York City. Data collection involved structured and unstructured interviews, group discussions, and visits to youth while they were living outside the home. A total of 38 youth were contacted within the two-year period, 72% of which were males (females were often unwilling to talk, or hard to contact). Black and Latino youth accounted for 80% of the sample, and most all youth were from New York City. The modal age of respondents was 14-15, with a range between ten and nineteen years.

Palenski and Launer assert that one can only reach the deviant designation of "runner" after giving up, one-by-one, conventional home-living concerns and replacing them with out-of-the-home concerns. They were able to identify several "main events" important in the process of the respondents' becoming runaways, although their particular sequence varies from youth to youth. One of these is "Family disengagement." Most of the youth interviewed reported that prior to leaving, they felt little involvement with family concerns, or accountability to family priorities. When communication reaches a certain high level of disuse, and possibly other problems (school, etc.) start to surface, children may no longer be seen as worth disciplining, and instead be recast as a "bad kid."

Another main event on the path to becoming a runaway Palenski and Launer called the "Effects of friends as role models." They hold that friends can serve as irritants to suspicious parents already unhappy with their child's performance, and also as role models of "how to run away." Palenski and Launer

report that almost all of the youths they conversed with had not perceived running away as a real possibility until they saw others having similar problems leave home.

"Shrinking alternatives" was the term Palenski and Launer used to describe situations in which youth found they were out of chances, and an ultimatum would soon be reached. These shrinking alternatives had a lot to do with the desire, and finally, the act of leaving home. Often, an outside party, such as the police, the court, or a doctor had gotten involved, elevating the situation beyond the confines of the family, and leaving the youth uncertain as never before concerning its outcome. This is the problem with outside parties that Morgan (1982) refers to in his critique of the legal system's involvement with runaways and their families. Supported by Palenski and Launer's finding that third-party intervention was often a necessary step on the road to running away, Morgan warrants that outside parties such as the court system actually hinder families' ability to help themselves by escalating tension and decreasing dialogue, effectively creating an ultimatum.

Another main event Palenski and Launer call "Recognizing the 'right' situation." Apparently, the decision to leave becomes "crystallized" when the situation is right; that is, something happens to make the youth feel justified in leaving. "Managing the residuals" is the term Palenski and Launer apply to dealing with the unpleasant and confusing aftermath upon leaving home, and the gradual shift away from home concerns to adapting to the outside world. Youth must decide what parts of their "old" life fit in with their current, more uncertain one; they must make decisions about the amount of contact they maintain with people they used to know, whether or not to continue going to school or jobs,

etc. The more of their previous ties they cut, the more their new life gets top priority and they see themselves entrenched in their new role.

In addition to these main events, Palenski and Launer have identified several "themes" present in the lives of youth who are fully living the role of runaway. "Themes," maintain Palenski and Launer, "allow individuals to construct and thus orient themselves to the social situations they encounter. Likewise, the audiences young people encounter have some thumbnail reference to them." (Palenski & Launer, 1987). The first theme they describe is that of "making it." Making it involves both "holding one's own" out of the family home, and having a successful quality of life. This becomes a focus after residual concerns are dealt with, and can often involve a willingness to find work and school opportunities.

The theme of "Making it" is linked to and furthered by the theme of "Getting over," which Palenski and Launer define as "the runaway's concern for wanting to "make it" while doing little in order to ensure such a successful outcome." While "Getting over" is an overriding ideology, it is manifested in several concrete behaviors, mostly concerned with "hustles." These usually involve selling drugs, prostitution, theft, and other illegal activities. How these activities look in the eyes of peers is reportedly quite important, in addition to their ability to sustain. Palenski and Launer's hypothesis that "Getting over" is part of the progression to becoming a runaway would, I believe, be supported by research showing that total length of time living on the street was positively correlated with the incidence of such "hustles."

Two other themes Palenski and Launer observed were held by youth who had made the transition to the runaway role were "Recognizing emergencies" and "Perfection and control." The

first of these has to do with the transformed time-line those who have taken on the runaway identity experience. The expectations of school and home have most often been lifted, and the urgent press to try to "make good" is gone. Instead, their time is basically their own, and in fact may require extra patience as they initiate the slow process of finding work and supporting themselves. Palenski and Launer except from this attitude those who support themselves with daily hustles, who have to remain in a continual state of cool alertness in order to be safe.

