Homeless Shelter Conditions and Street Victimization

by

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ABSTRACT

The following research addresses some of the contemporary problems that individuals experiencing homelessness face; specifically, investigating the decision to forgo shelter services and spend nights in places unfit for human inhabitation, a phenomenon known as sleeping rough. The paper begins with a broad look at the historical roots of homelessness, urbanization and the failure of mental health services, before exploring past attempts at answering the research question, why do the homeless choose to sleep rough? Several seminal studies, most of which were performed in large New York City shelters, gave context to the dangers present within shelters, but, due to both their location and methodologies, failed to capture the nuances of decision making for individuals experiencing homelessness. In order to expand the literature's understanding of homelessness and the decision to forgo shelters, I conducted 23 in-depth interviews with various individuals embedded in the homeless culture in Phoenix, Arizona, including those experiencing homelessness, shelter employees, service providers, and the police squad designated to work the shelter beat. This thesis also provides information about the unique circumstances of Phoenix shelter services, the majority of which are housed on the Human Services Campus, a cluster of services specialized for homeless outreach. To supplement the information gathered through in-depth interviews, I analyzed crime maps of the Human Services Campus. This information, coupled with the in-depth interviews, helps explain that the homeless avoid the shelter services for a variety of reasons. These include concerns for safety, freedom, and personal property, as well as a longing to maintain dignity and avoid confrontation

with shelter staff and security. Mental health and substance abuse implications are also discussed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The word homeless carries many connotations, depending on the listener. To the general

public, individuals experiencing homelessness are both public nuisance and,

empathetically, down on their luck. The homeless have a similar history in both

academia and legislation, as they have alternately been treated as menacing pariah and

humble saints for centuries. Laws governing and criminalizing homelessness date back

to medieval Europe where, during the Black Plague, in order to ensure cheap labor,

vagrancy and wandering were first deemed crimes (Simon, 1991-1992). Punishing

someone for, in effect, their status continued throughout European history where

legislation was updated to make homelessness and begging crimes, while at the same

time, missionary groups such as the Catholic Church took pity on the poor, providing

both refuge and sustenance (Simon, 1991-1992). Similar laws made their way to

America and have continued throughout each generation with a startling pattern: opaque

legislation enacted to make homelessness a crime, followed by judicial overturning of the

law due either to its vague premise or for constituting cruel and unusual punishment

(Simon, 1991-1992). Still, loopholes in the legislation have consistently been found and,

in recent years, police have still been utilized to 'round up' the homeless, bringing them

either to a shelter, the outskirts of town, or jail for violating laws against sleeping in

public (Barak & Bohm, 1989). In 2009, this practice was addressed in U.S. federal court,

where in *Bell v. City of Boise* (2009), it was ruled that any individual experiencing

homelessness could sleep on public property whenever all local shelter beds were

occupied. Since this ruling was handed down by the federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals,

it is binding on all jurisdictions in said circuit, including the City of Phoenix. However, while this subjugated population has earned the modest protection of being permitted to sleep in a park or on a bus bench without police harassment, this exposure leaves homeless individuals at an elevated risk for both violent and financial victimization.

There are many ways in which academics and social activist groups classify people experiencing homelessness, but for purposes of this paper they will be designated by sleeping status: sheltered or unsheltered. While both groups lack stable, consistent living arrangements, the sheltered homeless are those who utilize shelters and services to sleep, shower and eat, while the unsheltered homeless reside in public parks, cars, sidewalks, or other structures not deemed suitable for human inhabitation (Donley and Wright, 2012; Larsen et al., 2004; Rossi, 1989). In both social lexicon and academic literature, this is called sleeping rough. Sleeping rough is an excessively dangerous behavior, as unsheltered homeless are often victims of assault (Fischer, 1992; Kinsella, 2012; Newburn and Rock, 2006; Novac et al., 2006; Padgett and Struening, 1992; Roy et al., 2014; Smith, 2015), sexual assault (Fischer, 1992; Kinsella, 2012; Newburn and Rock, 2006; Novac et al., 2006; Padgett and Struening, 2012; Smith, 2015; Wenzel, 2001), and theft (Berk and MacDonald, 2010; Kinsella, 2012; Newburn and Rock, 2006; Novac et al., 2006; Smith, 2015). Furthermore, the unsheltered homeless population is at an increased risk of illness and accidents, with mortality rates ten times higher than the general public and three times higher than their sheltered companions (Roncarati, 2016). While it is plausible that some individuals experiencing homelessness, especially those who have recently joined the homeless population, do not fully understand the risks that sleeping rough presents, it can be assumed that some, if not the vast majority, understand

that they are in some level of danger sleeping exposed in public. While these dangers

have been explored and consistently reported by academics, documentarians, and

journalists, the reasons why unsheltered homelessness continues to prevail has not yet

been adequately explored. Why do people continue to sleep rough instead of using

shelters, despite the fact that staying outside puts them at an elevated risk of physical,

sexual, and financial victimization?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Before discussing the size and demographic make-up of the current homeless population,
it is important to understand how homelessness has evolved throughout American
history. While homelessness and vagrancy have always existed (Rossi, 1989; Simon,
1991-1992), they have often waxed and waned depending on the other societal
circumstances of the era. In colonial America, voyagers arriving at New England port
colonies were largely homeless and left to the charity of the townsfolk. The new arrivals
who showed promise to be able to contribute to the common good were invited to join the
community, while those who were viewed as useless prospects were run out of town.
Thus began the first occurrence of transient homelessness, as the unwanted colonists
bounced from township to township seeking permanent residence.

In the aftermath of the American revolution, citizens of the new nation began
spreading manifest destiny west across the continent. As settlements expanded, the
majority of the population resided in rural stretches. In fact, prior to the 1820s, less than
seven percent of American's lived in cities (National Academies of Sciences,
Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). This changed with the progression of the nineteenth
century, as The Industrial Revolution altered the national landscape. By the 1850s,
transients flooded into the new cities looking for work and residence at various lodging
houses (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). Rates of
unsheltered, transient homelessness increased further in the aftermath of the Civil War as
discharged veterans from both sides joined the railroad system's call for seasonal and

episodic labor (Rossi, 1989). This burgeoning labor market sent transients across the country to work in agriculture or construction. During this time, most homeless relief was county and municipality based. Upon arriving in a new city, if one was unable to find a room at a poorhouse, any homeless individual could spend the night at the police station without arrest or charge. According to a report by the New York Police Department, throughout the 1890s, the New York Police Department provided lodging to 150,000 individuals a year, making them the largest lodging supplier in the city (Rossi, 1989). Additionally, in response to this new workforce, shanty towns began to develop around major railroad depots. These eventually morphed into skid rows, neighborhoods inhabited largely by the homeless featuring cheap hotels, restaurants, brothels, and bars.

Beginning in the 1930s and 1940s, the nature of American homelessness drastically shifted as both the Great Depression and technological innovation thinned the workforce and made unskilled, physical labor largely obsolete. The skid rows that once housed the seasonal muscle of America became a port of respite for transients traveling the country in search of work that they likely would not find. The homeless population at that time was largely composed of young men who were now a surplus to the dwindling labor market that no longer needed their services. However, the homeless population was soon greatly reduced by World War II, as these young men were recruited to fight on the European front.

Following the war, rates of homelessness in America remained relatively low. The labor market had largely recovered from the hit of the Great Depression and the nation was growing. As cities expanded throughout the 1950s, popular business districts came into direct contact with the now greatly reduced skid rows. Thanks largely to a

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renewed economy and the 1960s creation of social security removing much of the elderly from the street, homelessness had all but disappeared (Rossi, 1989). However, throughout the 1970s, the homeless population swelled to the current rates seen today, largely due to the systematic alteration of major American cities through efforts at urban renewal and the deinstitutionalization of mental health facilities (Lamb, 1984).

Prior to the 1960s, much of America's chronically mentally ill resided in state-run mental health institutions. However, the 1960s and 1970s were peppered with a series of nationally publicized incidents of extreme institutional neglect. These incidents, and subsequent court cases, such as *Lessard v Schmidt (1971),* which significantly raised the standard of proof necessary for involuntary confinement, led to a large-scale systemic restructuring. The initial plan, devised to better serve the chronically mentally ill, exchanged mental health institutions for community-based solutions. However, with the inability of community mental health resources to force compliance with treatment, many of the formerly institutionalized chronically mentally ill joined the homeless population (Lamb, 1984).

The situation was further exacerbated in the following decade by the process of urban renewal, whereby the skid row neighborhoods of American cities were revamped and restructured. Through this process, the cheap services, flop houses, and single room occupancy hotels utilized by the homeless, were leveled and replaced by bustling business districts and expensive apartment complexes (Rossi, 1989). The formerly sheltered homeless were functionally pushed out of the downtowns by gentrification and the enforcement of criminal infractions for vagrancy and loitering. This rapid urbanization impacted the high rates of unsheltered homelessness seen today.

There are several factors that make the homeless a difficult population to quantify: a secretive, antisocial nature; fragmentation in the homeless shelter system; easy mobility across county and state lines; and, most notably, the fluidity of housing situations. The homeless population is constantly changing, with individuals becoming housed and others losing their living situation daily. However, while these factors, and unsophisticated methods of extrapolation, often resulted in inflated and inaccurate estimates in past decades--between 1.5 million to 3 million nationwide in the 1980s, depending on the agency doing the counting (Rossi, 1989)--we now know that the number of homeless individuals in the United States hovers around half a million men, women, and children (Lucas, 2020). The number of unsheltered homeless is even harder to account for than is the number of sheltered homeless, but the general consensus is that the unsheltered homeless make up between 33 and 37 percent of the total homeless population, placing their numbers between 165,000 and 185,000 individuals (Donley and Wright, 2012; Lucas, 2020).

