

USING GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPTS TO ASSESS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
SHELTER PRACTICES AND ADMINISTRATOR
ATTITUDES FOR THOSE WE CALL “HOMELESS”

Helen P. Hartnett, Ph.D.
University of Kansas
School of Social Welfare
1545 Lilac Lane
Lawrence, Kansas 66044-3184

Denise E. Bronson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Director of Ph.D Program
The Ohio State University
College of Social Work
bronson.6@osu.edu

USING GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPTS TO ASSESS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
SHELTER PRACTICES AND ADMINISTRATOR
ATTITUDES FOR THOSE WE CALL “HOMELESS”

ABSTRACT

Intended as a temporary response to “homelessness”, shelters have outlived the temporary label and become a common community service. Shelters differ widely from community to community and programs are often influenced by agency administrators, community members and funder attitudes toward those they serve. For social work administrators, it is essential to consider how practices within shelters may deviate from their attitudes and the profession. Through a survey to Ohio sheltering programs, this study explores the relationships between agency administrator attitudes regarding “homelessness” and “homeless” people, especially in terms how the program fits in the local community. Theoretical constructs from geography on how public space is defined, utilized and maintained were used to frame the survey questions and to interpret the administrators’ responses. The results have implications for social work administrators working in shelters and for those interested in developing or maintaining shelters for those without homes.

Key words: Social Administration, homelessness, geography, program operations

USING GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPTS TO ASSESS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
SHELTER PRACTICES AND ADMINISTRATOR
ATTITUDES FOR THOSE WE CALL “HOMELESS”

Social work has a long history of providing services and conducting research to better address the social problem of “homelessness”. Opinions about the causes of homelessness and the best solutions have changed over time to reflect the attitudes of funders, service providers and public perceptions of homeless individuals. Currently, two approaches tend to dominate the field. The first targets the individual and services are directed at individual needs while the second focuses on the structural barriers that limit available housing and employment options (McChensey, 1995; Ralston 1996; Hartnett, 1992; Burt 1992; Elliot and Krivo, 1991; Hoch, 1991; Johnson, 1994; Law and Wolch, 1991; The National Coalition for the Homeless, 1997). Agency administrators must often decide how to balance these two approaches often driven by differing constituencies in the design and delivery of services.

The most common response to homelessness is to provide temporary shelter. The two views of homelessness (i.e., individual versus systemic dysfunction) suggest radically different intervention strategies, and these differences are often reflected in the services offered by the sheltering agencies. Although the shelter administrators’ views of homelessness should be reflected in the operation of the shelter and in the services that are provided, it may be that other stake holders play an influential role; one which beclouds the values of the profession of social work. The increasing number of people requesting housing assistance suggests, however, that the old ways of viewing homelessness are inadequate and that new ideas and approaches to providing shelter may be needed.

Geography, which is concerned with the ways in which public space is defined, utilized and maintained, offers one alternative approach that may broaden social work's understanding of ways to address homelessness, especially in terms of the factors that guide the design of shelter programs, decisions about where shelters are placed, and the policies and procedures that are adopted within those places. This article reports on a study that used concepts from geography to examine shelter operations. It considers the relationship between geographical concepts and administrators' attitudes toward service delivery. The paper concludes with a discussion of the implications for social work practice and research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Much of the research on homelessness has focused on estimating the prevalence and scope of the problem (Burt & Cohen, 1987; Link, Phelan, Breshan, Stueve, Moore & Susser, 1995; Roth, Bean, Lust, & Saveanu, 1985; Wright & Devine, 1995); describing the individual characteristics of the people experiencing homelessness (Burt & Cohen, 1989; First, Rife, & Toomey, 1994; First, Roth & Arewa, 1988; Hagen 1987a; 1987b; Hartnett, 1992; Leibow, 1993; McChensey, 1995; Ralston 1996); and analyzing the social, political, and economic factors that contribute to homelessness (Burt 1992; Elliot and Krivo, 1991; Hoch, 1991; Johnson, 1994; Law and Wolch, 1991; The National Coalition for the Homeless, 1997; Wolch, 1991). Research has also focused on the best ways to deliver services to homeless people in shelters and other temporary housing facilities (Barge & Norr, 1991; DeCosta Nunez, 1994; Johnson & Cnaan, 1995; Johnson & Castengera; Procher & Taber, 1987; Rowe, Hoge & Fisk, 1996; Stoner 1989). This research has provided valuable information regarding the number of people who are homeless, their personal characteristics, and the structural conditions that make homelessness

possible, but provides little information on how the sheltering programs themselves may influence the prevalence of homelessness and the outcomes of sheltering programs.

Geography has the potential to assist in examining the ways in which “homelessness” is addressed in the context of shelter services and how shelters may influence the prevalence of the problem. For example, Burt (2000) suggests that social services designed to address the problem may unintentionally contribute to the problem of homelessness. Geography examines the mediating role of the “built environment” in urban space as it relates to providing shelter to “homeless” people (Wolch, 1991) and is concerned with how the spatial organization of social communities is influenced by and influences social processes. For example, Rowe & Wolch (1990) state that the placement of a shelters within any given community has an influence on the choices and options of homeless people as they attempt to negotiate relationships that may assist in moving them out of their status as “homeless”. In other words, people may be segregated into certain areas of a community due to shelter placement and which subsequently influence social networks, housing and employment options. Other aspects of the “built environment” or place such as what services are offered on site and “house” rules are also important in considering the social segregation and isolation of people in need of shelter. Failure to consider the influence of shelter placement and operations may have many unintended consequences for service delivery. As stated by Burt (1992), “personal conditions increase a person’s vulnerability to homelessness but people have experienced these in the past. Only the structure can explain a much larger population” (p.226). Perhaps the structure that should also be examined is that of shelters, the place that has been created to assist people forced to live without housing. Vaness (1994) states that perhaps in the effort to assist homeless people, social work administrators operate programs in ways that further marginalize or exclude people from public places. This can occur by