The second theme, "Perfection and control" deals with the constant desire of the full-fledged runaway to improve his/her condition, such as finding more secure lodging and improving the quality of companionships. Where these youth are is never, it seems, where they want to be.

Palenski and Launer conclude by stressing that the reason social work intervention is useful to runaways is that it helps them to manage the leaving-home transition successfully. In order to come to conceptualize themselves as filling the role of a (successful) runaway, youth must learn to "routinize all behaviors and issues that are important to running away." Social work agencies facilitate this necessary process.

Yates, G. L., MacKenzie, R., Pennbridge, J. & Cohen, E.
(1988). A risk profile of runaway and
non-runaway youth.

In this study, what they claim to be the first of its kind, Yates, MacKenzie and Pennbridge (1988) review all initial visits to an ambulatory outpatient medical clinic serving 12-24 year-olds, in order to assess the overall health status of runaway and nonrunaway youth. Whitbeck and Simons (1993) speak to this risk in their article on homeless adolescents and adults. They contend that the sheer amount of time homeless people

end up spending on the streets and in other public places puts them at increased risk for victimization. In addition, because of homeless adolescents' lack of legitimate means of subsistence, they especially are often required to engage in survival behaviors that greatly increase their risk of victimization. As Yates and his colleagues demonstrate, these survival behaviors also place them at much higher risk for health problems, as well as mental health problems.

Yates and his colleagues analyzed all initial visits during the calendar year 1985 to the ambulatory clinic described above. They ended up analyzing the risk profile interviews (HEADS) of 110 self-described runaways and 655 nonrunaways, drawn from the overall initial-visit sample of 765 youth ages 12-24. The HEADS, administered by the examining physician, is an acronym denoting six areas of risk contribution: Home, Education, Activities/Affect, Drug Use, and Sex/Suicide (Suicide comes under the Affect category).

Yates and his colleagues found that runaways were much more likely to be Caucasian, and younger than nonrunaways. The HEADS interviews showed that runaways were five times as likely to have dropped out of high school as nonrunaways, and six times less likely to live at home with parents or relatives. Thirty-eight percent of runaways reported living on the streets, compared to one nonrunaway.

Runaways were found to have compromised mental health compared to nonrunaways, although Yates and his colleagues acknowledge that it is hard to know how much it was a predecessor to homelessness and how much was caused by homelessness. That said, runaways were found to be more than three times as likely as nonrunaways to be depressed (83.6%), four-and-a-half times as likely to have attempted suicide (18%), five times as likely to be suicidal (9.1%), and almost five times as likely to

report having a mental health problem (18%). In addition, runaways were almost four-and-a-half times as likely to report sexual abuse in their past (21.8%), and almost eight times as likely to report physical abuse in their past (16.4%), which should be taken into consideration by service providers when looking at emotional health, and especially depressive symptoms.

The HEADS interviews revealed several survival behaviors that compromised their health, such as drug use and prostitution. Compared to the nonrunaway (NR) sample, "hard" drug use was high: 34.5% of runaways reported using IV needles (9 times the rate of NR's), 22.7% used hallucinogens (10 times NR's), 36.4% used stimulants (five times NR's), and 13.6% used narcotics (4 times NR's). Although only 7.3% of runaways reported having a drug problem (7 times NR's) when asked directly, 57.3% of the initial visits to the clinic by runaways were for drug abuse.

