THE EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

OF MALE AND FEMALE

STREET INVOLVED YOUTH

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ABSTRACT

The early recollection technique has been in use since the late 1800s. In recent years early recollections have been utilized to analyze a number of different populations (e.g., alcoholics, homosexual men). The present study looks at the early recollections (ERs) of a number of male and female street involved youth. It is exploratory in nature as it presents the first ER research on street youth. No prior research was available for comparative purposes. The population consists of 32 subjects, whose average age is 20 years. Subjects were chosen from a downtown Vancouver drop-in centre.

A scoring system, part of which was derived from an earlier study, is used to analyze the memories. The results generally indicate that males and females are passive agents in their actions, have memories that possess negative affect, and are externally controlled. In addition, the males have issues with their sexuality, and gender differences are evident with regard to role-activity and sexuality.

This study also highlights the fact that more than half of the sample came from broken homes, had completed grade 10, had Catholic upbringings and, once on the street, were heavily involved in drug use.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and Background of the Problem

In most cities throughout North America street youth are an escalating and tragic problem. Part of the tragedy lies in the horrendous experiences these youth faced while growing up, and part of it lies in the inability of the youth to break free from the destructive life style that engulfs them once they reach the street.

Having had experience counselling this population, the author is aware that the male segment of the population is not receiving adequate services. Most of the services provided have been aimed at female street youth, leaving the males with very little support.

In Vancouver, for example, there are a few counsellors available who deal with sexual abuse issues, but none available who deal specifically with sexual identity confusion, which appears inherent in most of the males on the street. As well, the police consistently bring females into the Ministry office for emergency care, but rarely pick up males because they are uncomfortable with the stigma that may be attached to them should any of their colleagues see them with a gay, male prostitute. Compounding this problem is the reality that those working with the population do not fully understand the male street youth perspective, as little research has been done on this subject.

Objectives of the study

The lack of information on the males' perspective makes it almost impossible for helping professionals to ascertain what services would be most useful. For those working with this population, it is apparent that there are gaps in services, but before more appropriate services can be provided, it is important to

first understand how male and female street youth differ. This is an exploratory study which attempts to highlight the different characteristics of male and female street involved youth. The hope is that this information can be of use in the implementation of services for the male (and female) segment of this population. In order to accomplish this task, the early recollection (ER) projective technique was employed.

Adler viewed early recollections as revealing fundamental aspects of an individual's present view of life (Bruhn & Last, 1982). The individual would chose memories that justified or highlighted aspects of present day functioning. When used with street involved youth, it is expected that this information will prove to be valuable in providing information on the needs, beliefs, and values of this population, which will in turn help to educate those working with this population.

Definition of Terms

Street Involved Youth

The first hurdle to overcome concerned the definition of street involved youth. As there was no previous research available which described this term, street involved youth was defined as those youth who live away from home, typically in a downtown area, in a place not safe nor suitable (e.g., a "sleazy" downtown hotel), who survive through activity such as prostitution and drug and alcohol use and abuse, and whose social network is composed of similar street people. It was important to differentiate street involved youth from juvenile delinquents; the latter do not necessarily live on the streets but have been in trouble with the law. (Of course some street youth are juvenile delinquents, but to the best of the author's ability, such youth have not been included in the present study.)

Sexual Abuse

In defining sexual abuse, problems arose. Much of the discrepancy was due to differences in definitions which were culture and time-bound and based on the values and beliefs of individuals, professionals and society. One researcher (Gold, 1986) used age parameters to define sexual abuse (e.g., between a child 12 years old and under, and a postpubertal person at least five years older than the child). Other authors (Wyatt & Peters, 1986) divide sexual abuse into noncontact and contact abuse and do not refer to age boundaries. It was therefore difficult to articulate a definition that could be applied universally. This still appears to be the case today, despite efforts to promote uniform criteria in the definition.

Differences in definitions may have contributed to discrepancies in the estimated prevalence of abuse. Recently there has been a trend toward clearly specifying the experiences labelled abusive; but even with those definitions the rates vary considerably. Russell, Wyatt, and Peters (1986) estimated that over 50% of all female children will be sexually abused before 18 years of age. Kercher and McShane (1984) and Wyoner and Calhoun (1984) reported rates of 11% and less. The large discrepancy in these studies was due to their different definitions of sexual abuse. Schechter and Roberge's definition (cited in Mrazek & Kempe, 1981) is widely used and appears to be all encompassing, "the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activity that they do not fully comprehend, are unable to give informed consent to, and violate the social taboos of family roles" (p.24).

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, it was inappropriate to set up hypotheses and test them statistically. Instead, questions were posed which served to highlight the various gender patterns in the ERs of the street youth.

Questions

1   What is the pattern of sexuality, as defined by the scoring system, in the ERs of male and female street involved youth?

2   What is the pattern of passivity, as defined by the scoring system, in the ERs of male and female street involved youth?

3   What is the pattern of affect, as defined by the scoring system, in the ERs of male and female street involved youth?

4   What is the pattern of control, as defined by thescoring system, in the ERs of male and female street involved youth?

5   What is the pattern of the tone, as defined by the scoring system, in the ERs of male and female street involved youth?

6   What are the different patterns of the ER and demographic data, in the ERs and questionnaires of male and female street involved youth?

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Street Involved Youth

A problem arose when reviewing the literature on street involved youth. Previous studies have not focused on street youth per se, rather, they chose to study prostitutes (female) and define them as "streetkids". In so doing, a substantial number of street youth have been excluded from examination, as not every street youth is a female prostitute. A study of the Vancouver Reconnect Program and Vancouver Street Youth (CS/Resors Consulting, Ltd., 1989), found that only 58.3% of those interviewed were involved in prostitution. Clearly, there is a substantial portion of street youth (not prostitutes) unaccounted for in previous research, a gap this study hopes to fill.

Personal experience with the population in question has shown that many street youth choose to spend their time "hanging out" on the streets, meeting friends, and going to bars. They do not all fit the extensively studied category of "runaways", as many were kicked out of their homes, planned the decision with their families, or have families that live on the streets as well (e.g., Native youth); but what does appear common to all street involved youth (prostitutes and non-prostitutes) is their family background.

Prostitution will be the focus of this literature review because there is no literature on street youth and some street youth are prostitutes.

Female Prostitution

James and Meyerding (1977), two of the foremost researchers on early sexual experience as a factor in prostitution, concluded that "deviant" women differed from "normal" women in that they (a) learned more about sex from personal experience, (b) experienced more sexual advances by elders, as children, (c) were more involved in incestuous relationships with their fathers, (d) usually initiated sexual activity at a younger age, (e) usually had no further relationships with their first sexual partner, and (f) experienced a relatively high incidence of rape.

It is plausible that a child who has had experiences similar to those mentioned, will have some psychological problems as a result of being used, sexually, at an early age. This may often lead the victim to feel much less of a "saleable commodity" (e.g., low self-esteem, low self-worth) and therefore view prostitution as her only alternative.

Seng (1989) did a comparative analysis of sexually abused children and prostitution-involved children, and found that the two groups were similar on 13 of the 22 variables. Of relevance to this study were the findings that the majority of children from both groups came from single parent or broken homes, a higher portion of prostitution-involved children were school dropouts, had more extensive runaway histories, and were more likely to have a history of drug and/or alcohol abuse. In terms of emotional characteristics, both groups of children were considered depressed, but three-quarters of the prostitutes were considered suicidal.

Gray (1973) found that all the girls in her study came from lower or lower-middle socioeconomic levels, from broken homes with many siblings, and had weak family ties and parental attachments. Communication patterns within the family were poor and the parents consistently failed to provide positive social

reinforcement in the form of attention, affection or effective communication. Clearly, lack of intimate attachments to parental figures does not necessarily lead a girl into prostitution, but it does contribute to the social conditions which make a girl vulnerable to that type of lifestyle (Gray, 1973).

In the above study, all the girls reported having known someone, on a fairly intimate basis, who was involved in prostitution before they themselves became prostitutes. And when asked about the attractiveness of the profession, although material rewards were recognized, the subjects reported social rewards as being the initial reinforcer. Reasons such as, "being drawn to the fast life", "a way to be somebody important", or "becoming someone to be admired" were mentioned as often as were the clothes or money. It is possible that the prostitute, through unconventional behaviour, is seeking the social reinforcement she does not obtain in other realms of her life.

Deisher, Robinson and Boyer (1982) reported that few adolescents enter prostitution solely for its financial gain, rather, abusive childhood experiences predispose adolescents to this type of lifestyle. Often times these youth ran from home to escape physical and/or sexual abuse, fighting parents, or alcoholism. The authors noted that early negative sexual experiences played a significant role in entrance into prostitution and rape, incest and molestation were common in the history of prostitutes. In a dysfunctional family situation a child who reports abuse is often not believed or, worse, is blamed for the abuse. This leads to internalized responsibility on the part of the victim, which results in further emotional trauma. This initial negative incident lessens the adolescent's ability to prevent further exploitation. Prostitution may provide an illusion of success after a life of abuse and negative self-image.

Silbert and Pines (1983) attempted to determine whether prostitutes were sexually exploited during their childhood. Their sample consisted of 200 prostitutes who were given a questionnaire about the long-term effects of their

sexual abuse experiences. Sixty percent were victims of incest and sexual abuse and of those, 70% involved repeated abuse by the same person. Ninety-four percent of the subjects felt very negatively about themselves just prior to entering into prostitution (e.g., "I hate myself").

In light of other components in this study, it is clear that entrance into prostitution was motivated by an attempt to avoid or escape negative conditions in the enviroment. Most subjects came from homes marked by violence and substance abuse and felt that they had no other options at the time they entered prostitution.

Bagley and Young (1987) studied 45 former prostitutes and a control group. Twenty-eight percent of the control group experienced childhood sexual abuse, 73% of the prostitutes experienced sexual abuse, and 100% of the prostitutes experienced either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or both.

Covenant House (cited in Hersch, 1988) in New York City, one of the largest shelters for homeless teens, reported some reasons why youths left home for the street: 36% ran from physical and sexual abuse, 44% from other severe, long-term crises such as drug-abusing, alcoholic parents or stepfamily crises, and 20% left because of short-term crises such as divorce, death or school problems. However, the National Network of Runaway and Youth Services (cited in Hersch, 1988) reported that approximately 70% of the youth who came to their shelter have been severely physically and/or sexually abused.

The Huckleberry House study (Harlan, Rodgers, & Slattery, 1981) concluded that 90% of prostitutes had been victims of sexual abuse, which included both familial and extrafamilial victimization. The same study concluded that 70% of the subjects experienced physical abuse and neglect.

Summary

Clearly, female prostitution is rooted in a dysfunctional childhood where abuse and neglect are a way of life. It provides social and material reinforcement, where reward is immediate and relatively easy to obtain. Punishment is ineffective as a deterrent because, if administered, it is usually mild. Once a girl begins to prostitute she becomes entangled in a system that provides very strong incentives to continue and little or no incentives to become part of the "real world". At a critical stage in development, young girls are not in school, have no legitimate employment and do not have access to positive, adult role models. As a result, the majority fail to obtain the educational and employment skills necessary to survive in the world and their adult life consists of hand-to-mouth survival in an enviroment that helps to perpetuate their past history of destruction.

Male Prostitution

The aforementioned studies deal solely with female prostitution, as does most of the literature. A survey of the Cumulative Medical Index for the past 10 years, indicated that only 10 out of over 100 papers published on prostitution referred to males (Allen, 1980). A bibliography on male prostitution prepared by the Institute for Sexual Research at the University of Indiana, listed only 14 English language references (Allen, 1980), even though male prostitution is an ever increasing phenomenon.

Male prostitutes can be defined as males who provide sexual favors for other males in exchange for money (Allen, 1980). Consequently a homosexual dynamic enters into the relationship, a factor not evident in female prostitution. Surprisingly enough, studies indicate that typical male prostitutes are masculine in appearance and do not consider themselves homosexual. Coombs (1974) found

that only 6% of his subjects could be classified as homosexual, 22% bisexual and 72% heterosexual. In a study of 300 male prostitutes, Jersild (cited in Allen, 1980) found only 23% could be classified as homosexual. It is not presumptuous to conclude that a male who actively engages in behaviour that is overwhelmingly considered homosexual, yet does not consider himself to be homosexual, likely has issues surrounding his sexual identity.