creating exclusionary programs that are isolated both physically and socially from the “homed” community, that have multiple individual services on site, and that enforce strict rules regarding appropriate behavior both inside and outside the actual building (Sibley, 1996). The unintended result may be the controlling of individual behavior and movement in any given community, or even within the shelter itself. Attempting to control public behavior (in the community and organization) may reinforce the dominant ideology that stigmatizes people who experience homelessness as outcasts (Handler and Hasenfeld, 1991), or furthers the idea that homelessness is only a problem when people are in the wrong place at the wrong time behaving in ways that are not acceptable for that place (Massey, 1994).

Two closely related geographical concepts—exclusion and place—are particularly relevant to studying sheltering programs. Exclusion is defined in this paper as the extent to which a shelter operates with strict rules that regulate the mobility and actions of people through placement, program structure, and policies and procedures. Sibley (1996) argues that the creation of exclusionary places (i.e., those which are isolated through 1) actual location in relation to other places and 2) through rigid rules of behavior) serves as a means of social separation or segregation. He also notes that exclusionary processes and rules that define what is considered unacceptable behavior may not be recognized in institutional practices. “Classification and boundary maintenance are characteristic of both families, communities and institutions, and are all implicated in the construction of deviance and the exclusion of deviant individuals and groups” (Sibley, 1996, p. 81).

Another central geographic concept is place. The word “place” is used in a variety of ways in everyday dialogue. It can imply a specific building and also create an image which defines the intended use or purpose of that place. It can also imply a sense of appropriateness or

proper behavior as in the phrases “know one’s place,” “everyone has a place.” In other words, certain things or people belong in some places and not in others (Cresswell, 1997). These distinctions often assume a sense of appropriate behavior, as in “she was out of place.” These distinctions have the potential to assist social work administrators in understanding the creation and maintenance of shelter programs. Cresswell (1997) states that often the attitudes about the place itself (e.g., shelters) invoke attitudes about the purpose it serves and how it should be maintained. In the case of shelters, the actual physical location of the place may also relate to its purpose. The placement of sheltering programs indicates the idea that people who are homeless should be hidden or excluded from people who are more deserving of being in public places, because they are “homed”. It is both the placement of shelters and other exclusionary processes within shelter that are relevant concepts for social workers to consider.

Place and exclusivity can be conceptualized together in a framework offered by Sibley (1996), and can be considered not only based on built environment attributes, but also human attributes and the related expected behavior within the confines of that place.. Thus, the level of exclusivity of a place (shelter in this case) is defined by the extent to which a program restricts the mobility and actions of people through placement as well as organizational structure, policies, and procedures. Place attributes and resulting ideas about what should occur within the place itself are rarely examined and often results in “common sense” approaches to homelessness in the context of shelter.

Both exclusion and the place (the placement the size and physical make-up of the built structure, behavioral expectations, policies and procedures) may be associated with not only administrators’ attitudes regarding homeless people, but also with the attitudes of others involved in the process of determining what is considered a proper community response to homelessness,

appropriate conduct for residents within the shelter, and which services should be provided to people who experience homelessness. The relevance of these geographical concepts in sheltering services can be explored by studying the attitudes of shelter administrators and the structures of the shelter programs in which they are employed. The relationship between these concepts (i.e., what is believed and what is practiced) is essential in the examination of social work administration. This study presents the results of an effort to explore this relationship by using a survey to assess both administrators' attitudes regarding the homeless and the kinds of programs which they oversee.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

This exploratory project employed a survey mailed to the administrators of "homeless" sheltering programs across the state of Ohio that were included in the 1997-1998 Coalition on Homeless and Housing (COHHIO) directory. The agency administrators selected for this project were those that identified shelter as a focus of service provision in their agencies. These agencies served different types of homeless populations including victims of domestic violence, runaway youth, and individuals living with chronic health problems such as MRDD or AIDS. One hundred and fourteen (114) administrators completed and returned the survey (a response rate of 69.94%). The total number of separate shelters operated by the respondents was 127. Most of the responding agencies provided homeless shelters (75.6%) but others offered housing for domestic violence victims (18.9%) or youth (5.5%). Additionally, a map of the responding shelters demonstrates a variety of geographic locations (urban and rural) as well as a sample which represents the state as a whole.

[Insert Figure 1]

Seventy-three percent of the survey respondents were female. Most of the respondents have a college education (48.6%) with social work as the predominant field of study (28.6%). This finding differs from that of Barge and Norr (1991) who found that few social workers were involved in shelter services. The length of time respondents had been in their current position ranged from less than one year to 40 years (mean 7.16, SD 7.12).

Survey Instrument

The survey consisted of two sections. The first section collected information on the shelter programs operated by the agency, especially in terms of exclusivity and place. These concepts were measured by the extent to which a program restricts the mobility and actions of people through the shelter's placement, structure, policies, and procedures. Additionally, administrators were asked to indicate the level of involvement in program operations from several key stakeholders (funding agencies, board of directors, community members, and people served). Administrators completed the first section of the instrument for each sheltering program operated by the agency.