In addition to the above drug use, 30 (26.4%) runaways reported participating in survival sex, compared to one nonrunaway who responded yes to such. The high level of IV drug use, in combination with the fact that runaways were 3.5 times as likely as nonrunaways to report being bisexual, and one-and-a-half times as likely to report being homosexual, places runaways at a higher risk for the transmission of HIV. Because of their high risk and the fact that they will not get such education in school, Yates declares a need for somehow educating this group on reducing the spread of HIV infection. Also, 1.8% of runaways visiting the clinic were diagnosed with rape-related injuries (as compared with .5% of NR's), indicating not only the increased risk of survival sex and time spent on the public street, but an increased vulnerability to contracting AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

As for other health problems, although runaways comprised only 14% of the total sample, they accounted for 23% of the

recorded diagnoses. Runaways were over three times as likely to be diagnosed with Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (4.4%), and nine times as likely to be diagnosed with hepatitis (2.7%) as nonrunaways. In addition, the large amount of time they report spending on the street is reflected in a greater rate of pneumonia (8.2%), more uncontrolled asthma (1.8%), and a larger incidence of scabies (6.4%), as well as a greater incidence of trauma (3.6%, as compared to 1.4% of NR's).

Contrary to the pattern found in the rest of the diagnoses, more nonrunaways (29.9%) than runaways (18.2%) were diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease, and nonrunaways were just as likely to come to the clinic for pregnancy (13.5%) as runaways were (13%). This may be due to runaways' younger age, or to the possibility that it is mainly for this type of stigmatizing health problem that nonrunaways come to such an ambulatory clinic, instead of going to family care. Nonrunaways were also more often reported to be at the clinic for family planning services (37.5%) than runaways (20.3%). This may, again, be one of the main reasons nonrunaways utilize such an anonymous ambulatory clinic. It may also be that runaways are utilizing family planning services (such as birth control) less, and instead buying or otherwise receiving over-the-counter prophylactics, or taking their chances.

Yates and his colleagues acknowledge that this study may suffer from the fact that all data was collected at one point, revealing little about runaways and nonrunaways patterns of health and health-care utilization. They also remind us that their runaway sample was relatively small, and from a small geographic area. Finally, they restate that many of the runaways sampled may have been chronically homeless "street youth" at the time of the interview, possibly inflating the incidences of mental health problems and physical problems.

Kirlin, K. A. (1995). The effects of homelessness on the psychological adjustment of adolescents.

Kirlin (1995) compares the levels of symptoms of psychopathology of adolescents who are homeless, in foster care, and living with their families, in an effort to disentangle the effects of homelessness from other factors. Foster youth were chosen as a comparison group because both homeless youth and youth in foster care have a greater likelihood of past abuse than those living at home, and because both have been separated from their families of origin. Kirlin hypothesized that homeless youth would report the highest levels of Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, depression, anxiety and substance abuse, both because of their histories of abuse, and their experience of living on the street. She hypothesized youth in foster care would report a greater rate than youth at home, but a lesser rate of symptoms than runaways, because although they, too, often have histories of abuse, they are at least living in a home.

Kirlin's sample contained 102 adolescents, ages 15-18. She recruited street youth by placing flyers at various Portland, Oregon agencies that serve homeless and runaway youth; she was able to interview 22 homeless youth. She contacted youth in foster care with the help of the Oregon State Children Services Division, and youth living at home were recruited from a Northeast Portland high school. She recruited 22 youth from foster care and 60 who were living with their parents. The mean age of the homeless sample was about 17; youth in foster care and youth at home were about 16 years old. About half of each group was female and most of the participants were white. Youth living at home and youth in foster care obtained parental permission to participate. Youth at home completed the packet at school. Street youth were fed pizza in exchange for their time; they reported having no guardians from whom to obtain permission.

All samples completed a packet of questionnaires, containing the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), the Trait Scale of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Adults, the Trauma Symptom Checklist-40, and the Personal Experience Screening Questionnaire (PESQ). The BDI measures physical, cognitive and affective symptoms of depression; the Anxiety Inventory measures stable individual differences in anxiety proneness; the Trauma Checklist measures post-traumatic stress disorder, with an emphasis on sexual abuse; and the PESQ was designed to identify adolescents in need of a referral to a comprehensive drug abuse assessment.