There are several demographic factors that differentiate the homeless from that of the general population of the United States. When homelessness gained national attention as a social epidemic in the 1970s, the homeless population was largely homogenous and concentrated in specific areas of major cities. The original homeless archetype was a middle-aged white male, suffering from an interplay of addiction and mental illness, living in or around a skid row (Rossi, 1989; Royse et al., 2000). However, with the gentrification of major cities and an increase in the number of individuals living

below the poverty line throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the demographics of people experiencing homelessness have drastically changed. Prior to the 1980s, due to both the public welfare system and societal expectations of family support, women had a buffer that protected them from slipping from poverty into homelessness (Baker, 1994). However, the demographics have shifted, with the estimates of female homelessness ranging from 30 (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020) to 50 percent of the homeless population (Hagen, 1987). Pathways into homelessness differ depending on gender, with men more commonly reporting alcohol abuse, unemployment, and jail release as major causal factors, while women more commonly report eviction and domestic violence (Hagen, 1987). The racial make-up of the homeless population has also changed. While Whites still make up the plurality with 47 percent, Blacks and Native Americans are disproportionally represented, 39 percent and three percent, respectively (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020). In comparison, 60.1 percent of the United States' population is White, 12.2 percent is Black, and .7 percent is Native American (Ghosh, 2021). Perhaps even more distressing than the changes in gender or race is the alteration in age demographics. The current homeless population is significantly younger. The age estimates differ by gender, with the female average being 30 years of age and male being 39 (Baker, 1994). Recent estimates show that individuals under the age of 18 comprise 39 percent of the homeless population (Parble, 2012), the majority of whom are accompanied by maternal figures (Parble, 2012; National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020).

The homeless population also differs from the general population in its rampant rates of drug and alcohol addiction and mental illness. While it is agreed that the

prevalence of both mental illness and addiction is elevated in the homeless community, rates of each varies drastically from source to source. Current estimates suggest that between 20 and 50 percent of homeless adults have one or more severe mental disorders (Roy et al., 2014). Another study estimates that the mentally ill are 15 times more likely to be homeless than those without a mental illness (Baker, 1994). These illnesses include depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia (Baker, 1994). The rates of alcohol and drug addiction are perhaps even higher. One study concluded that one-half to three-fourths of the adult homeless population have alcohol or drug addictions (Royse et al., 2000) while a separate study estimates the prevalence of alcoholism alone at 47 percent (Baker, 1994). In the literature, alcoholism and drug addiction are each found as pathways into homelessness (Hagen, 1987) as well as coping mechanisms developed to combat the loneliness and isolation of not having a permanent residence (Johnson and Chamberlain, 2008). These disabilities and addictions put homeless individuals at a heightened risk of being a danger to both themselves and others, while also making it more difficult to enter shelter services, as will be discussed in further detail throughout the study. While it is important to understand the national context of homelessness, the remainder of this paper will utilize the population demographics of Phoenix, Arizona, the location of the following interviews.

In 2000, the Phoenix homeless population was estimated between 10,000 and 11,000 individuals. Since 2000, that number has decreased substantially, but there have been unsettling trends over the past five years (Department, 2020). According to a 2013 point-in-time count, that population had shrunk to 5,918 homeless people (Uss, 2020). However, between 2014 and 2020 the number of people experiencing homelessness in

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Phoenix has consistently grown to a count of 7,419 in January of 2020 (Uss, 2020).

According to one source, fifty-one percent of these individuals are living unsheltered

(Uss, 2020). While the Maricopa Association of Government website reports less than

fifty-one percent as unsheltered, their point in time counts still show that the unsheltered

population has grown consistently over the past four years (Maricopa Association of

Governments, 2020). This growth is shown in Table 1. It is important to speak to how

these point in time counts are taken. In Phoenix, the number of unsheltered homeless is

devised from both interviews and survey responses. The city uses this information in an

extrapolation method, identifying high and low density homeless areas. These high-

density areas are given a complete census, while a random sample of low-density areas

are taken and extrapolated. Because of this method, it is unlikely that all unsheltered

homeless are accounted for, due to some individuals' inclination to stay out of the public

eye, and it is possible that some individuals were counted more than once, due to quick

mobility around the city. Additionally, it is likely that the extrapolation method is not

100 percent accurate. However, while the exact number is possibly inaccurate, the

population growth is likely realistic, since the same methods were used during each point

in time count. Thus, based upon the available information, it can be concluded that the

Phoenix homeless population, and especially the unsheltered homeless population, is

growing.

Table 1: Unsheltered Homeless Population in Phoenix

2020	2019	2018	2017
2,380	2,030	1,735	1,508

Source: Maricopa County Association of Governments

There are 19 emergency shelters in Phoenix with 1,026 beds available (Uss, 2020). The largest of these, the Central Arizona Shelter Service (CASS), is located on the Human Services Campus, surrounded by other homeless-specific services. These services include the St. Vincent de Paul Dining Center, the Lodestar Day Resource Center, and Andre House of Arizona. St. Vincent de Paul functions as a dining hall, providing both breakfast and dinner to homeless clients. Andre House of Arizona performs a similar service, providing food as well as essential items such as hygiene kits. The Lodestar Day Resource Center hosts various nonprofits including Behavioral Health, Case Management, and Employment Services. CASS itself contains approximately four hundred beds for homeless clients.

The campus was created in 2005, when against backlash from citizens in a 'not in my back yard' (NIMBY) movement, services were geographically concentrated as part of an effort to remove the homeless from other parts of the city (Brinegar, 2003). The Human Services Campus is located at 1201 West Madison Street in Downtown Phoenix, directly surrounded by an area denoted as 'The Zone.' The name, The Zone, refers to The Twilight Zone and has been in use since the early 1980s. This eerie descriptor came from the homeless population's description of the area that ran rampant with open drug abuse, prostitution, and high crime (Aceves, 2011). The parameters of The Zone range from 9th Avenue to the east, 15th Avenue to the west, West Jefferson Street to the north,

and the railroad tracks adjacent to West Harrison Street to the south: 12 square blocks in total. The term, The Zone, is used by the Phoenix Police Department as well as members of the shelter services when describing the area surrounding the Human Services Campus with the highest concentration of individuals experiencing homelessness. While concentrating the necessary services increases their availability to clients, the resultant congestion of individuals experiencing homelessness has created an area that is at times both unsanitary and violent (Brinegar, 2003). Roped off by posts and chains, the homeless line the streets with tents and possessions and inhabit several of Maricopa County's spare parking lots. Shelter employees and green-shirted security officers organize and oversee the area while the Phoenix Police Department's Shelter Squad attempts to maintain peace and cleanliness. However, as will be displayed through crime mapping, The Zone is a dangerous area. Regardless, the homeless shelter and service employees strive to provide reliable and humane services to their homeless clients. While homeless individuals can be turned away from shelters if they are found committing criminal activities or violating the regulations against drugs and alcohol through a process known as "trespassing," it is shelter policy to find space for those in need, offering them a floor mat or a differing sleeping arrangement, even when they have exceeded capacity (Smith, 2015). Since shelter capacity is not a reason for rejection, the question persists: Why do individuals experiencing homelessness choose to sleep rough when shelter space exists?

Figure 1. Map of The Zone bound by 9th Avenue to the east, 15th Avenue to the west, West Jefferson Street to the north, and the railroad tracks to the south

Source: Google Maps

SHELTER CONDITIONS

Over the past 30 years, the social science literature has made several attempts to answer the question of why individuals experiencing homelessness continue to sleep rough. The majority of these studies have utilized either qualitative interviews or investigative participation, with the consensus of their findings being unsafe shelter conditions. There is a prevailing understanding that the unsheltered homeless avoid shelters due to rampant rates of violence and theft. Interestingly, this phenomenon is often found in investigations of large, New York City shelters (Barrow et al., 1999; Dordick, 1996; Marcus, 2003; Smith, 2019). These studies found that in the shelters under investigation,

theft, violence, and death were not uncommon occurrences (Barrow et al., 1999; Dordick, 1996; Marcus, 2003; Smith, 2019). However, the frequency of criminal activity within shelters was dwarfed by the victimization experienced on the streets. Additional off-putting shelter factors included illness (Dordick, 1996), drug use (Barrow et al., 1999), a lack of personal space, and degrading loss of identity (Donely and Wright, 2010; Pable, 2012; Stickel, 2017). This depersonalization is often compared to conditions seen in prison (Dordick, 1996; Donley and Wright, 2012; Marcus, 2003). The process of adapting to these dehumanizing shelter conditions is termed "shelterization," a concept mirroring "institutionalization," and has found mixed empirical support (Grunberg and Eagle, 1990; Marcus, 2003). However, while these research studies expanded the literature's understanding of what living in a shelter is like, they are missing a key component: experiences and insights obtained from the unsheltered homeless themselves.