Deisher, Eisner and Sulzbacher (1969) reported a clear distinction between homosexual and heterosexual prostitutes. Heterosexual prostitutes were less willing to admit involvement in prostitution and usually had no prior homosexual experience before entry into prostitution. On the other hand, homosexual prostitutes were likely to have been on the streets because of negative reactions from their families when they divulged their sexual orientation. Rejection and persecution are often reactions to a homosexual orientation and these messages are internalized by gay youth and damage their self-worth. Often the youth runs from the home as a reaction to the negative feelings of his family and friends.

Once on the street, contact with other gay males is limited to the street sub-culture. This results in a lack of positive homosexual role models, which serves to reinforce the negative messages of the homosexual as a sexual deviant. Damaged self-esteem, the desire to be with gay peers and immediate financial gain, all help to keep the individual on the street as a prostitute.

Butts (1947) found that over half of his sample of boys indicated feelings of being not wanted or misunderstood at home and that the same number came from broken homes.

Ginsburg (1967) reported an overwhelming pattern in the early years of all the male prostitutes he interviewed. (He spent approximately 1400 hours on the street amongst them.) The parents, almost entirely the fathers, were either not present, or present and unsupportive in all of the cases. Hostility, aloofness,

disinterest and rejection were continually aimed at the youth from a young age. The author also found that the desire for affection (often unrecognized) and the disdain and antagonism toward the male customers, were the two most common factors associated with the homosexual prostitute.

Coombs (1974) noted a number of personality characteristics which typify the male prostitute. He grew up in a broken home, or a home in which his parents were poor role models, where there was a lack of warmth and an abundance of violence and rejection. He is typically of low to average intelligence, possesses no vocational skills and comes from a deprived socioeconomic background. He is a drop-out and is below the average in educational attainment. Most hustlers have been found to be immature, unstable, irresponsible, neurotic, hypersensitive about rejection, unable to stay within limits, poor in judgement, and have a strong dislike for authority. As well, Coombs (1974) found that 64% of his subjects remembered early homosexual seduction at a mean age of 9.6 years. The problem with this finding is the author's use of the word "seduction". It is likely these children were victims of an abusive situation given that they were very young at the time the "seduction" occurred. His choice of words provides a neutral, rather than a negative connotation, to this experience.

Allen (1980) interviewed 98 male prostitutes on a number of issues and found results similar to the previous studies. Firstly, only 18 (18%) of the subjects had intact families, and of those 18 subjects, all generally commented on the poor relationships within the family, the lack of caring and warmth, and either over-permissiveness or physical abuse. The remaining 80 subjects (82%) had varying degrees of non-intact dysfunctional home enviroments.

With regard to the fathers of the subjects, only 25% of them were present and functional, as compared to about 50% of the mothers. Even when the fathers were described as present and functional, the subjects reported the lack of a significant emotional relationship with them. Absent fathers numbered 40% and

13% of the subjects had stepfathers with whom they did not get along. Fourteen percent were alcoholics and therefore inadequate and another 4% were abusive. Allen (1980) also found that one-third of the male prostitutes were, or had been, runaways, and none of those had functional or effectual fathers.

MacNamara (1965) studied 103 male prostitutes and found that they ranged in age from 15 - 23, were of low to average intelligence, had highly traumatic family backgrounds with broken homes, rejection (especially by the father) brutality, alcoholism and low educational and income level. Only 23 finished high school and only one attended college. Of the 38 subjects who had been employed, all had poor work histories.

Janus, Burgess, and McCormack (1987) interviewed 89 male runaways who entered a home for runaways in Toronto. Seventy-nine percent of their subjects reported physical and sexual abuse. Upon administering the Piers Harris Self-Concept Scale, the subjects scored significantly lower on the subtest for happiness and satisfaction than did their nonabused counterparts. This scale tapped general satisfaction with life, and showed a general dissatisfaction, a longing for things to be different and feelings of negative self-worth.

A behaviour checklist was then administered to the subjects and the results were signficant. Sexually abused males differed significantly with regard to their relationships and their sexual feelings, from other people. The sexual abuse victims had difficulty with people of both the same and opposite sex, had a tendency to fear adult men, withdrew from their friends more often than did their non-abused counterparts, and had difficulty with their sexual feelings. As well, the sexually abused males reported a wider range of emotional and physical symptoms than did the non-abused subjects.

With regard to drug and alcohol use, Allen (1980) found that the full-time prostitutes, as well as having very high incidences of poly-drug use, were also

involved in dealing drugs. Often the money gained from prostitution was used to support their drug habits.

With regard to family characteristics, 59% of the subjects came from families with financial problems, 47% with an arrest or court appearance, 97% with serious arguments, 71% with a divorce or family breakup and 59% with a remarriage of one or both parents. Clearly a high level of family distress can be associated with these runaways.

Dimock (1988) reported that there were three common characteristics of males who had been sexually abused as children: (a) masculine identity confusion, (b) relationship dysfunction and, (c) sexual compulsiveness. The identity confusion took two forms: confusion regarding sexual orientation, and confusion regarding male roles. With respect to the male role confusion, many of the subjects felt like a failure in portraying a "stereotypical" male identity because they felt that a "real" male would have been able to stop the sexual abuse they experienced in their childhood. With regard to relationship dysfunction, all the subjects had difficulty forming stable, trusting relationships. Their relationships typically were characterized by intense involvement, followed by abrupt withdrawal and isolation. In intimate relationships the subjects responded as though they were about to be abused. The author found that although there was an effort made to attempt to control themselves or their partner, paradoxically, there was little control that they could actually exercise in order to avoid the situation, even though, cognitively, they may have been able to distinguish it as harmful.

The characteristics of sexual compulsiveness closely parallel other addictions. Examples of such behaviour is a preoccupation with sexual thoughts, sexual acts with other men in restrooms, and multiple sexual partners. Other compulsive behaviours were also common in many of the subjects. Of the 25 males in this study, 15 reported alcohol or other chemicals as a problem, eight had

been through treatment, four had been through treatment more than once and two had problems with compulsive eating. When asked, those working with Vancouver male prostitutes will mention the above points as a source of concern for the majority of Vancouver's prostitute population.

Although male and female prostitutes have had similar negative childhood experiences, which likely impact their daily functioning, there is one large difference between the genders. Male prostitutes are on the streets for male clients. This brings the dynamic of homosexuality into the daily lives of these male youth. For many, it poses a great problem as they do not see themselves as homosexual, yet engage in homosexual activity on a daily basis. Confusion around sexual orientation is therefore an issue for a large number of male prostitutes, while not an issue for the females. It is likley that the root of this confusion stems from an early age when the male was involved in a sexually abusive situation with another male (the general scenario). The dynamics of this type of sexual abuse are therefore different than abusive situations of female children.

In our society, being male is equated with strength, aggression, assertion, self-reliance and a denial of helplessness. From an early age boys learn that masculinity means not depending on others, not being weak, not being passive, not being a loser in confrontations and not being a victim. Abuse, as perceived by the victim, involves power on the part of the abuser and helplessness on the part of the victim. In our society, passivity and helplessness are equated with homosexuality (Nasjleti, 1980). The effect on the victim then becomes one of an implied homosexuality, although that may not necessarily be the case. The abuse victim may then develop a homosexual identification by engaging in prostitution, while all the time denying that he is gay. This existence would likely cause great inner turmoil, daily, on the part of the male prostitute, and will lead to identity confusion (Dimock, 1988).

Summary

Prostitution is damaging to adolescents in several ways. Most are neither sexually nor emotionally mature enough to endure the stresses of life on the streets without suffering physical and/or psychological damage. Motivated by such things as quick money, perceived power over adults, excitement, peer pressure, a desire to rebel, boredom, curiosity, and a hope to receive attention and affection, make conforming to the expectations of street life an easy task. Unfortunately, prostitutes are also naive and unrealistic with respect to the immediate dangers, health risks, and aspirations for the future (Layton, 1975).

Physical and sexual abuse are common in the lives of prostitutes. Continued abusive experiences reinforce poor self-esteem and helplessness. Unfortunately these youth are unaware that their involvement in prostitution will affect their future. Values such as marriage, education, and employment are rejected as a result of their early childhood experiences. These youth find reinforcement on the streets because they have experienced failure in the traditional setting.

Vancouver Statistics

In Vancouver, the number of street youth is generally given as 300-500, with an increase in the summer. Among identified prostitutes, the average age is 16-17, and females represent the highest percentage. The street workers who make contact with these youth estimate an average of 100 new street youth each month, while sustaining repeat contacts of three times that many (Social Planning, 1990).

Once entrenched in street life, Vancouver's street youth do not tend to stay for long periods of time. Nineteen percent, at any given time, have been on the street for less than six months, and only 30% of those are prostituting. A further 25% have been there for six months to a year. Only 21% have been involved for more than three years (Social Planning, 1990).

In Vancouver, the youth congregate in three main areas: the downtown eastside, the downtown south (several blocks around Seymour and Davie), and Mount Pleasant. The downtown eastside youth are predominantly Native (60%), although this area also is home to a large number of Latin American young men. Downtown south is characterized by young male prostitues and experienced young women. This area is seen as the entry point to street life for the suburban kids who hang around street corners in their home areas and then drift into Vancouver. The Broadway strip is frequented by new runaways and the younger female prostitutes (Social Planning, 1990).

Of the entrenched street youth, 84% are drug users, 85% regularly drink alcohol with 43% stating that they get drunk every time they drink (Social Planning, 1990).

Although these statisics are for Vancouver, they are likely not unique to Vancouver alone and could be compared with other Canadian cities of a similar size. For those working with the population however, Vancouver's uniqueness

may be apparent in (a) its lack of services for non-prostituting street youth who receive only minimal attention, as they do not fit the mandate of the Ministry's Adolescent Street Unit and, (b) as mentioned in the introduction, in its lack of contact with the male prostitutes (Greater Vancouver Mental Health, 1988).

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW

Early Recollections

It is believed that the first data on early recollections (ERs) were obtained by Miles (1895) who asked subjects to respond to a questionnaire designed to explore individuals' early lives. Neisser (1982) spoke of how little was known about memory. He believed that to understand memory it was necessary to study how people make use of it in naturalistic ways. One important question to address was the way in which people made use of their past to meet present and future needs. The use of early recollections as a projective technique is perfectly suited to investigate this issue.

Given the unique perspective one is allowed through the analysis of ERs, it is surprising that there are no studies which look at the early memories of street youth or prostitutes. The data from past studies of these populations were obtained through questionnaires and interviews, which have limitations. The early recollections technique is an unassuming, unbiased and culture-free method of eliciting information (Lord, 1971). It allows for an internally valid study and eliminates many of the problems inherent in previous work.

The following literature review outlines the various theoretical perspectives of ERs, presents some information on the reliability and validity of the technique, and discusses the use of ERs as a projective device. Methods of eliciting and interpreting early recollections are summarized, as well as a brief look at the ERs of alcoholic women and homosexual men. These two populations were chosen because of their similarity to street youth, who are non-existent in ER research.

Theoretical Orientations

Psychoanalytic View

Freud's view of ERs was tied closely with his theory of infantile amnesia (Freud, 1916). He believed that as the Oedipal period ended and the child entered the latency period, a large part of the early experiences fell under a "shroud of oblivion" (p. 210) because this period's major task was the repression of murderous and incestous fantasies directed toward the parents. What memories remained were typically concerned with everyday events and were very rich in detail, a phenomenon he decsribed as "screen memories". Those memories that were retained were recalled because of a connection with another memory that had been repressed (Freud, 1938). Rather than being truthful, the memories represented elaborations or distortions that served to protect the child from his/her upsetting content (Freud, 1956).

Whereas Freudian theorists were concerned with the latent content of the ERs and the repressive mechanisms that work with them, the Individual psychology approach dealt with the manifest content of the ER, and the here-and-now individual (Mosak, 1969).