The second section of the survey contained 58 attitude statements designed to measure attitudes toward 1) the structure and process of sheltering, 2) the personal/individual causes of homelessness, 3) the extent to which programs should address individual solutions, 4) the systemic causes of homelessness and shelter placement, and 5) homelessness and homeless people in general.

RESULTS

Program Exclusivity

The first section of the survey consisted of eight-five items that measured exclusion as defined by Sibley (1996). The minimum score is 18.0 and the maximum score is 66.0, with lower scores indicative of fewer restrictions on mobility and actions. The results for this scale had a mean score of 44.57 with a standard deviation of 9.70. The scale was examined using the following tests of normality, the stem and leaf plot, the normal Q-Q plot and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (.083 with a significance of .03). The following figure demonstrates the results of the exclusion scale. Thus, many programs do not operate in the most exclusive manner as described by Sibley (1996), although a mean of 44.57 indicates that exclusionary processes frequently do exist in many sheltering programs and merits additional inquiry.

[Insert Figure 2]

A number of factors suggested by the geography literature were included in the exclusion scale. These included: building placement in relationship to the community, building type, populations served and excluded, services provided both inside shelter in and in the community, and program policies and practices.

Shelter Placement

Forty-seven percent of the sheltering programs are located in central city neighborhoods while an additional 34.9% are located downtown. Therefore, for the programs participating in the survey, 82.5% of them were located within the city limits. These data indicate that the placing of sheltering programs may be related to exclusion, thus keeping people considered deviant out of view of others in the community.

Building Type

While 49 programs serve single men, a small number (13) of the 127 programs participating in this study are for single men only. Two of these represent the only programs using a former warehouse as building type. The other buildings used to provide shelter to single men include: (1) a former factory building, (2) an apartment building, (3) a house, (4) a building constructed as a shelter, (5) a multi-services building, (6) and a YMCA. Again, the idea of the place may matter, sending a message of the type of a physical place in which homeless people belong.

Populations Served and Excluded

When considering the populations served and excluded it is also important to consider how behavior influences this process. The most frequently excluded population is people who are violent (74.0%), followed by people who actively use drugs (60.2%). On the other hand, 92.7% of all sheltering programs serve people with criminal records, while 81.9 % serve people with mental illness and 81.3% serve victims of domestic violence.

The most frequently served population is women and children (77.6%). This number may reflect the national trend indicating an increasing numbers of women and children among “homeless” people (National Coalition for the Homeless, 1997). However, it is interesting to note that the majority of programs do not serve single men (60.8%). It may be that this population has been left behind or is less desirable to serve. There may be a connection to the perceived characteristics of the population of single men and the lack of sheltering programs for them. Another population that may be underserved is men with children who are excluded from 59.2% of the participating programs.

Services

Shelters also control resident behavior by requiring participation in certain kinds of service as a prerequisite to living at the shelter. In some cases, offering the services on-site, rather than allowing residents to enter the community to receive services controls a person's mobility. For agencies represented in this survey, case management (93.5%) is the most frequently offered service on-site followed by housing assistance (78.9%), and individual counseling (67.7%). The services least frequently provided on-site are day care (15.0%) and formal public education for children (15.4%). The provision of formal, public education on-site may indicate that in some cases children who are "homeless" are excluded from neighborhood schools due to their lack of a permanent address.

When considering the services in which participation is required to remain in shelter, the most frequently required services are case management (74.5%), formal public education for children (56.6%), individual counseling (52.3%), and housing assistance (50.9%). Requiring both case management and individual counseling may reflect an individual approach to the issue of "homelessness." The requirement of receiving housing assistance may be indicative of a systemic approach to assisting people experiencing "homelessness" but requires further study to determine the focus of these services. The least frequently required services are day care (14.0%), support groups for children (21.8%), and tutoring for children (22.0%). The frequency with which these services are required may be a function of the number of programs serving children in the area or the proportion of children in the resident population. For example, 35.0% of programs responded that the requirement of day care is not applicable.

Another measure that is relevant to the concept of exclusion is the services available in the neighborhoods where sheltering programs exist and whether or not these services are

reproduced on-site. As described by Rowe and Wolch (1990), the result of the reproduction of services for people using homeless sheltering programs may be the further control of the movement and the mobility of people within certain neighborhoods, thus limiting access to other communities and other resources.

The most frequently reported accessible services in the neighborhood include: individual counseling (94.2%), health care services (93.6%), employment programs (92.8%), drug and alcohol counseling (92.2%), and housing assistance and case management (both 90.9%). Of these services accessible in the neighborhood, many are also offered on site. For example, case management and individual counseling represent the most frequently offered service on-site. The duplication of services offers another way in which people within shelter are restricted from participating in community services.

Practices

Another measure of exclusion is the practices and policies employed within the shelters that control the actions and mobility of people. These behavioral expectations may become the ways in which people are controlled within shelter, or excluded after entering shelter for not following or complying with the rules of appropriate behavior. Eighty-seven percent of all sheltering programs have a practice for “banning or barring” while 82.1% have a written policy related to who cannot receive services. Other practices that regulate the movement and behavior of people include a practice that requires people to wake up at specific times (78.3% of the programs) and a practice that requires a specific time for sleeping (79% of the programs). Another means of regulating people is limiting access to material goods. Sheltering programs report that 63.5% have a practice related to accessing personal hygiene items while 36.3% have a practice related to accessing personal belongings. Limited telephone use (91.8% of the

programs) may be a function of program size and expense, but also limits residents' connection to others and may have severe implications for access to employment opportunities or other services in which a person may be involved. Other practices reported in the survey include a level system (this is a system by which behavior is rewarded or punished by awarding or removing of privileges), access to laundry facilities, policies on drug and alcohol use, consensual searches, designated quiet times, and visitation by others.