WHY SLEEP ROUGH

Recent research has built upon the foundational finding that shelters are often inhumane and violent by incorporating the perspectives of both the homeless and the shelter employees. The primary research methods have been qualitative interviews and focus groups. In several studies, the participants acknowledged that violence and theft were factors in their decision-making process on whether or not to sleep at a shelter (Donely and Wright, 2012; Kryda and Compton, 2009; Smith, 2015). However, the fear of victimization due to a lack of security was never the solitary reason cited for not using shelters, and a specific focus on that feature alone would be both short-sighted and dismissive of more nuanced reasoning. More often than fear of victimization,

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participants cited factors related to dignity and autonomy (Donely and Wright, 2012; Kermen et al., 2018, Kryda and Compton, 2009; Larsen et al., 2004; Smith, 2015; Uss, 2020). While living on the streets is dangerous, it is clear that being unattached from a stable shelter provides some homeless people a sense of freedom. Without a residence or possessions, individuals are better able to travel by foot and move about at will, a feature of homeless living that many people experiencing homelessness come to cherish. Donely and Wright found this when interviewing individuals in homeless camps in the Florida woods. The individuals in question found that living in the woods allowed them to eat, sleep, abuse substances, and move about as they pleased (Donely and Wright, 2012). When staying in a shelter they lost much of this autonomy. This sense of individualism was encroached on in several ways: through rules about shelter admittance times, regulations about sobriety, and employees treating them like children (Donely and Wright, 2012; Kermen et al., 2018, Kryda and Compton, 2009; Larsen et al., 2004; Smith, 2015; Uss, 2020). This last factor was seen to be particularly upsetting as individuals experiencing homelessness reported that shelter employees were dismissive, talked down to them, and showed favoritism towards select shelter clients (Donely and Wright, 2012; Kermen et al., 2018, Kryda and Compton, 2009; Smith, 2015). It was a common finding that a discourteous or dehumanizing experience with a shelter employee often led to the homeless individual choosing not to return to the shelters, instead turning back to the streets, despite the increased risk of victimization (Donley and Wright, 2012; Kerman et al., 2019; Kryda and Compton, 2007; Larsen et al., 2004; Uss, 2020). Other decision-making factors of whether or not to attend a shelter include rules against pets (Donely and Wright, 2012), rules splitting up unmarried couples (Donely and Wright,

2012), an extreme emphasis on religion (Donely and Wright, 2012), and shelter location (Donely and Wright, 2012; Smith, 2015).

Two studies in particular examined why Phoenix's unsheltered homeless choose to sleep rough instead of using shelters (Larsen et al., 2004; Uss, 2020). Larsen et al. interviewed a mixed cohort of shelter- and non-shelter-using homeless, comprising 85 individuals who used shelters regularly, and 45 who chose to sleep rough. The findings were consistent with the previous literature, with highlighted factors of stringent rules against alcohol or drug usage, poor shelter experiences, and being forced into psychiatric care against their will as the most prevalent reasons that the unsheltered homeless preferred sleeping on the streets. Ash Uss, an employee of Andre House, one of the organizational providers on the Human Services Campus, performed a similar series of interviews with 100 unsheltered homeless individuals in 2020, finding that the vast majority--90 percent--of the sample reported that they would like to enter a shelter if it met their standard of living. The most significant reported barriers against attending a shelter included not enough space for personal belongings, poor experiences with service members, bad influences of other shelter guests, unsanitary conditions, overcrowding, and an atmosphere that felt like a prison (Uss, 2020). While these studies each offer great insight into the state of unsheltered homelessness in Phoenix, they are limited by their methods and the inconsistency of their findings. One study was conducted by a member of the Human Services Campus. Her familiarity and relationship with the interviewed individuals potentially impacted the results of the study, as the unsheltered individuals might have been less likely to voice more extreme concerns in an attempt to retain a positive relationship with the campus. Additionally, while it was conducted by a service

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provider, the study in question failed to incorporate any perspectives other than the unsheltered homeless. The other Phoenix related study suffered from a similar issue as the researcher only interviewed the sheltered and unsheltered homeless.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to put the current research into context, it is important to understand the relationship between the victim of a crime and the offender. For the majority of completed criminal acts, some person, place, or institution is victimized. The line between victim and offender is often blurred, as someone's status can change depending on the incident. An individual can be a victim of one incident and offender in another. As previously discussed, individuals experiencing homelessness are at extreme risk for physical, sexual, and financial victimization (Fischer, 1992; Kinsella, 2012; Newburn and Rock, 2006; Novac et al., 2006; Padgett and Struening, 1992; Roy et al., 2014; Smith, 2015). However, often times, the offender is another member of the homeless community or someone else who spends a large amount of time on the street (Fischer, 1992; McCarthy and Hagan, 1991; O'Grady and Gaetz, 2004; Smith, 2019). Because of this, any theoretical discussion of homelessness and shelter avoidance needs to draw perspectives from both criminology and one of its subcategories, victimology.

Routine activity theory explains much of homeless-shelter avoidance. Routine activity theory (Felson and Cohen, 1979) approaches crime as a combination of three factors: a motivated offender, the absence of capable guardianship at the crime location, and a suitable target or victim (Akers et al., 2021). According to the theorists, a criminal act is most likely to occur when a motivated offender and a suitable target or victim are present, and capable guardianship, either a physical guardian or technological surveillance, is nonexistent. Unsurprisingly, routine activity theory has been utilized in the field of victimology to explain patterns of victim behavior (Akers et al., 2021).

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Routine activity theory is applicable to the current research question--why some individuals experiencing homelessness avoid homeless shelters--when considering the crime avoidance explanations offered in the current literature. Several studies explain shelter avoidance by pointing to the rampant rates of violence and theft within homeless shelters (Barrow et al., 1999; Dordick, 1996; Marcus, 2003; Smith, 2019). According to routine activity theory, the homeless individuals avoiding the shelters due to safety concerns are removing the suitable target--themselves--from the crime-necessity equation. Additionally, routine activity theory explains shelter avoidance based on shelter rules against bringing in excessive property (Donely and Wright, 2012; Smith, 2015). While theft is always a negative experience for the victim, loss of property can be especially crippling for members of the homeless community. In a situation where everything they own must be carried, individuals experiencing homelessness may be hesitant to enter shelter services that are either unable or unwilling to accommodate large amounts of personal property. While property may be hidden to be retrieved the morning after a night in a shelter, individuals experiencing homelessness may find this idea unsavory. According to routine activity theory, while those possessions are out of sight, they are at an elevated risk of victimization due to lack of capable guardianship.

The more nuanced, interpersonal reasons for avoiding shelters--protection of personal identity, dislike of dismissive employees, and reluctance to accept regulations banning inebriation--may be better explained using labeling theory. Though often applied to criminology, labeling theory was introduced to the field of sociology in the early 1960s by a collection of sociologists, Charles Horton Cooley, George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer, and Howard Becker. The theory states that much of an

individual's behavior is based upon the symbolic interactions between the individual's identity, self-concept, and societal context (Akers et al., 2021). Essentially, an individual's behavior is a reflection of how he or she is labeled by the community around them. In regard to the current study, it is possible that some individuals avoid the homeless shelters simply because they wish to avoid being labeled as homeless. As previously established, throughout American history, the homeless population has received degrading treatment from both the government and the general public (Simon, 1991-1992). Until recently, homelessness was viewed as a personal flaw and reflection of individual laziness (Rossi, 1989). According to labeling theory, some individuals experiencing homelessness may avoid shelters to prevent themselves from being labeled as homeless and thereby incurring the treatment deemed appropriate of the homeless by shelter employees. Since homelessness is a situation that can change rapidly, as individuals gain and lose a stable residence, it is possible that some individuals who meet the definition of homeless have not personally accepted the label, and as such do not see the homeless shelter as an option. It is likely that some people without a stable living arrangement have not rationalized that they are homeless, and as such do not believe that staying in a homeless shelter is an opportunity that is available to them. Applying the theoretical implications of both routine activity and labeling theory, the following research explores this question: Why do some individuals experiencing homelessness sleep rough instead of utilizing the available homeless shelters?

CHAPTER 4

CURRENT STUDY

The current study continues the tradition of qualitative interviews and expands the

literature's understanding of the life and reasoning of those experiencing unsheltered

homelessness. However, this research improves on previous studies by both replicating

similar qualitative methods, as well as expanding the array of the included participants.

Historically, studies of this type have sought out the input of either the sheltered

homeless speculating on the decision-making of the unsheltered (Stickel, 2017) or of the

unsheltered giving their own reasoning (Donley and Wright, 2012). This has been

expanded in two ways: by gathering and comparing viewpoints of a mixed homeless

cohort (Larsen et al., 2004) or by adding the perspectives of shelter employees (Smith,

2015). However, this study incorporates three perspectives that are essential to

understanding the state of homelessness in Phoenix Arizona: individuals experiencing

homelessness, shelter employees and service providers, and, an often-overlooked

component, the members of the Phoenix Police Department's Shelter Squad, the group

exclusively tasked with policing the area known as The Zone.

The study comprises a series of interviews: five with individuals experiencing

homelessness, nine with shelter employees, and nine with members of the Phoenix Police

Department. Before moving into the interview specifics, it is important to briefly

consider the skepticism some academics have of self-report studies, especially those

conducted with a population such as those experiencing homelessness, which has

historically been deemed unreliable. While self-reporting accuracy is important to

maintain a study's internal validity, the skepticism towards homeless self-reporting has

no factual basis. A 1997 study testing adult homeless individuals' self-report accuracy by comparing reported events with medical and legal documents, concluded that those experiencing homelessness were as reliable with their self-reporting, if not more so, than the general public (Gelberg and Siecke, 1997). The only times that inconsistencies were found was when the researchers either over-emphasized their authority or when the researchers inquired about activities that are deemed socially unacceptable or illegal (Gelberg and Siecke, 1997). Since this study includes questions about behavior and activities that may be considered societally taboo, I emphasized building rapport with interviewees and guaranteeing the anonymity of the individuals experiencing homelessness.

For the purpose of this research, the gathered responses are compared and contrasted to gain a better understanding of why the unsheltered homeless continue to sleep rough. Additionally, the collection of opinions from different parts of the homeless response system illuminates the current relationship between the homeless population and those who provide homeless services. The study utilizes the following four hypotheses which were derived using the information synthesized in the literature review:

Hypothesis One: The unsheltered homeless choose not to participate in shelter programs due to strict rules.

Hypothesis Two: The unsheltered homeless choose not to participate in shelter programs due to poor past experiences with the shelter system.

Hypothesis Three: The unsheltered homeless choose not to participate in shelter programs due to a fear of victimization.

Hypothesis Four: The unsheltered homeless choose not to participate in shelter

programs due to a lack of knowledge of the services provided.