Individual Psychology

The main purpose of Adler's use of early memories was to discover the individual's present view on life - the lifestyle. Adler (1931) wrote:

> Out of the incalculable number of impressions
> which meet an individual, he chooses to
> remember only those which he feels, however
> darkly, to have a bearing on his situation.
> Thus his memories represent his "Story of My
> Life"; a story he repeats to himself to warn him
> or comfort him, to keep him concentrated on
> his goal, to prepare him, by means of past

experiences, to meet the future with an already tested style of action. The use of memories to stabilize a mood can be plainly seen in everyday life. If a man suffers a defeat and is discouraged by it, he recalls previous instances of defeat.... When he is cheerful and courageous, he selects quite other memories.... Memories thus serve much the same purpose as dreams. A melancholic could not remain melancholic if he remembered his good moments and his successes.... Memories can never run counter to the style of life (pp. 73-74).

Adler viewed ERs as revealing fundamental aspects of the individual's present view of life (Bruhn & Last, 1982). He believed that one selected past memories that had a bearing on one's current situation, the earliest memory being of particular importance because it was believed to reveal one's fundamental view of life.

Adler viewed early memories as a means by which the individual was able to validate and justify the current view of himself in the world. It can therefore be expected that a change in one's life would cause a change in one's early memories. Similarly, it would be expected that upon successful completion of therapy, there would be a change in early memories. Such changes could be observed in the emergence of a new set of memories reflecting a more adaptive life style, or in the modification of the existing ones (Bruhn & Last, 1982).

For those unaware of Adler's theory behind the ER technique, the use of ERs is often misunderstood. It is not an attempt to learn of specific occurrences which may have had an effect on the individual. In fact, the reality of the recollection is not of utmost importance. What is important is that any fantasy material is viewed as reality by the individual (Verger & Camp, 1970). The researcher does not look at specific instances per se, but looks for past themes that reflect present day attitudes.

Summary

In their article, Bruhn and Last (1982) provided a comprehensive discussion of Freud's and Adler's differences. The main difference was that Adler focused on the meaning and importance of the events reported, while Freud focused on events not accessible to consciousness. Ansbacher and Ansbacher (1956) termed Adler's view "revealing", in contrast to Freud's (1956) which they termed "concealing", as he believed ERs were used to cover up other, "really significant impressions" (pp. 33-34). Adler stressed the overt meaning of ERs, and their relationship to daily functioning (Davidow, 1985), while Freud was more interested in the covert meaning. Through analysis, Adler attempted to determine why one memory was chosen out of all others, and Freud concentrated on uncovering the forgotten event behind the memory.

With regard to interpretation, Freud was concerned with the individual's response at the time the event occurred, whereas Adler was concerned with how the reported event related to daily functioning in the present. Freud believed that early events, even those not consciously recalled, were the factors that determined the development of personality. For Adler, early recollections acted as "myths" which were used to reinforce current attitudes and therefore formed the basis for the current life style (Davidow, 1985).

Freud and Adler clearly differ on the technique's basic premise. One believed early memories were concealing, while the other viewed them as revealing. This research follows Adler's theory and attempts to demonstrate the revealing nature of street youths' memories.

The Use of Early Recollections as a Projective Technique

In the ideal sense, a projective technique allows one to project a part of one's inner personality onto a given response, as opposed to responding to a particular stimulus from a given task (Davidow, 1985; Semeonoff, 1976). Responses are assumed to be determined by the operation of the basic personality structure (Zubin, Eron, & Schumer, cited in Davidow, 1985), and not accidental. By analyzing an individual's responses, it is possible to determine their values, goals, and life style, which illuminates the raison d'etre of their functioning. According to Adler (1937), a person's:

> ... early recollections are found alwaysto have a
> bearing on the central interest of that person's
> life. Early recollections give us hints and clues
> which are most valuable to follow when
> attempting the task of finding the direction of
> a person's striving. They are most helpful in
> revealing what one regards as values to be
> aimed one senses as dangers to be avoided.
> They help us to see the kind of world which a
> particular person feels he is living in, and the
> ways he really found of meeting that world.
> They illuminate the origins of the style of life.
> The basic attitudes which haveguided an
> individual throughout his life and which
> prevail, likewise, in his present situation, are
> reflected in those fragments which he has
> selected to epitomize his feelings about life,
> and to cherish in his memory as reminders.
> He haspreserved these in his early
> recollections. (p.287)

A person "selects" to remember something from childhood that is related to present day fundamental views. The recollection can be useful in helping an individual to understand repetitive behaviour patterns, to evaluate oneself, one's world and one's role in the world (Mosak, 1958; Taylor, 1975).

Recently, interest in the use of early recollections as a projective technique has grown. Taylor (1975) reported studies which lent support to the use of ERs as a

projective technique. Lieberman (1957) and Hedvig (1965) noted that the early memory technique was a rapid, valuable sample that was similar to information obtainable from more time consuming projective test battery exams.

McCarter, Tomkins, & Schiffman (1961) reported that ERs were a valid method of personality appraisal, specifically in the areas of degree of activity. As well, there is evidence that subjects diagnosed as belonging to several neurotic categories produce thematic differences in their ERs (Jackson & Sechrest, 1962). Hedvig (1963) found that situations of hostility, friendliness, success, and failure did not influence early memories and were therefore more stable than TAT stories, which appeared to be influenced by those situations.

Eckstein (1976) described a case study wherein the theme of a patient's early recollections changed markedly throughout treatment. This change was believed to be clearly reflecting the patient's change in life style.

As further evidence of the benefits of this technique, Mosak (1958) has pointed out their unstructured and unobtrusive nature. As well, ERs can be quickly obtained and can provide information similar to that received from a more involved technique, like the Thematic Apperception Test (Davidow, 1985; Mosak, 1958; Verger & Camp, 1970). The ER technique does not appear to subjects as a "test", and does not rely heavily on verbal ability, as do sentence completion techniques and thematic methods (Lord, 1971).

With regard to interpretation, early recollections are easier to interpret than other projective techniques. All autobiographical data are evident in the various memories, and clearly relate to the self (Davidow, 1985; Kadis, Greene, & Freedman, 1952), therefore it is not necessary to ask autobiographical questions. Family relationships are clearly outlined, and the way in which problems are handled is also evident (Kopp & Der, 1979). Generally, early recollections provide a condensed version of the issues facing an individual and how that individual is likely to deal with such issues (Bruhn, 1981, 1984).

Reliability

Mood does not seem to have an effect on the stability of early memories. Plutchik, Platman and Fieve (1970) tested manic depressive patients and a group of controls. They then retested both groups seven weeks later. They found that the average affect scores were consistent between the two test sessions.

Hedvig (1963) compared the stability of early memories with Thematic Apperception Test results after a temporarily stressful situation, and found that the early memories were more stable than the TAT for revealing long standing personality traits.

Since early memories are purported to reveal the basic attitudes of an individual, when the attitudes change, so should the recollections (Davidow, 1985). The reliability of this technique is therefore evident in studies which showed that therapy was reflected in corresponding changes in early memories (Eckstein, 1976; Mosak, 1958).

As well, severe stress has been associated with changes in the recall of early memories. Tobin and Etigson (1968) studied 57 subjects who were waiting for admission to a home for the aged. They were asked to give early memories before entering the nursing home and then 2 months after admission. After admission, the subjects reported early memories with more themes of mutiliation and death.

It is apparent that the early recollection technique provides a stable and reliable means of assessing the personality dynamics of an individual. Stresses such as institutionalization, as well as basic changes in the personality structure, often as a result of therapy, are predictably reflected in early memories. As well as being reliable, a diagnostic tool must also be valid. The following section examines this issue.

Validity

Lord (1971) studied the early memories of 32 adolescent boys and coded their recollections on the dimensions of activity vs. passivity and positive vs. negative affect. The subjects were then requested to do drawings which were used as a measure of directed activity in current self-representation, and as a measure of differentiation of body concept. A series of questions regarding vocational goals and plans were also asked. Variations in the early memory dimensions, believed to be associated with measures of current self-representation and coping effectiveness, were found to be significantly related to the figure drawings, the self-descriptions and the measures of differentiation of body concept and sense of separate identity, thereby providing indirect support for the validity of early memories as a projective technique.

Recent research by Kopp and Der (1982) also provides support for the validity of early recollections. They used the role-activity (R-A) scale in an attempt to determine if the degree of activity and the type of role adolescents played in their early recollections correlated with the clinical assessment of their behaviour. A significant correlation was found, such that the role-activity in early recollections seemed to be a good indicator of activity in the current behaviour of the adolescents. As well, for one of the subject groups, the length (number of words) of the recollections was found to be strongly related to the clinical assessment of activity.

Ansbacher (1947) tested 271 male college students using early memories and the Maslow Security-Insecurity Test (Maslow, 1945). High and low security individuals were differentiated by their early memories. The low security scorers reported memories where they did not belong to a group and recalled instances in which something wrong was happening- they were either being harmed, or

harming others. On the other hand, high security scorers recalled memories where they were active participants in various groups and were treated with kindness by others around them.

Barrett (1980) found that the use of early memories as a projective technique correlated significantly with three standardized scales. Early memory ratings and locus of control scores, as measured by the Adult Norwicki-Strickland Internal-External Scale (cited in Barrett, 1980), were correlated. Anxiety levels, as measured by the Manifest Anxiety Scale (cited in Barrett, 1980), were predicted by early memories, as were measures of need approval on the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (cited in Barrett, 1980). Davidow (1985) stated that the early memory technique should not be used in place of a full battery of tests, but noted it is a useful addition in providing information, especially during clinical interviews.

Rogers (1977) found this technique to be very useful in predicting academic achievement as measured by grade point average. The high achievers appeared to take a more active role in their enviroment, while the low achievers produced fewer memories and placed less of an emphasis on mastery.

Langs (1965) studied 62 early memory variables as they related to 26 different personality measures. He found significant relationships when the context of the memory and the role of the subject were taken into consideration. For example, subjects who assumed the role of the pawn of others in their early memories, expressed a strong themes of resentment in their ERs (Davidow, 1985).

The above mentioned literature lends support to the reliability and validity of early memories as a projective technique. Clearly, there is a link between early memory data and personality variables; and although generally stable, early memories are also sensitive to major psychological changes. Taylor's (1975) review of validation studies concluded that the early memory technique was a useful and rapid method of personality appraisal, and although it correlated well

with other assessment tools it is not a tool with which to diagnose clinical psychopathology.

Early Recollections of Street Involved Youth

Unfortunately, no literature could be found that details the use of the early recollection technique with a population of street involved individuals. Due to the lack of research in the area, this section discusses studies that are somewhat relevant to the street population (e.g., alcoholics, homosexuals).

Manaster and King (1973) studied the early recollections of 5 male homosexuals and found an interesting result. All the subjects had at least one memory in which a woman either hurt or was angry with them. As well, four of the five subjects reported recollections that contained a contradiction, thereby supporting previous research that reports double-binding behaviour of mothers who have homosexual sons.

Friedberg (1975) studied a group of homosexual males and a control group of heterosexuals and found that: (a) the homosexual had a weaker sense of identity than the heterosexual (b) the homosexual had less social interest than the heterosexual, (c) the homosexual was a more dependent person than the heterosexual, (d) the homosexual viewed the world as a more hostile and dangerous place than did the heterosexual and, (e) the homosexual had a more severely impaired gender identity than did the heterosexual.

The study's finding that homosexuals view the world as a hostile and dangerous place, was not surprising. It is possible that the majority of homosexuals were forced to hide their homosexuality from their family and friends while growing up. As well, once having admitted a homosexual orientation, there is a stigma attached to such people and they are open to tremendous ridicule.

Bruhn and Davidow (1983) studied the early recollections of 15 delinquent and 18 non-delinquent controls for the purpose of distinguishing the two groups from the content of their early memories. As was predicted, the early memory scoring system, which ws derived empirically from the subject sample, discriminated middle class delinquents from non-delinquents. The codes included items such as rulebreaking, injury, emphasis on self versus emphasis on others, mastery, and victimization.