Policies

The policies of sheltering programs participating in this study reflect that 70.2% have a policy related to a time to wake up while 69.7% have a policy regarding a "lights out time" or time to sleep. The percentage of programs restricting access to personal hygiene items is 42.7% while the percentage for access to personal belongings is 25.5%. Again, telephone access is limited in policy (79.5% of sheltering programs). The other categories included in the policies within programs include a level system, laundry, drug and alcohol use, consensual search, quiet time, and child management. It is important to note that inconsistencies exist between practices and policies. This may indicate that programs are operated at the discretion of staff which may send mixed messages to people served.

Security cameras are also used in some programs to monitor the movement and behavior of residents. Fifteen percent of all participating sheltering programs have security cameras inside while 18.1% have security cameras outside. In his case study of a "homeless" shelter, Williams (1996) discussed how security cameras became a method for internal and external surveillance of the behavior and movement of the people within shelter by staff. Although the use of security

cameras is often typical for domestic violence shelters as a matter of safety, the domestic violence programs participating in the study represent only 3 out of the 19 programs with internal cameras, and 7 out of the 23 programs with external cameras.

The exclusivity section of the survey provides a description of agency policies and practices that serve to limit contact with the larger community or control the actions of shelter residents. The second section of the survey collected information from the administrators on their attitudes about the causes and solutions for homelessness.

Administrator Attitudes

The second section of the survey contained 58 attitude statements and asked respondents to rate their level of agreement using a Likert scale (1=Strongly Agree, 4=Strongly Disagree). Using exploratory factor analysis, the items were then reduced to five sub-scales measuring attitudes toward 1) the structure and process of sheltering, 2) the personal/individual causes of homelessness, 3) the extent to which programs should address individual solutions, 4) the systemic causes of homelessness and shelter placement, and 5) homelessness and homeless people in general.

The items in the first sub-scale assess attitudes regarding the structure of sheltering programs (Figure 3). The items in the sub-scale attempt to measure administrator attitudes regarding shelter structure. The reliability score of .6064 is acceptable for an exploratory study or the first time the scale has been used (Pedhazur and Schmelkin, 1991). The scale item mean of 1.99 (n=89) indicates that most administrators agree that shelters should operate with structured rules supporting the idea of exclusivity. Interestingly, the statement that shelters should create homelike environments may point to the concept of “common sense” approaches

to maintaining shelter programs. In other words, although most administrators agree that shelters should create home like environments, the other items on the scale reflect a more structured approach. These responses also reflect what Burt (1992) considers to be commonly held view that a series of temporary housing arrangements need to be offered to homeless people before permanent housing is considered.

[Insert Figure 3]

Subscale 2 contains items that assess the administrators' attitudes regarding the personal reasons that someone may become or remain "homeless" (Figure 2). These items are intended to examine the extent to which administrators believe that "homelessness" is an individual problem. The reliability alpha for this subscale was .7428. The mean score of 2.80 (n=82) indicates that administrators tend to disagree that "homelessness" is an individual problem as measured by these statements.

[Insert Figure 4]

The third subscale assesses attitudes about whether "homelessness" is an individual problem and the extent to which programs should focus on individual solutions. The scale had a good reliability (alpha=.78). The mean of 2.34 (n=68) indicates that there is a moderate level of agreement that "homeless" people need individually focused services. This is consistent with the responses to subscale #2 indicating that homelessness is not primarily due to individual difficulties.

[Insert Figure 5]

The fourth sub-scale relates to systemic issues regarding the systematic causes of "homelessness," the solutions, and the placement of sheltering programs. The scale item mean

score of 2.35 indicates a moderate level of agreement with the items related to these system issues. The scale reliability statistic is .75.

[Insert Figure 6]

The final sub-scale describes attitudes regarding general definitions and ideas about “homelessness” and “homeless” people. These items include both attitudes about the behavior as well as characteristics of people in the shelters. The scale reliability statistic, (.63) although below the standard .70, is considered adequate for exploratory research (Pedhazur and Schmelkin, 1991). The mean item score of 2.72 indicates moderate disagreement with the items of this scale.

[Insert Figure 7]

Considering all items related to administrator attitudes, the statement with which most respondents reported strong agreement was “Homelessness is the result of systemic problems” (1.68). This is consistent with the item with which there was the most disagreement, i.e., “Homelessness’ is a personal characteristic of people” (3.34). However, there appear to be inconsistencies in other items. For example, administrators tend to agree that shelters should create homelike environments (1.86) while also supporting the presence of multiple on-site services (1.74) and the idea that shelters are more effective with structured rules (1.87). One possible interpretation is that administrators have certain ideas about what is appropriate behavior in a “home,” as described by Vaness (1994). Another interpretation is that administrators believe that “homes” should be organized in a particular manner. Agreement that multiple services should be offered on-site seems to indicate that administrators view homelessness as an individual problem rather than a systemic one. However, conflicts with the lack of strong agreement on the “individual” items in the attitude statements (i.e., most

“homeless” people are drug and alcohol addicted, most “homeless” people are mentally ill, most “homeless” people lack the motivation to seek employment). Complicating the picture further is the fact that administrators report moderate agreement (2.40) that shelters are not the answer to “homelessness.”