While the literature, including a recent study interviewing the Phoenix homeless population (Uss, 2020), has offered mixed findings as to why the homeless choose to sleep rough, it is important to replicate similar methods to gather further information. Additionally, it is essential that the service providers, including the police, are brought into the conversation, and perhaps even more important, that they are learning from the community they serve.

METHODS

Due to the continued prevalence and impact of COVID-19, the number of qualitative interviews conducted fell short of the desired amount outlined in the project proposal. Initially, the goal was to conduct 30 interviews with the homeless, 10 with shelter employees, and 10 with Phoenix Police Department officers, resulting in a total of 50 interviews. However, due to public-health concerns, I was only able to conduct 23 interviews. When possible, these interviews took place over either a phone call or Zoom meeting. If an interview required an in-person component, safety precautions, including the use of a face mask and a six-foot social distance, were implemented, as per the CDC guidelines at that time. Unfortunately, while the majority of shelter employees and police officers were able to be contacted remotely, these restrictions drastically reduced the number of interviews with individuals experiencing homelessness. However, while the number of homeless interviews was lower than desired--a total of five--these interviews tended to last significantly longer than other interviews, ranging from 45 minutes to three hours. In comparison, interviews with police officers and service employees lasted

between 15 minutes and an hour-and-a-half. Thus, what the study lacks in number of homeless individuals interviewed, it compensates for with the breadth and depth of information gathered.

The interview participants were recruited in a variety of ways. While the individuals experiencing homelessness were recruited using convenience sampling by approaching known spots around the city where homeless people congregate--Hance Park, Civic Space Park, and the Human Services Campus--the service employees and police officers were recruited using snowball sampling. Shelter and homeless services employees recommended other shelter and services employees, and Phoenix police officers recommended other officers. I believe that this collection of interviews accurately captures the prevailing opinions and viewpoints of the shelter staff, the Phoenix Police Department's Shelter Squad, and the city's unsheltered homeless community.

Since each group of participants had different knowledge and experiences, separate lists of interview prompt questions were necessary. The interview questions and their breakdown by participant type are listed in the appendix. Additionally, prior to the interviews, a consent/recruitment script was read, culminating in a request to proceed with the interview. All interviews were transcribed by hand and following the conclusion of the interview, I transferred the fleshed out the handwritten documents into a Microsoft Word document. No identifying information was recorded and, following the acceptance of this thesis, both the handwritten and typed notes will be destroyed. In order to garner the most information from the interviews, the responses were categorized and sorted into groups based on their content. These categorizations were based upon the previously

stated hypotheses. New group classifications were added when information was discovered that was not noted in the prior literature. The groupings will be expounded upon in the discussion section of this paper.

In an attempt to supplement and expound upon some of the most pertinent findings related to dangers in The Zone, crime mapping was also utilized. A request was placed to Phoenix Police Department's Crime Analysis and Research Unit (CARU) for three years' worth of data that detailed the criminal infractions that were reported to police in The Zone. The results were analyzed and the findings are discussed below.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

The following section details the findings derived from the 23 open-ended interviews.

The qualitative findings will be broken down by interview type: individual experiencing

homelessness, service provider/shelter employee, or Phoenix police officer. Each section

will begin with the demographic information that is pertinent to the specific role. I will

then summarize the collective thoughts on why unsheltered homelessness persists. Some

of the information is later supplemented with crime mapping data supplied by the

Phoenix Police Department. This will lead into a conclusion section where the pertinent

findings will be compared and contrasted in an attempt to ascertain common opinions.

Finally, the paper will culminate in a discussion of policy and practice recommendations

that will intended to improve the lives of those experiencing homelessness and that will

encourage individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness to utilize the available

shelters and services.

INTERVIEWS WITH INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

The individuals experiencing homelessness who agreed to participate in this study were

diverse. Four identified as males and one identified as a female. Four were White, one

was Black, and one was Native American. Two were Arizona natives, one grew up in

New Mexico, one hailed from Chicago, and one had come from a small town in Missouri.

Their average age was 47, with a range from 32 to 63. As a whole, this small group has

had incredibly long bouts with homelessness. While each individual reported

incremental homelessness, wherein they fell in and out of stable housing, the majority of

the individuals interviewed would be viewed as members of the chronically homeless population. The average length of homelessness was seven years, with a range from one to 17 years. Two of the individuals cited the current pandemic as the reason they could no longer afford a residence and were back on the streets. Perhaps the most interesting of this small cohort, was a man who admitted to formerly abusing methamphetamine. After being released from a lengthy, reformative prison sentence, this man set off on an odyssey where he traveled cross country on a bicycle, only to stop in Arizona for the winter.

For such a diverse group, the cohort has had surprisingly similar experiences with the shelter system. While none of the interviewed individuals were currently utilizing a shelter service, all had stayed in a shelter at some point in the past. The length of stay varied from three weeks to a full year. However, despite their resistance to staying in a shelter, two of the five still used homeless services, specifically Andre House and a local church's weekend meal provision. The members of the cohort had also experienced a startling amount of victimization while homeless. Every individual interviewed had experiencing street level victimization. These offenses included rape, aggravated assault, and theft. In comparison, only one individual had personally been victimized while staying in a shelter. This incident consisted of having items stolen from a bag while utilizing the shower services. The individual left the shelter shortly after. However, even with the disproportionate amount of violent victimization experienced on the street, four of the five individuals reported feeling safer sleeping outside than in a shelter. As one individual pointed out, "On the streets, you have more control over your protection." When asked about what made a certain area a desirable place to stay the night, one

individual explained that a vacant structure with a covered roof, such as a parking garage or public bathroom was ideal. The next best place was a park bench in a well-lit area. Another individual explained that it was best to make a deal with someone who owned private property, an arrangement whereby you could sleep outside without the risk of the property owner calling the police.

Applying the results from Gelberg and Siecke's 1997 study that found that individuals experiencing homelessness were reliable in their self-reports except when reporting societally taboo or illegal activities, I inquired about the homeless cohort's thoughts on why other unsheltered homeless individuals avoided the shelters, rather than why they avoided the shelters themselves. The findings were largely consistent with past literature, while also bringing up problems that may be exclusive to the Phoenix shelter system.

These discussions would often begin with the more benign complaints and observations. Two individuals mentioned that other individuals experiencing homelessness did not want to conform to the rules and responsibilities the shelters required. When prompted, rules against intoxication and curfew regulations were mentioned. One of the individuals also complained about dismissive staff, going so far as to claim, "the workers don't treat the homeless like people, they treat them like commodities. I think they make commission off of us." While this sentiment was not mirrored by any other interview, it is still worth considering. Another individual also claimed that the shelters were not inclusive for those with severe mental illness. As such, those individuals were more often on the street.

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Besides the complaints about stringent rules, dismissive staff, and noninclusive policies, there were observations made about the physical dangers homeless individuals experienced in and around the Human Services Campus. Four of the five individuals spoke about seeing both weapons and drugs inside the shelters. One of the homeless cohort talked about an incident that took place where an individual experiencing homelessness shot and killed a CASS staff member. This was a reference to the 2009 shooting of Kevin Collins, a shelter case worker. In this incident, the homeless client was being trespassed from the property when he shot Kevin Collins six times, before returning inside to wait for the authorities (King, 2019). In response to this, the Human Services Campus changed several of its policies. One of these requires all bags to be searched before any individual experiencing homelessness can be admitted to the shelter. Interestingly, while the homeless cohort complained about the physical dangers of weapons inside the facility, they also complained about this bag searching process. One individual explained that if campus employees found an item that was not allowed within the facility, it would be confiscated without the opportunity to reclaim it upon leaving. Four of the homeless cohort listed this theft as well as theft by other shelter clients as primary reasons for avoiding the shelters.

According to one of the homeless cohort, alongside bag checks, the fatal 2009 shooting also caused the Human Services Campus and CASS specifically to hire private security. While this was a logical response to a violent incident, four of the individuals experiencing homelessness cited either being a victim of or witnessing abuse at the hands of the shelter security. The reported incidents ranged from bag theft to physical assaults. One individual went so far as to call the security guards racist and claimed that the

company had several pending lawsuits for unjust uses of force. However, I was unable to find any evidence to back this latter claim. Additionally, another homeless individual claimed that two campus security guards purchased beer from him while they were on shift.

The final complaint revolved around the campus itself and the surrounding neighborhood. Two of the homeless cohort spoke of the various dangers homeless individuals had to endure to enter CASS or to receive services. These included violence, drug usage, and other aberrant behavior displayed by the individuals experiencing homelessness who camped out along the street and in the county overflow lots. One of the individuals spoke about the congested and unsanitary nature of the area. According to this individual, the threat of the COVID-19 virus elevated the unsanitary and crowded area from a hindrance to a legitimate health concern.

INTERVIEWS WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS AND SHELTER EMPLOYEES

The service providers and shelter employees interviewed for this study were also an extremely diverse group. Of the nine individuals interviewed, four identified as men and five identified as women. While they were all involved or formerly involved with providing services for the homeless population of Phoenix, their roles varied drastically. Two worked at Andre House. One provided medical services for the Human Services Campus. One served as a security officer for the Human Services Campus. One worked at CASS itself. Four were involved with homelessness remotely, two as academic homeless advocates and two as members of the Department of Human Services. Their length of homeless outreach experience ranged from six months to 14 years.

As a whole, the reasons offered by service providers as to why individuals experiencing homelessness avoided shelters focused on personal and logistical factors. While one individual referenced both a dangerous area and problems with campus security, specific physical threats to the health of homeless clients were largely left out. Instead, two individuals pointed out that the unsheltered homeless might view the shelter as similar to prison or may not feel safe sleeping in a shelter. Several other factors introduced by the individuals experiencing homelessness were presented in the service provider interviews. Four of the service providers mentioned the unsheltered homeless avoiding the shelter due to rules against intoxication. Concerns with non-empathetic employees and issues with mental health and addiction were also mentioned.