Epstein (1963) studied a sample of forty, 13 year old male and female adolescents attending teenage clubs in New York City. Lower class adolescents had more memories containing references to angry feelings and aggressive and sexual behaviour. Middle class subjects had significantly more memories involving euphoric affect, parents, and siblings.

Crandall and Reimanis (1976) studied 55 male and 57 female students from a psychology class. Their objective was to learn more about the cause of negative feelings about the past, shown by people with low social interest. Males with a low social interest consistently described both mothers and fathers as being cold and rejecting. Females showed the same pattern as males.

Pattie and Cornett (1952) studied the early memories of three groups of 36 boys. The home and school enviroments of one group were exceptionally favourable. The other two groups lived in highly unfavourable conditions. The authors found that the mean percentage of memories that were unpleasant was more than twice as great in the unfavourable enviroments as in the favourable one. Boys who came from an enviroment of poverty, violence and neglect, mirrored that enviroment in their early memories. Any repression or differential forgetting which served to protect individuals from unpleasant early memories, was not sufficient to obliterate the large differences found in this study.

In reviewing two studies on the early recollections of alcoholics, some interesting results were evident. Hafner, Fakouri, and Labrentz (1982) interviewed

30 "normal" males and females, and 30 alcoholic males and females about their early childhood memories. They found that the two groups differed significantly in their themes and on the dimensions of external/internal control. More alcoholics reported memories of threatening situations characterized by fear and anxiety. As well, the alcoholics reported a significantly higher proportion of recollections that suggested they were externally controlled. This was compared to the control group whose ERs indicated they were internally controlled.

Hafner, Fakouri and Chesney (1988) investigated the early recollections of alcoholic and non-alcoholic women. They found that the alcoholic women mentioned mother, and other family members, less than non-alcoholic women. Another interesting finding was that animals were present significantly more in the recollections of alcoholic women than non-alcoholics. As well, alcoholic women were more passive than their non-alcoholic counterparts.

The use of the early recollections technique for studying a population of street involved youth would seem to be promising, despite the fact that the literature contains no reports of such studies. The above review attempts to present material that encompasses characteristics of the street population. Although none of the reported studies are fully representative of the population in question, and therefore cannot automatically be extrapolated to this population, they do provide a reasonable background for the expectations of the present study.

Variables That May Influence the Collection of Early Recollections

Many authors have noted that demographic variables need to be taken into account in order to properly equate groups of subjects. The literature appears to suggest that it is important to control for sex, age, intelligence and socioeconomic status. This author believes that it may also be important to control for race.

Gender

The literature has recorded a number of differences between males and females with regard to their responses on early memory research. Potwin (1901) found that the male memory was better for repeated impressions, and the female for single impressions. A significantly greater number of women remembered very minor details. The average age of the first memory for men was 4.4 years, while for women it was 3.0 years.

Dudycha and Dudycha (1933) found sex differences with regard to affective states. They noted that male memories involved fear more often than did female memories, and female memories involved joy more often than male memories. They also found that anger, shame and guilt were more common in memories reported by women.

Age

Typically, most researchers attempted to control for age when instigating research. It is therefore interesting that some researchers found differences in the production of early memories based on age. Bruhn (1981) found that the older children were, the more likely they were to produce recollections which were clinically useful. Horowitz (1962) found that the younger children were, the more likely they were to report memories of embarrassing incidents.

Intelligence

Some researchers have linked level of intelligence with early memory production. Rogers (1977) found that children who did not do well in school had fewer early recollections. As well, subjects with high grade point averages produced more memories relating to themes of mastery, or attempts at mastery of their personal skills, of others, or of their enviroments. Similarly, Bruhn (1981)

found that children with below average IQs were less likely to produce early memories than children with higher IQs.

Socioeconomic status

It is quite possible that an individual's economic status may effect early memory production. As reported previously, Pattie and Cornett (1952) found that subjects who lived in disadvantaged enviroments reported more than twice as many unpleasant memories than did subjects from better enviroments. Epstein (1963) found that subjects from poorer enviroments tended to recall memories that contained anger and aggression, whereas middle class subjects recalled memories of more pleasant events. (Davidow, 1985).

Race

There do not appear to be any recent studies which discuss racial differences in early memory research, but Colegrove (1900) noted such differences while reviewing replies to his questionnaire. He noted that the memories of Blacks detailed hardships, wrongs, and suffering which were deeply imprinted. Native Indians provided many memories which could be termed "crystallized racial experiences". As well, he found that pleasant and unpleasant memories had the distinct quality of racial experiences.

Eliciting Early Recollections

There appears to be much variability with regard to the elicitation of early recollections. Some researchers have tested groups of subjects by having them write down their memories (Barrett, 1980; Bruhn & Schiffman, 1982; Hafner, Corotto & Fakouri, 1980; Manaster & Perryman, 1974; Pattie & Cornett, 1952; Rogers, 1977). Other researchers have utilized a questionnaire format to elicit written early memories (Ansbacher, 1947; Friedberg, 1975; Horowitz, 1962).

The interview method is a technique that has been used quite widely by early memory researchers (Epstein, 1963; Hedvig, 1965; Potwin, 1901). Jackson and Sechrest (1962) interviewed an experimental group while obtaining data, via a written questionnaire, from their control group.

Not only is there variability with regard to the elicitation of the early memories, there are also inconsistencies with regard to what is requested. Adler (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956) emphasized the earliest memory, whereas Last and Bruhn (1983) believed that the first memory may be less relevant because it may be defensive and therefore not as reliable as the subsequent memories.

There is also variability with regard to the number of early memories needed to create a reliable protocol. Hedvig (1965) believed that the first memory was sufficient. Brodsky (1979) and Epstein (1963) believed that two early memories were needed; Kopp and Der (1979) and Friedman and Schiffman (1962) believed that three memories must be elicited in order to obtain enough information to receive accurate results. Other authors (e.g., Pattie & Cornett, 1952; Rogers, 1977) requested from five to all of the memories that could be recalled from the first eight years of life.

There has also been debate about the age of an early memory. Adler (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956) believed that life style was established during the first four or five years, whereas Der (personal communication) and Verger and Camp (1970) believe that early memories up to the age of eight should be considered.

After obtaining the memories, the most frequently requested information is the affect that is related to the various components of the memory (Bruhn, 1984; Der, personal communication; Epstein, 1963).

It is also important that the researcher explain to the subject the difference between an early memory and a report. Early memories are important for the

purpose of projective interpretation, reports (incidences about the subject told by another person e.g., a parent) are not as useful for this purpose.

Interpreting Early Recollections

As is similar to other projective techniques, the interpretation of early recollections is often based more on guidelines than strict scoring procedures (Davidow, 1985). As early memories are believed to reflect an individual's life style, such memories should provide a consistent picture of the person's functioning with the basic issues repeated throughout all of the memories (Brodsky, 1979; Davidow, 1985; Mosak, 1958).

There are a number of important components an interpreter must take into account when analyzing early memories. One must pay close attention to the wording of the memory (Olson, 1979b). It is also important to pay close attention to who is in the memory. Often the presence or absence of others reflects the quality and extent of the person's social relations (Olson, 1979a). The people in the memories must be incorporated as prototypes, rather than the specific roles they play in the recollection. For example, a mother remembered in a recollection must not stay a mother in the analysis of that memory, but should represent a motherly figure in the individual's life (L. Cochran, personal communication, February, 1989).

The feelings a person has at the time of the recollection also provide an important interpretive clue (Verger & Camp, 1970). As well, innocuous memories tend to be more significant than dramatic ones (Mosak, 1958). Very traumatic events are easily remembered, therefore it is more significant if an individual remembers a seemingly insignificant one because such an event would obviously have special meaning. Mosak (1958) believed that such memories provide the most information about inner needs.

The length of time the recollection has been remembered is also an important component of the memory. Individual's who report, "I've always remembered this" are supplying trustworthy information and the most consistent elements of their personality (Shulman & Mosak, 1988). On the other hand, if an individual reports, "I haven't thought of this one in a long time" the report is likely one of an incipent change in personality (Shulman & Mosak, 1988).

Details are important in that they show an individual's characteristic patterns of action (Shulman & Mosak, 1988). Orgler (1972) and Mosak (1958) found that people in various vocations revealed their occupational choices in their memories. The study of Shulman and Mosak (1988) support that finding. They noted that artists and people with strong aesthetic abilities often included color in their memories.

Dreikurs (1954) found that the detail of position suggests the stance an individual takes toward life. For example, a memory of lying on one's back, suggests a different stance toward life than one of standing in an upright position.

Other details such as tactile sensations, which may reveal a sensual response to tactile stimuli (Shulman & Mosak, 1988), affective details, which may reveal an individual who is very sensitive to inner feelings (Peven & Shulman, 1983), or movement details, which may reveal an active style of responding (Hedvig, 1965), are also important components which a researcher must take into account.

There are also a number of researchers who have developed scoring systems in an effort to objectify memory interpretation. Manaster and Perryman (1974) developed a scale to distinguish between people choosing different occupations. They focused on content variables such as the location of the memory, and the family members who were mentioned. For example, the group with the highest proportion of subjects mentioning "mother" was the nursing/medical group. When discussing a possible interpretation for this result, the authors noted that if

a person has a life style in which the "mother image" is important, the field of nursing may be a very natural occupational choice.

Kopp and Der (1979) formed a hypothesis about each phrase in the memories of their subjects, and then looked for confirming statements from the subjects. This can be described as a method of systematically checking the meaning of each phrase.

Altman (1973) developed a scale containing nine bipolar attitudes which were divided into (a) subject's behaviour toward the enviroment or, (b) subject's affective response. Eckstein (1976) used a modified version of this scale in an attempt to measure changes after counselling.

Shulman and Mosak (1988) attempted a more elaborate system to uncover idiographic information. They listed numerous themes found in early recollections as well as numerous common response themes (a response to the particular topical issue of the ER). They examined the sequence construction in each early memory set and assessed the sequence construction between the themes.

Last and Bruhn (1983) created a scoring system to assess the memories of children with varying levels of psychopathology. The scale combined several theoretical approaches and nine categories. It was useful in assessing maladjusted subjects, but only one third of the well-adjusted subjects were identified correctly.

Clearly, there are a number of well-researched scoring systems for use in early memory research. It would be useful to implement a scale most likely to produce the best results with indivdual subject populations. Bruhn and Schiffman (1982) caution against using scoring systems that have been formulated on different populations or for different purposes and warn against basing outcomes solely on theoretical considerations.

Summary

The above literature review provides a comprehensive discussion of the various components of early memory research. The Individual psychology view is that early recollections can best be described as metaphors of an individual's life. They can be insightful to the individual and helpful to the counsellor in a counselling relationship.

To date, no research has been done which applies this technique to street youth. This could be viewed as a reflection of the minimal attention which has been directed to the study of this population. The successful application of the early recollections approach, to the wide spectrum of dysfunctional populations noted above, suggests that this powerful projective technique could be used to shed some light on one of society's least understood populations.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology used in this study was an ex post facto design. The independent variable was the early recollections of the subjects. The dependent measure was the various themes that emerged from the recollections.

Participants in the Study

Subjects

The male group consisted of 20 males with a mean age of 20.05 and a standard deviation of 2.31. They came from families with a mean number of 5.45 children, had left home at a mean age of 13.76 years, had been on the streets for an average of 5.9 years and had completed, on average, grade 10. Information on past involvement with the law was difficult to obtain as many of the subjects had sporadic dealings with the police (e.g., drugs, prostitution, theft) and many charges that were laid were subsequently dropped. At the time of the interview, 15 of the 20 males were prostituting, but some remarked that they only engaged in prostitution when they were in desperate need of money. As there is a social stigma attached to prostitution, when questioned, many of the youth were embarrassed about what they did. Thus it was difficult to discern exactly how many had enagaged in prostitution at any one time in their lives.