Others influencing the decision making process

As a way of examining the groups involved in place maintenance decisions, administrators were asked to respond to the level of involvement of various groups (Table 1). The most involved group (at any level) of people is administrators (100%), followed by direct service staff (99.2%). Although the community members are not the predominating group participating in the internal policies and procedures, they do have influence in the ways in which sheltering programs are maintained (66.4%). Interestingly, people in need of shelter appear to have the least influence. Again, reality of shelter administration may be that the focus on individual rehabilitation (in working with people called homeless) may outweigh the ability to value the person in organizational structure and operational ways. Thus, the question of how social work administrators balance the needs of multiple stake holders remains unclear, but is an important one. It may be that programs are operated based on other needs, not those of the people requesting services. Based on these data, it is clear that although administrative staff has the most influence in determining internal policies and procedures, the decisions made by this group of people are also influenced by other groups of people. This item describes the broad level of participation in internal policies and procedures, but it is also important to examine in more detail the ways in which the policies and practices with shelter are influenced. Most significantly, it is relevant to consider the ways in which policies and procedures that inhibit the mobility and behavior of people served within shelter are influenced.

[Insert Table 1]

In order to understand specific policies and procedures that are influenced by people outside the day to day operations of the sheltering programs, an item in the survey asked the level of influence of each group in several policies/procedures. Table 2 reports the findings of these items. Of interest in considering the idea of place maintenance as it relates to both human and practice characteristics and exclusion are the items that regulate the behavior of people. When considering the curfew of the shelter, the neighbors have the highest level of influence (20.3); the type of people served is most influenced by funders (66.4); the number of people served is most influenced by funders (57.6); gathering outside is most influenced by neighbors (50.0); hours of operation are most influenced by funders (49.1); and location of shelter is most influenced by local government (52.2). Considering these influences, it is interesting in that when asked how placement decisions were made, only 35.2% of the participating programs reported that the funders or other community political groups had an influence in this decision. Additionally, although funders may not have been the most influential group when asked about general internal and external policies and procedures, this group was extremely influential in specific categories.

[Insert Table 2]

The results of this analysis must be interpreted with caution for it is not without limitations. The information was gathered through the lens of the administrator. It may be that actual practice in shelter deviates from what was reported by the administrators. It is not assumed that the information gathered can provide an accurate picture of the operations in shelter. Additionally, it is possible that others involved in shelter influence operations equally

or more than the administrator, therefore, the attitudes of administrators may represent a small portion of influence on exclusion.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK SERVICES AND SHELTERING PROGRAMS

The results of this study suggest that although administrators in sheltering agencies are more likely to believe that systematic factors cause homelessness, the practices and policies of the agencies they administer tend to address individual factors. This is done through rules and regulations which serve to exclude people who are homeless from other segments of society and to “teach the homeless their place” by restricting individual freedoms. Some of the sheltering programs included in this study enforce strict rules of behavior for residents, limit personal property, restrict access to phone calls, and have clear guidelines about who will be served. In addition, the shelters are usually located in the city, limiting access to employment opportunities in the city suburbs. People in shelter are further excluded from interacting with the larger society by providing on-site services to address individual needs, even when similar services already exist in the community.

The concepts of “exclusivity” and “place” from geography provide a framework for examining the programs that exist to serve those we call homeless. Sibley (1996) defines exclusionary places as those that are isolated and structured by rigid rules for behavior in order to achieve social separation or segregation. Place, a closely related idea, refers to attitudes about the place itself (Cresswell, 1997) including the purpose of the “place” and how it should be maintained. This is often reflected in the extent to which a program restricts the mobility and actions of people.

The results of this study suggest that social workers and others engaged in services to people who experience homelessness (and perhaps other marginalized groups) need to examine the attitudes and values they bring to their positions as compared to the attitudes and values that are reflected in their agency policies. It is clear from the responses to this survey that actual agency practices and policies are often not consistent with the attitudes expressed by those responsible for designing and implementing service delivery. The sheltering programs may, in fact, more accurately reflect the attitudes of the community and, in doing so, contribute to the systemic issues that continue to sustain homelessness rather than ameliorate it.