Using ANOVA, Kirlin found that on all but the Anxiety Inventory, homeless youth reported twice to three times as many difficulties as both youth in foster care and youth at home, who were not found to differ. Homeless youth reported three times as great a degree of depression as both youth in foster care and youth at home. Across all groups, girls reported being twice as depressed as boys. Although it did not reach significance, homeless youth tended to report slightly more anxiety than the other two groups; girls of all groups reported significantly more anxiety than boys, although both were still in the normal range for high school students. Homeless youth reported a twice-as-high rate of trauma-related problems as either youth at home or in foster care. Kirlin also conducted a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) to ascertain differences between the three groups on the six subscales within the Trauma Checklist. She found that except for Sleep Disturbances, homeless youth scored over twice as high on all the subscales as both of the housed groups, who were again not shown to differ. Girls in all groups scored significantly higher than boys on all six subscales.

The PESQ revealed that homeless youth are twice as heavily involved with drugs as either youth in foster care or at home,

twice as heavily involved with alcohol as youth at home, and three times as heavily as youth in foster care. The PESQ also measures frequency of drug and alcohol use. Homeless youth were found to use alcohol, marijuana, and hard drugs more frequently than either housed group, and boys used more marijuana than girls. Homeless youth also used a greater number of different hard drugs than either housed group. The two housed groups were again not shown to differ. Their rate of involvement in drugs and their frequency of use indicates that homeless youth are likely to need further assessment for treatment.

In addition to the substance use/abuse questions, the PESQ includes three subscales, Thought Problems, Psychological Distress, and Physical and Sexual Abuse. Homeless adolescents reported more thought problems and psychological distress than either of the housed groups, which did not differ from each other. There were no sex differences between housed and unhoused youth on these three subscales. On the Physical and Sexual Abuse subscale, however, youth in foster care reported significantly higher rates of abuse than youth living at home, and homeless youth reported the highest rates of all.

Homeless youth were asked how long they had lived outside of a conventional dwelling; they reported a mean time of 3.89 months. Kirlin found significant positive correlations between the length of time youth reported being homeless and their levels of depression, anxiety, trauma symptoms, and severity of substance abuse. Youth in foster care most frequently reported having received counseling services in the last three months (14 out of 20 youths), followed by street youth (7 out of 21), and then youth living with parents (9 out of 60).

Kirlin concludes that although her hypothesis that homeless youth would report poorer psychological adjustment than

housed youth was supported, her hypothesis that youth in foster care would report poorer adjustment than youth living at home was not. She warrants that there must be something else besides a history of abuse and separation from one's family that places homeless youth at a psychological disadvantage, although the correlational nature of her study makes it hard to place causal directionality.

It may be that homeless youth's experience on the streets is what is placing them at risk, which is supported by Kirlin's finding of a positive correlation between length of time spent on the street and psychological problems. For this, longitudinal data would be necessary to clarify the nature of the relationship. It may also be that the combination of stressors (e.g., history of abuse and homelessness) is multiplied and not just additive, as Rutter (1979) suggests in his study of how children are affected by stress (Rutter, 1979 as cited by Kirlin, 1995). It may also be that psychological adjustment is better predicted by a third factor, such as Edelbrock (1980) hypothesizes. Edelbrock contends that it is delinquency that better predicts running away than any other psychological problem or behavior might. Along this line, Whitbeck and Simons (1990) remind us that psychological stressors at home are often a cause of both running away and psychopathology, illegal activities, and victimization on the street.

The only exception to this pattern of greatest psychological disturbance among homeless youth was the Abuse subscale on the PESQ. Here, although youth in foster care reported less abuse than homeless youth, they also reported much more abuse than youth at home. Kirlin holds that because youth in foster care scored so much higher than youth at home on this crude measure of abuse history, many of them must have been removed from their homes of origin because of abuse or

neglect. The fact that youth in foster care register greater abuse but not other psychological disturbances is congruent with Rutter's work, who suggests that children's emotional well-being can withstand stressors if they do not pile up.

Kirlin suggests that possible confounds may exist in the sampling and data collection procedures. It may be that foster youth, filling out the questionnaires in the presence of their guardians, may have underreported problems they might have had out of concern for privacy. The same could be true for youth living at home, who filled out the questionnaires in the presence of their teachers and fellow students. Also, the runaway sample tended to be about a year older than the foster care and at-home samples, which could lead to an increase of reported problems. Lastly, the homeless sample was recruited from agencies serving street youth; it could be that the sample that utilizes these services might be different in composition from the population at large.