The female group was composed of 12 subjects with a mean age of 20.17 and a standard deviation of 2.66. They came from families with a mean number of 2.91 children, left home at a mean age of 13.6, had been on the streets for an average of 5.32 years and had completed, on average, grade 10. Of the 12 subjects, two pan-

handled for money and the remainder were prostitutes. Any involvement with the law appeared limited to charges of soliciting.

Over a two month period 39 subjects were interviewed. Of these, one female was deemed inappropriate because she was originally a male and had undergone a sex change operation. Six of the male interviews were not utilized; two were unable to follow the directions and four were too old.

Interviewer

Initially the interviewer was to be a social worker who had no previous experience with the street youth population. After a preliminary interview with three male street youth, this approach was altered as it became evident the street youth did not wish to share information with someone they did not know. It was then decided that the researcher carrying out the study, who previously had interacted with a number of the youth, would interview all of the subjects.

Raters

To ensure that the scoring was consistent, two graduate students in the Masters degree program in Counselling Psychology at the University of B.C., who were unfamiliar with the purpose of the study, were selected to serve as the raters. They were trained to use the scoring system (Appendices A, B, C) through practise in a graduate course and in a training session where unuseable protocols were scored for training purposes. Before discussion, in the training session, the raters reached an overall agreement of 80%, and 100% agreement was reached after discussion. Upon completion of the actual scoring, which was done individually by each rater, the interrater reliability was 83%.

Instrumentation

Questionnaire

The questionnaire (Appendix D), designed by the researcher and her supervisor, was used to obtain information about the subjects' families and experiences on the street.

Structured interview

Each interview lasted approximately 15 minutes. During that time the questionnaire was filled out and a minimum of three early memories was collected. All but one of the interviews was tape recorded, as one subject preferred to handwrite his memories. Verbatim transcripts of the memories were typed from the tapes. The interview followed a structured format (Appendix E).

The following verbal probes were used by the researcher when necessary:

- How old were you when this happened?
  If the subject was having difficulty
  remembering a memory, the researcher would
  cue them.
- Think back to school, a family vacation your siblings,
  a family pet, or picture your house and go through it
  room by room.
- Are there any other feelings you had at that time?

Scoring system

As mentioned previously, Bruhn and Schiffman (1982) cautioned against using scoring systems that had been formulated on different populations or for different purposes. As there had not been any previous ER research on this population, there were no scoring systems that could be directly implemented. That being the case, segments of two different scoring systems were compiled to form the system deemed most useful for this population (Appendices A, B, C).

Kopp and Der's (1982) study on the activity level in adolescents' early recollections, used a role-activity scale which emphasized the stylistic role and activity level the subject remembered playing in the ER. It attempted to identify the role a person played in the interaction, with a focus on whether the subject assumed the role of initiator or responder. The scale was divided into four categories: passive-observer, passive-responder, active-weak, and active- strong.

As well, a portion of the Manaster-Perryman Manifest Content Early Recollection Scoring Manual (1974) was combined with the Kopp and Der (1982) segment. There were four categories taken from this manual, (a) characters- which dealt with the characters mentioned in the ER, (b) affect- which was concerned with the pleasantness or unpleasantness the subject felt about what happened in the ER, (c) detail- which dealt with the attention the subject gave to describing something seen, or heard, or to describing vigorous physical movements, and (d) control- which was concerned with whether the subject assumed responsibility for what happened in the ER.

The researcher added two other categories to the scoring system that were related to the questions being asked. They were: (a) sexuality- which dealt with feelings about sexual identity and about any coercive/abusive sexual interactions,

and (b) tone- which was concerned with the overall genre of the ER. All data were reported in frequency form.

Procedures

Subjects were approached in a drop-in centre in downtown Vancouver. Upon entering the office the males, and most of the females, were asked if they would take part in a research study. Upon acceptance, the interviewer and subject went into a private office in the drop-in centre. Signed permission was obtained, and the interviewer began the meeting by verbally recounting the questionnaire. The verbal approach was considered most useful because a number of the youth do not have a good grasp of the English language. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the subjects were asked to report a minimum of three early recollections. At the session's end, all subjects were thanked for their participation and given $5.00.

Some of the females were approached while sitting in one of two restaurants they frequented. They were told the procedure would involve a short questionnaire and the recounting of a minimum of three early memories. Upon acceptance, the interviewer and subject went to an empty table in the restaurant and engaged in the same procedure as mentioned above.

There was an overabundance of willing male subjects, but problems arose in obtaining their female counterparts as the drop-in centre was located in the male part of downtown (Boys' Town). As the female clientele at the centre was limited, so was the researcher's pool of female subjects. It was therefore suggested that each subject be paid $5.00 for his/her time, with the hope this would attract some females.

This second attempt at recruiting female subjects proved to be only partially successful as the sample size was still small. The only alternative was to recruit girls as they were "working" (prostituting). This approach created much

apprehension, as the researcher did not want to put herself or the subjects in any danger. A male street worker then became the intermediary, and the two spent time in two restaurants frequented by the female street youth. The final six female subjects were recruited from these two establishments.

After the information had been collected, the subjects were asked if they had any questions, paid, and thanked for taking part in the study.

Scoring

Each rater was issued a copy of the typed transcript from each interview. They then independently scored the ERs on the scoring sheet using the standarized guidelines (Appendix F).

Data Analyses

Reported Percentages

In all instances, percentage totals were reported for the male and female subjects. In studies of an exploratory nature, with a small subject sample (N), a statistical procedure (e.g., chi square) often produces a non-significant result. Therefore reporting percentages is the important factor when describing the results (N. Kishor, personal communication, September 10, 1990).

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

This study's objective was to determine if there were differences in the ERs of male and female street involved youth, with the hope that this new information would shed some light on the males' (and females') perspective. Raters reviewed the memories and converted the various themes to frequency data, after which percentage scores were obtained. As well, the answers from the questionnaire were converted to data in a frequency format and percentage scores were obtained for those categories.

The first section looks at the scoring system reliability. This is followed by a review of the hypothesis and the questions. The last section reviews the population characteristics based on the results of the questionnaire.

Scoring System Reliability

Before valid predictions can be made from a scoring system, its reliability must first be demonstrated. In the present study both raters scored 96 early recollections. In the practise session, before discussion, the raters were in agreement 80% of the time. Upon closer scrunity and discussion, the raters reached 100% agreement. The high rate of pre and post discussion agreement indicates that both raters were approaching this task from the same perspective.

After completion of the task, the interrater reliability was 83% overall. On the basis of this high rate of agreement, interrater reliability of the scoring system was considered adequate.

Scoring System

Analyses were done on the various categories of the scoring system. The results were reported in percentage totals. (No statistical procedures were implemented because of the exploratory nature of the research.)

Questions

1   What is the pattern of sexuality, as defined by the scoring

system, in the ERs of male and female street involved

youth?

In this question, sexuality was divided into two sub-headings, sexual confusion and sexual coercion. With regard to the males, nine of the 20 subjects (45%) had themes of sexuality in their ERs. When reviewing the memories, 11 of the 60 memories (18%) possessed themes of sexuality.

Sexual confusion was defined as some confusion with regard to a sexual experience or with one's sexual identity. When reviewing the memories, two of the 60 memories (.03%) showed sexual confusion.

Coercive sexuality was defined as a sexual experience, involving the subject, that was considered abusive, or one in which the subject was the abuser. Eight of the twenty subjects (40%) evidenced such a theme in their ERs. When reviewing the memories, nine of the 60 memories (45%) showed coercive sexuality.

The females had substantially different results. No females had any themes of sexuality in their memories.

2   What is the pattern of role-activity, as defined by the

scoring system, in the ERs of male and female street

involved youth?

The role-activity scale was used to emphasize the activity level and stylistic role that the individual remembered playing in the memory. In percentage, terms 53% of the males were passive-responders in their memories, as were 36% of the females. Passive-responder was defined as, "a subject who was involved in what was going on in the ER, but things primarily happened to him/her and his/her reaction was generally a passive one". When reviewing the passive-observer category, wherein "the subject has the primary role as an observer of another's activity" (see Appendix A for a complete list of the scoring system definitions), 1% of the males and 31% of the females were passive-observers. With regard to the active-weak category, the males (22%) and the females (19%) were fairly close. The same was true in the active-strong category with rates at 15% and 14% respectively (Appendix G). After combining the two "passive" categories, 54% of the males and 76% of the females were passive agents in their actions.

3   What is the pattern of affect, as defined by the scoring system, in the ERs of male and female street involved youth?

In this instance, a negative affect was demonstrated when the overall feeling tone of the ER was unpleasant. Fifty-five percent of the males' and 67% of the females' memories had negative affect, while 17% of the males' and only 2% of the females' memories had a positive affect. The remaining memories fell into the "mixed" category (Appendix H).

4   What is the pattern of control, as defined by the scoring system, in the ERs of male and female street involved youth?

External control was demonstrated when a subject was dissociated from any responsibility for what happened in the ER. Eighty-seven percent of the males' ERs depicted them as being externally controlled, as did 94% of the females' ERs.

5   What is the pattern of the tone, as defined by the scoring
       system, in the ERs of male and female street involved
       youth?

An aggressive tone was scored when the overall genre of the ER was aggressive. Sixty-nine percent of the males and 61% of the females had ERs that had a neutral tone. Only 31% of the males and 39% of the females had aggressive tones in their memories.

6   What are the different patterns of the ER and
       demographic data, in the ERs and questionnaires of
       male and female street involved youth?

This was a general, summary question that stemmed from the researcher's belief that, although there was uncertainty as to where the gender differences lay, there would definitely be differences in some areas of this research.

Role-activity

The largest percentage total, for the males, was in the passive-responder category (53%), with the second largest total in the active-weak category (22%). Similarly to their male counterparts, the females had the largest percentage total in the passive-responder category (36%), but the difference lay in their second largest total- the passive-observer category (31%).

Sexuality

The second gender difference was evident in the category of sexuality. None of the females mentioned themes of sexuality in any of their ERs, while 45% of the males mentioned either confused or coercive/abusive sexuality.

The Remaining Scoring System Categories

Although there were no questions pertaining specifically to the remaining four categories of the scoring system, their results were considered an informative addition to this research.

Character

Frequency data were obtained for the various characters mentioned in the ERs. Both males (23%) and females (25%) mentioned "mother" most often. Following that category, for the males, came "father" (19%), "sibling" (18%), "non-family" (16%), "other family" (12%), "group" (8%), and "animals" (5%). For the females the categories fell into a slightly different order: "sibling" (20%), "father" and "non-family" (17%), "other family" and "animals" (18%), and "group" (6%).

Detail

This category was broken down into three sub-sections: (a) visual, (b) auditory, and (c) motor. Both the males and females followed the same pattern with regard to the overall frequency of the reported sub-sections. The males reported motor detail 63% of the time, while the females reported it 67%. The males reported visual detail 23% of the time, and the females 31%. Finally, the males reported auditory detail 13% of the time, while the females reported it 2%.

Age of First Memory

When reviewing the age of the first memory, a mean and standard deviation score were obtained. The mean age of the first memory for the males was 5.65 years, with a standard deviation of 1.52. The mean age of the first memory for the females was 5.71, with a standard deviation of 2.24.

Number of Words

A random sample of five male and five female subjects was obtained and the mean number of words per memory was calculated. The average number of words for the males was 119, with a standard deviation of 35.24. For the females the number was 92, with a standard deviation of 52.22. A t-test was performed, t=1.70, p<.05. There was a significant gender difference with regard to the number of words per memory; the males had longer memories.

Other Related Data

As well as focusing on the themes of the ERs, an attempt was made to ascertain significant information regarding the background of these youths. A questionnaire evolved after a review of the literature highlighted some common family characteristics of this type of population, e.g. broken homes (Seng, 1989), many siblings (Gray, 1973), school problems (Hersch, 1988).

Age

The mean age of the male subset of this sample was 20.05. The female segment had a mean age of 20.17.

Broken Homes

The majority of male and female street involved youth came from broken homes (single parents). Only 35% of the male subjects came from intact home enviroments; the remaining 65% came from broken homes. Thirty-eight percent of the female subjects came from intact homes, the remaining 62% came from broken homes.