REFERENCES

- Barge, F. C., & Norr, K. F. (1991). Homeless shelter policies for women in an urban environment. *American Journal of Nursing*, 23(3), 145- 149.
- Burt, M. (1995). Critical factors in counting the homeless: An invited commentary. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 65(3), 334- 339.
- Burt, M., & Cohen, B. (1987). Differences among homeless single women, women with children, and single men. *Social Problems*, 36(5), 508- 523.
- Burt, M., & Cohen, B. (1989). *America's Homeless: Numbers, Characteristics, and the Programs that serve them* (Urban Institute Report 89-3). Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.
- The Coalition on Housing and Homelessness in Ohio (1997). *The COHHIO directory: A listing of non-profit housing organizations and agencies serving homeless people in Ohio*. Columbus, Ohio.
- Cresswell, T. (1997). *In place/out of place: Geography, ideology, and transgression*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Daly, G. (1996). *Homelessness: Policies, strategies and lives on the street*. New York, New York: Routledge.
- DeCosta Nunez, R. (1994). *Hopes, dreams and promise: The future of homeless children in America*. New York, New York: Homes for the Homeless, Inc.
- Dillman, D. A. (1978). *Mail and telephone surveys: The total design method*. New York, New York: Wiley.
- First, R. J., Roth, D., & Arewa, B., Darden (1988). Homelessness: Understanding the problem for minorities. *Social Work*. March-April: 120-124.
- First, R. J., Rife, J. C., & Toomey, B. G. (1994). Homelessness in rural areas: Causes, patterns, and trends. *Social Work*, 39(1): 97-108.
- Hagen, J. L. (1987a). The heterogeneity of homelessness. *The Journal of Contemporary Social Work*. October: 451- 459.
- Hagen, J. L. (1987b). Gender and Homelessness. *Social Work*. July-August: 312- 316.
- Hartnett, H.P. (1992). Women we call homeless: The politics of interpretation. Unpublished Masters Thesis, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

- Hombs, M., & Synder, M. (1982). *Homelessness in America: The origins of homelessness*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Johnson, A. K. (1989). "Measurement and methodology: Problems and issues in research on homelessness". *Social Work Research and Abstracts*. December: 12-19.
- Johnson, A. K. (1994). Homelessness policy in the United States. *Social Policy and Administration*, 28(2). 151-163.
- Johnson, A. K., & Cnaan, R. A. (1995). Social work practice with homeless persons: State of the art. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 5(3), 340-382.
- Johnson, A. K., & Castengera, A. R. (1994). Integrated program development: A model for meeting the complex needs of homeless persons. *Journal of Community Practice*, 1(3), 29-47.
- Law, R., & Wolch, J. (1991). Homelessness and urban restructuring. *Urban Geography*, 12(2), 105-136.
- Liebow, E. (1993). *Tell them who I am: The lives of homeless women*. New York, New York: The Free Press.
- Link, B., Phelan, J., Bresnahan, M., Stueve, A., Moore, R., & Susser, E. (1995). Lifetime and five-year prevalence of homelessness in the United States: New evidence on an old debate. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 65(3), 347- 354.
- Massey, D. (1994). *Space, place and fender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- McChesney, K. Y. (1995). A review of the empirical literature on contemporary urban homeless families. *Social Service Review*, September: 429-459.
- National Coalition for the Homeless (1997). *Homelessness in America: Unabated and increasing: A ten year perspective*. Washington, DC.
- Pedhazur, E. J., & Schmelkin, L. P. (1991). *Measurement design and analysis*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Proch, K., & Taber, M. (1987). Helping the homeless. *Public Welfare*. Spring: 5-9.
- Ralston, M. L. (1996). *Nobody wants to hear our truth: Homeless women and theories of the welfare state*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.
- Roth, D., Bean, G., Lust, N., & Saveanu, T. (1985). *Homelessness in Ohio: A study of people in need*. Columbus: Ohio Department of Mental Health.
- Rowe, S., & Wolch, J. (1990). Social networks in time and space: Homeless women in skid row, Los Angeles. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, vol. 80: 184-204.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. (1989). *Research methods for social work*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, Inc.

SPSS Users Guide (1993). Chicago, Illinois: SPSS Inc.

Shinn, M., & Weitzman, B. C. (1990a). Research on homelessness: An introduction. *Journal of Social Issues*, 46(4), 1-11.

Shinn, M., & Weitzman, B. C. (1990b). Urban homelessness. *Journal of Social Issues*, 46(4), 12-25.

Sibley, D. (1996). *Geographies of exclusion: Society and difference in the West*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Stoner, M. R. (1989). Beyond shelter: Policy directions for the prevention of homelessness. *Social Work Research & Abstracts*: December: 7-11.

Straw, R. B. (1995). Looking behind the numbers in counting the homeless: An invited commentary. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 65(3), 330- 333.

Toomey, B., First, R., Greenlee, R., & Cummins, L. (1993). Counting the rural homeless population: Methodological dilemmas. *Social Work Research and Abstracts*, 29(4), 23-27.

Veness, A. R. (1994) Designer shelters as models and makers of home: New responses to homelessness in urban America. *Urban Geography*, 15(2), 150-167.

Williams, J. C. (1996). Geography of the homeless shelter: Staff surveillance and resident resistance. *Urban Anthropology*, 25(1),75-113.

Wolch, J. (1991). Urban homelessness an agenda for research. *Urban Geography*, 12(2), 99-104.

Wright, T. (1992). *Out of place: Mobilizations, subcities, and contested landscapes*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.

Wright & DeVine. (1995). Housing dynamics of the homeless: Implications for a count. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 65(3), 320-329.

