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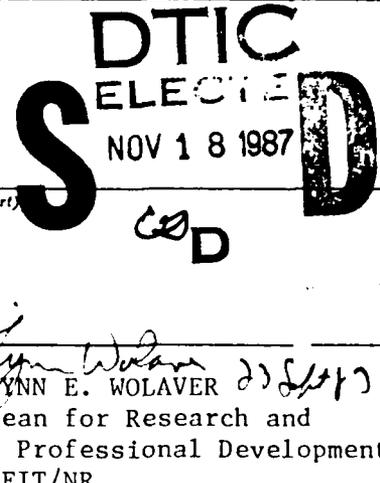
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DRUG ABUSE AND CRIMINAL VIOLENCE IN URBAN COMMUNITIES

A Thesis

by

Emmett J. Mitchell  
Captain, United States Air Force  
1987  
95 Pages

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Criminal Justice

at

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

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Abstract  
of  
DRUG ABUSE AND CRIMINAL VIOLENCE IN URBAN COMMUNITIES  
by  
Larrettia A. Mitchell

Statement of Problem

The need to understand the relationship between drugs and criminal violence is essential to the effective control of crime in America, and for understanding the serious nature of the drug problem. This study provides an analysis of the literature in the area of criminal justice, criminology, and the social sciences with a special focus on the causative factors in drug abuse and violence; and a case history of a city which is familiar with these problems.

Sources of Data

Information collected from the Social Science Citation Index, California State University, Sacramento, the California State Library, the Oakland City Library, the National Institute of Justice, books, journals, and newspapers were critical in conducting this research.

Conclusions Reached

The following conclusions were reached from this

Conclusion: Researchers are reluctant to say that drug abuse causes crime; Violence is an integral part of the drug sub-culture; Drug addicts/users commit a large number of violent crimes against family members, friends, and society in order to support their habits; Drug abuse contributes significantly to the amount of violent crime found in urban communities; Drug trafficking is a multi-million dollar business that is by far the major cause of violence in urban areas; Drug abuse is impossible to eradicate because of its high demand, although it can and must be controlled; The root of the problem, what causes people to turn to drugs, must be better understood before appropriate policies can be made to alleviate the problem of drug abuse and violence; Finally, efforts to minimize drug-related crime will require reducing the demand for drugs as well as curtailing illegal supplies of drugs.

DRUG ABUSE AND CRIMINAL VIOLENCE IN URBAN COMMUNITIES

Emmett J. Mitchell  
B.S., Alabama State University, Montgomery, Alabama, 1978

Thesis

Submitted in partial satisfaction of  
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Criminal Justice

at

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO

Summer  
1987

DRUG ABUSE AND CRIMINAL VIOLENCE IN URBAN COMMUNITIES

A Thesis

by

Emmett J. Mitchell

Approved by:

Thomas R. Phelps Chair  
Dr. Thomas R. Phelps

James M. Poland Second Reader  
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Date: 31 July 1987

Name of Student: Emmett J. Mitchell

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Thomas R. Phelps  
Thomas R. Phelps, Graduate Coordinator

31 July 1987  
Date

Division of Criminal Justice

Abstract  
of  
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The Social Science Citation Index was used extensively and offered a useful resource of information for the study of this subject area. Information collected from the California State Library, the Oakland City Library, the National Institute of Justice, books, journals, and newspapers were crucial in completing this research.

### Conclusions Reached

Drug abuse is an historical part of the American culture. Criminal violence is a product, or side effect, of drug abuse. The following conclusions are reached from this study: Researchers are reluctant to say that drug abuse causes crime; Violence is an integral part of the drug subculture; Drug addicts/users commit a large number of violent crimes against family members, friends, and society in order to support their habits; Drug abuse contributes significantly to the amount of violent crime found in urban communities; Drug trafficking is a multimillion dollar business that is by far the major cause of violence in urban areas; Drug abuse is impossible to eradicate because of its high demand, although it can and must be controlled; The root of the problem, what causes people to turn to drugs, must be better understood before appropriate policies can be made to alleviate the problem of violence and drug abuse; Finally, efforts to minimize drug-related crime will require reducing the demand for drugs as well as curtailing illegal supplies of drugs.

Committee Chair Signature of Approval

Thomas R. Phelps

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

Crime in America is said to be the single greatest domestic threat to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Because crime inhibits freedom, most city dwellers place it at the top of their complaints list over housing, schools, and transportation problems. In 1980, crime in America reached its highest statistics ever, an increase of 300 percent from 1960. During that same year more than 24 million households, or one third of the nation was touched by crime. Crime rates decreased for three straight years in 1982, 83, and 84 respectively. However, 1985 and 86 show an increase once again. The rise has been blamed on everything from unemployment rates to the change in our society's moral standards. Violent crimes have also increased over the past three years and drugs are implicated in most of the cases. Our urban communities have become war zones for drug users/addicts, dealers and traffickers.

#### Statement of the Problem

America has a very serious drug problem. According to John C. Lawn (Administrator, Drug Enforcement Administration), "America abuses more drugs than any nation in

the history of the industrialized world. We have 20 million users of legally prescribed drugs for non-medical purposes, 20 million regular users of marijuana, one-half million heroin addicts and a cocaine epidemic enveloping our country today. Cocaine consumption rose 11 percent in 1985, and cocaine emergencies increased 51 percent. Deaths caused by cocaine abuse has increased 325 percent since 1980."<sup>1</sup> What does the drug problem have to do with violence in urban cities? The majority of those half-million heroin addicts and cocaine epidemic victims are located in America's urban communities. Therefore, they attract two other elements of the drug culture the dealers and traffickers. Ultimately, homicide rates as well as property crimes have increased within urban cities and law enforcement officials say they are mostly drug related.<sup>2</sup>

The need to understand the relationship between drugs and crime/violence is essential for better control of crime in America, and understanding the serious nature of our drug problem itself. In conducting background for this research, it seemed apparent that drug use/abuse and crime has some kind of relationship. It also became apparent, based on readings, that the exact relationship remains unclear. As Clayton and Tuchfeld stated (1982) "The relationship between drug abuse and crime is one of the most complex and sensitive topics in the social

sciences. Among those involved in studying the relationship dissensus about theoretical, conceptual, measurement, and methodological issues are pervasive. This dissensus is aggravated by the importance and urgency of the crime-drug relationship in the political areas and fear held by scientists that policy makers might distort and misinterpret "scientific" facts to justify violations of constitutional rights or to institute repressive statutory or correctional programs."<sup>3</sup>

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide an analysis of the literature in the area of criminal justice, criminology, and the social sciences which focus on the causative factors in drug abuse and violence; and to provide a case history of a city which is familiar with the problem of drug abuse and criminal violence. The case study is a result of interviews and on site visits to the Oakland Police Department, for the review of records, identifying the participants in the subculture of violence comprising the criminal and the drug environment.

#### Methodology

A review of the literature in the area of criminal justice, criminology, and social sciences which focuses on

the causative factors in drug abuse and violence has been conducted. Oakland, California is researched to identify drug culture violence within an urban community. The contribution of drugs to violence/crime, the type of drugs most used when violent acts occur, and the level of violence within the drug culture are examined. The social science citation index compiled for the California State University, Sacramento, Library was used extensively and offers a great source of information for this subject area. Additionally information collected from the California State Library, the Oakland City Library, National Institute of Justice, books, journals and newspapers were crucial in completing this study.

#### Limitations of the Study

This is a descriptive study which reviews the literature in criminology & criminal justice. In addition the profile of one community is provided. There is no attempt to comprehend metropolitan areas within the United States or to prove that drugs are the sole cause of criminal violence and crime. The literature review will provide the knowledge required for policy formulation for comprehending and controlling the causes of the problem.

Definitions of Terms

1. Drugs: "Although usually thought of as any substance used to treat disease, a more proper definition is any substance that affects bodily function, including any material-plant, powder, fluid, solid, or gas, that can be eaten, drunk, injected, sniffed, inhaled, or absorbed from the skin."<sup>4</sup>
2. Convicted Drug User/Abuser: A convicted criminal with a known recorded history of illegally using or abusing drugs.
3. Drug Abuser: "An individual who uses therapeutic or non-therapeutic drugs to the point where it affects the health of the individual or impacts adversely on others."<sup>5</sup>
4. Cocaine: "Primary psychoactive ingredient in coca. Cocaine was isolated from coca (*Erythroxylon coca*) in the 1850s.... Sold in the form of white crystals, called flake, or powder that is sometimes diluted to about half its volume by lactose or other inert material. Drug is often "snorted" through the nose, but it is also sometimes injected intravenously."<sup>6</sup>
5. Crack: A cocaine distillate created in a hard rock form used for smoking or freebasing.
6. Heroin: "Semisynthetic derivative of morphine. Chemical name is diacetylmorphine hydrochloride. Synthesized in 1898 in Germany, the name is derived from

the German word heroisch, meaning "heroic; powerful. Comes in the form of powder or tablet."<sup>7</sup>

7. Opiate: "A preparation are derivative of opium; broadly Narcotic la."<sup>8</sup>

8. Phencyclidine (PCP): "Trade name is Sernyl. Chemical name is 1-(1-phencyclohexyl) piperidine hydrochloride. Sold in the form of a white crystal or powder that can be injected, smoked, or mixed with other drugs, in the form of a tablet or capsule, or dissolved in liquid."<sup>9</sup>

9. Amphetamines: "General term for class of drugs that causes stimulation to the brain. These drugs are also called sympathomimetic amines since they are similar in structure and function to endogenous neurotransmitters... Usually sold in the form of capsules and tablets but also in powder or liquid form."<sup>10</sup>

10. Methadone: "Synthetic narcotic less potent than heroin or morphine that is used in maintenance or detoxification programs for individuals dependent on these drugs. Comes in the form of white crystals that are water soluble, or tablets. Trade name is Dolophine."<sup>11</sup>

#### Organization of Study

This study is organized into four chapters. Chapter 1 contains the introduction, statement of the problem,

limitations of the study, and a list of definitions of terms. Chapter 2 contains a comprehensive review of related literature including books, journals, periodicals, and newspapers. Available studies focusing on the drug-crime relationship are identified.

Chapter 3 provides a case history of violence within an urban community: Oakland California. Finally, Chapter 4 offers a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for future research in the area explored by this study.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>John C. Lawn, "Drugs In America Our Problem, Our Solution," Vital Speeches of the Day, 15 Mar 1986: 322.

<sup>2</sup>Isabel Wilkerson, "Urban Homicide Rates in U.S. Up Sharply in 1986," New York Times, 15 Jan 1987: A14.

<sup>3</sup>Richard R. Clayton and Barry S. Tuchfeld, "The Drug-Crime Debate: Obstacles to Understanding the Relationship," Journal Of Drug Issues 12, no. 2 (1982): 153-55.

<sup>4</sup>Ernest L. Abel, A Dictionary Of Drug Abuse Terms and Terminology (Westport: Greenwood, 1984), 47.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>8</sup>"Opiate." Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary.

<sup>9</sup>Abel, p. 122.

<sup>10</sup>Abel, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup>Abel, p. 103.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

The purpose of this review is to provide information from the leading researchers within the area of study of drug abuse and violence. The most critical issues and controversies are examined within this chapter. These issues and controversies are examined by reviewing the history and background of drug abuse problems in America. After examination of the history and background of this problem, an analysis of current literature linking the drug-crime relationship will narrow the focus of this study. The last section of this chapter will examine two recent studies that brings this drug-crime link into better perspective.