Step-parents

Somewhat related to the above category, the questionnaire requested information on step-parents. Of the subjects who came from broken homes, 62% of the males did not have step-parents, while the remaining 38% lived with a step-father. The females' numbers were slightly different. Twenty-five percent did not have step-parents, while the remaining 75% lived with a step-parent; two lived with a step-mother, three with a step-father, and one, at various times, lived with a step-mother or step-father.

Birth Order

In this category there appeared to be some gender differences. Forty percent of the males were the youngest, and this number was similar for the females (42%). Thirty-five percent of the males were the middle children, while this number was 8% for the females. Oldest children numbered 15% for the males and 50% for the females. Finally 1% of the males and none of the females were only children.

Family Size

The mean number of children in the families of the male subjects was 5.45, which included two subjects who came from families of 16 and 18 children. When

they were excluded from the calculations, the mean number decreased to 4.16 children. The females came from families with an average of 2.91 children. A t-test was preformed with significant results, t=1.81, p< .05, showing that the male subjects came from larger families.

Religion

When reviewing the religions of the street youth, it was found that forty-five percent of the males were Catholic, the remainder representing a combination of various other religions. Fifty-six percent of the females were Catholic; the remaining 44% were a variety of other faiths (Appendix I).

Education Attained

There appeared to be some gender variability with regard to the education level attained by the subjects. Seventy percent of the males completed grades 7-10. The remaining 30% completed grades 11+. Of the 70%, 29% finished grades 7,8, and 9 and 71% completed grade 10.

For the females, 58% completed grades 7-10; and of this percentage, 57% completed grade 10 and the remaining 43% finished grades 7-9. Forty-two percent completed grades 11+, including one female who completed her B.A. in English and then spent 2.5 years in a nursing program.

Age Left Home

When analysing the results for this section, three subjects were considered outliers and were therefore excluded from the analysis; one did not consider himself gone from the home, although he spent most of his days and nights on the street, the other two reported that they left home at age two and four respectively. Upon further questioning they reiterated their initial responses and therefore seemed unable to report the age at which they left a home (e.g., group

home, foster home) to go to the street. They were therefore excluded from analysis.

Fifty-nine percent of the males left home between 14-18 years. The remaining 41% left between 9-13 years. Fifty-eight percent of the females left home between 9-13 years, while the remaining 42% left between 14-18 years.

Years on Street

An interesting picture did emerge when reporting the length of time male and female street involved youths had spent on the street. Fifty-five percent of the males, and 58% of the females had been on the street from 6-12 years. The remaining 45% and 42%, respectively, had been on the street from two months to five years. A substantial portion (80%) of the females who had been on the street from two months to five years, had been there for less than one year.

Drug Use

The use of drugs is a significant part of life on the streets. Eighty-five percent of the males reported using drugs, and 41% of them began their drug abuse before going to the street. The numbers were somewhat different for the females; 67% reported using drugs and 63% of that number initiated their drug use before going to the street.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The implications of the results reported in the preceding chapters will now be discussed. The hypothesis is first reviewed, followed by a review of the questions, and the subjects' characteristics. Finally, the limitations of the study, as well as suggestions for future research, are presented.

Questions

1   What is the pattern of sexuality, as defined by the scoring system, in the ERs of male and female street involved youth?

The present study reported that 45% of the males' and 0% of the females' ERs involved themes of sexuality. What was surprising was the small percentage of males who evidenced sexuality confusion. This was unexpected, as past research (Coombs, 1974) has found that 72% of the male prostitutes interviewed considered themselves to be heterosexual, although a homosexual dynamic entered into much of their daily activities. Further, Dimock (1988) reported that it is common for a male who has been sexually abused as a child to be confused about sexual orientation and male roles. Similarly, a number of Vancouver's male street youth, who prostitute, had told the researcher that they were not gay. It seems reasonable to expect that such opposing life-styles must cause some internal confusion with regard to sexual identity. It was therefore expected that this sample would evidence such confusion in their ERs. Eighteen percent of the males, who evidenced themes of sexuality in their ERs, revealed sexuality confusion.

Coercive/abusive sexuality was evident in 45% of the males' ERs and 0% of the females'. That was an interesting result because studies have reported (Bagley & Young, 1987; Deisher, Robinson & Boyer, 1982; Silbert & Pines, 1983) that upwards of 100% of prostitutes (male and female) experienced childhood sexual abuse. The theme of sexuality would therefore be expected in the ERs of both male and female street youth who are prostitutes. A possible explanation for this discrepancy is that the males and females chose not to discuss their memories of sexual abuse as they likely were painful recollections.

The fact that more males than females evidenced this theme, may be attributed to the fact that male prostitutes have their sexual identity challenged on a daily basis (e.g., they service male customers) and therefore sexuality and sexual identity are always at the forefront of their minds. Such is not the case for the females, who are there to service male customers and therefore engage in "normal" (male/female) encounters. The females are more able to consider their activities job-like, which is easier to dismiss, whereas the males must contend with the added dimension of homosexuality.

2   What is the pattern of role-activity, as defined by the
      scoring system, in the ERs of male and female street
      involved youth?

The present study found that 54% of the male and 67% of the female street youth fell into the passive category - things happened TO them. These findings seem to confirm past research on similar populations (Silbert & Pines, 1983) that reported prostitutes came from very unpleasant home enviroments, where abuse appeared to be the norm. They experienced a high incidence of rape and sexual advances, by elders, as children (James & Meyerding, 1977). At a young age they learned that they had very little control over their lives. Many of these youths therefore left home for the streets, with the intent of gaining back some of their

power and control (C. Hudnell, personal communication, 1987). Unfortunately, having never experienced power and control, they were unable to retrieve it on the streets. Their lives as street youths therefore appeared to parallel their past lives in their homes; they continuously found themselves in situations where they were the victims - things continuously happened TO them.

Research on alcoholic women (Hafner, Fakouri & Chesney, 1988) has similarly demonstrated that they are more passive than their non-alcoholic counterparts. Although not solely alcoholic, the majority of female street involved youth are alcohol and/or drug addicted, so this result would likely be applicable to them as well.

3   What is the pattern of affect, as defined by the scoring

        system, in the ERs of male and female street involved

        youth?

The present study has demonstrated that male and female street involved youth recall memories that are more unpleasant than pleasant or neutral. Past research (Coombs, 1974; Deisher, Robinson & Boyer, 1982; Hersch, 1988) has indicated that the lives of these youths have been unpleasant and, in most instances, continue to be unpleasant. It is therefore not surprising that their ERs validate this fact. Street youth, in general, do not appear to recall particularly pleasant ERs.

4   What is the pattern of control, as defined by the scoring

        system, in the ERs of male and female street involved

        youth?

The present study found that 87% of the males and 94% of the females reported memories in which they were externally controlled. Similarly, Hafner, Fakouri, and Labrentz (1982) found that alcoholics reported a high proportion of

recollections that suggested they were externally controlled - that they dissociated themselves from any responsibility for what happened in the ER. Although not every street youth is an alcoholic, these results can be generalized to those who are.

One possible explanation for this abundance of external control is its use as a survival technique. These youths appear to live by denying any responsibility for their present situation. To look inward and accept some responsibility for their present circumstance would be a very painful experience, for which there is no support (e.g., counsellors).

5   What is the pattern of the tone, as defined by the scoring
       system, in the ERs of male and female street involved
       youth?

The finding that 69% of the males and 61% of the females had a neutral tone in their ERs was expected. If early recollection research is correct, then ERs with overtly aggressive tones would signify an aggressive style of interacting. If that were the case, such youth would constantly be battling amongst their peers and would likely not survive very long in the street envirement and hence could not be called street youth.

6   What are the different patterns of the ER and
       demographic data, in the ERs and questionnaires of
       male and female street involved youth?

As there was not any previous research comparing the ERs of male and femals street youth, this question was a general one.

Role-activity

The first difference was evident in the role-activity scale. While both the males and females had the largest percentage scores in the passive-responder category, a difference was evident when observing the next highest percentages. The males were next highest in the active-weak category, whereas the females second highest category was passive-observer. In our society, being male is equated with strength, aggression, assertion, and self-reliance. It is therefore not surprising that this societal stereotyping was more apparent in the ERs of the males than in the ERs of the females.

Sexuality

Another difference was evident in the category of sexuality. As mentioned previously, this gender difference was likely due to the fact that sexuality is a considerable issue for the majority of the males because they are reminded of the homosexual dynamic in their lifestyle on a daily basis, even when most of them do not consider themselves homosexual (Coombs, 1974).

Summary

The results from this component of the study provided some valuable information. The objective here was to highlight the different aspects of male and female street youth, with the hope of being able to use the resulting information as a basis for implementing services geared at the under-serviced males (and females). Clearly, the males had issues concerning their sexual identity. Although the small sample size limits generalizing these results to the whole street youth population, this appears to be an area where counselling services would provide a tremendous resource.

The Remaining Scoring System Categories

Character

Both the males (23%) and females (25%) mentioned "mother" most often in their ERs. Past research has highlighted the fact that most street youth come from homes where the fathers were either not present, or present and unsupportive (Ginsburg, 1967; Silbert & Pines, 1983). In such instances it can be assumed that the mother was left to take care of the children. The results of this section are therefore not surprising.

Detail

Male and female street involved youth demonstrated motor detail in the majority of their ERs. As their lives are focused on physical activities (e.g., prostitution, drinking, fighting, talking, sleeping), their ERs reflect that lifestyle.

Age of First Memory

The results from this study reported that male and female street youths' first memories were at approximately 5.5 years of age. Past research (Potwin, 1901) found that the average age of the first memory for non-street youth males was 4.4 years and for females, 3.01 years. ER research suggests that individuals who are unable to remember any memories before six years of age have probably repressed those incidents because they were too painful (D. Der, personal communication, February, 1989). The present research has already reviewed the literature that concluded street youths came from abusive home enviroments. It is therefore possible that these youth repressed much of their early childhoods and were only able to remember back to approximately 5.5 years of age.

Number of Words per Memory

There was a gender difference with regard to the mean number of words per memory. The males (119) had longer memories than the females (92) and a t-test, p< .05 confirmed those results. This finding appears to run counter to general studies which have found females to be more talkative. A possible explanation was that the males were mostly the youngest or middle children. Shulman and Mosak (1988) noted that second-born and youngest-born children tended to have the highest sociability rating of all siblings. On the other hand, first-borns, like the majority of the females in this sample, tended to be undemonstrative and shy.

Other Related Data

Broken Homes

The present study has shown that 65% of the male and 62% of the female street youth come from broken homes. It could be implied that these broken homes are also dysfunctional homes, as this would support previous studies of sexually abused and prostitution-involved children (Seng, 1989; Gray, 1973; Butts, 1947; Allen, 1980) who came from dysfunctional home enviroments. The percentage of street involved youth who come from broken homes may be explained by the circumstances that are apparent in a dysfunctional home enviroment. In such situations children learn that fighting, abuse, alcoholism, are a way of life (Deisher, Robinson, & Boyer, 1982). When they leave the home they go to the place where they are most comfortable - the street. They are attracted to the street because it is comfortable- it has dynamics similar to that which they experienced at home.

Census Canada (1986) looked at a number of family characteristics in households in Vancouver city. Thirteen percent of the homes had single parents. Somewhat related to that statisic was the Census Canada finding that 17% of the

broken homes housed the male parent, while 83% of the broken homes housed the female parent.

It should be noted that Vancouver city is not necessarily the place of origin for all of the street youth in this study. It is possible that the cities where some of these youth came from have a higher percentage of broken homes.

Step-parents

The present study revealed that a high percentage of females (75%), when living at home, lived with a step-parent, while that percentage was lower for the males (38%). Previous research reported that fathers were most often absent from the home (Ginsburg, 1967), leaving the mothers with the children and also with the opportunity to remarry. In most instances, therefore, the new parent was likely a male. A new male in the household may have created more friction for the son than for the daughter. This may explain the low rate of male street youth who lived with a step-parent.