Comparisons Between Runaways and Throwaways

Much of the confusion and dearth of sound data regarding the nature of runaway behavior as well as the obvious lack of success in reducing the rates at which youth run away from home may be due, in part, to the assumption that runaways are a homogeneous group of youth. As long as thinking and activity regarding runaway behavior remain at such a level, theory building and subsequent theory testing are destined to produce a host of misconceptions and disappointments. (Dunford and Brennan, 467).

Gullotta, T. P. (1979): Leaving home: family relationships of the runaway child.

In this brief synopsis of the issues related to youth who leave home, Gullotta makes a neat and dramatic distinction between

runaway and throwaway youth. He characterizes runaways and their families as experiencing a temporary estrangement, a salvageable weakness in the family fabric due to a social control issue. Gullotta attributes the number of disputes in these families over seemingly inconsequential matters such as personal appearance and dating to a desire to "displace...intense anger to areas less likely to unsettle an already weak family structure." It is not a lack of love that bars effective communication between runaways and their parents, Gullotta contends, but rather the fear, the risk of being hurt. He suggests that programs directed towards changing communication patterns between runaways and their families have been met with some success.

Throwaways and their families, on the other hand, are experiencing not a weakness, but rather a severe breakdown in the fabric of the family. The rift is so severe that bonds between parent and child have often been completely severed. Gullotta emphasizes that the bonds from the parent to the child have been broken, and not the child to the parent. This may come about by newly divorced parents realizing neither wants to care for their offspring, a child being scapegoated and ostracized from a home where an incestuous relationship has gone on, or an adopted child whose parents have since had a child of their own. He also cites cases of parents attempting to put an end to some undesirable behavior in their child, such as drug use or sexual promiscuity, and ending up throwing them out. In any case, he contends, the relationship of the throwaway child's parents to them is one of neglect and an absence of caring.

The prognosis for these youth is not so good, Gullotta reports. By the time of their "ultimate rejection," he claims they are "pathetic individuals." They have had months, and perhaps years of failed relationship at home and at school, and are emotionally disorganized. This crisis at the critical stage of develop-

ment of adolescence can damage the youth's search for a positive ego identity and accelerate role confusion. Gullotta reports great feelings of individual isolation, sadness, worthlessness, and uselessness in these youth, a contention which is supported by Adams, Gullotta and Clancy (1985). However, in their study, they found these feelings to be equally reported by runaway and throwaway youth.

Three assertions Gullotta makes that are questionable in the face of other information described in this review are that there are no significant age differences between runaways and throwaways, that throwaway girls outnumber boys by almost a third, and that throwaways are most often friendless. In Gullotta's (1978) study of runaways and "castaways" (throwaways), he did not find significant age differences: the average age of runaways was 14.6 years, while the average age of castaways was 15.4 years. However, Adams, et al. (1985) found the throwaways in their sample to be older, on average, than runaways; so, too, did Levine, et al (1986) in their sample.

The second assertion, that girls comprise more of the throwaway type than boys, was also not supported in Gullotta's own 1978 study of runaways and castaways, wherein girls were no more represented in this group than in the two others, and in fact showed up in slightly larger numbers in the runaway group. Adams, et al., (1985) also did not find such an overrepresentation of females in their throwaway sample: 60% of the runaways in their study were female, and 42% of the throwaways were female. However, their total sample size was small ($n=43$), and thus hard to generalize. Levine, et al. (1986), working from another fairly small sample ($n=38$), did not find any differences in percentages of females in her study, either.

The third unsupported claim Gullotta makes, is that throwaways are friendless. The "push-out" Brennan (1980) identified

in his typology of runaway youth fits with Gullotta's description in that they have the profound misfortune to have extremely poor relationships both with their parents, and have experienced severe failure at school. However, Brennan identified these youths' "peer situation (as) probably the only bright spot in their profile," finding these youth to "have quite a few friends, and they have a high commitment to these friends."