#### Background and Historical Review

America continues to confront a serious drug abuse problem. In fact, the United States has had a history of drug problems. A number of Americans seem to think that our drug problems evolve from the 1960s

during the era of peace and flower children. Erich Goode states:

It is a fallacy to think that the narcotics problem emerged full blown out of nothing in the 1960s. In fact there is a long history of drug addiction in this country. The social image of the drug addict has come almost full circle since the second half of nineteenth century addiction to morphine as a result of administration during surgery was common during and after the civil war, and addiction came to be known as the "soldiers disease," or the Army disease.<sup>1</sup>

It would appear that society must take partial responsibility for its drug abuse problem. For example, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century it was perfectly legal to obtain over the counter medicine containing narcotics such as opium and morphine. These drugs were sometimes considered cure-all drugs, and were often used for ailments such as headaches, toothaches, menstrual pains, sleeping problems, depression and several others. The people who became drug addicts during this time period surprisingly, were often respectable middle class housewives. Society viewed these kind of addicts as victims, in need of medical help (based on the connection between medical therapy and addiction) according to Goode. However, around 1920, the attitude of the public toward the addict changed from victim to "that of a criminal, a willful degenerate, a hedonistic

thrill-seeker in need of imprisonment and stiff punishment."<sup>2</sup> This change no doubt came after the 1914 passage of the Harrison Act, which outlawed the sale of over the counter narcotic medicine. The demand for narcotics which a large portion of the American society had come to depend upon, did not disappear after the Harrison Act became law. Americans simply turned to physicians to provide them narcotics (for treatment of course), and they responded because it was within their legal rights. In 1925, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed its earlier decisions, which basically said addiction was not a crime, and thus ended the physicians legal right to provide narcotics to addicts. Doctors were soon arrested when caught providing narcotics to addicts for treatment. Several thousand were convicted and imprisoned before most doctors gave up treating addict patients altogether.<sup>3</sup>

The passing of strict federal laws against the illegal use and sale of narcotics was designed to eliminate existing drug abuse problems. Unfortunately, one of the side-effects of such legislature was the creation of a black market for narcotics. Because the demand was there, many users recognized an opportunity to make money, thus narcotic traffickers and dealers became a part of the American drug culture. There are those who believe that if the Harrison Act had not been passed, we would never have had drug traffickers, dealers, addicts

who steal, or other drug-related crimes. The laws passed to prevent drug abuse affected three types of people; "the middle-age, middle-class addicts" (mostly white women, who turned to barbiturates i.e. tranquilizers and sedatives), "those least addicted" (who terminated their drug abuse), and "the street addicts" (those who would not or could not give up their addiction).<sup>4</sup> The street addicts are the the largest group in this typology and will be the primary focus of this literature review. Goode states that:

Probably the most important contributions that law enforcement has made to the problem of addiction is the creation of an addict sub-culture. It is important to emphasize that prior to 1914 no addict sub-culture of any significance existed in the United States, and there was<sup>5</sup> no inevitable link between narcotics and crime.

The criminal subculture comprised of drug addicts, traffickers, and dealers play an important role in generating crime in the cities. This results from breaking the law by using, trafficking, or selling illegal drugs, and by the commission of property crimes, armed robberies, assaults, and murders. The literature analysis will offer further support for this assumption.

The drug subculture was somewhat controlled up until the mid 1940s when there were only 20,000 known addicts. The lack of organized crime involvement in the supplying of illegal drugs (due to distribution of liquor during alcohol prohibition), the economic depression of 1930, and

World War II were probably contributing factors to this low number. However, after the war the rise in the addict culture is noteworthy, particularly in the late 60s.<sup>6</sup>

Heroin, the drug which was actually developed to cure morphine addiction in 1898 by a German pharmaceutical company, ended up becoming the number one illegal addictive drug in America.<sup>7</sup> This drug has been used illegally almost as long as its legal use. John Kaplan in his book The Hardest Drug describes heroin as follows:

Heroin is one of the major flights of urban life in the United States and many other parts of the the developed western world. It creates addictions, contributes to crime, operates as one of formidable obstacles to mobility out of city ghettos, over-burdens the institutions of criminal justice, exacerbates problems of police corruption, and puts pressure on the adherence of law enforcement officials to constitutional values. Heroin never should be invented.

Why did American's drug culture grow so rapidly? As time passes people change, and thus their culture is affected. For example, what was taboo in the fifties and sixties becomes perfectly acceptable today. The 60s generation of college students were more open in expressing both feelings and beliefs. Whereas peace demonstrations were one method of expression, taking drugs was sometimes another. Oakley Ray states in his book Drugs, Society and Human Behavior: "The increase in drug use and misuse can be viewed as part of a too rapidly

developing revolution, a culture revolution and a biological revolution."<sup>9</sup>

As the drug abuse problem expanded so grew the theory that drug abuse leads to crime and thus an escalation in our crime rates. By the early 1970's our leadership was convinced that this theory was somewhat valid. For example, Oakley quotes former Governor of New York, Nelson Rockefeller (1972) as using theft figures to justify harsher punishment for drug users, using data from the New York Addiction Control Commission which claimed New York lost approximately \$6.5 billion per year from drug addict thefts. Of course those figures were difficult to substantiate since New York State's total reported thefts for 1972 recorded a loss of 238 million dollars.<sup>10</sup>

The Drug Abuse Council was formed in 1972 to provide independent study of American drug abuse problems. The Council reported that in 1972 America had approximately three hundred to six hundred thousand heroin addicts (the majority were inner-city Blacks and Hispanics), and almost twenty-five million Americans had tried marijuana while ten million were regular users. In addition, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, and tranquilizers were used by millions for non-medical purposes.<sup>11</sup> The Council also reported:

Illicit drugs - marijuana, heroin, and cocaine in particular - were singled out for attention, yet

the misuse of legally available drugs was often ignored. While various methods or approaches for "solving the drug problem" were presented, confusion prevailed. Drug issues particularly that of the relationship between drug use and crime, were constantly publicized and politicized. Many Americans thought the increase in street crime during the late 60s resulted largely from illicit drug use and therefore responded enthusiastically to calls for a war on drugs to keep illicit drugs and there users apart. Heroin was labeled "Public Enemy Number One". New "get tough" laws were proposed, and many were enacted. Hundreds of million of dollars were appropriated for programs to stiffen law enforcement, improve public education, and expand treatment efforts.<sup>12</sup>

The time had come by the 1970s for researching the dilemma of the drug-crime relationship. Although research had been done as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, there had not been a general consensus formed on this matter by the various criminologists studying the problem.

The 1980s has brought new and significant research findings concerning the drug-crime relationship but no absolute solutions to the drug abuse problem, now that cocaine and its derivative known as crack assumed the role as the number one illicit drug in America. The drug subculture clients participant have now changed over the past three decades; whereas, in the nineteenth century the primary clients for drug abuse were middle-age, middle-class Americans the period since 1960 has produced a much younger client. The primary addict clients are found in our urban communities, mostly Black & Hispanic on a low-

income level.

As Oakley has noted the time arrived where citizens and their government were willing to utilize the appropriate funds to find creditable answers to this problem. The forthcoming sections will reveal the findings of researchers on this subject.

#### Drug-Crime Relationship

James A. Inciardi's edited volume The Drugs-Crime Connection provides the reader with a variety of essays written by leading researchers on the drug-crime relationship. Inciardi provides his personal thoughts on the subject in the introduction, which is titled "Drug use and Criminal Behavior; Major Research Issues." As mentioned earlier, the study of the drug-crime relationship is one of the most complex issues within the social sciences. For example, Inciardi states:

The findings that emerged however, led to a series of peculiar and contradictory perspectives. Some researchers found that the criminal histories of sample cases considerably precede any evidence of drug use; thus their conclusion was that the heroin user was indeed a criminal. Other investigators found in their data that the temporal sequence of crime and drug use was in the reverse direction. Still a third group found that portions of their samples had been criminals first,<sup>13</sup> with the remainder having been drug users first.

#### Methodological Issues

Methodological issues associated with drug crime

research are addressed throughout the literature. Robert Gandossy et al, identified the following methodological issues in drug-crime research:

- Problems with definition of drug use and crime.
  - Basic problems with identifying the dependent independent variables, resulting in incorrect interpretation of the findings.
  - Crime is not properly defined.
- Measurement Problems
  - Problems in identifying and measuring major variables of interest.
- Sample Representatives
  - Using unrepresentative samples causing major limitations on the generalizability of research findings to other populations.<sup>14</sup>

Indciardi states that research on the drug crime relationship focused on two major issues in the early 1960's. First, the hypotheses, theories, conclusions and other findings generated by almost the entire spectrum of research were of little usefulness in setting crime control policies. There was many biases and deficiencies in the very nature of the research. Data gathering on criminal activity was often limited to heroin users arrest histories, and inadequacy of official statistics as measures of the incidents and prevalence of criminal behavior. The use of self-reported criminal activity

often involved small samples of incarcerated heroin users or addicts placed into treatment programs. Secondly, the proponents of the "medical model" conducted much of the research, this is the approach which states addiction is a chronic and relapsing disease, and the addict should be dealt with as any patient suffering from some physiological or medical disorder. In spite of this approach to drug abuse there was other independent work which presented some accurate data on heroin users and their life-styles.<sup>15</sup>

By the 1970s researchers were more aware of the errors of the past, and were more critical of their research and that of their contemporaries. This attitude coupled with the support of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), resulted in more accurate data on the nature and extent of drug related crime, the criminal involvement of narcotics users, and the causal linkages between drug use and criminality.<sup>16</sup>

The first study for review is by Dr. John C. Ball et. al., entitled "The Criminality of Heroin Addicts When Addicted and When off Opiates." This study will be discussed in detail due to its contribution to our understanding of drug-crime relationships. The study took

place from July 1973 to July 1974. The purpose of the study was to find answers to two primary questions: "What are the types and frequencies of crimes committed by heroin addicts? and What impact do post-onset periods of abstinence or subsequent periods of addiction have on criminality?"<sup>17</sup> The study involved 243 male heroin addicts (109 white and 134 black) randomly selected from a chronologically stratified list of 4,069 known opiate users arrested by the Baltimore Police Department between 1952 and 1971.

One of the most interesting and significant developments in this study is the development of a new measure of criminal behavior, which is termed "crime-days per year at risk". A crime day is defined as a 24-hour period during which one or more crimes are committed. Years at risk are the number of years an individual is "on the street," or not incarcerated or hospitalized, following the onset of regular opiate use. This measure was used to study the relationship between crime and periods of addiction and abstinence for the subjects. The methodology used was a retrospective, correlational survey. Instruments used included in-depth interviews (primary source for data collection); penal, hospital, and other institutional data.

Ball's research findings indicated that the mean age

of the 243 male addicts was 35.9 years, with 93 percent between 25 and 49 years of age. The onset of opiate use occurred between 15 and 19, and the majority of the sample had post onset careers of 10 or more years (198 had 10 or more years, 37 had 5-9, and 8 had 2-4). The sample spent an impressive total of 61.6 percent of their risk years addicted to opiate drugs, from the onset of their regular opiate use; they abstained from regular opiate use only 38.4 percent of their years at risk. It is noted that abstinence from regular opiate use classification included occasional opiate use periods and routine use of other illicit drugs. With an average 11.3 years at risk, this equates to opiate addiction two thirds of the time, and being abstinent just over one third of the time for the sample.<sup>18</sup>

The new measurement for criminal behavior developed by Ball resulted in several major findings. For example, it was used in determining the mean number of crime days per year at risk, and the total amount of criminal behavior from the beginning of addiction for the sample. Ball found:

The mean number of crime days per year at risk for the sample was 178.5. Thus, the total amount of time these Baltimore addicts spent engaged in daily criminal behavior since their onset of addiction was almost half of their years. To be exact, they were committing crimes on a daily basis during 47.7 of their years at at risk.<sup>19</sup>

Classification of criminal careers of the sample was another significant finding. Nine types of crimes were committed by 237 of the respondents. These crimes were classified as: daily theft, daily drug sales, daily "other" crimes; weekly drug theft, weekly drug sales, weekly "other" crimes; infrequent theft, infrequent sales, and infrequent "other" crimes. Of the 237 addicts that committed crimes the following outlines their criminal career patterns; 156 were career thieves, with 41 engaging in career daily theft, 58 engaging in weekly theft, and 57 in infrequent theft. Drug dealing was the second most common crime committed by the addicts; 45 were primarily engaged in dealing drugs, 13 performed this crime daily, 18 on a weekly basis, and 14 on an infrequent bases. The other crime group of addicts consisted of 36 men, (confidence crimes: forgery, gambling, pimping); 7 committed daily crimes, 7 committed weekly crimes, and 22 infrequent crimes.<sup>20</sup>

The Impact of addiction upon criminal careers for the addicts presented another major finding from the study. It was noted that the number of crime-days per year at risk increased sixfold during periods of addiction, as contrasted with abstinent periods. The increase was greatest for those criminals who engaged in weekly or monthly offenses, thus, the extent of criminality increased more than ten times the non-addicted rate. The

highest increase when not addicted occurred among the men who had the highest crime rates when addicted. Ball also notes that although the level of criminality varied by career types (from 2.3 to 151.0) during periods of abstinence, the rates are much more consistent during addiction periods.