Birth Order

The present study found that 50% of the female street youth were the oldest in their family, while most of the males were either the youngest (40%) or the middle children (35%). One possible explanation is that often in dysfunctional families there is a role reversal and the eldest daughter becomes a pseudo-friend to her mother and a psuedo-mother to the other siblings. This role reversal may flow into the mother's sexual relationship as well, where the daughter becomes sexually involved with the mother's boyfriend, becoming a quasi-lover (S. Cooke, personal communication, September 19, 1990). As a psuedo- mother, it is the daughter's job to rear and feed her siblings. Typically the girl is young and, having lived in a dysfunctional home enviroment, has few social skills. The street is a

place to obtain fast money. The author knows of a number of females who turned to prostitution as a means of supporting their younger siblings.

With regard to the males, it is possible that the son, as the youngest child in a dysfunctional family, feels defenseless against his siblings and/or parents, may be neglected by the other family members, and may not be included in much of the family affairs because of his young age. In such situations, it is possible that he does not get the love, affection, and nurturance that a "normal" child would receive and therefore goes to the streets with the hope of finding a sense of belonging.

Family Size

This study reported that the male street youth came from larger families (5.45 children) than did the female street youth (2.91 children) with a significant t-test, $P<.05$. With regard to the males, it is possible that large, dysfunctional families do not provide support and nurturance for the children, who often become lost and neglected. They therefore may go to the street in search of other ways to satisfy their needs.

The females, on the other hand, appeared to come from smaller families. A possible explanation is that in a small, dysfunctional family the eldest daughter must take responsibiity for the other sibling(s) and often for the mother (as mentioned previously). This overwhelming responsibility, on a teenage girl, may cause her to flee the pressures of her household. At a young age, and typically with few skills, the street is a place to receive fast money.

is that a "restrictive" Catholic upbringing may have resulted in the child rebelling against authority and choosing life on the street.

Census Canada (1981) reviewed the religious affiliations of people in Vancouver city. They found that 20% of the population were Catholic. Once again, as we do not know in what city the street youth were born, we are unable to make any real interpretations about these results.

Education Attained

This study presented evidence that the majority of male (70%) and female (58%) street youths dropped out of school in, or after, grade 10. School Board regulations require parental permission to withdraw from school prior to that time. It appeared that the majority of street youth waited until parental permission was not required, and then dropped out of school.

A second possibility is that the youths were not performing well in school as a result of their dysfunctional home enviroments (e.g., unable to complete homework because of alcoholism in the home, abuse) and were therefore treated as outcasts by their peers. They may have dropped out because school was so unpleasant for them.

Age Left Home

Females in this study left home at a younger age (9-13) than did the males (14-18). This gender difference may be attributable to puberty. Females begin maturity younger than males; therefore it is not a surprise that they were ready to leave home before the males. As well, 50% of the females in this study were first born, and first born children tend to be more responsible, conscientious, and have more leadership abilities than later born children (Shulman & Mosak, 1988).

Years on Street

The fact that 55% of the male and 58% of the female street youth had been on the streets for six to twelve years is a result that differs substantially from Vancouver statistics (Social Planning, 1990) which report that only 21% (males and females combined) were involved in street life for longer than three years. As this study interviewed subjects 19 years and over, its findings may be discrepant because of a sample bias. Had the study included subjects under 19, its results may have been more consistent with the Vancouver statistics. Another possible explanation for the differing results is that the Vancouver statistics were concerned with the length of time these individuals had been on Vancouver's streets, whereas the present study requested information on total street time (e.g., in other cities and towns as well).

Drug Use

A large percentage of male (85%) and female (67%) street youth use drugs. On numerous occasions the researcher was informed that drug use was rampant because it served as an escape from the painful reality these youths experience on a daily basis.

Fifty-nine percent of the males started using drugs after going to the street, while 63% of the females began their drug use before going to the street. One possible explanation for this difference is that some females became involved in prostitution to support their drug habit while some males, on the other hand, became prostitutes because of their desire to try out the gay lifestyle. Their drug use began only after the reality of their "work" became too painful.

Conclusion

Generally, the males appeared to come from broken homes without step-
parents. They were either the youngest or middle sibling from a family of
approximately five children. They completed grade 10, left home between the ages
of 14-18, had been on the street from six to twelve years, and began their drug use
after going to the street. Their memories were predominately unpleasant, and
evidenced themes of sexuality. They appeared to be passive agents with regard to
their actions and were overwhelmingly externally controlled.

A profile of a female street youth would present a girl who came from a
broken home with a step-parent, was the eldest sibling in a family of
approximately three children, and was Catholic. She probably completed grade 10,
left home between nine and thirteen years of age, has been on the streets from six
to twelve years, and began her drug use before going to the streets. Her memories
are predominately unpleasant. She appears to be a passive agent with regard to
her actions, and is externally controlled.

Limitations of the Study

Although ER research has the advantage of providing important
information, often out of the subject's awareness, it also has a general
shortcoming. Early recollection data are extremely diverse in their subject matter
and theme. Any attempt to contain an ER by devising structured scoring systems
limits the available information.

This study was limited by its small sample size (N). A small N limits the
ability to generalize the results. In this situation the results are only generalizable
to the population from which they were obtained.

A further limitation, and one of great importance, was the lack of previous
ER research with a population even remotely similar to street involved youth.

This limited the opportunity to compare the data with previous work. Linked closely to this problem was the fact that the researcher made claims, based on her knowledge of the population, that had to go unsubstantiated because of the lack of written material.

As well, the person who interviewed the subjects was also the author of the research. As reported previouisly, this was done after consultation with three trial subjects, but it does not negate the fact that researcher bias may have played a part in the data collection.

Finally, this was a study of the older street youth. It did not include subjects under 19 years of age. Had the study looked at youth between the ages of 13-19, it is possible that different patterns would have emerged.

If one wished to speculate, a younger street youth may present ERs with a more active role-activity theme, ERs in which they were more internally controlled, which had more aggressive tones, and which had an increase of sexual confusion but a decrease in overall sexuality (for the male segment of the population).

It is hoped that this study will create interest in the ER technique and the street youth population, and therefore tempt others to fill the void in the literature.

Implications for Future Research

As is often the case, the present study answered some questions while raising many more. Work with the present scoring system has highlighted alterations that should be considered in future research. It would be useful to develop a scoring system designed specifically with this population in mind. The "sexuality" category should be broadened to allow for a more precise scrutiny of the issues related to sexuality, and the "tone" category should be expanded so that it is clearly differentiated from the affect scale. Future research should also use the

results from this study and implement a sexuality counselling program for the males, with a pre and post test to measure its success. Another area for future research is an investigation of the Native street youth. Within this population, whole families live on the streets and are engaged in street "activities".

Finally (and of most importance) it would be useful to do a follow-up study involving a larger N. Failing that approach, it would be beneficial to do similar, small studies throughout Canada in an attempt to generalize the results to all street involved youth.

Implications for Counsellors

Professional counsellors are a necessity if these youth are ever to return to "mainstream" society. A large portion of the male street youth require counselling with regard to their sexual identity, as a number are clearly confused. Both males and females need sexual abuse counselling to help them with their low self-esteem. After intensive personal counselling they will require drug and alcohol counselling and some life-planning information.

Counsellors working with this population must be aware that, compared with other populations (e.g., alcoholic women), the rewards are very slim. It is rewarding if the client arrives for his/her first appointment, and extremely rewarding if he/she ever returns. Patience is a necessity when working with these youth; they rarely keep appointments and require a large amount of a counsellor's time before they begin to trust. At times, working with street youth can be frustrating because they have a tendency to strike out at those with whom they form a relationship. The "burn-out" rate for counsellors is therefore high.

In general street youth resemble young children in adults' bodies as they look adult-like, but are egocentric and irresponsible. It is important to keep in mind that they are survivors; their lives for the most part have been miserable, yet they are attempting to do the best they can with what they have.

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APPENDIX A

Scoring System

<u>Characters:</u>

Concerns the characters mentioned in the ER, whether or not they play an active role.

<u>Role-activity:</u>

Passive-observer: Subject has the primary role as an observer of another's activity. There is generally no interaction in the recollection in which the subject is a participant.

Passive-responder: Subject is involved in what is going on in the ER, but things primarily happen to him/her and his/her reaction is generally a passive one.

Active-weak: Subject is involved in what is going on in the ER, but he/she appears either tentative or hesitant in his/her actions (e.g., he/she is active only briefly during the memory).

Active-strong: Subject is involved in what is going on in the ER, and he/she appears either determined or persistant in his/her actions (e.g., he/she is constantly active throughout).

Affect:

positive: The overall feeling tone of the ER is pleasant.

negative: The overall feeling tone of the ER is unpleasant.

mixed: The overall feeling tone is partly pleasant and partly unpleasant.

neutral: No indication of affect in the ER.

Sexuality:

confusion: Subject describes some confusion with regard to a sexual experience or sexual identity.

coercive/abusive: Subject describes a sexual experience that was abusive to him/her, or one in which he/she was the abuser.

Tone:

aggressive: The overall genre of the ER is aggressive.

neutral: The overall genre in neither aggressive nor placid.

Concern with Detail:

Visual: Attention is given to describing color, size, shape, etc. of a person or object, etc.

Auditory: Attention is given to describing volume, quality of sound, or something heard.

Motor: Attention is given to describing some vigorous physical movement e.g., we ran around the field.

Control:

Internal: Subject accepts responsibility for what happens in the ER.

External: Subject dissociates self from any consequences or outcomes of ER.

APPENDIX B

The Females' Scores

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CHARACTERS:												
mother	3	1	2	2	2	2	2		1			1
father	2			2			2		1		3	
sibling	1	1	1	3	1	1	1		1		1	2
other family member	1	1				1		2	1			2
non-family	1	1	1	1	1	1		2	1			2
group										3		2
animals	1		1		1					1	1	
ROLE-ACTIVITY:												
passive-observer			2	1	3				2		2	1
passive-responder	3			1		2	1	2	1	1	1	1
active-weak			1				2	1	2			1
active-strong		3		1		1						
AFFECT:												
positive				1								
negative	2	3	1	1	1	3	2	3	2	2	3	1
mixed	1		2	1	2		1		1	1		2
neutral												
SEXUALITY:												
coercive												
confusion												
TONE:												
aggressive	1	3	1				3			1	2	3
neutral	2		2	3	3	3		3	3	2	1	
CONCERN W/ DETAIL:												
visual			1	1	1		1	2	1	1	2	2
auditory				1					1			
motor	1	3	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	2	2	3
CONTROL:												
internal				1						1		
external	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3

subject number

APPENDIX C

The Males' Scores

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CHARACTERS:												
mother	1	2	1	2		2	3		3	2		
father	1	2	1			1	2		2			
sibling					1	1	2		2	1	1	2
other family member		1		2			1	2	1		1	
non-family	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1			1	1
group				1					1	1		2
animals		1							1			
ROLE-ACTIVITY:												
passive-observer	1				2		1				1	2
passive-responder		1	1		1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
active-weak	1	2	2			2		1	1	1		
active-strong	1			3								
AFFECT:												
positive	1	1	1				1	1		1		
negative	1	2	1	3	3	1	1	2	2	2	2	
mixed	1		1			2	1		1		1	3
neutral												
SEXUALITY:												
coercive	1	1		1	2			1				
confusion					1							
TONE:												
aggressive	1	1	1	3	2			2	1	1		
neutral	2	2	2		1	3	3	1	2	2	3	3
CONCERN W/ DETAIL:												
visual				1	1	1					1	2
auditory		1		3								1
motor	2	3	3	3	2	3		3	3	3	2	1
CONTROL:												
internal			2		1			1		1		
external	3	3	1	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	3

subject number

The Males' Scores - continued

CHARACTERS:	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20				
mother	2	2	1	2		2	1	1				
father	3	1	1	2		1	1	3				
sibling	2	1		3		2		1				
other family member		2	1			2		1				
non-family	1	1			1	1						
group		2	1				1					
animals			2	1			1					
ROLE-ACTIVITY:												
passive-observer							1					
passive-responder	3	3	1	1	2	2	2	2				
active-weak					1							
active-strong			2	2		1						
AFFECT:												
positive				1	1		1	1				
negative	3	1	2	2	2	1	1	1				
mixed		2	1			2	1	1				
neutral												
SEXUALITY:												
coercive		1				1	1					
confusion					1							
TONE:												
aggressive		1	2	1	1	1						
neutral	3	2	1	2	2	2	3					
CONCERN W/ DETAIL:												
visual	1	3	1		1		2					
auditory			2			1		1				
motor	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	2				
CONTROL:												
internal				2								
external	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3				
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20				

subject number

APPENDIX D

AGE_____   GENDER_____

Last completed grade in school?_____

       Are you the first born_____ in your family?
            second born_____
            third born_____
            fourth born_____
            other_____

       How many children are in your family?_____

       At what age did you leave home?_____

       How long have you been on the street?_____

       How long have you been using
       drugs/alcohol?_____

       Were your parents divorced?_____
       If so, did the parent you lived with remarry?_____
       If yes, do you have a: step-father_____
                or
                   step-mother_____

     Occupation:

     mother_____ full time___
                                         part time___

     father_____full time___
                                       part time___

     Religion_____

APPENDIX E

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INSTRUCTION FOR WRITING EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

Think back to when you were a child, some time before the age of <u>seven or eight (8)</u> years of age, and write down an incident that comes to mind. It can be anything at all--good or bad, important or unimportant--but it should be something that you remember as having <u>happened only once,</u> that is, a one-time specific incident; and it should be something that you can sort of <u>picture in your mind</u> like a scene.