In addition to inclusion of several of the factors mentioned by the homeless cohort, the shelter employees mentioned several new concerns. There was a focus on logistical complications. These included a lack of space in the shelter. Three of the service providers brought up needing additional space for more shelter beds. There was also a mention of logistical issues such as not having space for possessions or pets owned by the individuals experiencing homelessness. One service provider mentioned potential concerns with LGBTQ inclusion. Two other service providers brought up problems the unsheltered homeless might have trying to get to the Human Services Campus from other parts of the city.

INTERVIEWS WITH THE PHOENIX POLICE DEPARTMENT SHELTER SQUAD
Nationally, there has been great concern with over-enforcement of laws against members of the homeless community. While I am unable to speak to the Phoenix Police

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Department's general policies towards homelessness, I found that the Phoenix Police Department's Shelter Squad's approach is the antithesis of criminalization. The Shelter Squad is a specialized detachment of the Phoenix Police Department that requires for assignment to it several rounds of interviews that focus on finding applicants with a humanitarian outlook. I conducted interviews with nine Shelter Squad members, eight men and one woman. The officers' years of experience ranged from three to 19. The average length of service was 10 years.

Currently, the Phoenix Police Department is often at odds with the service providers as well as the individuals experiencing homelessness. Most service providers view the police as a bullying presence and accuse the officers of criminalizing the homeless. At the same time, the police officers view the service providers as unrealistic and fault them for not aggressively and actively attempting to get clients into programs. Additionally, the Shelter Squad reports exasperation with the Human Services Campus as CASS prohibits them from entering the shelter, even to retrieve suspects accused of felony offenses. The unsheltered homeless have a complicated relationship with the police, specifically the Shelter Squad, and there seems to be a spectrum of appreciation from amicability to blatant dislike and disrespect. According to one of the officers, the majority of individuals staying around the Human Services Campus have had some type of interaction with the criminal justice system. However, while I cannot speak about the Phoenix Police Department as a whole, the Shelter Squad seems to avoid imposing criminal infractions whenever possible. In cases of misdemeanor infractions, especially those integral to a homeless lifestyle, the officers attempt to get the suspect into homeless services instead of imposing criminal sanctions. Only in cases where the suspect is

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blatantly defiant of peaceful resolution or when the suspect is involved in a felony infraction will the Shelter Squad officers act with an arrest. During the nine interviews with officers of the Shelter Squad, a pair of phrases were used often: "Lead with services" and "We can't arrest our way out of homelessness."

The interviews with the Shelter Squad officers took place over two days. The officers identified several layered issues involving homeless-shelter avoidance. Many of these observations mirror the opinions of those experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Three officers brought up issues with excessive rules and no place to leave property. Another officer mentioned that many of the unsheltered homeless may be comfortable with their lifestyle and may not be looking for a way back into stable residence. According to this officer, the homeless lifestyle offers access to food and illegal drugs with no real consequence or responsibility. Two officers mentioned concerns with rude or dismissive employees as well as mental health considerations amongst the homeless that avoid the shelters. Two other officers introduced a new factor: that shelters may not provide the services that the unsheltered homeless are looking for. In their experience, the unsheltered homeless are seeking immediate housing options instead of working with the current system that gradually elevates individuals into different housing situations, from the homeless shelter, to group homes, and finally to individualized housing.

The officers generally agreed that much of the shelter avoidance could be linked to the dangerous nature of the area. One officer spoke about how predatory individuals on the streets know the police schedule and utilize the area around the shelter to prey financially upon the homeless. He offered the example of drug dealers who visit the shelter on the days when individuals experiencing homelessness receive their disability

checks each month: "Some of the individuals experiencing homelessness are staying away to avoid bad influences." Several other officers mirrored this opinion, stating that while most of the homeless population goes to the Human Services Campus to receive help, part of the population goes there to victimize.

Finally, the Shelter Squad officers corroborated the opinions of the homeless cohort, as well as one of the service providers, by linking homeless-shelter avoidance to the problem of security-guard abuse. To set the context, one officer stated that "campus security act like pissed off bar bouncers having a bad day." This was immediately corroborated by several other officers. They have heard of and witnessed incidents of both theft and assaults of the homeless by security guards. The officers provided three examples to defend these statements. The first two incidents took place two years prior. In one, an armed security guard got into an argument with an individual experiencing homelessness while standing in one of the overflow lots. When the guard recognized that the confrontation might get physical, the guard drew his sidearm and fired it once in the air, in response to which, all the individuals experiencing homelessness scattered. No charges were leveled against the security guard for the reckless endangerment or unlawful discharge of a firearm, and while the guard was fired following the incident, he was rehired the next day. In a similar incident, a homeless individual was trespassed from the property, but upon leaving, began shouting expletives at two security guards. When he refused to stop shouting, the guards chased after him, assaulted him, placed him in cuffs, and called the police. These security guards were subsequently arrested for assault and kidnapping. The final story focuses on an ongoing problem with the security at CASS. According to members of the Shelter Squad, and corroborating a complaint

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made by the homeless cohort, the shelter security guards frequently confiscate items from the homeless and refuse to return them even upon leaving. While these items may be prohibited in the area, this action constitutes a theft. On several occasions, the police have received calls from the Human Services Campus and upon arrival discover that the security officers have collected large amounts of weapons, illegal narcotics, and drug paraphernalia. These instances of abuse support the statements from the unsheltered homeless that the area is dangerous, both due to other homeless and the campus security.

CRIME MAPPING THE HUMAN SERVICES CAMPUS AND SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD

In order to further investigate the claims that The Zone is a dangerous area, I placed a request to Phoenix Police Department's Crime Analysis and Research Unit (CARU) for crime data in the area. They responded with three years' worth of police calls for service that took place within the parameters of The Zone. It is important to note that while this data was provided by the Phoenix Police Department and outlines calls which were placed for police service, not all listed incidents involved a criminal infraction. Still, these datasets indicate that the area surrounding the shelter is indeed dangerous. Additionally, the findings from the crime data display an increase in activity needing police intervention both within The Zone and CASS itself over the past three years. This increase in activity mirrors the increase in unsheltered homelessness in Phoenix, Arizona.

The data provided by CARU are best analyzed as three separate datasets. The first displays three years' worth of calls for service linked to the address 230 South 12th Avenue. This is the address for the Central Arizona Shelter System (CASS). These calls

for service represent a combination of three types: Dispatched/Callback/Self-initiated. A call for service does not necessarily mean that the incident reported occurred, and upon investigation, officers may have decided that a different activity occurred. Additionally, it is possible that there is more than one call for service for a single incident. However, with these caveats in mind, calls for service have consistently increased at the CASS address over the past three years. There was a total of 90 different types of calls reported. The total number of calls is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Total Dispatched/Self-Initiated Calls to 230 S. 12th Avenue (CASS)

2018	2019	2020	Total
352	411	415	1,178

Source: Phoenix Police Department Crime Analysis Unit

While an increase in calls for service does not necessarily mean an increase in criminal activity, an exploration of the most frequent types of calls for service substantiates several of the factors mentioned by the homeless cohort. As seen in Table 3, which details the most frequent types of calls for service that required a police response, several of these complaints are mentioned. It is important to note that the calls for Trespassing are likely related to the shelter's practice of using the police to remove disorderly homeless from the campus. While the rates decreased between 2019 to 2020, Trespassing is still the third most frequent type of call to CASS, which implies heavy usage of that practice to remove disorderly clients. Additionally, Fights, Assaults,

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Mentally Ill Subject Transports, and Thefts, all of which are amongst the most frequent

calls for service, are all linked to claims of problems mentioned by the homeless cohort.

Table 3: Most Frequent Dispatched Types of Calls for Service to CASS

	2018	2019	2020	Totals
Calls requiring police response				
Check Welfare	52	63	48	163
Trespassing	33	67	43	143
Fight	41	37	26	104
Assault	32	28	46	106
Mentally Ill Subject Transport	30	32	35	97
Theft	23	29	31	83
Missing Person	146	162	201	509
Totals	**357**	**418**	**430**	**1205**

Source: Phoenix Police Department Crime Analysis Unit

Similar data is provided for The Zone, the geographical area that encompasses

CASS and the Human Services Campus and includes the most compressed population of

individuals experiencing homelessness in Phoenix. There was a total of 184 different

types of calls for service in The Zone between 2018 and 2020. As with the calls for

service to CASS, they are separated by Dispatched/Callback/Self-initiated. The total

number of calls is displayed in Table 4. The most frequent calls are shown in Table 5.

Table 4: Total Calls for Service to The Zone

2018	2019	2020	Total
4,314	3,585	4,823	12,722

Source: Phoenix Police Department Crime Analysis Unit

Table 5: Most Frequent Dispatched Types of Calls for Service to The Zone

	2018	2019	2020	Totals
Calls requiring police response				
Subject stop	453	455	1023	1931
Trespassing	637	532	507	1676
Check welfare	451	360	370	1181
Fight	265	265	271	801
Suspicious person	224	200	181	605
City ordinance offense	495	95	82	672
Assault	146	162	201	509
Totals	**2671**	**2069**	**2635**	**7375**

Source: Phoenix Police Department Crime Analysis Unit

While the most frequent calls for service to The Zone show a similar trend to that of the calls for service to CASS, however, while the calls to CASS increased each year, the calls for service to the zone actually decreased from 2018 to 2019 before returning to a similar rate in 2020. To better understand the nature of criminal activity within The Zone, it is important to consider the nature of the area. While it is frequented by individuals experiencing homelessness, the area also contains residences and businesses. As such, some proportion of the calls for service may not be related to individuals experiencing homelessness. However, it is important to note the two highlighted portions of the table which show a significant decrease in city ordinance offenses as well as a massive increase in the number of subject stops. It is likely that the drastic increase of city ordinance offenses can be linked to the outcome of *Bell v. City of Boise* (2009) that ruled that individuals experiencing homelessness could not be fined nor jailed for sleeping outside when shelter beds are full. Additionally, the higher rate of subject stops could be linked to both the state of the current pandemic and the nature of crimes in The Zone. Since a large number of commercial businesses have closed due to public health

concerns, it is likely that the homeless spend more time out on the street. As such, this increased time outside may have led to increased interaction with the police. Additionally, when interviewing the Shelter Squad, the officers spoke about issues pertaining to predatory crimes against the homeless in the area. This increased number of suspect stops could be linked to the Phoenix Police Department's response to that criminal activity. To expound further upon the data linked to The Zone, Table 6 shows the 29 calls most theoretically likely to involve an individual experiencing homelessness. Of these incidents, those showing an increased prevalence are in bold. Many of these showing increased rates can be linked to the complaints voiced by the homeless cohort.