In a sense, then one effect of opiate addiction is to raise the number of crimes committed to a threshold or support level, and this occurs for all nine career types. Thus, when addicted, seven of the nine career types commit more than 260 crimes per year and none of the nine career groups fall below 100 crime-days per year at risk.<sup>21</sup>

The correlation of addicts and crime was consistent throughout this study. For instance, the total crime-days when addicted for the 237 addicts significantly correlated with days on and off heroin, total arrest, prior crime, race, onset of heroin use age, and age of interview. However, during abstinent periods, the total crime days were significantly correlated. It was also found that the earlier the age the onset of addiction is significantly correlated with increase frequency with later criminality.<sup>22</sup>

Gregory A. Austin and Michael L. Prendergast reviewed The Ball study and concluded:

A majority (85%) of a group of male heroin addicts in Baltimore spent two thirds of their time since the onset of regular opiate use addicted to opiates

and one-third abstinent. The average number of crime-days per year for addicts who committed crimes was 178.5; during addicted periods the number increased to 248.0 crime-days per year, compared with an average of only 40.8 during abstinence. Although the amount of crime committed during addiction was strongly correlated with opiate use, there was no correlation between opiate use (or other variables, such as age, race, prior crime) and the amount of crime committed while abstinent, suggesting that further study is needed to account for criminal behavior during periods of abstinence. The results make it clear that heroin addicts commit a large amount of crime, that many of their offenses are serious, that criminal behavior is an integral part of their life-style, and that their criminality is persistent and recurring. This study has also shown that opiate use itself is the main cause of high crime rates among addicts. Thus, since addiction can be influenced through treatment and control measures, criminality can be reduced appreciably if a<sup>23</sup> major coordinated effort is focused on the task.

Finally, Ball provides the implications of his study. He notes that the findings from his study concerning the extensive criminality among opiate addicts within the United States, in fact supports findings of other researchers (Inciardi and Chambers 1972, and Inciardi 1979). However, the Ball study introduces one new perspective; that being opiate use alone is the principal cause of high crime rates among addicts, when addiction terminates, crime rates reduce significantly. Therefore, if addiction is controlled, it is evident that we will reduce criminality noticeable. Ball offers three ways to attack this problem:

First, programmatic and research priorities be established to further this specific objective to

impact addiction among persistent offender group. Second, three or four well- designed experimental programs need to be established to research or impact specific offender populations. These experimental programs should make use of relevant knowledge concerning ongoing programs such as TASC, methadone maintenance, family therapy, and intensive probation efforts-yet be based on new concepts and new research findings. Finally, let it not be taken amiss if it be suggested that it is time to get on with the task at hand and not be sidetracked by irrelevant ideological scholastic or methodological arguments.<sup>24</sup>

Duane C. McBride Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Miami, has published several articles appropriate to the topic under study. His latest article focusing on drugs and violence, which is found in Inciardi's book The Drugs-Crime Connect, is used in formulating this study. In McBride's study "Crime and Drug Using Behavior: An Aerial Analysis," he and his colleagues examine the relationship between crime and drug use from an ecological perspective which is an analysis of the areal distribution of crime and drugs in the neighborhood context in which such behavior occurs. The study took place in Dade County Florida, using data from arrestees, drug treatment program patients, and individuals with severe drug reactions and admitted to a hospital emergency room. McBride's study suggests:

That both narcotics users and individuals engaged in property crime, but not narcotics use and individuals engaged in both are drawn from not only the same types of areas but also exactly the same neighborhoods.<sup>25</sup>

Such findings have major implications for the drug-crime relationship. First, the environment as well as the individual must be studied to obtain an understanding of the drug-crime relationship. Second, that treating individuals for drug abuse and assuming it will deter criminal behavior as well maybe only wishful thinking (which contradicts Ball's study). Finally, failure to take environmental factors into consideration when assessing treatment programs effectiveness may result in program failure.<sup>26</sup>

A recent study by Thomas Mieczkowski indicates that heroin dealers in Detroit, Michigan are different from those described in most previous literature. Data from this study came from interviews and observations of "15 heroin dealers" in the field, over a period of three months. The traditional manner of selling heroin from from old "fixed physical location" is being superseded by the "Young Boys Inc (YBI)" which uses a technique call the runner system.<sup>27</sup>

The runner system is an organized, cooperative strategy for selling heroin. It is designed for selling heroin in public places, most typically either at the carbide of public roads or other open locates such as areas in front of shops<sup>28</sup> and stores, play grounds parks and school-yards.

The following are attributes of the Detroit heroin runners: All males; all black; all young; generally, not

chronic users of "hard" drugs and are not addicts; all but one, were users of a recreational drug or drugs. The runner is given a supply of heroin to sell each day, if he does not sell all of it, he is fired by the "crew boss". The crew boss is a mid-level manager so to speak, he has the power to hire, fire, and even pay bonuses.<sup>29</sup>

Mieczkowski concludes that perhaps:

The most noteworthy of these finds is the fact that that the street-selling network in Detroit is staffed by individuals who do not use heroin, and who in general lack an ideology for the approval of heroin use. Second, the networks are, relative to the "hustler-oriented" models, more structured. In actual operation they are rather bureaucratic in form. It is noted that they are short lived, however, and therefore bear some resemblance to the more fluid "hustler" conception of distribution. Last, these networks are staffed by relatively young operatives, which is also rather rarely reported.<sup>30</sup>

Efforts are now being made to study the female drug-crime relationship. Basically, the lack of research in this area is primarily because males make up the majority of the drug and criminal subculture. Historically, the female addicts crime contribution have consisted of prostitution. Susan K. Datesman reviews this area in her essay "Women, Crime, and Drugs". She states:

The high incidence of prostitution among female addicts has led researchers to examine the direction of involvement between addiction and prostitution, that is, whether addiction precedes prostitution or prostitution precedes addiction.<sup>31</sup>

Datesman further states serious methodological problems have limited the validity of many of earlier studies on female drug use and crime. A 1978 study in Miami, Florida, "Female Drug Use and Crime" involving 153 female addicts reveals the following:

Female drug users commit a significant amount of crime primarily of a non-income generating nature. Female drug users tend to be involved primarily in prostitution, drug sales, and shoplifting, although they do engage in a wide variety of other offenses as well. In the study, only 4 percent of the female users were involved exclusively in prostitution during the 12 month period of interviews.<sup>32</sup>

#### Drugs and Violence

The purpose of this section is to examine the relationship of drug use and violence. Whereas the primary focus of this section will evolve around two particular studies "Varieties of Criminal Behavior" (Chaiken and Chaiken) and "Drug Use In Arrestees In Manhattan," (Wish), the beginning provides an over-view of other significant literature on the subject.

One of the most noteworthy findings within the literature is the fact that earlier writings basically said illicit drug addicts/users mostly committed non-person income producing crimes. However, recent studies indicate that this no longer describes the contemporary illicit drug addict. Presently, addicts are just as likely to commit violent crimes (i.e., homicide, sexual

assault, and arson) as their non-drug using or addict counterparts. National Institute of Justice (NIJ) sponsored research by Wish, 1982; Johnson, Wish, and Chaiken, 1983, supports this observation.<sup>33</sup>

Many studies have shown that most incarcerated criminals use drugs. A 1978 Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) sponsored study interviewed 5,300 inmates across the U.S. in local jails to determine the incidence of drug use and criminality. Inmates response indicated 7 out of 10 inmates (68%) had used drugs such as heroin, methadone, cocaine, marijuana, amphetamines, barbiturates, and hallucinogenic substances outside of a treatment program, and without a doctors prescription.<sup>34</sup>

Over the past four years, several urban cities have concluded that drug related crime (primarily drug trafficking) make up more than a quarter of their homicide rates.<sup>35</sup> Homicide rates increased drastically, in urban cities particularly in 1986, in Detroit, law enforcement officials saw an increase in shootings among teenagers, believed to be a result of wide spread of cocaine and its derivative crack. Los Angeles law enforcement officials consider more than half of all their homicides to be drug related. Chicago, New York, Miami, Boston, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Baltimore, and Dallas all reported a 20 percent increase; Atlanta and Washington D.C. showed a 30 and 60 percent increase respectively, in homicide,

rates for 1986.<sup>36</sup>

Jan M. Chaiken and Marcia R. Chaiken, researchers for the Rand Corporation, conducted a study "Varieties of Criminal Behavior"(1982), under a grant from the National Institute of Justice. Although the primary objective of the study was to determine whether official records and characteristics that the records might or might not contain, would allow for serious criminal identification, it resulted in some significant findings regarding drugs and violence.

The study involved surveying some 2,200 offenders from three different states: California, Michigan, and Texas. The survey design allows both internal and external validation of the self-reported data collected. The survey questionnaire sought the following self reported data on the background and activities of inmates:

- Juvenile criminal behavior, use of illegal drugs and alcohol, and incarceration in juvenile facilities.
- Criminal behavior and arrests during a one to two year period just prior to the present conviction.
- Other behavior during the same period prior to conviction, including use of alcohol and illegal drugs, employment, and change in residence.
- Type of crimes committed in two earlier reference periods.
- Sociodemographic information.

For prisoner respondents (but not those in county jails), the following additional information was collected from the official records (inmate folders):

- Rap-sheet arrests for the same one to two year

- period covered by the self-reports.
- Details of the current conviction offense(s).
  - Prior history of adult conviction.
  - Juvenile probation and commitments to juvenile facilities.
  - (For California only) details of up to ten juvenile arrests; date, charge, whether convicted, and disposition if convicted.
  - Sociodemographic data.

The structure of the survey and its administration also provided multiple means of a check and balance for the truthfulness of the inmates responses.

Chaiken identifies ten types of offenders for the study, with the violent predator being the most serious one. A violent predator is an offender who qualifies as a robber, assaulter, and a drug dealer (Note: murder also falls under the violent predator but is not listed for this study). The violent predators are very young (average age 23) upon entry to jail or prison, but normally have highest arrest records of the respondents, and have at least six years experience as a serious offender. The predator was committing violent crimes before turning 16 years of age. By 18, he regularly commits property and violent crimes. They are uncommitted to family life and are usually single. They experience routine employment problems and commit more crimes during periods of unemployment. Chaiken, et. al., also states:

The violent predators also have characteristic histories of drug use. Most of them begin using

several types of "hard" drugs, and using them heavily, as juveniles. Indeed, their use of drugs and their criminal careers usually begin at the same time. However, this does not indicate that drug use caused them to become criminals. Rather, drug use appears to be just another element of the criminal life-style.<sup>38</sup>

For a short period, it seemed the researchers were going to commit themselves to saying "hard" drug use causes crime. Unfortunately, throughout this review no one has found evidence to support such a direct statement. However, the writer concludes that the Chaiken findings present a strong argument that "hard" drug use does cause criminal behavior to occur. For example, 83 percent of the violent predators that sell drugs also used them during the period of the study.

Another significant finding of the study, is contrary to having an heroin addiction, the violent predator is a multiple drug user "heroin with barbiturates, heroin with amphetamines, barbiturates with alcohol, barbiturates with amphetamines, amphetamines with alcohol, or multiple combinations of these."<sup>39</sup>

The violent predator also commits almost any crime when drug use is expensive and intense. The extent of drug use seems related to the type of crime the abuser will commit. When the abuser finds a cheap source of heroin supply or can provide services for drugs, his habit does not effect his criminal activity rate.<sup>40</sup>

On the other hand, the opposite applies to multiple drug use, specifically when barbiturates and intermittent, "recreational", use of heroin, is linked with assault; non-opiate psychotropic drugs under intense use, is highly related to all crimes except burglary and auto theft (non-violent offenses). Finally, the researchers found:

Juvenile drug use is strongly associated with rates of robbery and assault in our study, but we found no association between crime rates and juvenile use<sup>41</sup> of marijuana or experimentation with hard drugs.