When you have thought of a <u>specific event,</u> indicate the approximate age at which it occurred, and then write down WHAT YOU CLEARLY REMEMBER ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED. In the course of describing the incident, address the following points:

(1)   If you remember <u>how you felt at the time,</u> or what <u>reaction you had</u> to what was going on, please indicate it. (It is okay, however, if you don't remember a particular feeling or reaction.)

(2)   If you do remember having a particular reaction or feeling at the time of the incident, indicate what was going on that made you feel or react that way.

When you have finished writing down what you remember about the event, ask yourself the question (unless you have already included this point in the context of the memory):

(3)   Suppose you had a Polaroid snapshot of the moment in the incident which you can picture most clearly-the moment that stands out most vividly in the memory. Describe (a) what was happening at the moment. (b) what your feeling or reaction was at the moment, and (c) why you were feeling that way or why you were having that reaction.

Repeat the above procedure for 2 additional memories so that when you have finished you have recalled a total of 3 events. If it is impossible for you to remember 3 events from before you were 7 or 8 years old, use events that occurred as early in your life as you can remember, but <u>not after 11 or 12 years of age,</u> at the latest. Whether or not you are sure the event actually occurred is not important--what IS important is that YOU remember it as having occurred.

Some background details may be appropriate. Do not, however, spend too much time "setting the stage" with facts leading up to or surrounding the incident itself. Instead, CONCENTRATE ON WHAT ACTUALLY TRANSPIRED.

Phrases like "We were always . . .", "X always would . . .", "X used to . . .", or "X would happen", suggest incidents which occurred repeatedly. You should choose one specific time that this incident occurred, which stands out more clearly than the others, and tell what happened that one time. If one particular instance does not stand out over others, forget about this event and choose a different early memory which happened only once.

You will probably find that you can remember 3 childhood events. Most people can do this with only a little effort. If, however, you experience some difficulties recalling events which meet the requirements of these instructions, please ask for assistance. You should spend no more than about 10 minutes on each memory.

APPENDIX F
Example of An Analyzed ER

1.

I was seven years old and I was at my mother's (CHARACTER - mother)

house. My mother was really drunk and she passed out. I figured that we

weren't living the right life, or whatever, so I decided to kidnap my little

sister (CHARACTER - sibling). She was only like four years old, three years

old, and I took her for the night and we just went to my mom's sister's

(CHARACTER - other family member). (ROLE-ACTIVITY - active-weak).

Then she phoned back. She phoned my mom in the morning and told her

exactly what happened. (TONE - neutral). (CONCERN WITH DETAIL -

motor). (CONTROL - internal).

feelings - I felt angry at my mom for drinking all of the time, because she had

a bad drinking problem. I was really angry with her (AFFECT - negative).

freeze frame - When the police ended up coming to get us from my aunt's

house. That was the worst.

feelings - Fright. I didn't know what was going to happen to me.

2.

I was about seven years old. I was outside of our apartment building. I was in

the back. My mom (CHARACTER - mother) was sleeping and I thought I was

home free, but I wasn't. She woke up and caught me in the back of the

apartment building with a cigarette. She come downstairs and "warmed" me.

(ROLE-ACTIVITY - passive-responder). (TONE - aggressive). (CONCERN

WITH DETAIL - motor). (CONTROL - external).

feelings - I was petrified. I was scared when she came downstairs. I thought she was going to make me eat it.

(AFFECT - negative).

freeze frame - Getting caught with a cigarette in my hand.

feelings - Fright.

3.

I was about five years old and I was playing outside with my friends (CHARACTER - group) and my friend got onto my bike and started running down the street. So I started crying and I ran down the street and I was running so fast that I tripped and I fell and my whole face got scarred with scabs and full of blood. (ROLE-ACTIVITY - active-seak). It was just not a pretty sight. (TONE - neutral). (CONCERN WITH DETAIL - motor). (CONTROL - external).
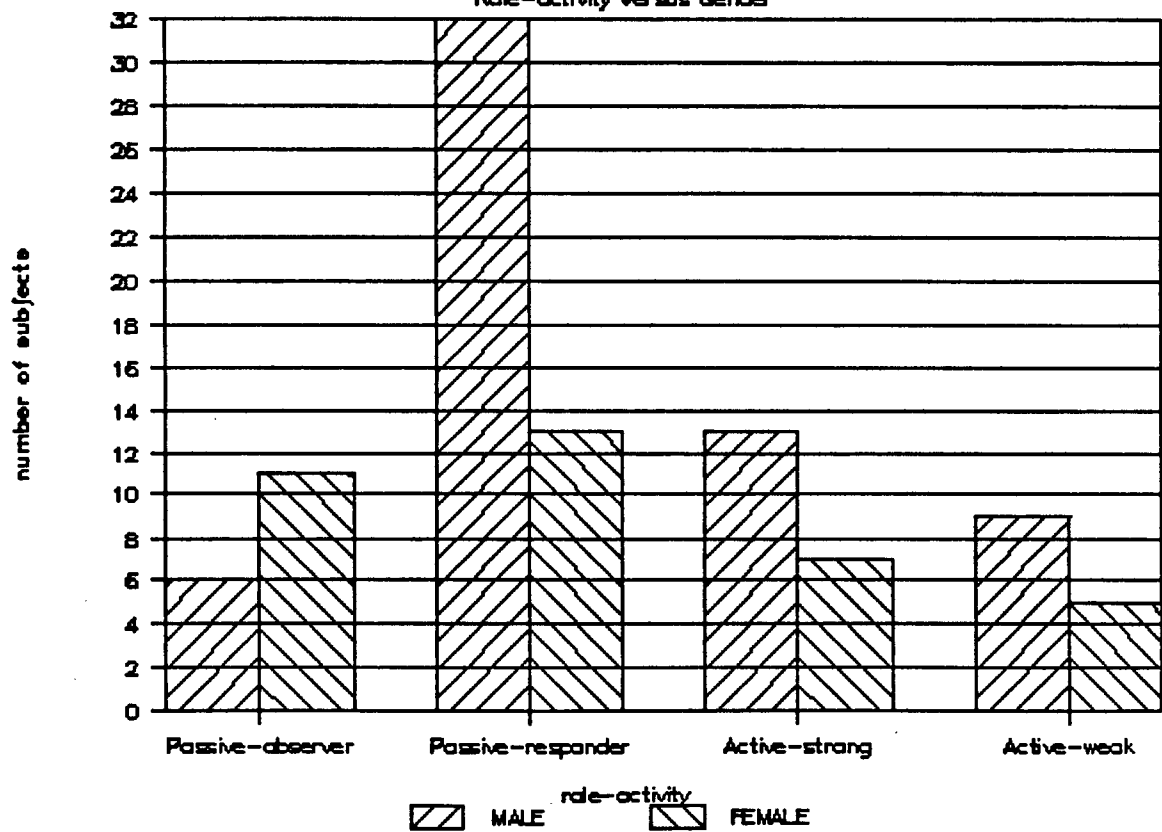
feelings - I was in shock. (AFFECT - negative).

freeze frame - Falling, I guess.

feelings - I was scared. I didn't know where I was going to hurt myself and then I just landed on my face and I got up and ran home and started bawling my eyes out.
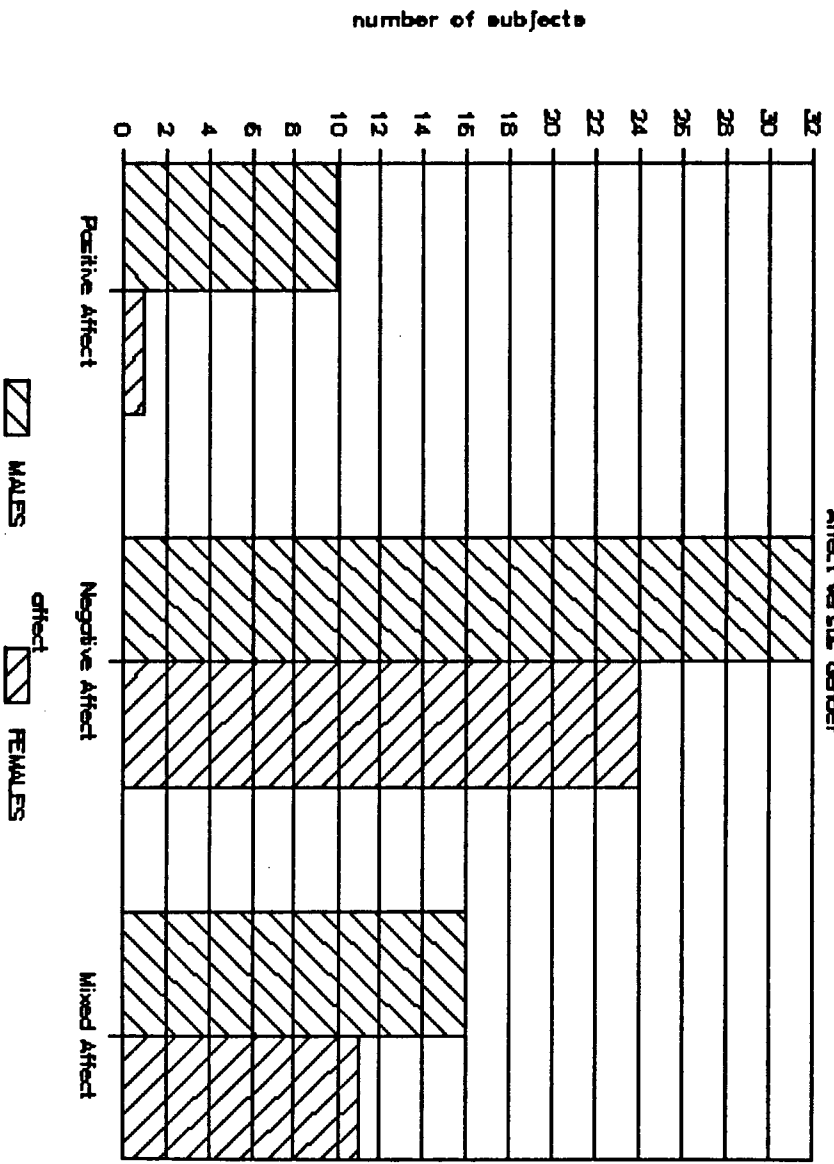
APPENDIX G

Role-activity versus Gender

number of subjects (y-axis)

role-activity (x-axis categories): Passive-observer, Passive-responder, Active-strong, Active-weak

Legend: ▨ MALE   ▨ FEMALE

APPENDIX H

Affect versus Gender

number of subjects

MALES   FEMALES

affect

Positive Affect   Negative Affect   Mixed Affect

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APPENDIX I

Religion versus Gender