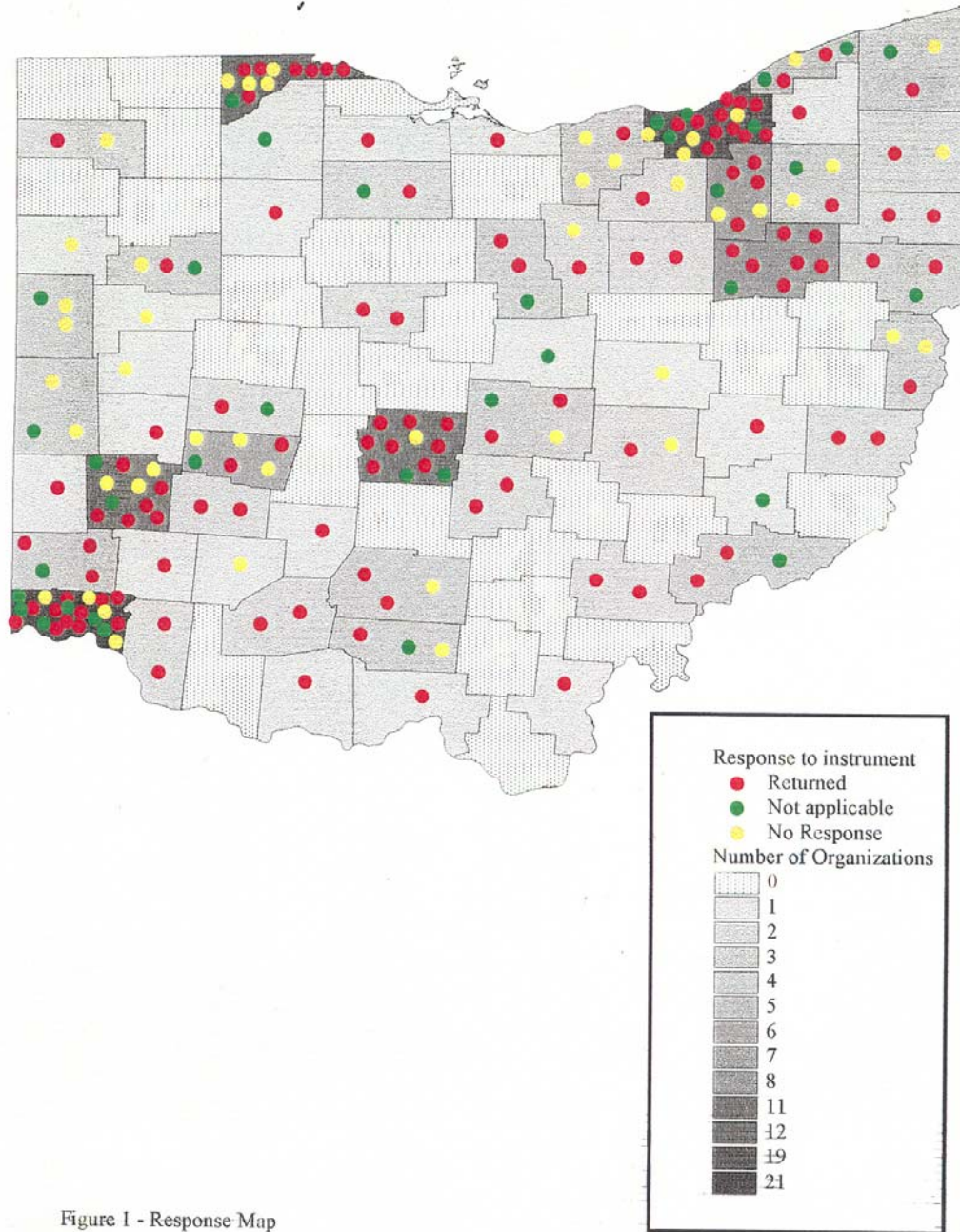


Figure 1 - Response Map

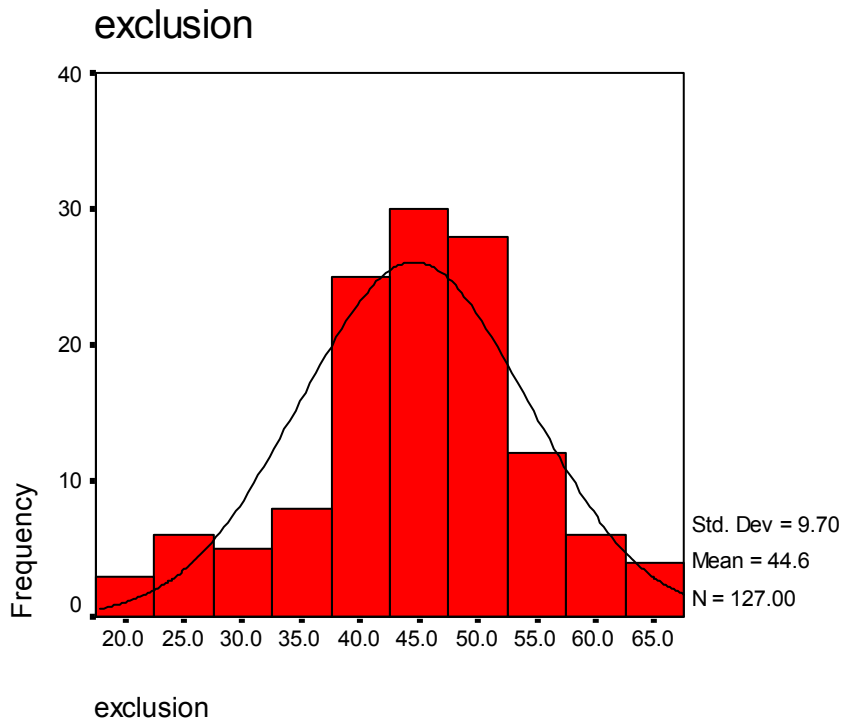


Figure 2: Exclusion Scale

Item

Shelters should have multiple services on-site

Shelters should create homelike environments

Homeless people should enter shelter first before going to transitional or permanent housing