In conclusion, this study provides some enlightening facts concerning the drugs-crime relationship.

A more recent study is "Drug Use in Arrestees in Manhattan: The Dramatic Increase in Cocaine from 1984 to 1986", by Eric D. Wish. This is a later follow up from a 1984 6 month study sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, and conducted by the staff of Narcotic and Drug Research Inc. (NDRI). NDRI staff members were assigned in the Manhattan Central Booking to obtain voluntary information (through interviews) and urine specimens from 6,406 male arrestees. Priority was given to people charged with non-drug felony offenses when obtaining volunteers for the study. Results of the 1984 study, indicated 56 percent of all male arrestees tested positive for opiates, cocaine, PCP or methadone.<sup>42</sup>

Due to the New York City's crack epidemic, NDRI and the New York Police Department wanted to know if the drug use and crime patterns in Manhattan arrestees had changed (the information obtained is used to forecast crimes). The current study took place during September, October, and November of 1986, at the same Manhattan Central Booking Station. The interviews and urine specimens were taken for one week each month, during the most active periods (3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.), until some 200 specimens were collected. The 1984 procedures were applied with the one exception that no names were taken on the subjects. Again, participation in the study was voluntary. Wish's findings were as follows:

The study shows a dramatic increase in the prevalence of cocaine in the arrestee population in New York City. Recent use of cocaine by arrestees doubled since our study two years ago, and exceeded 80 percent in September and October. The increase was found in all age levels and for persons charged with a variety of offenses. In September and October, 92 percent of the person charged with robbery and 81 percent<sup>41</sup> charged with burglary were positive for cocaine.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup>Erich Goode, Drugs in American Society (New York: Knopf, 1984), 217.
- <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 218.
- <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 219.
- <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 221.
- <sup>5</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 222.
- <sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 224.
- <sup>8</sup>John Kaplan, The Hardest Drug (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1983), ix.
- <sup>9</sup>Oakley Ray, Drugs Society and Human Behavior (St. Louis: Mosby, 1978), 3.
- <sup>10</sup>Oakley, p. 62.
- <sup>11</sup>The Drug Abuse Council, The Facts About "Drug House" (New York: Macmillan, 1978), 1.
- <sup>12</sup>The Drug Abuse Council, 2.
- <sup>13</sup>James A. Inciardi, ed., The Drugs Crime-Connection (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1983), 7.
- <sup>14</sup>U.S. Department of Justice, Drugs and Crime: A Survey and Analysis of the Literature [by Robert Gandossy et al.] (Washington: GPO, 1980), 4-20.
- <sup>15</sup>Inciardi, p. 9.

<sup>16</sup>Inciardi, p. 10.

<sup>17</sup>Inciardi, p. 17.

<sup>18</sup>Inciardi, p. 47-48.

<sup>19</sup>Inciardi, p. 50.

<sup>20</sup>Inciardi, p. 51.

<sup>21</sup>Inciardi, p. 53.

<sup>22</sup>Inciardi, p. 55.

<sup>23</sup>John C. Ball, et al, "The Criminality of Heroin Addicts: When Addicted and When Off Opiates", Drug Use and Abuse: A Guide to Research Findings, ed. Gregory A. Austin et al, (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 1984).

<sup>24</sup>Inciardi, p. 63.

<sup>25</sup> Duane C. McBride and Clyde B. McCoy, "Crime and Drug-Using Behavior: An Areal Analysis" Criminology 19 no 2 (1981); 197.

<sup>26</sup>McBride, p. 298.

<sup>27</sup>Thomas Mieczkowski, "Geeking Up and Throwing Down: Heroin Street Life in Detroit" Criminology 24 no 4 (1986): 648

<sup>28</sup>Mieczkowski.

<sup>29</sup>Mieczkowski.

<sup>30</sup>Mieczkowski, p. 663.

<sup>31</sup>Inciardi, p. 91.

<sup>32</sup>Inciardi, p. 99.

<sup>33</sup>Bernard A. Gropper, Probing the Links Between Drugs and Crime, NIJ Reports, SNI/188 (Bethesda: Aspen System, 1984, 1984), 4.

<sup>34</sup>W.I. Barton, "Drug Abuse History and Criminality of Inmates in Local Jails in The U.S.," NIJ Reports, SNI/164 (1981): 5.

<sup>35</sup>Isabel Wilkerson, "Urban Homicides Rates in U.S. Up Sharply in 1986," New York Times, 15 Jan. 1987: A-14.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Jan M. Chaiken and Marcia R. Chaiken, Varieties of Criminal Behavior: Summary and Policy Implications, (Santa Monica: Rand, 1982), 8.

<sup>38</sup>Chaiken, p. 16.

<sup>39</sup>Chaiken, p. 17.

<sup>40</sup>Chaiken.

<sup>41</sup>Chaiken.

<sup>42</sup>Eric D. Wish, Drug Use In Arrestees In Manhattan: The Dramatic Increase In Cocaine From 1984 TO 1986 (New York: Narcotic and Drug Research, 1987), 1-2.

<sup>43</sup>Wish, p. 6-7.

## CHAPTER 3

### Drug Abuse and Violence in Oakland, California: A Case History

#### Introduction

In this chapter drug abuse and criminal violence problems in Oakland, California are examined. A review of its history, and demographics will clarify the background of the city of Oakland. Next, some key personnel from the Oakland Police Department provided their personal perspectives on drug abuse and criminal violence within the city. The interviews provide first hand knowledge from people who are combatting this problem each day. Finally, a four year history of Oakland's drug abuse and criminal violence problems are reviewed and this case history will clarify the drug-crime relationship within an urban community.

#### History and Demographics

Oakland was founded in 1848 following the discovery of gold in California. Its location on the mainland side of San Francisco Bay (the center of the gold rush), led many prospectors to extend their searches into Oakland. The city acquired its name from the beautiful Oak trees that grew on its hills. Oakland's industry and seaport emerged

after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Thousands of citizens came to Oakland seeking emergency shelter and never returned to San Francisco. Housing was provided for 100,000 to 150,000 people, with some 65,000 becoming permanent residents. This event was one of the most important periods in Oakland's growth.<sup>1</sup>

The twentieth century brought about accelerated progress in the industrial, commercial, culture, and residential growth of Oakland. For example, the replacement of its original municipal airport with the new Metropolitan Oakland International Airport; improved and expanded port facilities; as well as constructing the Naval Supply Center, the Alameda Naval Air Station, and the Oakland Army Terminal. Additionally, thousands of new industrial firms located in the city and contributed to its growth.<sup>2</sup>

Today Oakland is at the center of the bay area, and is the fourth largest metropolitan area in the country. The city is the county seat of Alameda County and includes approximately 26 square miles of inland water. Lake Merritt situated near the Oakland city center.

Economically, Oakland is one of the busiest ports for container ships in the world. The city is an important railroad terminal for passenger and freight trains. Travel is made available throughout the United

States via passenger train or airplane. The World Book Encyclopedia states the following about Oakland:

The city ranks as an important commercial center. About 25 percent of Oakland's workers are employed in wholesale and retail trade, more than in any other economic activity. Oakland has about 750 manufacturing plants, and they employ about 20 percent of the cities workers. The leading industries, in order of importance, produce processed foods, transportation equipment, fabricated metal products, chemicals, non-electrical machinery, and electrical equipment.<sup>3</sup>

Oakland utilizes a council-manager form of government. A mayor and eight council members are elected to four year terms by the voters. The council makes policies which are carried out by their appointed city manager. The city is also the headquarters for the Bay Area Transit system (BART) which began operation in 1972.

The population of Oakland as of 1 April 1980, was 339,337 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The California Employment Development Department, San Francisco-Oakland Labor Market Bulletin states the population is currently 371,829, as of 1986. The city's population breakdown by race is as follows: Blacks=159,281 or 42.8%; Whites=129,692 or 34.9%; Asian/Pacific Islander=26,341 or 7.1%; American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut=2,199 or .6%; Other=21,824 or 5.9%; and Hispanic=32,492 or 8.7%.<sup>4</sup>

Unemployment rates for the entire population as June 1983, was 12.5% (San Francisco-Oakland Labor Market), 1986

unemployment rates was approximately 6.7%. For a more detailed demographic profile of Oakland see Appendix A.

Oakland offers a wide variety of cultural, industrial commercial, and residential growth. However, it is also an urban community with housing projects in which low income families are harassed by drug abuse and violent crimes. Drug problems in Oakland began around 1975, and started reaching its peak around 1983 and continuing to present. The past four years, in particular, have been an uphill battle for city and community officials in combatting this vicious problem. Many efforts are made to get citizens to join city official and the Oakland Police Department (OPD) in the "War against Drugs". The following section provides interviews with OPD personnel directly involved in combatting Oakland's drug and criminal violence problems.

The Oakland Police Department was visited on 30 June, and 1 July 1987. Interviews were conducted with Lieutenant (Lt.) James Hahn, Homicide Section, Criminal Investigations Division; Lieutenant John J. Vomacka, of Police Vice Control Division; Lieutenant Kristina Wraa, of Police Felony Assault Section, Division of Criminal Investigations; and Sergeant (Sgt.) Francis Moschetti, of the Special Duty Unit, of Patrol Division. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain first hand knowledge focusing on drug abuse and criminal violence in Oakland.

Additionally, the officers provided the author with some statistics dealing with drug-related crimes over the past four years. It should be noted that these were open-ended interviews in which the interviewees provided their personal perspective, and any other information which they felt helped criminologists concerned with drug-crime problems in their city.

Lt. Hahn of the Homicide Section, states he sees the effects of Oakland's drug problems in approximately 80 percent of all homicide cases. Although the statistics will not support such a high percentage, this is due the fact that direct evidence must be found to classify a case as drug related. For example, a homicide may have occurred during a drive-by shooting, the victim could be a known drug dealer, but if there is no direct evidence showing he was gunned down because of drugs, the case cannot be classified as a drug related crime. Lt. Hahn says this occurs quite frequently since the majority of the drug dealer King-Pins (Leaders) have been arrested, dealers are fighting and killing over their territory.

Lt. Hahn was asked whether drug related homicide was stabilizing or increasing. He states that drug-related homicides are definitely on the rise, and the statistics supports this fact. For instance, in 1985, the June year to date (ytd) drug related homicides were 10; in 1986

there were 19, and 1987 led with 22 homicides. When comparing these same figures in percentages to the total number of homicides year to date, it equates to 17 percent for 1985, 31 percent for 1986, and 42 percent for 1987. Lt. Hahn provided the following figures on Oakland Homicides from 1984 to present:

	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>
Number of Murders	117	114	146	
" " YTD (Jun)		60	61	52
Drug-Related to Date		10	19	22
Drug-Related Percentages	13%	17%	31%	42% <sup>5</sup>

Lt. Hahn offered the following synopsis of the Oakland drug abuse and violence situation. A vacuum for drugs is made as a result of the major drug leaders being arrested and convicted. Younger people are becoming drug dealers, these are mostly uneducated people who perceive using and selling drugs as the only way to move up in society, and to make a lot of fast money. He states drug abuse problems are found in the suburbs as well as the projects; with one major difference, the kids in the suburbs do not have the same desperation, because they already have money. The large amount of weapons and their easy availability also aid drug dealers in their criminal

violence. More younger people are getting involved in homicides as well. The dealers are wearing body armor and carrying uzi weapons. Finally, cocaine free-basing (smoking crack) has taken over as the most frequent used drug (over heroin) in Oakland. He relates that the person with the most detailed information regarding this issue is Lt. Vomacka, Vice Control Division Commander.

Lt. John Vomacka provided some enlightening information on the drug abuse problems in Oakland. He says cocaine makes up 80 percent of the illegal drugs found in Oakland, and 90 percent of that is Crack. He estimates some 30-50,000 people smoke Crack in Oakland. Five to ten years ago heroin was the number one drug in use, today it ranks secondly to cocaine. However, the Vice Division is still finding more heroin today than ten years ago.