**Hier, S. J., Korboot, P. J. & Schweitzer, R. D. (1990);
Social adjustment and symptomatology in two types of
homeless adolescents: Runaways and throwaways**

Hier, Korboot and Schweitzer (1990) assessed 52 male and female homeless adolescents in Brisbane, Australia, in order to compare social adjustment and symptomatology in runaways and throwaways. Hier and her colleagues (1990, 761-771) use Gokhale's (1987) distinction between homeless adolescents and "street kids," who may have a permanent shelter to which they occasionally return. Hier and her colleagues define runaways as "those who attribute their status to an act of their own volition," while throwaways are defined as those who "reported that they had no alternative, as they had been ejected from their homes."

Hier and her colleagues predict support for three theories that explain juvenile offending: biological theories, psychological control theories, and drift theory. Biological theory indicates a heritable predisposition towards aggression and criminal behavior; within this theory is the hypothesis that males are more aggressive and delinquent because of greater levels of testosterone. Inner social control theory contends that juveniles perform delinquent acts because they lack internal controls and strong social attachments to institutions such as family and school. Drift theory supposes that delinquent juveniles are intrinsically no different than non-delin-

quent juveniles, but rather make the choice to be delinquent. In this theory, they are strongly influenced by their situation, such as peer pressure.

Hier and her colleagues hypothesized that because throwaways are implicated in drift theory to a greater degree and are more influenced by delinquent peers, they would be less socially isolated. Inner social control theory predicts throwaways, with their fewer social institution attachments, would be more anti-social than runaways. But because they probably have been exposed to more, and have thus internalized more negative labeling by parents and schools, Hier and her colleagues hypothesized that their behavior would be less externalized (less aggressive) than runaways and more depressive. Finally, they supposed that female homeless youths would be more depressive and less anti-social and aggressive than male homeless youth, as is consistent with biological theory.

Hier and her colleagues recruited the 52 youth in their sample from a drop-in center in the metropolitan Brisbane area. Twenty-four were runaways, 10 male and 14 female. Twenty-seven were throwaways, 17 male and 11 female. Their mean age was about 15.5 years old. Subjects were given questionnaires at the drop-in center or at the hostels they were staying at, alone or in small groups; they were asked if they were a runaway or a throwaway after the questionnaires were administered.

Social isolation (preferring to be alone) and antisocial tendencies (solving problems in ways that show a disregard for social customs or rules) were measured using the Jesness Inventory, which consists of 155 true-or-false questions. Aggressiveness was measured by means of the Hostility and Direction of Hostility Questionnaire (HDHQ), a 51-item true-or-false questionnaire inquiring into hostile acting-out, self-criticism, guilt, and criticism of others. Depression was measured by

sixty questions pulled from the Depression subscale of the MMPI, which includes poor morale, lack of hope for the future, and general dissatisfaction with self-status.

Hier and her colleagues' hypothesis that throwaways would be less socially isolated than runaways was not supported, contrary to Brennan's (1980) finding that throwaways had many more friends than runaways. However, runaway males were found to be more socially isolated than runaway females, and homeless males were found to be more socially isolated in general. These findings do not support drift theory, which supposes that delinquency increases with peer pressure; both groups of youth were found to be more socially isolated than the average American juvenile offender (Jesness, 1966, as cited in Hier, et al., 1990).

A two-way analysis of variance revealed that throwaways were more depressive than runaways, and females were more depressive than males, although neither of these findings reached significance. It was found that homeless youth were clinically depressed compared to normal American adolescent samples (Greene, 1980, as cited in Hier, et al., 1990).

Contrary to Hier and her colleagues' findings, the only finding related to antisocial tendencies was that female throwaways were more asocial than male throwaways. Males were not found to be more antisocial than females.

Male runaways were found to be more hostile than female runaways, while on the other hand, male throwaways were less hostile than female throwaways. In addition, runaways were significantly more critical of others than were throwaways, and male homeless youth in general scored significantly higher on the urge to act out hostility than homeless females. These findings only partially support Hier and her colleagues' hypothesis that throwaways would be less aggressive than runaways, and

that female homeless youths would be less antisocial and aggressive than male homeless youth; biological theory was not supported. All groups were found to be extrapunitive as opposed to intropunitive.