Homeless people should be screened for acceptance into any shelter program

Specialized shelters should be developed for different homeless populations

Homeless shelters are more effective if the environment is structured by rules regarding daily activities

Scale 1(Strongly Agree)-4(Strongly Disagree), Scale Alpha= .6064,Cases =89,

Scale Item Mean 1.99

Figure 3. Attitude Sub-scale-Shelter Issues

Item

Homelessness is a personal characteristic of people

Homelessness is often a personal choice

Homelessness is the result of personal problems

Most homeless people are drug and alcohol addicted

Most homeless people lack the education required to obtain employment

Most homeless people lack the motivation to seek employment

Homelessness is a personal cycle

Homelessness is a family cycle

Scale 1(Strongly agree)-4(Strongly disagree), Scale Alpha= .7428,Number of cases = 82,

Number of items = 8, Scale Item Mean = 2.80

Figure 4. Attitude Sub-scale - Individual Causes

Item
Homeless people need guidance to overcome homelessness
People cannot escape homelessness without professional assistance
Homeless people need to be directed by others in making choices about daily living
Homeless people need parenting classes
Homeless people need to have daily structure in their lives
Homeless people should enter shelter first before going to transitional or permanent housing
Homeless people should be screened for acceptance into any shelter program
Homeless people need to resolve their personal issues prior to obtaining permanent housing

Scale 1(Strongly Agree)-4(Strongly Disagree), Scale Alpha = .78, Number of Cases = 68,
Number of items =8,Scale Item Mean 2.34

Figure 5. Attitude Sub-scale- Individual Solutions

Item

The lack of low-income housing is the primary cause of homelessness

Low-income housing would solve the problem of homelessness

Permanent housing with intensive supportive services would solve the problem of homelessness

Shelters should be located in suburban neighborhoods

Transitional housing should be located in suburban neighborhoods

Scale 1(Strongly Agree)-4(Strongly Disagree), Scale Alpha .75, Number of cases 76, Number of items 5, Scale Item Mean 2.35

Figure 6. Attitude Sub-scale- System Issues

Item
Most people who use soup kitchens are homeless
Most people who use food banks are homeless
Homeless people are generally from the inner city
The majority of homeless people are chronically in need of shelter
Homelessness can be solved
People should not sleep outside
Homeless people should not panhandle
Homeless people should not congregate in public spaces
Homeless people are often from out of town

Scale 1(Strongly Agree)-4(Strongly Disagree), Scale Alpha .63, Number of cases 71, Scale Item
Mean 2.72

Figure 7. Attitude sub-scale, General Attitudes

<i>Group of People</i>	<i>High f(%)</i>	<i>Moderate f(%)</i>	<i>Not at all f(%)</i>	<i>Total</i>
Administrative Staff	103(81.7)	23(18.3)	0(0.0)	126
Direct Service Staff	103(82.4)	21(16.8)	1(.8)	125
Funders	24(19.8)	73(60.3)	24(19.8)	121
Board of Directors	56(45.2)	57(46.0)	11(8.9)	124
Community Members	17(14.3)	62(52.1)	40(33.6)	119
Residents	26(21.1)	76(61.8)	21(17.1)	123

N=127

Percentages based on valid data.

Table 1. Group Participation in Internal Policies and Procedures

<i>Policy/Procedure</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>High f (%)</i>	<i>Moderate f (%)</i>	<i>Not At All f (%)</i>	<i>Total*</i>
Curfew	Neighbors	7 (5.9)	17(14.4)	94(79.7)	118
	Local Government	4(3.4)	15(12.8)	98(83.8)	117
	Developers	2(1.7)	6(5.2)	108(93.1)	116
	Funders	3(2.5)	11(9.1)	107(88.4)	121
Type of People Served	Neighbors	4(3.4)	18(15.5)	94(81.0)	116
	Local Government	17(14.7)	29(25.0)	70(60.3)	116
	Developers	4(3.5)	9(8.0)	100(88.5)	113
	Funders	47(39.5)	32(26.9)	40(31.5)	119
Number Served	Neighbors	6(5.4)	9(8.1)	96(86.5)	111
	Local Government	30(25.9)	21(18.1)	65(56.0)	116
	Developers	9(8.1)	7(6.3)	95(85.6)	111
	Funders	42(35.6)	26(22.0)	50(39.4)	118

<i>Policy/Procedure</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>High f (%)</i>	<i>Moderate f (%)</i>	<i>Not At All f (%)</i>	<i>Total*</i>
Gathering Outside	Neighbors	27(25.0)	27(25.0)	54(50.0)	108
	Local Government	8(7.5)	23(21.5)	76(71.0)	107
	Developers	5(4.8)	8(7.6)	92(87.6)	105
	Funders	5(4.8)	7(6.7)	92(88.5)	104
Hours of Operation	Neighbors	4(3.6)	12(10.7)	96(85.7)	112
	Local Government	14(12.2)	18(15.7)	83(72.2)	115
	Developers	6(5.4)	5(4.5)	100(90.1)	111
	Funders	38(32.2)	20(16.9)	60(50.8)	111
Location of Shelter	Neighbors	16(14.4)	35(31.5)	60(54.1)	111
	Local Government	27(23.5)	33(28.7)	55(47.8)	115
	Developers	19(17.6)	10(9.3)	79(73.1)	108
	Funders	20(17.2)	32(27.6)	64(55.2)	116

*N=127

*Numbers and percentages are based on valid responses.

Table 2. Influence over Internal Policies and Procedures