Lt. Vomacka estimates 70 percent of all crime is drug-related in Oakland. He states that most of the criminal violence among members of the drug subculture results from drug dealers fighting and rivalry over turf (territory) control. Top dealers often retaliate when someone rips them off. For example a lower dealer who sells and uses drugs might get a little over zealous and use the drugs which were to be sold to others for profit. When this occurs, the drug leaders punishes these individuals in

order to set and example for the others and the punishment is often death.

Narcotic crimes have increased 92 percent between March 1986 to March 1987, according to Lt. Vomacka. This equates to 1,423 opiate offenses the first three months of 1987, compared with 738 opiate offenses for the same period last year. Dangerous drugs offenses increase by 18 percent between January and March 1987 over the same time period last year. Lt. Vomacka states that one of the reasons for such a high increase in opiate offenses, is because drugs are entering the country through the Southwest as frequently as the Southeast. Oakland receives drugs from Southern California, Washington, Arizona, Texas, and Louisiana. The use and sale of illicit drugs still continue in spite of the arrest of major drug dealers in Oakland: the 69 Mob - Felix W. Mitchell; The Family Micky More; Funktown - Harvey Whisenton; and most recently convicted Rudy Henderson (Independent).

The author found that most of the major drug dealers in Oakland are black, however, some cocaine dealers are white. Most narcotics violators arrested in Oakland are also black. Lt. Vomacka provided the following statistics on narcotic drug laws violators for 1986:

## Classification

<u>of Offenses</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Indian</u>	<u>Japanese</u>	<u>Other</u>
Narcotic Drug Laws	912	4,753	13	1	178
A. Opium or Cocaine	309	3,025	5	1	73
B. Marijuana	66	655			18
C. Synth. Narcotics	84	91			6
D. Other Danger Drugs	453	982	8		81 <sup>6</sup>

Lt. Vomacka states that the primary objective of his unit is to investigate and target the major narcotic suppliers and dealers in the Oakland area. Although his division has made some major accomplishments in arresting the top drug leaders in Oakland, they remain committed to ameliorating the drug problems in the city. He adds that the departments Special Duty Unit is also contributing to this effort.

Sergeant Francis Moschetti, of the Police Special Duty Unit, states his unit was formed in December 1984. Their primary objective is to make quantity arrests of violent criminals. This unit responds to calls of crimes in progress such as drug-dealers making sales on neighborhood street corners or violent juveniles vandalizing or terrorizing neighborhoods. When asked what he felt was their most serious problem Sergeant Moschetti replied rock cocaine which is the same as crack. He also

acknowledges that the number one priority of the community for the Oakland Police Department is the drug problem.

The Oakland Police Department Special Duty Unit, was one of the first special operations force formed in the United States, according to Sergeant Moschetti. He states the unit makes approximately 50 percent of the department arrests. The unit averages around 10 to 15 arrests per night. An officer finds a weapon on offenders approximately every 13 arrests. The majority of the arrests made by the unit are for narcotics, and the ages of offenders range from 9 to 68 years of age with a noticed increase in teenage drug dealers. Sergeant Moschetti provided the following arrest statistics on his unit:

<u>Year</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>87</u>		
Felony Narcotics Possession	113	202	192	(May 87)	
Felony Narcotics Possession for Sale/Sales	746	1249	722	"	"
Marijuana Sales/Possession for Sale	628	205	34		
Under The Influence Arrest	28	17	11		
Felony (Other)	58	68	26		
Misdemeanor Arrest (Other)	77	133	78		
Felony Warrant Arrests	23	53	44		
Misdemeanor Warrant Arrest	80	199	121		

Total Arrest for all crimes    1800    2126    1228    (May 87)<sup>7</sup>

The Special Unit 2 statistics indicate a rise in felony narcotics possession and for sale/sales for 1986, and 1987 (if the present trend continues). Marijuana possession for sale/sales shows a decrease in 1986, but a rise in 1987.

Finally, Sergeant Moschetti concludes that in order for Oakland to win its war on drugs it is important to have the full participation of the community. In an effort to obtain a better perspective on the amount of drug related violence an interview was conducted with Lieutenant Kristina Wraa, of the Police Felony Assault Section.

Lieutenant Wraa's section investigates all felony assault cases such as: shootings; stabbings; beatings (with any form of deadly weapon) and sexual assaults (excluding those committed by family members). The felony assault section currently does not track the amount of drug-related crimes, but will start tracking them in July 1987. However, Lt. Wraa estimates that at least 80 percent of all cases are drug related. For example, in many cases individuals will get high on drugs and assault family members or friends. Often high percentages of the victims

will not file charges because of fear of self incrimination or retaliation from the offender.

Lt. Wraa has noticed a high number of sexual assault cases which allegedly occurs when the male partner takes a drug call Huba which is another form of cocaine. She states that felony assault cases are starting to increase, as they normally double during the summer months. Lt. Wraa provided the following statistics of her section for the first six months of 1987:

<u>Sexual Assault Unit</u>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Case-Load	D.V	D.V	D.V	D.V	D.V	D.V	
Cases Assign for							
Month	63	58	71	80	Unavailable		272
Felony Assault Unit	406	390	397	410	370	446	2419

D.V = Domestic Violence

#### The Beginning of Drug Abuse and Criminal Violence

Oakland's drug abuse and criminal violence dates back to the early 1970s' and started escalated in the early 1980s'. East Oakland is where most suggest the drug and violence problems had its roots, it is certainly where the the problem exist today. During the early 1980s' Oakland had established certain drug trafficking "King-

Pins", who often participated in turf battles and drug wars. An example is the 1980 drug war between "The 69 Mob" (led by Felix Mitchell) and "The Family" (led by Melton "Mickey" Moore), which resulted in several slayings.

Heroin was the number one drug used until around the mid-1980's, when cocaine and its derivative crack took over. The police department made many drug arrests and occasionally some of the big dealers such as Darrell King were incarcerated. He received a 45 year prison sentence in 1982. Also Felix Mitchell (the top heroin drug leader), was arrested by federal agents in March of 1983 Mitchell is further discussed in forthcoming sections.

The following will provide a history of drug abuse and criminal violence in Oakland from 1984 to the present. As drug abuse escalates among teenagers, citizens in the community felt as if they were prisoners in their own home and city officials declared war on drugs. The citizens joined the war and commenced assisting the police in removing drug dealers from their streets and neighborhood.

#### Drug Abuse and Criminal Violence 1984

1984 brought a new era of community involvement for Oakland. Communities were united against drug trafficking

and its associated criminal violence. In March 1984 community groups asked the courts to curb dealers by providing tougher sentences. In April 1984 citizens of one community marched in a park serving notice to drug dealers that they wanted them out. The the citizens fought for the park some six years ago as Harry Harris of "The Oakland Tribune" states:

Now the park has become a center for drug dealing, crime and violence that has caused residents to live in fear inside their homes. Police said more than 300 arrest for possession of drugs or sale of drugs were made within a block of the park and 52 arrests were made in the first three months of this year.

April of 1984, unfortunately, was a month for intense violence among drug dealers fighting over territory. The arrest of Felix Mitchell (a leading drug trafficker) in March 1983, provided unexpected results. Violence increased among drug dealers wishing to expand their control in the Mitchell territory. Harry Harris in his newspaper article entitled "Oakland drug dealers fight for turf", describes a common form of violence known among dealers "Drive-by" shootings: "Where shots are fired from a moving car either at another vehicle or a group of people standing at a corner known to be a center of drug dealing".<sup>9</sup> A drive-by shooting occurred outside an elementary school. Although none of the students were hurt, two of the dealers were injured.

There are six or more organized drug rings in Oakland dealing heroin, cocaine and marijuana, and earning thousands of dollars daily, according to Harris. These people deal drugs on street corners, residential areas and parks.

The main drug organizations in Oakland are the "The Mob" founded by Felix Mitchell, now operated by his henchmen and supported by Berkeley dealers. According to Harris "They control an area centered around East 14th Street and 71st Avenue not too far from Coliseum Gardens, the public housing project on 66th Avenue where Mitchell's career had its roots."<sup>10</sup>

Police say a burgeoning group controlled by three brothers who call themselves the "Hardy Boys", control the Campbell Village housing project in West Oakland. They have drug spots at 98th and Eden Avenues and 105th Avenue and Acalanes Drive in East Oakland.<sup>11</sup>

"The Family", operated by 33 year old Melton "Mickey" Moore and "Funktown" organized by 24 year old Harvey Whisenton are constantly clashing and are considered extremely violent. Whisenton ironically learned the drug business while working for Moore. In addition to the two groups having the normal business rivalry. Whisenton has a personal vendetta with Moore and one of his close associates who allegedly tried to steal Whisenton's

girlfriend. Whisenton and Moore's associate (22 year old Andrew Piazza), first confrontation ended with Piazza being brutally beaten with a tire iron. Their final confrontation ended with Whisenton being shot in the back (he did not die) by Piazza one week later.<sup>12</sup>

Harris provides information received from Oakland Police Department narcotic officer Everett Gremminger on the operational location of the two groups:

The family's key locations are still lower 23rd Avenue and Foothill Boulevard at 25 Avenue, Whisenton, he said deals primarily out of the area of 11th Avenue and Foothill Boulevard and also at an old Moore strong point, 13th Avenue and East 17th Street. Police said Whisenton is also trying to expand into North Oakland, particularly an area around Bushrod Park.<sup>13</sup>

These groups are estimated to make more than \$10,000 per day. In terms of violence, the Moore - Whisenton members are said to be the major contributors. Of the more than 20 violent acts committed (including homicides) during the past twelve months, are the result of rival drug groups according to Lt. Green from the Oakland police.<sup>14</sup>

The violence of rival drug groups often involves innocent by-standers as in the case of a 21 year old man, who was killed while trying to fix the car of a friend, or, another 24 year old man who was killed while trying to retrieve a borrowed jacket. Another 22 year old man was

shot and paralyzed from the waist down. One woman lost two children in one day. These are the type of violent acts which the people of East Oakland have to deal with. According to Bethany Korwin of "The Tribune", more than 40 percent of all the city's homicide rates are East Oaklanders under the age of 30.<sup>15</sup>

The Korwin article provides the following Oakland Police statistics on homicides:

Police said that 25 percent of homicides are drug related, with another 21 percent being committed in the course of robberies. Many of those fatal robberies are also drug related, said Lt. Terry Green.<sup>16</sup>

Often when drug-related homicides occur, people in the community know who is responsible but are afraid to talk for fear of retaliation from the drug families. Violence soon pushes people to their limit, and they demand more protection from the police as well as the courts.

The Oakland police respond by making major drug arrest. For example, the police describe a man arrested in his Hunter court home, as a major East Oakland drug supplier. The man had over \$60,000 worth of cocaine and \$52,000 in cash. The arrest was made by a police special operations unit.<sup>17</sup>

Concerned neighbors notified police officials of a woman who routinely had several visitors in and out of her

home. Police investigation resulted in a major cocaine bust with the arrest of five people. The woman who owned the house was selling approximately \$240,000 worth of cocaine per month. Additionally, \$80,000 in cash and stolen property, and \$40,000 worth of cocaine were seized. The woman involved was already on bail from a previous cocaine possession charge.<sup>18</sup>

Oakland narcotic officers arrested a man who claims he sells more than \$300,000 worth of heroin per week in different Latino neighborhoods. The 54 year old supermarket custodian who earns \$12,000 yearly, however, investigation show he had recently purchased \$150,000 worth of properties in cash. The money incentives for selling drugs are very high, therefore, people feel it is worth the risk of getting caught.<sup>19</sup>

In July 1984, Felix Mitchell and seven other defendants from his drug ring are to be retired. His organization allegedly ran a multi-million dollar heroin ring throughout the Oakland housing projects. The U.S. Court of Appeals rejected the appeal of the Mitchell lawyer that a new trial violated his constitutional guarantees against double jeopardy. In July 1983, the first trial was declared a mistrial, since Mitchell's attorney once represented two of the government witnesses.<sup>20</sup>

The Oakland drug problem persists and city officials

identify drugs as their number one problem. The city has asked the courts as well as top state and federal law enforcement officials for help in combatting the drug trafficking problem. Lonnie Isabel of "The Oakland Tribune" quotes Mayor Lionel Wilson as saying: " as soon as we clean up one hot spot, another opens around the corner."<sup>21</sup>

The mayor wishes to create a task force consisting of the Alameda County District Attorney, the Superior Court Presiding Judge, and the State Attorney General, state legislature representatives, and appropriate community representatives to meet and discuss the problem.<sup>22</sup>

The recommendations of the 1982 task force directed by the mayor, resulted in additional police officers being assigned to vice and a targeting on neighborhood street drug sales. Isabel states:

As a result of the push Oakland police increased drug arrests 67 percent from 3,422 in 1982 to 5,550 last year. In the first three months of this year (1984), the department made 1,648 drug arrests,<sup>23</sup> up 24 percent from the first three months of 1983.