Hier and her colleagues attempt to explain why it might be that female throwaways were shown to be more asocial and more hostile than male throwaways. They suppose that perhaps the two groups differ in length or type of abuse. This hypothesis seems to be supported by Gullotta's (1978) findings that 9% of the girls in his sample, compared to no boys, were "cast off" following an incident of incest, and that 21% of girls (compared to 9% of boys) were cast off after an incident of physical abuse. Hier and her colleagues also hypothesize that it would take a more highly dysfunctional family to push a female adolescent, at far greater risk for rape and other abuse than a male, onto the streets. This supposition would also seem to be supported by Gullotta's findings that twice as many girls (24%) as boys were cast-off because of "family breakdowns," whereas boys were three times as likely as girls to be cast-off following an incidence of their own misbehavior or drug use.

Aside on Throwaways

The categorization of street youth as either runaways or throwaways has its own set of problems, as is evident from the first part of this chapter. Though I have touched on some of these problems, I have not discussed the complexity that abused and lesbian and gay youth present to typologizing homeless youth. Although in-depth coverage of these issues is not possible in this already lengthy inquiry, I wish briefly to high-light some of the literature, and thereby encourage the reader to explore the topic further.

Gay and Lesbian Youth

In the case of gay and lesbian youth, the identification of clear boundaries between runaways and throwaways is difficult because of their unique situation of familial rejection. For example, children who are berated and abused daily because of their personal identity might eventually "choose" to leave home, but that choice cannot be considered a fair one, considering the unbearable alternatives. Indeed, Remafedi (1987 as cited in Kirlin, 1995) reported that almost half of the bisexual and gay youth interviewed reporting having run away from home at least once.

In an article aimed at school counselors, Robinson (1994, 326-332) admonishes that while gay and lesbian youth of every class, religious, and ethnic background are part of the high school counselor's caseload, what they share in common is the experience growing up "alienated from, yet shaped by, the social institutions, roles, and norms of their larger society." She asserts that isolation is, as for any minority group, the biggest issue for homosexual youth. Robinson cites work by Martin and Hetrick (1988), which outlines that such isolation cognitive, social, and emotional components (Martin & Hetrick, 1988, as cited in Robinson, 1994). Cognitive isolation involves the "almost total lack of accurate information available," in addition to all the negative, misinformed, and stigmatic stereotypes that are expressed concerning homosexuality. Social isolation is apparent when gays and lesbians are compared to other minority groups; the critical difference between homosexual youth and, for example, racial minorities, is that while African-Americans youth may be socially isolated from the majority society, they are not likely to be rejected by their own family, their own peer group, or their own church. Emotional isolation, being branded as "abnormal" and "unacceptable," can be utter, and, as

research into youth suicide indicates, deadly. Robinson reminds us that both gay and lesbian youth are two to six times as likely to attempt suicide as their non-gay counterparts (Harry, 1991, as cited by Robinson, 1994).

Familial problems of these youth, Robinson reports, include fear of rejection and even violence and expulsion. Boxer, Cook, and Herdt (1991) report that almost 10% of the 200 lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth in their sample report being thrown out of their homes when they disclosed their sexual orientation to their fathers (Boxer, Cook & Herdt, 1991, as cited in Kirlin, 1995). Robinson cites Martin and Hetrick's finding that 49% of the violence gay and lesbian youth suffered as the result of their sexual orientation was dealt out by family members, including both parents and siblings. Pilkington and D'Augelli (1995, 34-56) found that 83% of their adolescent gay and lesbian sample had experienced at least one out of nine forms of "gay-bashing." On the average, Pilkington and D'Augelli's sample of 194 clients of 14 metropolitan gay/lesbian community centers reported three forms of victimization; "victimization" included verbal insults, physical threats, damage or destruction of personal property, being chased or followed, being spat on, having things thrown at one's body, being hit, kicked or beaten, being sexually assaulted, or being assaulted with a weapon. They found that 10% of their sample acknowledged being physically assaulted by a family member, while 36% reported that they had been verbally abused by at least one immediate family member. It might come as no surprise, then, that out of Pilkington and D'Augelli's sample of youth who had not yet "came out" to their families, 29% described the prospect as "somewhat troubling," and 16% reported the prospect as "extremely troubling."