Table 6: Homelessness-related Calls for Service to The Zone

Call Type	2018	2019	2020	Totals
Aggravated assault	**34**	**25**	**78**	**137**
Assault	**146**	**162**	**201**	**509**
Burglary (Commercial)	**10**	**4**	**26**	**40**
Criminal Damage	**35**	**39**	**44**	**118**
Dangerous Drugs	**47**	**23**	**53**	**123**
Dead Body	**9**	**6**	**22**	**37**
Stabbing	**3**	**0**	**4**	**7**
Drunk Disturbance	11	14	6	31
Felony Warrant	**26**	**35**	**78**	**139**
Misdemeanor Warrant	22	17	17	56
Found Missing Person	9	8	9	26
Injured Sick Person	0	0	1	1
Noise Disturbance	**17**	**30**	**31**	**78**
Mentally Ill	69	60	45	174
Mentally Ill Transport	**100**	**121**	**123**	**344**
Missing Person	**52**	**64**	**79**	**195**
Narcotics	**6**	**3**	**12**	**21**
Obstructing Thoroughfare	**2**	**2**	**7**	**11**
Overdose	**2**	**2**	**5**	**9**
Stolen Bicycle	**4**	**5**	**7**	**6**
Subject Stop	**453**	**455**	**1023**	**1931**
Suicide Attempt	10	13	7	30
Sexual Abuse/Assault	**7**	**13**	**15**	**35**
Strong Arm Robbery	13	3	11	27
Suspicious Person	224	200	181	605
Shooting	2	0	1	3
Theft	**99**	**98**	**142**	**339**
Trespassing	637	532	507	1676
Urinating in Public	26	12	23	61
Totals	**2075**	**1946**	**2758**	**6779**

Source: Phoenix Police Department Crime Analysis Unit

The final dataset provided by CARU details actual criminal and noncriminal incidents within the zone. This includes activities where the police both investigated and either a citation or an arrest was made. This data tracks two years of incidents. In 2019, there were 619 police interventions within The Zone that resulted in either citation or arrest. In

2020, this number increased 62.48 percent to a total of 1087. As seen in Table 7, which

displays the ten most frequent incidents, there is a considerable overlap of the complaints

made by the homeless cohort and the actual police-recorded crimes. The most frequent

crimes mirror the unsheltered homeless individuals' fears of physical and financial

victimization. Additionally, many of these crimes, including assaults, aggravated

assaults, drug offenses, and thefts increased from 2019 to 2020. It is also important to

note that both criminal trespassing, where a citation or arrest was made, and trespass

warnings increased during this time period.

Table 7: Ten Most Frequent Types of Incidents in The Zone

|	2019	2020	Totals
Assault	123	171	294
Aggravated Assault	36	101	137
Drug Offenses	37	94	131
Theft/Larceny	57	85	142
Trespass Warning	36	81	117
Criminal Trespass	72	81	153
Obstruction of Street	53	58	111
Criminal Damage	34	48	82
Public Urination/Defecation	17	39	56
Found Adult	21	28	49
Totals	486	786	1272

Source: Phoenix Police Department Crime Analysis Unit

Time-of-day and day-of-week frequency graphs are shown in Figures 2 through 5.

The graphs on the left show 2019 data and the graphs on the right show data from 2020.

There are significant spikes in both years for police intervention between 00:00 and

00:59. While this could be due to an increase in criminal activity after nightfall, it is

likely that some portion of these incidents represent an artificial spike, where all calls

where no incident time was recorded were reported to the 00:00-00:59 slot. Additionally, both years show police intervention spikes on Wednesdays. This is likely linked to the schedule of the Shelter Squad assigned to The Zone. This unit is separated into two squads that rotate schedules. However, on Wednesdays, the schedule overlaps and both squads patrol The Zone. The Shelter Squad uses Wednesdays to undertake special tasks, such as an area clean-up and serving felony warrants.

Figures 2 through 5: Hour of Day and Day of Week (2019 & 2020)
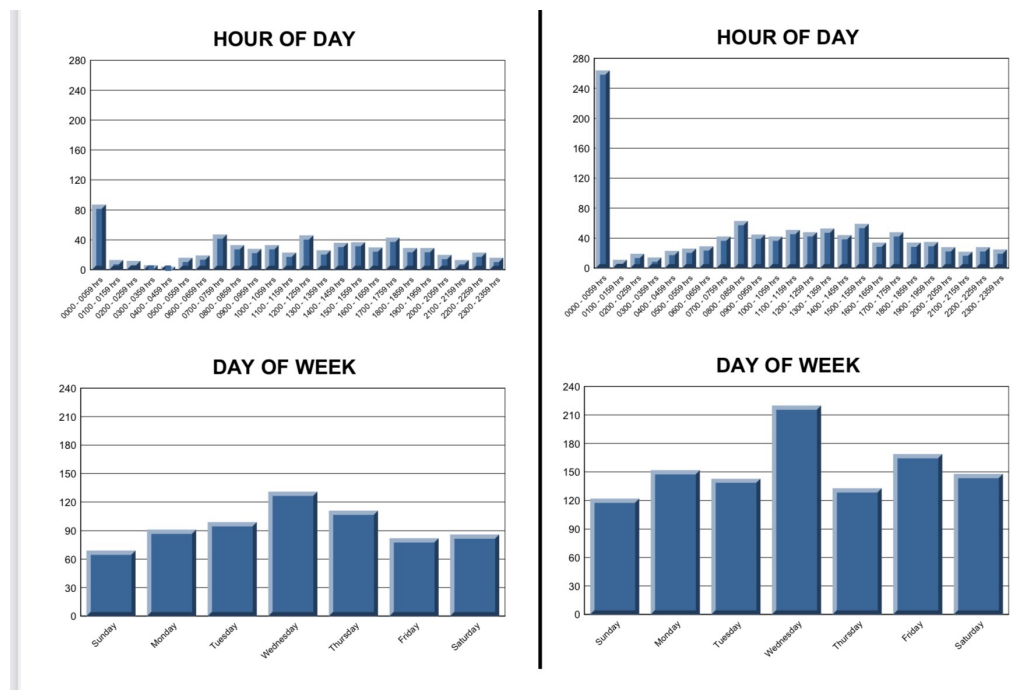
Source: Phoenix Police Department Crime Analysis Unit

Taking into account all three data sets, the calls for service to CASS, the calls to service to The Zone, and the police interventions made within The Zone, it is clear that criminal activity and reported criminal activity has increased in that area. At the same time, unsheltered homelessness has also increased. While these findings do not outright

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support a causal relationship between crime in The Zone and shelter avoidance, they do serve as evidence to support the unsheltered homeless individuals' claims that some of the homeless population avoid the area due to rampant rates of criminal activity.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

Throughout the country, the demographics of the homeless population have become more

heterogeneous, as younger, more racially diverse individuals are losing stable housing

(National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020). Perhaps even more concerning, the

homeless population has become more unsheltered as increased numbers of individuals

experiencing homelessness choose to utilize less traditional means of alternative housing

(National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020). The homeless community in Phoenix

has been no exception (Department, 2020). While a multitude of studies have examined

the problem of homeless shelter avoidance (Barrow et al., 1999; Donely and Wright,

2012; Dordick, 1996; Kermen et al., 2018, Kryda and Compton, 2009; Larsen et al.,

2004; Marcus, 2003; Smith, 2019; Smith, 2015; Uss, 2020), no single source has listed all

the significant factors that discouraged shelter use and which should be improved to

encourage more active participation. With the COVID-19 pandemic still inflicting heavy

health and economic casualties, and rent moratoriums scheduled to end soon, it is

possible, if not probable, that the homeless population will experience a drastic spike in

the near future. Due to both the vulnerable population currently on the street and the

potential impending influx of individuals experiencing homelessness for the first time,

there has never been a greater need to improve the homeless shelter system.

As seen in the previous sections, the three separate cohorts--the homeless, the

service providers, and the Phoenix police officers--each identified a multitude of

concerns related to the safety and well-being of the Phoenix homeless population. Across

the board, there was agreement that the Phoenix network of homeless services as a whole,

and the Human Services Campus specifically, could be improved to better serve and protect this vulnerable group. The differentiation between cohorts became apparent when discussing what types of improvements should be made.

While the service providers tended to focus on issues with logistics and humane and personalized treatment, the Phoenix police officers addressed issues dealing with physical dangers within the Human Services Campus and The Zone that surrounds it. However, while these two focal points seem incompatible or reductionist, it is clear that both are valuable when considering that the homeless cohort discussed issues concerning both safety and comfort.

The following six problems were listed by at least one member of each interviewed cohort: 1) issues with excessive rules and responsibilities (specifically those relating to intoxication); 2) problems with dismissive staff members; 3) concerns about the dangerous area; 4) concerns about physical dangers within the shelter itself; 5) issues with assaults and thefts by campus security; and 6) concerns with the congestion of the Human Services Campus, notably, unsanitary conditions, lack of space, and prison-like conditions. These six problems capture the essence of homeless-shelter avoidance. It is a problem of both physical danger as well as a problem of a lack of control over one's surroundings. These findings are consistent with the crime-mapping data as well as the theoretical framework.

