

April 20, 1972
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EVALUATION OF THE MANHATTAN BOWERY PROJECT

The Manhattan Bowery Project, developed by the Vera Institute of Justice in cooperation with the New York City Department of Social Services, Police, Correction, the Health Services Administration and St. Vincent's hospital, is a medically-oriented, non-coercive approach to helping destitute alcoholics. It is based on the concept that an alcoholic is a sick man, rather than a criminal, and therefore seeks to substitute a medically oriented program of treatment for the revolving door court processing of such persons, so prevalent throughout the United States. On November 27, 1967, the project began operation on the fourth floor of the Men's Shelter, 8 East 3rd Street, Manhattan, with a 50-bed detoxification and withdrawal infirmary.

Most of the admissions to the project are accepted through the operation of the Street Rescue Patrol Units, consisting of four plain-clothes patrolmen and two unmarked police stationwagons, assisted by former alcoholics acting as Rescue Aids. These units patrol the Bowery area, 16 hours a day, 7 days a week, as two-man rescue teams, seeking out derelicts most in need of attention. The derelict is first approached by the Rescue Aid who explains the benefits of the program and requests the man to accompany him to the infirmary. The police officer assists in getting the man into the police vehicle, transporting him to the project and maintaining related security and record keeping. The police officers play a vital role in the success of the project through their knowledge of the Bowery area.

Treatment at the facility is on a voluntary basis and consists of medical evaluation and alcoholic detoxification for an average of a five day stay. Afterwards, the alcoholic is given an opportunity to accept referral to any one of twenty-five aftercare programs. These programs offer therapeutic and rehabilitative services for patients willing to make an effort for eventual return to normal living.

As of February 29, 1972, the project had recorded 13,365 admissions, over the 4 year and 3 month period of operation (November 1967 through February 1972), representing 3,841 individual men. 11,093, or 83%, of admissions were made through the street rescue patrol operation, while 1,871, or 14%, were referred to the project by other agencies, both public and private, and 401, or 3%, were received from the 'deck' clinic, which operates on the first floor on the Men's Shelter.

Statistics are as follows:

Total admissions:	13,365	
Admitted through street patrol operations:	11,093	(83%)
Referred by other agencies:	1,871	(14%)
Received from 'deck':	401	(3%)

Of the 13,365 admissions, 9,524, or 71%, were treated at the facility more than once, some as many as five and six times before they were successfully placed in aftercare programs.

Statistics are as follows:

Total re-admissions:	9,524	(71%)
of which - 2nd admissions were:	2,539	(19%)
3rd admissions were:	2,040	(15%)
Admitted more than three times each:	4,945	(37%)

Since acceptance of treatment at the project is on a voluntary basis, not all men approached by the street rescue teams are willing to accept. Some men refuse each time they are approached, while other refuse the first or second time and subsequently accept treatment, depending on their physical condition, state of sobriety, weather conditions, etc. Of all approaches made, 19% refused to accept treatment, another 5% were escorted to lodging houses in the area, and the more serious cases requiring extensive medical treatment were sent to hospitals by ambulance. These were generally cases involving broken bones where medical expertise was necessary before removing the man off the street.

Statistics account for each approach made by the rescue teams:

Total approached:	17,892	
Refused help:	3,462	(19%)
Given other assistance (escorted to lodging house, etc)	975	(5%)
Ambulance cases (directly to hospital)	90	(05%)
Total taken in by street rescue teams;	13,365	(75%)

The non-coercive assistance approach of the project also extends to referrals made to aftercare programs. Since the project began operation, it has been successful in placing 9,088, or 68%, of its patients in aftercare programs providing therapeutic treatment. 4,277, or 32% however, refused any kind of referral. Some of these men requested to return to the project for continued treatment. As a result, an aftercare clinic was established providing antabuse, tranquilizers and other medication for about 100 men a week, on an out-patient basis.

DECK CLINIC

Since many more men required medical treatment than the Infirmary could provide for, the idea of establishing an out-patient emergency medical care 'clinic' was developed. The clinic provides medical services for the less serious cases not requiring the in-bed services of the Infirmary. Since all men treated at the clinic are given chest x-rays, cases of tuberculosis and other infectious disease can be detected earlier and appropriate treatment recommended.

In April 1969, the 'clinic' began operations on the first floor 'deck' of the Men's Shelter. During the two year and 3 month period of operation (April 1969 through February 1972), 22,166 admissions, representing 5,085 individual men, were treated on an out-patient basis, many of whom were treated several times. The police commitment to this phase of the program includes the assignment of two (2) additional patrolmen and one (1) additional unmarked police station wagon, to perform street rescue patrol in the 5th and 9th precincts.

Statistics are as follows:

Total cases treated:	22,166	
Brought in by street rescue teams:	9,470	(43%)
Self-referrals : (after initial police referral)	12,696	(57%)

As a result of being able to provide this medically-oriented source of treatment for alcoholic/derelects in the Bowery area, police enforcement arrests of these men have been discontinued in the 5th and 9th precincts. Consequently, alcoholic/derelect arrests in those precincts have decreased from 5,258 in 1968 to 428 in 1971, with the greatest percentage decrease in arrests for Public Intox-

toxication, from 3,655 in 1968 to 157 in 1971, a 96% decrease. (See arrest statistic table attached). The combined services of the Manhattan Bowery Project and 'clinic' now treat an average of 250 men a week, as compared to an average of 75 arrests a week previously made by police officers assigned exclusively to roundup duty in the 5th and 9th precincts. Ten (10) police officers were formerly assigned to roundup duty with a patrol wagon in these two precincts, which were returned to regular patrol duty in those commands when roundups in the Bowery area were discontinued.

While it is difficult to estimate the actual cost effectiveness of this program from a police standpoint, since many more men are now being taken off the streets and treated medically, than would have been arrested, thousands of unproductive arrests have been eliminated, thus reducing the burden on arresting officers, booking officers, detention and transportation facilities and the courts.

As a continuing development of the program's rehabilitative work with alcoholic/derelects, a new phase called "Project Renewal" began on June 1, 1970. This phase aims at developing a supportive community-life employment situation where several men live and work together with a view of being self-supporting and return to normal living standards. A contract has been signed with the Mayor's Urban Task Force under which these men work in maintaining approximately 35 playlots throughout the city. It is hoped that more rehabilitative programs can be developed to provide gainful employment for many more men in the near future.

TABLE I

COMPARISON OF ARREST STATISTICS FOR ALCOHOLIC/DERELICT RELATED ARRESTS IN THE 5TH AND 9TH PRECINCTS, FOR YEARS INDICATED

	5TH PRECINCT			9TH PRECINCT				
	1968	1969	1970	1971	1968	1969	1970	1971
Disorderly Conduct:	647	429	500	168	239	304	173	83
Loitering:	504	221	80	0	183	270	359	20
Public Intoxication:	1720	560	65	11*	1935	349	44	146*
TOTAL:	2871	1210	645	179	2387	923	576	249

TOTAL ALL SUCH ARRESTS, 5TH AND 9TH PRECINCTS, COMBINED

1968	1968	5258
1969	1969	2133
1970	1970	1221
1971	1971	428

* Note: The greatest percentage decrease occurred in the category of Public Intoxication arrests, 157 in 1971, (5th & 9th Pcts combined), as compared with 3,655 such arrests in 1968, representing a 96% decrease in public intoxication arrests.