In spite of the increase in arrests only 51% of those convicted received a jail sentence.

Violence continues as two alleged drug ring members of "The Mob" are killed on the sidewalk. The two victims were shot in the head, and were only 18 and 19 years old.

They were supposedly running the organization during the incarceration of their leader Felix Mitchell.<sup>24</sup> One week later, two men associate with drug rings were accused of killing a 15 year old pregnant Oakland woman. The young woman was mistakenly shot in the chest as she walked in the 800 block of Athens Avenue.<sup>25</sup>

Drug control efforts ran into another problem when the OPD came under fire from the predominantly black community in August 1984, Lonnie Isabel and Harry Harris in their article "Oakland drug efforts caught in crossfire," describe the problem as follows:

One group said the police department isn't doing enough to control escalating street drug trafficking and another that some over aggressive officers are harassing black citizens with unnecessary stops that too often lead to violence. Among the charges aired was one that the department was brutal and racist and that officers routinely treated residents of the flatlands with more hostility than residents of the much more affluent and pre-dominantly white hills.<sup>26</sup>

Oakland's City Manager Henry Gardner, responded by acknowledging there may be racist practices among some officers but the city would not tolerate such behavior, officers will be punished for violating the rights of citizens. At a later press conference a community group the Organized People of Elmhurst Neighborhood (OPEN) presented a plan for control of drug-related crimes. A OPEN representative recommended the OPD hire 12 additional

officers (half of them to be black) to combat open street drug sales. They also recommended that an advisory team with community and police representatives be established to advise the department.<sup>27</sup>

The remaining half of 1984, produced great strides in the war against drugs in Oakland. Federal agents arrested a 49 year old truck driver and seized 5 1/2 tons of hashish that had been shipped to the American Presidents Lines Terminal in Oakland.<sup>28</sup> Alameda County received stronger sentencing policies for drug prosecutions. The purpose of the change in policy was to prevent lawyers representing drug offenders from getting lower sentences through ple-bargaining, and in order to get the drug dealers out of the community. The Oakland school district and police department, have been allocated \$190,000 to fight drug abuse in the schools. This was part of a \$1.9 million program grant from the State Office of Criminal Planning.<sup>29</sup> The police department sets up a special task force to patrol and neutralize key drug "hot spots" as identified by community groups. The Mayor of Oakland asked the Board of Supervisors to press the legislators for three new judicial departments to handle the courts backlog of drug cases. The ultimate goal is to see more drug dealers convicted and imprisoned.<sup>30</sup>

Finally, 1984 ends in Oakland with the Mayor forming

an 11 member anti-drug panel with key local, state, and federal law enforcement administrators. The panel is called the Oakland Insurgency Council on Drugs. The primary goal of the panel is to effectively control the city's drug problems.<sup>31</sup> The reputed drug czar Melton "Mickey" Moore was arrested by the Oakland Police Department and federal agents. He was charged with possessing heroin for sale.

#### Drug Abuse and Criminal Violence 1985

The year 1985 begins with a new \$4 million dollar two year plan to fight drug trafficking and its associated violence in Oakland. The plan proposes a small task force of government officials which includes 21 new prosecutors and public defenders. Additionally, probation officers, investigators, criminologists and court reporters positions are also created. This would allow for faster prosecution of drug dealers. The bill is introduced into legislation by Assembly man Elihu Harris, Democrat from Oakland.<sup>32</sup> The assembly and senate approved the \$4 million bill in April and July respectively. Drug Kingpin Milton "Mickey" Moore pleads guilty to possession of heroin on 17 April. Moore the leader of the drug ring called "The Family" was sentenced to 20 years in prison. Around the same time Moore's ex-rival Felix W. Mitchell was

receiving a life sentence without the possibility of parole, from a U.S. District Court. Mitchell was the leader of the drug ring "The 69 Mob", and was said to be the top drug dealer in Oakland for some seven years. Three other Mob members received 25 year terms, one received 20 years and another received a 12 year term. It is said that the heavy sentence received by Mitchell sent a strong message to the community about the seriousness of the "war on drugs".<sup>33</sup>

Violence continues in the streets of Oakland. One known small drug dealer is killed and two people (including a woman) are seriously injured from sub-machine gun fire on a West Oakland street corner. The woman injured was walking down the street when the gunfire began, and the drug dealer decided to use her body to protect him from bullets. The man injured was engaged in conversation with the drug dealer when the shooting started. There were two gunmen arrested and charged in the daylight shootings. Police suspect the drug dealer was targeted because of some kind of drug dispute. This type of criminal violence spreads a wave of fear for the members of the community because it is so dangerous and unpredictable.<sup>34</sup> The uzi machine gun becomes the weapon of choice for the drug dealers. The Oakland Police Department sized at least 10 of them between 1984 to

1985. The weapons are mostly found during drug raids.

In May a drug dealer attempted to shoot down a federal undercover agent, he was arrested after selling the agent \$100,000 worth of heroin in Oakland. The man involved was subdued by other officers after he aimed a loaded gun at the undercover agent, while trying to avoid arrest.<sup>35</sup>

The new special drug unit of the Oakland Police Department makes some progress in reducing neighborhood drug dealings. The unit identified more than 90 drug hot-spots. Although violent drug related crimes are still occurring, the police are calming some progress. The special unit of 10 has been keeping an unpredictable presence in the dealers hot spot areas, thereby creating uncertainty. According to Lonnie Isabel of "The Oakland Tribune" citizens are acknowledging that some victories have been made. She states that effective police tactics include: "Rotating its shifts and alternating methods of surveillance, including use of the police helicopter, the squad has arrested more than 500 people and identified dozens more as dealers."<sup>36</sup>

By July 1985, the drug dealers were no longer standing on street corners and openly selling drugs. The dealers went undercover to avoid the aggressive efforts of the police and the community. Unfortunately, this would not be a long lasting situation.<sup>37</sup>

In August, Mayor Lionel Wilson's drug task force suffered its first setback with the community in East Oakland. The task force was supposed to meet with the community of East Oakland. Instead they were approximately 70 demonstrators, who were totally against the task force and its goals. One of the demonstrators said she was angry that the task force was making drug users out to be criminals. One task force member stated that without the commitment of the community, the task force is fighting a losing battle.<sup>38</sup>

One of the largest cocaine seizures in Oakland's history was made by a OPD beat officer in August 1985. A 50 year old man and his 41 year old wife were arrested and charged with possession of cocaine for sale, when over 14 pounds of cocaine (estimated value \$1.5 million) was seized in their home.<sup>39</sup> A West Oakland drug ring, allegedly led by a former top lieutenant to Felix Mitchell was raided and netted 15 arrest. Police seized cocaine, heroin, cash, guns and over a pound of plastic explosives and TNT, according to Harry Harris of "The Tribune". Included in the arrest was the 81 year old mother and 40 year old sister of the leader. The drug ring is said to net approximately \$2,500 in daily sales.<sup>40</sup>

Harvey Whisenton the alleged leader of the drug gang "Funktown" and several of his top lieutenants are

arrested. Whisenton is the third King-pin to be arrested over the past 2 and one-half years. His arrest and that of his top aides should make a noticeable difference in Oakland's open market drug sales. Whisenton's group is also considered one of the most violent operating in Oakland.<sup>41</sup>

Whisenton was denied bail because of his multiple charges (9 counts of conspiring to sell and selling cocaine and heroin), and his noted reputation of violence. If convicted he could receive up to 135 years in prison. The communities were delighted with Whisenton's arrest. Although other drug dealers did not disappear, the tension was less.

After ten months of operation the task force expresses some satisfaction with the war on drugs. Gerald Davis of "The Oakland Tribune" outlines the council accomplishments:

1. Sentencing of two of Oakland's reigning drug dealers, Felix Mitchell and Milton "Mickey" Moore, to long prison terms. A third alleged King-pin, Harvey Whisenton, has been arrested and is awaiting trial.
2. A 7 percent increase in drug-related arrests so far this year, according to police Chief Hart. That shows that the problem in fact is being licked... the volume simply is not there as it was before, Hart said.
3. A twelve percent reduction in the number of arrests for people under the influence of drugs, another barometer of reduced availability, Hart said.
4. A reduction in drug involvement in Oakland homicides, down to about 13 percent of 90 homicides

this year, compared with between 25 percent and 30 percent in 1983 and 1984,, the Chief said.

5. The signing of AB 248 which provides Alameda County with \$4 million to help courts process backlogs. A county<sup>42</sup> grant of \$2 million is being added to that amount.

Additionally, the task force received commendations from community organizations such as the Oakland Community Organization (OCO) for making their citizens feel safer. The Mayor warns everyone that the city still could not claim victory with the war on drugs.

Many efforts were made in 1985 to get youths involved in the war against drugs. Pupils from the schools participated in the national anti-drug crusade by conducting a street march. The Governor of California, George Deukmejian addressed an assembly of Oakland school children and asked them to resist the peer-pressure of favoring the use of drugs. He also praise Oakland's anti drug efforts. The school kids also received stiff lectures from Oakland's police officers.

Finally, the Oakland Board of Supervisors approves funds for a \$90,000 drug study. The purpose is to determine how illegal drugs are affecting the mental health of black families in Oakland.

#### Drug Abuse and Criminal Violence 1986

In February, Alameda County awarded a \$90,000 contract to The Institute for the Advanced Study of Black Family

Life and Culture, to study the effects of illegal drug use and sales on the mental health of members of black families in East and West Oakland. The study is scheduled for completion no later than June 1987. The study should determine the kind of services needed by the children and their parents in order to cope with the growing drug problem, according to Board Supervisor John George.<sup>43</sup>

The new two year \$6 million targeted Urban Crime Narcotic Task Force is now in effect, and will focus on the drug problem. This program provides additional district attorneys, public defenders, probation officers, criminologists, and court clerks. The objective of the program is to prosecute felony narcotics cases and remove offenders from the street. As Larry Spears of "The Oakland Tribune" states:

It's another step in government's response to the public outcry about drugs and drug-related violence that has claimed many dozens of lives in the country's urban core.<sup>44</sup>

If the program proves successful then similar programs will be established in other California cities experiencing serious drug problems.

In February, Harvey Whisenton 26, leader of the drug ring "Funktown" pleaded guilty in Federal Court to one count of conspiracy to distribute heroin and one count of conspiracy to distribute cocaine. Whisenton could receive

up to 30 years in prison and a maximum \$250,000 fine. In addition, two of Whisenton's top lieutenants pleaded guilty to one count of distributing cocaine. They could receive up to 15 years in prison. On that same day police arrested Thirl Chavis 51, another suspected cocaine supply Kingpin for East Oakland. The man was arrested in his home, and police found six pounds of cocaine (valued at \$300,000), \$20,000 in cash, and 23 pistols, rifles and shoot guns. A Mercedes Benz was also seized when cocaine was found in the glovebox. A 33 year old woman was arrested and charged, along with Chaivis, for possession of cocaine for sale and transporting.<sup>45</sup>

By May of 1986, Oakland had prosecuted the major narcotics dealers but the drug problem still prevailed. As the big dealers are removed from the street, numerous younger and smaller dealers move in to take over their turf. One of the major problems with this situation is that the younger dealers are more careless and dangerous due to their inexperience. Efforts of the city to wage a war on drugs has shown some improvements with an increase in the number of drug arrests and prosecutions.