Three of the four initial hypotheses found support in the interview and crime-mapping data: 1) the unsheltered homeless choose not to participate in shelter programs due to strict rules; 2) the unsheltered homeless choose not to participate in shelter programs due to poor past experiences with the shelter system; and 3) the unsheltered

homeless choose not to participate in shelter programs due to a fear of victimization. However, the fourth hypothesis--the unsheltered homeless choose not to participate in shelter programs due to a lack of knowledge of the services provided--was unsupported by the current study. The five individuals experiencing homelessness interviewed reported extensive knowledge of the services and shelters available in the Phoenix area. While it is possible that some homeless individuals, especially those who are newly homeless, suffer from misinformation or lack of information about the Phoenix shelter systems, this factor was not reported by any of the homeless cohort.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

While performing this research I found that the individuals involved in the Phoenix homeless community, whether they be the homeless themselves, the service providers, or the police officers, are passionate about reforming and augmenting the system in an attempt to better serve this vulnerable group. Similar to the opinions about the core reasons why the unsheltered homeless avoid the shelters, the recommended improvements tended to differ from cohort to cohort. However, I found that the differing ideas were often compatible with one another. The following compilation of policy recommendations come from two sources: 1) responses by the cohorts when asked what the next best-steps might be, and 2) my personal deductions based on the gathered qualitative and quantitative data. Instead of grouping the recommendations by cohort, as was done with the interview data, the recommendations will be paired by categories. This distinction both presents the data in a clearer format, and avoids attributing beneficial ideas to particular groups: ultimately, all groups share a similar goal of

improving the lives of the Phoenix homeless population. The five policy categories are:

1) physical and structural shelter improvements, 2) shelter policy improvements, 3)

education, 4) citywide policy alteration, and 5) crime control methods.

PHYSICAL IMROVEMENTS FOR THE CAMPUS AND SHELTER

Many of the potential solutions to the problems suggested by the three cohorts find their

roots in augmenting the current environment of the Human Services Campus and CASS

itself. Many of these issues revolve around space, something that has been partially

resolved over the course of this research. While a proposal to the Phoenix City Council

to implement a low-barrier shelter on the Human Services Campus, which would service

those still involved in substance abuse, was rejected, an expansion of four hundred beds

was approved (Boehm, 2021). However, while adding beds could encourage more

participation, there are still many other things that need to be fixed.

Several of the issues voiced by the cohorts revolved around the lack of dignity or

sense of safety provided in homeless shelters. In order to offer a sense of protection and

comfort, the best improvement would be to create single-occupancy cubicles for each

homeless guest. While this is likely impractical given the space, the next best method

would involve manipulating the current floor plan to create a perception of protection and

privacy. This would include installing bunk beds, curtains, and, most importantly,

creating single-occupancy stalls in the shower facilities. These simple alterations would

turn the shelter facility into a more dignified temporary residence. However, it is

important to note the potential downside of reconstructing the shelter into a more private

facility. Increased interpersonal privacy also leads to a reduction in natural surveillance

by the staff and the fellow homeless clients. As such, the construction of such privacy barriers would allow greater opportunity for out of sight rule infringement.

There were also concerns about storing large quantities of personal property being a barrier to staying at a homeless shelter. According to one of the Shelter Squad officers, CASS has responded to this by creating safe spaces for the homeless guests' property. This was done using a donation of large rolling recycling bins that were outfitted with locks. This improvement should be continued and expanded until there are as many property receptacles as there are shelter beds.

Finally, improvements should be made to the area within the Human Services Campus and The Zone. Besides basic improvements like installing outdoor misters and shade covers, and placing a food line outside so the trespassed homeless can still eat, there are things that could be done to organize and sanitize the surrounding area. Some of the complaints that the homeless and the Shelter Squad officers brought up dealt with the disorganization of The Zone. Overnight encampments line the streets, growing more congested the closer they get to the campus. The solution to this is based in a practice the Human Services Campus already implemented over the past year. Several of the county overflow lots that abut the campus were opened for the homeless to set up camp. The area is organized and protected, and a list of occupants is maintained. In order to clean and structure The Zone, the campus would be encouraged to move the remaining overnight encampments on the streets into the county lots. This change will provide a sense of order to the area and encourage more active participation from some of the unsheltered community. However, when this was discussed in one of the interviews, a caveat was mentioned. The congestion of encampments within the county lots might

become a jarring, unsightly fixture in the neighborhood. The solution to this is based in a

new practice in America: building compact, single-room houses, commonly known as

tiny homes. Some number of these could be built in a grid formation within the county

lots and provided to the homeless as a temporary step before moving into the shelter or

permanent housing. Moving the homeless off the streets, into tiny homes within the

county lots, and protecting their property in the aforementioned receptacles, would

present an organized, secure, and aesthetically acceptable solution to the current

congested and unsanitary situation.

CAMPUS POLICY IMPROVEMENTS

Some of the most frequently referenced issues can be resolved with alterations to policies

of the campus itself. While I am not fully aware of the current objectives of some of the

listed services, some of the individuals experiencing homelessness mentioned that they

would benefit from enhanced trauma services and connection to employment agencies.

Additionally, several members of the homeless cohort spoke about a need for more

proactive rule enforcement in the shelters and campus, specifically speaking about

mandating the residents to help clean the area, as well as restricting dangerous items from

making their way inside the campus. At first glance, this may seem contradictory with

the complaint of security abuse of power and theft; however, this will be addressed in

more detail later. Finally, members of each cohort stated that the Human Services

Campus needs to be more active and aggressive with its presentation of services. As one

Shelter Squad officer pointed out, "You have a captive audience there at all times. While

they're waiting to receive food and necessities, start pitching your services." This

mirrors something that one of the individuals experiencing homelessness spoke to. When

he arrived in Phoenix, he was hoping to return home to New England but did not have the

money to do so. Months later, after he'd abandoned the Human Services Campus in

favor of sleeping rough, he discovered that the campus has a policy whereby they will

buy bus tickets home for any individual experiencing homelessness who is stranded in

Phoenix. By the time he discovered this, it was too late to access the service. He is still

in Phoenix today. This example demonstrates a two-pronged need to both translate

services into easily understood vernacular, as well as a need to actively spread the word

of what services the campus offers. As a former shelter employee stated, "All the

services are there, but it's like we were waiting for them to come find us."

EDUCATION

Individuals from all sides of the homeless-care spectrum could benefit from increased

education in how to better relate to the homeless community. As I've spoken to in great

depth previously in the paper, the Shelter Squad is an excellent example of progressive,

service-based police work. However, that does not mean they cannot continue to

improve by becoming further immersed in the practices of problem-oriented policing

with a community focus. Additionally, their learned knowledge and protocols should be

expanded to the rest of the Phoenix Police Department which may not be as empathetic in

their treatment of the city's homeless population.

The homeless cohort specifically spoke about issues with staff members treating

them either indifferently or like children. This type of non-empathetic treatment was a

contributing factor to why several of the homeless cohort no longer utilize CASS. As

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pointed out by a service provider, there are two ways to remedy the problem of dismissive and disrespectful staff. The first suggestion is obvious: the staff needs to be educated to provide ethical care. The second suggestion is something that both the Human Services Campus and CASS itself already implements: hiring staff members with lived experience; essentially, offering jobs to those who have successfully worked their way out of homelessness. Community Bridges Inc. (CBI), an Arizona-based service provider primarily focused on homeless substance abuse treatment utilizes this method. Additionally, several of the service providers I spoke to had previously been homeless. Interestingly, and although this is based entirely upon my observations, these individuals who had experienced homelessness firsthand, had the best working relationships with the Shelter Squad, the homeless, and the other shelter providers of anyone I interviewed. It is likely that a combination of both methods would go a long way in providing more relatable and nurturing care to the homeless.

Finally, the issue I found most troubling throughout my research was the abuse and theft by the campus security officers. It appears to be a problem that everyone involved in the homeless services knows about, but which is seldom in the public eye. Additionally, I found it upsetting that while this problem was voiced by someone in every cohort and by the majority of the Shelter Squad officers and homeless individuals, it was never referenced in the most recent study of Phoenix homeless-shelter avoidance (Uss, 2020). When speaking to the officers of the Shelter Squad, they recommended two policies that might help reduce incidents with the security staff. The first concerns education. The police should educate the staff on a regular basis about what they are and are not allowed to do as private security. Secondly, there needs to be a program where

confiscated items, that are not illegal, but are prohibited on the campus, can be returned

to the individuals experiencing homelessness upon their leaving. It appears that the rate

of security abuse has decreased, according to the Shelter Squad officers, and this has been

linked to a change in the structural organization of the campus security itself, but,

regardless, any incident of neglect, theft, or abuse of a homeless client is unacceptable.

By implementing educational standards and mandatory property return, hopefully, this

problem can be eliminated.

CITY POLICY CHANGES

Besides the simple argument that the City of Phoenix should allocate more funds to the

homeless services system, there are several specific, large-scale policy improvements that

should be made. One of the more important changes which I've already spoken about is

the implementation of a low-barrier shelter. A low-barrier shelter creates an opportunity

for the homeless to gradually rehabilitate themselves from substance abuse and transition

into the regular shelter, which in turn will prepare them for permanent housing. The

proposal for a low-barrier shelter was rejected by the Phoenix City Council last month,

largely due to the protest of a coalition of area business owners and residents. While this

impedes structural progress in the homeless services, their complaints had some validity.

The core of their argument revolved around how it was already uncomfortable to live and

work in an area that is both unsanitary and riddled with criminal activity. This presents

yet another reason why The Zone needs to be organized.