In addition to rejection at home, these youths can often have problems with acceptance at school. A full one-third of

Pilkington and D'Augelli's respondents reported being harassed or verbally abused at school because of their sexual orientation. In addition, 22% percent of males and 29% of females reported being physically hurt by another student for that same reason, while five percent of males and 11% of females reported being physically hurt by a teacher, a somewhat staggering prospect. Accordingly, thirty-three percent of their sample reported being "not at all comfortable" with the prospect of disclosing their orientation to people at school. Another issue at school, Robinson contends, is institutional discrimination against gay and lesbian youth in the form of inadequate, or (more usually) non-existent courses including any discussion of sexual minority issues, and the complete obliteration of sexual minority issues from sex education curricula (Robinson, 1994).

A closing thought: after collecting data from the case files of two large Los Angeles community agencies serving gay and lesbian street youth, researcher Kruks (1991) concludes that homophobia and prejudice are one of the main reasons that gay and lesbian youth end up on the streets. He found that for 80% of the youth whose case files he reviewed, victimization and prejudice due to sexual orientation were reported as the primary reasons for leaving home and being on the streets.

Abused Youth

Homeless children with a history of physical and sexual abuse are also hard to categorize because of the familial situations they come from. Researcher Nye (1980) acknowledges the difficulty in delineating those who are "pushed-out" as opposed to those who run: "are only those who are abandoned or told to leave pushouts? It seems appropriate to add those who are frequently and severely beaten." Kurtz, Kurtz and Jarvis (1991, 543-555) found that 27.7% of their sample of

2,019 runaway youth (a total of 560 youth) had been physically or sexually abused prior to running away; Farber, Kinast, McCoard and Falkner (1984, 295-299) report that 78% of their sample of 199 runaway youth had experienced at least one act of violence directed at them by a family member in the year preceding the runaway act; and Stiffman (1989, 417-426) reports that almost half of her sample of 291 runaways acknowledged having been physically or sexually abused by a family member at some time.

In their study of the victimization of homeless and runaway adolescents, Whitbeck and Simons (1990) contend that youth would be unlikely to run away and *stay* away from home, if it were to mean losing rewarding and valuable family relationships. They assert that chronic runaways, especially, are suffering little loss, and may even gain a "sense of relief" by cutting ties to abusive parents. Supporting this assertion, they found that abuse was significantly correlated with increased incidences of running. Kurtz, Kurtz and Jarvis (1991) also found that the number of times youth in their sample had ran was significantly greater for youth reporting physical and sexual abuse than it was for nonabused runaways.

The above data leads one to wonder if the "runaways" in many studies have really "run" away, or if some of them have crept away, or been pushed away. Is *anyone* under 18 who leaves home a runaway? It would seem that unless researchers directly address the distinction between throwaways and runaways in their methods, they are conceptualizing a too-wide variety of youth as "runaways." I suggest, therefore, that research on this topic be designed and interpreted with these concepts specifically addressed.

Conclusion

I hope that you, the reader, have gained some insight not only into the homeless youth population, but into how researchers and practitioners conceptualize that population. The utility of the different typologies applied to the diverse group of young people often simply referred to as "street youth" should be somewhat more clear than it was at our beginning. I hope that this examination might facilitate understanding of homeless youth, aid future researchers in developing new typologies, and spur discussion of the ways that conceptualizations of this population guide service.

In addition, it is interesting to ponder how the current day homeless youth problem fits in with the historical perspective described in Chapter One. How are the conceptions of the homeless and runaway youth situation we hold today different from those held in the 1920's, 1950's, or 1970's? Do we order our service around different principles? Have we become more proficient at assessing the scope of the problem and its solutions?

With regard to the discussion of the restructuring of the family in Chapter One, a historian might note that increasing technical dependence, the move towards a service-based economy, high divorce rates, and a movement away from traditional religious beliefs in the United States might be alienating family members from each other now, more than ever. However, a historian might also suggest that the restructuring will have but temporarily negative affects, eventually settling down into a new, but livable situation. Perhaps the changes society is experiencing will result in a lessening, or an increase of the homeless youth phenomenon. More likely, and more optimistically, we will find new ways to support youth in their decision to leave home in a safe and sensible manner.

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