However, the drug demand remains high and the dealers are coming from the underground and the escalation of violence has resumed. For example, the Oakland Housing Authority (OHA) had to expand its police force at the

Campbell Village public housing project in West Oakland, because of the presence of a new drug ring. The ring was believed to be organized by the Black Guerrilla Family (BGF) prison gang. The housing project has 400 people and the gang is selling around \$5,000 worth of heroin and cocaine per week, according to police. Both the city narcotics officer and the housing authority officers fear a rival confrontation between the Black Guerrilla Family and independent drug dealers. The residents fear possible violence and dislike having drug dealer actions make them feel like prisoners in their own homes.<sup>46</sup>

The battle continues to reduce the distribution of drug supplies in the city. One man is arrested for suspected possession of 5 pounds of "crack". The drugs have a street value of \$115,000. Two days later police arrest a man for carrying a pound and a half of Mexican heroin valued at \$370,000. Oakland police raid a narcotics ring in East Oakland which netted 24 arrests. Three ounces of Mexican tar heroin valued at \$22,000 and one ounce of cocaine valued at \$4,000 were seized by police in the raid.

Finally, Oakland's homicide rates increase from 114 in 1985 to 146 in 1986. The drug related homicides went from 17% to 31% of crimes known to the police. Again, police attribute the rise to an increase in violence among

drug dealers. Drug prices dropped thereby making the less organized dealers more aggressive and violent when confronting their competition. The arrests of teenagers below the age 18 on drug related charges increased over 500% over a one year period. The year ends with citizens marching in the street once again against drug trafficking.

#### Drug Abuse and Violence 1987

1987 has thus far shown a continued presences of drug abuse and criminal violence in Oakland. Beginning with the murder of a reputed drug Kingpin Larry Lorenzo Parker. He ran an independent drug ring within a West Oakland housing project. The young drug czar was shot more than 20 times by someone in the apartment parking lot where his mother resides. Drugs are the suspected motive in the slaying. Parker was also on bail for a murder charge in the 1986 slaying of Vincent Scott.<sup>47</sup>

The U.S. Postal Service makes a "crack" bust at the post office. One former employee and two others were arrested and charged with selling crack cocaine to undercover narcotic agents in April. Agents arrested a U.S. Customs mail technician at the Main Post Office in February on similar charges.<sup>48</sup> In April, Oakland Police Department narcotics officers seized 5 pounds of base rock

cocaine (valued at \$250,000), 4 1/2 pounds of pure cocaine (valued at \$250,000) and \$251,000 cash in one raid. John Johnson 25, of Oakland and Kent Woods 27, of Richmond were charged in federal court for possession of cocaine-for-sale, and a 16 year old boy will be prosecuted by Alameda County authorities.<sup>49</sup>

On June 1, 1987, the U.S. District Court charged Rudolph "Rudy" Henderson and six other suspected drug dealers with conspiracy to distribute cocaine. Federal agents and Oakland police had investigated Henderson's operation for two years, before seizing some 90 pounds of cocaine which he left in a vehicle near his home. Gene Ayres of "The Oakland Tribune", quotes U.S. Attorney John Graham, coordinator of the federal drug enforcement task force, as saying:

He was certainly Oakland's largest cocaine dealer. Our information is that they never had more than about 40 keys (kilograms) at a time. The demand was such they could have moved that in a day.<sup>50</sup>

The government also took possession of Henderson's home as well as \$350,000 in cash when he was arrested.

Finally, homicide rates for the first half of 1987 indicate a dramatic increase in drug related homicides. For example, in April a man and woman were killed while trying to purchase some cocaine, according to Sgt. Voznik of the Oakland police. Harry Harris' newspaper coverage of

the case quotes Lt. Hahn of the homicide section as saying: "the high percentage of drug-related slayings this year is alarming. He said 45 percent of this years murders and seven of the last 10 have been drug related."<sup>51</sup>

#### Summary

Oakland's drug abuse and criminal violence began in the early 1970s and escalated in the early 1980s. The worst drug abuse and criminal violence occurs in local public housing projects. The drug problem consists of major drug traffickers operating drug rings dealing drugs openly on street corners, in public parks, and residential areas. The criminal violence normally occurs as a result of rival drug gangs experiencing territorial disputes. Violence includes murders, shootings, and general terror of the community. Key Oakland police state that 80 percent of all crime in Oakland is drug-related.

In 1984, the citizens of Oakland made a demand that city officials remove the drug dealers from their streets and communities. Violent activities increased and most citizens felt as if they were prisoners in their own homes. The Mayor responded by declaring war on drug traffickers. He establishes a task force made up of local, state, and federal law enforcement representatives,

to organize a plan to better deal with local drug problems. A special duty unit is formed within the Oakland Police Department with the primary purpose of identifying and neutralizing drug hot-spots.

In 1985, a six million dollar program that provides more district attorneys, public defenders, probation officers criminologist, court reporters and other court personnel is approved. The purpose of the program is to provide faster trials for narcotic dealers so they will be taken off the streets. As a result of these programs involving more aggressive police tactics and active community involvement, 1985 did show some small progress in winning the war against drugs. There were fewer drug dealers on the open street, and some communities acknowledged that their neighborhoods seem safer.

Unfortunately, the communities and city officials soon learned that 1986 was to be a more violent year. As major drug dealers were arrested and convicted, younger and more violent independent dealers fought for their own territory. The Mayor's Task Force concluded that even though the police were making more arrests of drug dealers, new ones were waiting to take their place.

Finally, 1987 indicates that if the present trends continue in Oakland both drug abuse and criminal violence will be worse than in the previous years.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Oakland Convention and Visitors Bureau, Oakland in the Early Days-A History. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>The World Book Encyclopedia N-0 Vol 14. 1987: 477.

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Census, Census Tracts April 1, 1980.

<sup>5</sup>James Hahn, Lieutenant of Homicide Section Division of Criminal Investigations, Oakland Police Department, 30 June 1987.

<sup>6</sup>John J. Vomacka, Lieutenant of Police Vice Control Division, Oakland Police Department, 30 June 1987.

<sup>7</sup>Francis Maschetti, Sergeant of Police Special Duty Unit, Oakland Police Department, 30 Jun 1987.

<sup>8</sup>Harry Harris, "Park drug deals spur neighbors to take offensive," The Tribune, 29 Apr 1984: D-5.

<sup>9</sup>Harry Harris, "Oakland's drug dealers fight for turf," The Tribune, 1 Apr 1984: A-1.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid; p. A-1 and A-2.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid; p. A-2.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Bethany Korwin, "Senseless Deaths in East Oakland," The Tribune, 1 Apr 1984: A-2.

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<sup>17</sup>"Major Drug Arrest in Oakland," The Tribune, 17 Apr 1984: A-10.

<sup>18</sup>"Five arrested in major Oakland cocaine burst," The Tribune, 7 May 1984: A-9.

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<sup>20</sup>Gene Ayres, "Oakland heroin ring suspects must be retired, court rules," The Tribune, 3 Jul 1984: C-12.

<sup>21</sup>Lonnie Isabel, "Oakland asks officials for help in drug war," The Tribune, 4 Jul 1984: A-10.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

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<sup>24</sup>Harry Harris, "Alleged drug ring members slain on Oakland sidewalk," The Tribune, 24 Jul 1984: A-10.

<sup>25</sup>Harry Harris, "2 accused in 'mistake' slaying of mother-to-be," The Tribune, 15 Aug 1984: B-2.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Gene Ayres, "Driver held in hash haul to Oakland," The Tribune, 14 Aug 1984: A-11.

<sup>29</sup>"East Bay schools receive drug abuse grants," The Tribune, 16 Sept 1984: D-1.

<sup>30</sup>Lionel J. Wilson, "Combatting Oakland's drug problem," The Tribune, 18 Sept 1984: B-7.

<sup>31</sup>Gerald Davis, "Mayor's task force begins war on Oakland drug traffic," The Tribune, 4 Dec 1984: A-1.

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<sup>33</sup>Gene Ayres, "Drug Kingpin Mitchell gets life, no parole," The Tribune, 5 Jun 1985: A-1.

<sup>34</sup>Harry Harris, "1 dead, 2 injured in blaze of bullets," The Tribune, 24 Apr 1985: B-6.

<sup>35</sup>"Federal agents collar heroin suspects after gun incident," The Tribune, 25 May 1985: A-8.

<sup>36</sup>Lonnie Isabel, "Police say aggressive new tactics curbs neighborhood drug dealing," The Tribune, 29 Apr 1985: A-1.

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<sup>38</sup>Don DeMain, "East Oakland snubs drug war task force," The Tribune, 16 Aug 1985: B-1.

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<sup>41</sup>Harry Harris, "Drug czar's arrest will hurt trade," The Tribune, 5 Oct 1985: A-2.

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<sup>44</sup>Larry Spears, "Unit targets drug crimes," The Tribune, 23 Feb 1986: D-1.

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<sup>47</sup>Harry Harris, "Burial set for reputed drug Kingpin," The Tribune, 20 Feb 1987: D-12.

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## Chapter 4

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### Summary

Drug abuse has been a problem in America since the mid-nineteenth century. America's first drug addicts were military men who were addicted to morphine from war injuries; and then there were the middle class house wives who were addicted to narcotic medicines purchased from over the counter; and the street addict who was addicted to heroin. The 1914 Harrison Act which terminated the sale of over the counter narcotic medicine was the first federal law passed to prevent drug abuse. By the early seventy's the majority of heroin addicts were inter-city blacks and Hanspanics. Heroin was the number one abuse drug until around the mid eighty's.

Drug-crime relationship research has presented a number of controversies. Among the controversies are: drug addicts were involved in crime before they became addicts, therefore they are criminals; addicts became criminals as a result of their addiction; drug addicts and criminals are two sub-cultures that interact with neither causing the other to happen. The major problems associated with drug-crime relationship research are methodological issues such as the definition of drug use

and crime; measurement problems, and, the use of appropriate representative samples. Ball's study of heroin addicts suggests opiate use alone is the principal cause of high crime rates among addicts; and when addiction terminates crime rates reduce significantly.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, if addiction is controlled, it is evident that noticeable criminality will occur. Yet another study finds that to rely solely on drug abuse treatment of drug addicts to deter criminal behavior might be idealistic thinking since environmental factors must be considered when assessing treatment program effective-ness. Research focusing on female drug users indicates they commit a significant amount of crime such as prostitution, drug sales, and shoplifting. They also commit a variety of other crimes as well.<sup>2</sup>

Recent research on illicit drug addicts/users indicates they are as likely to commit violent crimes (i.e. homicide, sexual assault, and arson) as their non-drug user counter-parts. This contradicts early research which suggested illicit drug addicts/users committed only non-person property crimes. The literature also states that most of our violent prison offenders have been frequent users of "hard" drugs since they were juveniles.<sup>3</sup>

Several urban cities have concluded that drug-related crime especially drug trafficking, makes up more than a

quarter of their homicide rates. Another study found that cocaine consumption among those arrested in Manhattan has increased more than 100 percent since 1984, with over 80 percent testing positive for cocaine.<sup>4</sup>

Oakland's drug abuse and criminal violence began in the early nineteen seventy's and started escalating further in the early eighty's. The drug abuse and criminal violence is mostly found in public housing projects. Major drug rings sale drugs openly in public housing areas, street corners, and in parks. The criminal violence usually occurs when rival drug gangs have territory disputes, which result in drive-by shootings and murders. Some Oakland police officers estimate 80 percent of city crime is drug-related.

The Mayor of Oakland responded to the complaints of concerned citizens who asked that drug dealers be taken off the streets by declaring war on drugs. A special task force made up of local, state, and federal law enforcement officials was formed to organize a plan of attack to deal with this vicious problem. The Oakland Chief of Police formed a special duty unit, to identify and neutralize drug-hot spots.