Besides a low-barrier shelter, the city also needs to address the reduction in

affordable housing opportunities. The commonly accepted best practice for homeless

services is known as Housing First. This method argues that in order for an individual experiencing homelessness to be able to focus on the reasons they fell into homelessness, substance abuse, mental illness, lack of employment, etc., they need first to have stable residence and food. Only once they've satisfied their base-level needs can they go on to focus on their nuanced problems. While the service providers in Phoenix are proponents of this ideology, and encourage rapid rehousing by providing housing vouchers to those who have proven to be able to maintain a stable life in the shelter, there is a startling lack of apartment complexes that are willing to accept these vouchers. This lack of affordable housing affects the homeless in two ways: by preventing those who are already experiencing homelessness from finding stable living, while also pushing those who reside in apartments with rising rents into homelessness themselves. As stated by one of the service providers, "The individuals experiencing homelessness are competing against each other for too few resources." Regulation by the Phoenix city government to prevent skyrocketing prices and encourage the construction of affordable housing is an essential next step to reducing homelessness.

CRIME CONTROL

As pointed out by all three cohorts, criminal activity is common in The Zone. However, it was the experts in the matter, the Shelter Squad, who pointed out the specific nature of this activity. According to these officers, the major reoccurring crimes in that area are predatory in nature, where individuals are violently and financially preying upon the vulnerable homeless population. This presents a difficult situation for the police department, as it has a duty to protect all citizens. However, some of these predatory

crimes are being committed by other homeless individuals. By cracking down on the predatory crimes, it may be misconstrued as criminalization of the homeless. Thus, the Shelter Squad is placed in a difficult position, with a need to investigate and reduce criminal activity while not imposing criminal penalties upon those homeless individuals who are not culpable in the criminal activity. While I am not informed enough in police tactics to speak to how this should be done, it is logical that the reorganization of homeless encampments from the street into structured lots will assist in isolating those individuals who are not there to receive services, and who instead are in The Zone to commit criminal activity. While this is a delicate process, it is necessary to encourage increased utilization of CASS and the Human Services Campus.

LIMITATIONS

While this study adds to the literature on homeless shelter avoidance, there are several limitations that need to be addressed. The first of these deals with a reduction of scope from the initial project outline. Due to the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, both the number of interviews and the type of interviews had to be altered. Originally, the intention was to include many more interviews with the Phoenix homeless community, including both those who were using the shelter and services as well as those who were not. Unfortunately, while the service providers and police officers could be contacted in socially distant, safe ways, this was not possible for the homeless cohort, a group who, due to reduced access to medical care, are at an elevated risk of fatality from the virus. While the interviews that could be performed safely with the five individuals within the homeless cohort were extensive, I was, unfortunately, unable to interview

anyone currently staying at CASS. Additionally, while the officers of the Shelter Squad

serve as great examples of progressive police work, the project would have benefited

from speaking to other Phoenix officers who were not specifically focused on homeless

problems. This information may have made it easier to expound upon best next steps for

the Phoenix Police Department.

The second limitation, and perhaps the most important, is a potential lack of

generalizability due to the unique nature of Phoenix's homeless services. While the

concept of concentrating homeless services is growing in popularity, there are only a few

cities that have followed a similar Human Services Campus model, notably, San Diego,

Miami, St. Louis, Council Bluffs, San Antonio, and Omaha (Aceves, 2011). Due to this

fact, some of the geographically based findings, such as crime in The Zone or difficulties

getting to the campus, may not be applicable to the national problem of shelter avoidance.

However, while the findings of this study may not be able to serve as a framework for

solving unsheltered homelessness nationally, I believe some of the discovered issues still

could help direct efforts to improve the service systems in other cities.

CONCLUSION

This research set out to investigate the problem of homeless-shelter avoidance. It began

by expounding on the history of homelessness in America before delving into a look at

the current demographics. As shown, the current national homeless population is more

heterogeneous than ever, with a size of half a million men, women, and children

(National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020). Roughly a third of these individuals live

unsheltered (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2020) where they experience higher

rates of physical, sexual, and financial victimization (Berk and MacDonald, 2010; Kinsella, 2012; Newburn and Rock, 2006; Novac et al., 2006; Smith, 2015). The current homeless-shelter avoidance literature is explored, including two articles focused on Phoenix's homeless community (Larsen et al., 2004; Uss, 2020). The current study expanded on the research tradition of qualitative interviews with the homeless by bringing both service providers and police officers into the conversation. Through this thesis I found that, while all three cohorts were focused on improving the lives for those experiencing homelessness, they all offered differing reasons as to why unsheltered homelessness persists. While the police officers often cited reasons related to crime, the service providers offered reasons related to logistics, and the homeless cohort spoke about a mix of the two, there were six problems that at least one member of each cohort agreed upon. These included: issues with excessive rules and responsibilities (specifically intoxication); problems with dismissive staff members; concerns about the dangerous area; concerns about physical dangers within the shelter itself; issues with assaults and thefts by campus security; and concerns with the congestion of the area, notably unsanitary conditions, lack of space, and prison-like conditions. The findings were consistent with the prior literature and brought up a problem that had not been mentioned before, abuse by campus security. The thesis continued by offering a series of policy recommendations at the personal, organizational, and governmental levels that will hopefully help create a more inviting and hospitable environment for the Phoenix homeless community.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCRIPTS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESS

1. What shelters do you know about in the Phoenix area?

2. Have you ever used a shelter? If so, which ones?

3. How long have you been homeless?

4. If you used a shelter, how long did you stay there?

5. Is there a certain time of year that you use shelters?

6. Have you ever been victimized at a shelter? If so, describe the event.

7. Why do you think some homeless people prefer to sleep on the streets instead of in the shelters?

8. How helpful are shelter employees/managers?

9. In your opinion, what are some of the biggest dangers homeless people face within shelter facilities?

10. Do you feel safer at night in the shelters or on the street?

11. What shelter policies or services do you think could be improved?

12. Have you ever been denied admission to a shelter? If so, why?

13. If you go to a shelter, where do you go when the shelter is closed?

14. One a scale of one to five, with one being the worst and five being the best, how would you rate:

1.   Shelter security?

2.   Shelter comfort?

3.   Availability?

4.   Shelter services?

5.   Cleanliness?

6.   Admission requirements?

7.   Rules and guidelines?

POLICE

1. How long have you been a police officer?

2. What is the standard protocol when you receive a call involving an unsheltered homeless person? Do you usually make arrests or attempt to provide services? Is this policy based or on your own discretion?

1. What options are available when responding to a homeless person breaking the law?

2. What options are available when responding to an unsheltered person who is vulnerable to harm (e.g. due to intoxication, mental health, etc.)?

3. How often do you take homeless individuals to crisis services, such as mental health, drug and alcohol intervention, or victim services?

4. How often are you called to a homeless shelter?

5. What are the most common types of calls that you respond to at the shelter facilities?

6. Why do you think some homeless individuals are not going to shelters? (Pets or Property)

7. Have you ever come in contact with someone who preferred to go to jail instead of a shelter? If so, did they say why? Do you think this is common?

8. Is there a certain time of the year/hour of the day when shelter calls increase?

SHELTER EMPLOYEE

1. How long have you worked at a homeless shelter or service center? Were you at a different shelter before this?

2. What position do you currently hold? What are the responsibilities for this role?

3. What are the most difficult aspects of your position?

4. How many homeless people do you provide service to on any given night? If you work at a shelter, are all beds usually full?

5. Does the facility's capacity/attendance fluctuate throughout the year? Do you have any particularly busy seasons?

6. What services does your facility offer? Are there outside services that you encourage the homeless to participate in?

7. Have any homeless clients experienced injury or illness while you've worked at this facility?

8. Are there any policies or rules you think are too stringent? Too relaxed?

9. Are there any physical or structural improvements you would support if the funding was available?

10. Are there any dangers that exist within the facility?

11. How often do you have to contact the police or medical services?

12. Why do you think some homeless prefer to sleep on the streets instead of patronizing local shelters?

APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT AND CONSENT SCRIPT

Interviewer: Good (morning/afternoon/evening). My name is (interviewer's name). I'm a

graduate student at ASU working on my thesis about the conditions of homeless shelters. We

are interviewing (homeless individuals/shelter employees/police officers) about their experiences

in and around the Phoenix shelters. The goal is to come up with a set of conditions that can be

enhanced in order to improve the safety and security of the homeless people that live there. I

would like to ask you a few questions about your experiences with the shelters. It will take

between fifteen and twenty minutes and it will be a big help on this project.

Interviewer: This interview is completely voluntary, and you can choose not to participate at all.

There is no penalty for not participating. If you decide to participate, you can stop at any time or

skip any questions you're not comfortable answering. There are no foreseeable risks to your

participation in this research. You must be 18 or older to participate in this study. If you do

choose to participate, for the sake of this interview please do not mention yourself or any

additionally people by their name as it may infringe upon their privacy. This interview will be

recorded and transcribed.

Interviewer: If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the principal

investigator, Andrew Hughes, at (615) 727-4824. If you have any questions about your rights as

a participant in this research or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the

Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the Arizona State University

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480).965.6788.

Interviewer: Are you willing to participate in this short interview?

APPENDIX C

IRB APRROVAL

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Michael Scott WATTS: Criminology and Criminal Justice, School of

602/496-0409 msscott5@asu.edu

Dear Michael Scott: On 10/23/2020 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	An Investigation into the Environmental and Physical Dangers Within Phoenix Homeless Shelters
Investigator:	Michael Scott
IRB ID:	STUDY00012787
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Interview Questions, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Master's Thesis Interview Recruitment Consent Script .pdf, Category: Consent Form;• Thesis IRB (Final).docx, Category: IRB Protocol;

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 10/23/2020.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required. Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Andrew Hughes