In 1985, a \$6 million state and county sponsored program was implemented to provide additional district attorneys, public defenders, probation officers,

criminologists, and other court personnel. The purpose of the program was to provide faster trials for narcotic traffickers and dealers to get them off the street. Additionally, more rigorous prosecution policies were implemented. As a result of these programs, more aggressive police tactics, and better community involvement, the year ended with fewer overt drug dealers and more safer neighborhoods.

Unfortunately, the progress in the war on drugs was temporary. In 1986 Oakland suffered one of its most violent years when 146 homicides were recorded. Although major drug traffickers had been arrested and convicted, law enforcement officials found that younger and more violent drug dealers were taking their place in the criminal sub-culture. Early 1987 crime trends indicate that Oakland's crime rate will be worse this year than in 1986.

#### Conclusions

Drug abuse is an historical part of American culture. Criminal violence is a product or side effect of drug abuse, whether it is committed by the drug addict/user, dealer, or trafficker. The following conclusions are reached from this study:

- \*\*\* Researchers are very reluctant to say that drug abuse causes crime.
- \*\*\* Violence is an integral part of the drug sub-culture.
- \*\*\* Drug addicts/users commit a large number of violent crimes against family members, friends and society in order to support their habits.
- \*\*\* Drug abuse contributes significantly to the amount of violent crime found in urban cities.
- \*\*\* Drug trafficking is a multi-million dollar business that is by far the major cause of violence in urban areas.
- \*\*\* Drug abuse is a problem which is impossible to eradicate because of its high demand, although it can and must be controlled.
- \*\*\* The root of the problem, what causes people to turn to drugs, must be better understood before appropriate policies can be made to alleviate the problem of violence and drug abuse.
- \*\*\* Efforts to minimize drug-related crime will require reducing the demand for drugs as well as curtailing illegal supplies of drugs.

Drug abuse in urban communities exposes juveniles

to drug and criminal subcultures. Finally, drug abuse maybe viewed as a way of life for some and a means for survival for others in our cities.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

Although several questions have been answered about drug abuse and criminal violence in urban communities, the need for continued study is essential in order to provide better policy guidance for the problem. As Bernard Gropper states: "To be a useful guide for public policy, research on the links between drugs and crime must be tailored to specific policy issues."<sup>5</sup>

Further study is recommended on drug abuse and criminal violence among juveniles since they are both dealing and operating drug rings. Additonally, the Oakland police have found that these juveniles are more violent than the older and more experienced drug dealers. Finally, further study on the drug-crime relationship is recommended.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>John C. Ball, et al, "The Criminality of Heroin Addicts: When Addicted and When Off Opiates," The Drugs-Crime Connection, ed. James A. Inciardi (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1983), 63.

<sup>2</sup>Susan K. Datesman, "Women Crime and Drugs," The Drugs-Crime Connection, ed. James A. Inciardi (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1983), 99.

<sup>3</sup>Jan M. Chaiken and Marcia R. Chaiken, Varieties of Criminal Behavior: Summary and Policy Implications (Santa Monica: Rand, 1982) 16.

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Use in Arrestees in Manhattan: The Dramatic Increase in Cocaine From 1984 to 1986 [Eric D. Wish.] (Washington: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1987), 2-3.

<sup>5</sup>Bernard A. Gropper, Probing the Links Between Drugs and Crime: NIJ Reports, SN/188 (Bethesda: Aspen Systems, 1984, ), 4-8.

APPENDIX A: OAKLAND DEMOGRAPHICS

"Oakland Demographics," mimeographed paper prepared by Oakland Public Library, California History Reference Desk, and given to The Author on 30 June 1987.

#### Population

Total population (Apr 1, 1980, U.S. Census) = 339,337  
 (Estimated Jan 1, 1983, CA Population  
 Research Unit) = 347,300  
 1984 = 351,607  
 1986 = 354,200

#### Population breakdown by age (Apr 1, 1980; U.S. Census, Census Tracts)

0-5 = 23,380	Median age = 31.2
5-9 = 21,344	Children (0-14) = 67,230=19.8%
10-14 = 22,506	5-14 = 43,850=12.9%
15-19 = 25,884	Youth (15-19) = 25,884= 7.6%
20-24 = 31,695	Adult (20-64) = 201,428=59.4%
25-34 = 68,807	Seniors (65- ) = 44,795=13.2%
35-44 = 37,577	
45-54 = 30,247	
55-64 = 25,522	
75- = 19,273	

#### Population breakdown by race (Apr 1, 1980; 1980 Census Tracts, Oakland City Planning Dept.)

Black = 159,281 = 46.9% [corrected 42.8%]  
 White = 129,692 = 38.2% [corrected 34.9%]  
 Asian/Pacific Islander = 26,341 =7.8% [corrected 7.1%]  
 Other = 21,824 = 6.4% [corrected 5.9%]

Hispanic = 32,492 = 9.6% [corrected to 8.7%]  
 [Total = 371,829]

#### Households, families, etc. (U.S. Census, Census Tracts)

Persons/household = 2.34    Persons/family = 3.14  
 Families: Total = 79,649  
     With own children under 18 = 38,872  
     Female householder, no husband present with  
     own children under 18 = 15,339 = 39.5% of  
     families with children under 18

Unemployment rate (June, 1983, San Francisco-Oakland Labor Market Bulletin) = 12.5%

#### Income and poverty

Median and per capita income (1979)  
 Households = \$13,780  
 Family = \$17,651  
 per capita non-institutional = \$7,740  
 Household income (1979)

\$00 - \$09,999 = 38.0%	\$30 - \$39,999 = 8.6%
\$10 - \$19,999 = 27.7%	\$40 - \$49,999 = 4.0%
\$20 - \$29,999 = 8.6%	\$50,000 or more = 4.2%

Household Estimated Buying Income 1983 (Sales and Marketing Management Survey of Buying Power, 1984)

Median = \$20,179  
 (\$0-\$9,999 = 25.8%)  
 \$10-\$19,999 = 23.8%  
 \$20-\$34,999 = 26.5%  
 \$35-\$49,999 = 14.3%  
 \$50,000 or more = 9.6%

Families below poverty level (1979) = 16.0%  
 Families with female house holders below poverty level (1979) = 36.3%

Education (County and City Data Book, 1983, from 1980 Census)

Years of school completed (persons 25 or older)  
 0-12 = 28.5%  
 12 or more = 71.5%  
 16 or more = 21.8%

School enrollment: elementary and high school = 60,021  
 college = 28,169

Employment (County and City Data Book)

Jobs in Oakland = 142,699  
 By type of business: Manufacture = 14.3%  
 Professional and related = 25.7%  
 Transportation/public utility = 10.3%  
 Government = 22.9%

Housing units (1979) owner occupied = 42.9%  
 renter occupied = 51.4%  
 vacant = 5.7%

Oakland Demographics: Blacks

Total Population = 159,234

Population breakdown by age

0-5 = 13,574	Median age = 27.2
5-9 = 13,040	Children (0-14) = 40,752 = 25.6%
10-14 = 14,138	(5-14) = 17%
15-19 = 15,601	Youth (15-19) = 14,138 = 8.9%
20-24 = 15,925	Adult (20-64) = 91,036 = 57.2%
25-34 = 30,151	Seniors (65- ) = 11,892 = 7.5%
35-44 = 17,676	

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DRUG ABUSE AND CRIMINAL VIOLENCE IN URBAN COMMUNITIES

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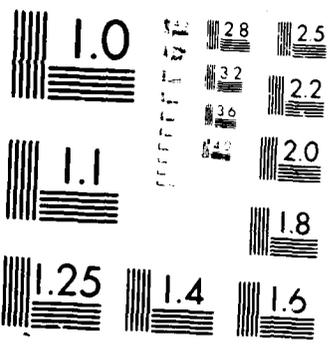
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RESOLUTION TEST CHART



under 18 = 361 = 12.4%  
of families with own children under 18

Median income (1979) for families=\$20,724/mean=\$23,666

Persons with poverty status determined = 27,700  
persons with income below poverty level = 4,482  
= 16.2%

#### Education

Years of school completed, persons 25 and over  
Total = 17,419  
0-8 = 4,200 = 24.1%  
High School = 1,599 = 9.2%  
High School, 4 = 3,834 = 22.0%  
College 1-3 = 3,304 = 19.0%  
College more than 4 = 4,482 = 25.7%

#### Oakland Demographics: American Indians

Total Population = 2,199  
Population breakdown by age

0-5 = 183	Median age = 27.0
5-9 = 205	Children (0-14) = 602 = 27.3%
10-14 = 214	(5-14) = 419 = 19.1%
15-19 = 215	Youth (15-19) = 215 = 9.8%
20-24 = 206	Adult (20-64) = 1,284 = 58.4%
25-34 = 477	Senior (65- ) = 98 = 4.5%
35-44 = 306	
45-54 = 171	
55-64 = 124	
65-74 = 65	
75- = 33	

#### Households, families, etc.

Persons/household = 2.57      Persons/family = 3.44

Families = 435

Families with own children under 18 = 287

Female householder, no husband & with own children  
under 18 = 122 = 42.5%  
of families with own children under 18

Median income (1979) for families =\$13,236/mean=\$17,365

Persons with poverty status determined = 2,715  
persons with income below poverty level=545=20.1%

#### Education

Years of school completed, persons 25 and over  
Total = 1,351  
0-8 = 230 = 17.0%  
High School = 322 = 23.8%

High School, 4 = 277 = 20.5%  
 College 1-3 = 298 = 22.1%  
 College more than 4 = 224 = 16.6%

Oakland Demographics: Hispanics

Total Population = 32,492

Population breakdown by age

0-5 = 3,574	Median age = 25.00
5-9 = 3,035	Children (0-14) = 9,376 = 28.9%
10-14 = 2,767	(5-14) = 5,802 = 17.9%
15-19 = 3,142	Youth (15-19) = 3,142 = 9.7%
20-24 = 3,747	Adult (20-64) = 17,898 = 55.1%
25-34 = 6,267	Seniors (65- ) = 2,076 = 6.4%
35-44 = 3,237	
45-54 = 2,537	
55-64 = 2,110	
65-74 = 1,298	
75- = 778	

Households, families, etc.

Persons/household = 3.01    Persons/family = 3.77

Families = 6,941

Families with own children under 18 = 4,273

Female householder, no husband & with own children  
 under 18 = 1,050 = 25.6%

Median income (1979) for families=\$15,028/mean \$18,550

Persons with poverty status determined = 31,808  
 persons with income below poverty level = 6,450  
 = 20.3%

Education

Years of school completed, persons 25 and over

Total = 16,057

0-8 = 5,911 = 36.8%

High School = 2,419 = 15.1%

High School, 4 = 3,714 = 23.1%

College 1-3 = 2,382 = 14.8%

College more than 4 = 1,631 = 10.2%

Oakland Demographics: Whites

Total Population = 129,692

Population breakdown by age

0-5 = 5,346	Median age = 38.5
5-9 = 4,407	Children (0-14) = 14,361 = 11%

10-14 = 4,608	(5-14) = 9,045 = 7%
15-19 = 5,582	Youth (15-19) = 5,582 = 4.3%
20-24 = 10,017	Adult (20-64) = 80,536 = 62.1%
25-34 = 27,961	Seniors (65- ) = 29,213 = 22.5%
35-44 = 14,684	
45-54 = 11,729	
55-64 = 16,145	
65-74 = 15,084	
75- = 14,129	

## Households, families, etc.

Persons/household = 1.95      Persons/family = 2.70

Families = 30,166

Families with own children under 18 = 9,746

Female householder, no husband & with own children  
under 18 = 2,301 = 23.6%

of families with own children under 18

Median income (1979) for families=\$22,708/mean=\$27,535

Persons with poverty status determined = 127,490

persons with income below poverty level = 13,291  
= 10.4%

## Education

Years of school completed, persons 25 and over

Total = 100,727

0-8 = 11,661 = 11.6%

High School = 9,320 = 9.3%

High School, 4 = 25,899 = 25.7%

College 1-3 = 21,276 = 21.1%

College more than 4 = 32,571 = 32.3%

Sources: U.S. Census, 1980, Census Tracts  
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