

ALASKA LEGISLATURE SPECIAL COMMITTEE / SUBJECT FILE 8672
1430 SCOMM 52: JOINT SPEC. COMMITTEE ON LOCAL OPTION LAWS 1985-86

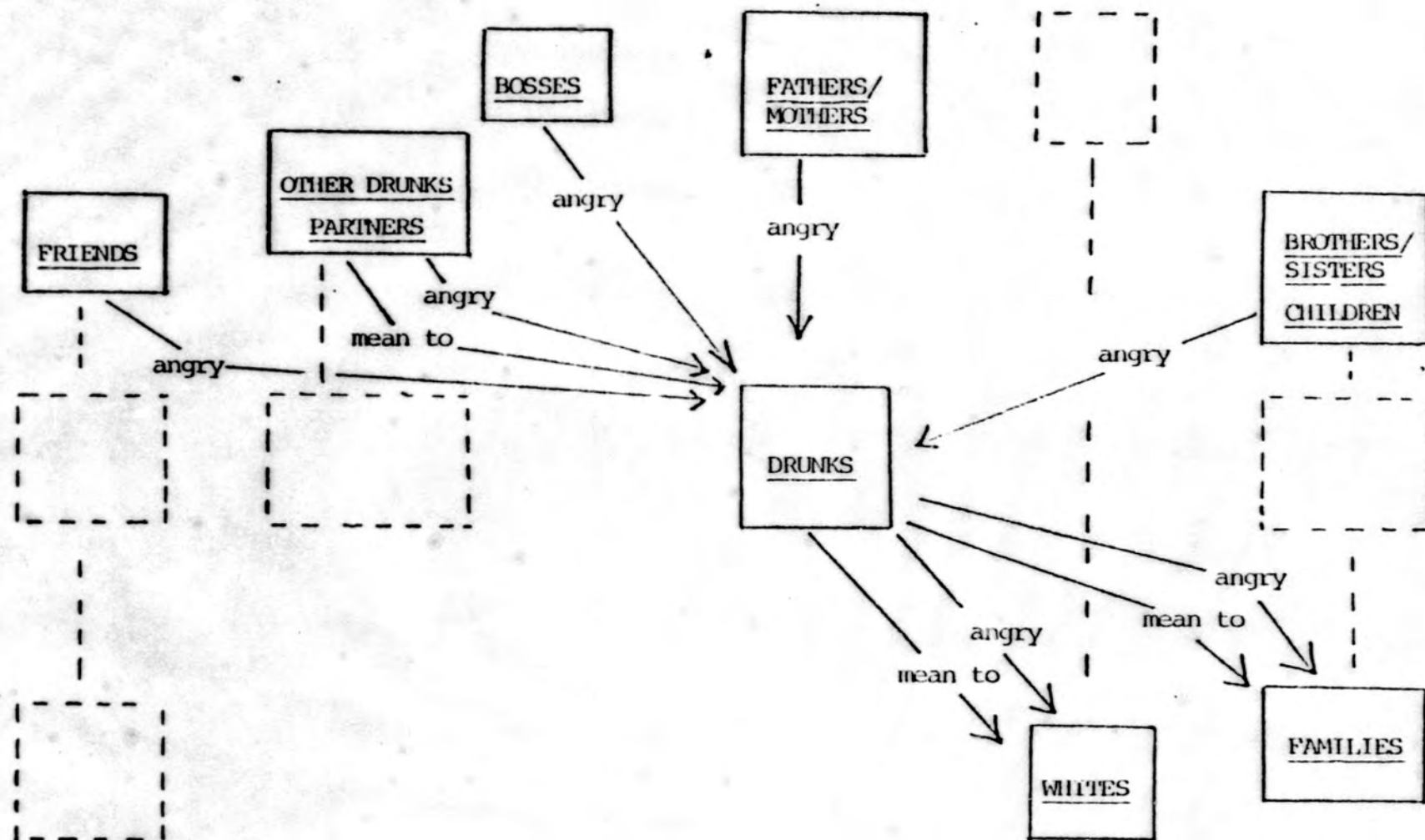
by arrows.

This map provides a concise profile of the impressions local people have about drunks and drunks are thought to have about them. The dotted lines connecting the two levels of brothers/sisters and families, and connecting the three levels of friends are provided to indicate how fluid and unbalanced the relations with these categories of people are. At one moment, brothers and sisters seem to fit at one level, but then another perspective sets them at a lower level. Friends is an ambiguous category, since it is juggled back and forth; it seems that there is little consistency in the relationships between friends and drunks at least in terms of perceptions and attitudes. Friends are at the same moment respected, understanding companions, and obedient subordinates. In brief the system looks to be "out of sync" and unable to provide a coherent set of relations upon which to determine obligations or judge the behavior of people around you. That is, for the drunk, a friend could obey him, help him or judge him, and all of these relations are perceived as being typical and appropriate.

We see a slightly different picture if we map out the sentiments of a hostile or negative quality that people perceive. Figure 3 shows these, following the same format used to summarize the personal relations. The dotted lines and empty boxes are used to illustrate how the connections have changed when compared to the relations map. Some of the categories of people have moved up, and others have moved down. Here nearly everyone is seen to express their anger at the drunk, while others have been shifted down to the receiving end of anger on the part of the drunks.

It is clear that the perceived social system places the drunk in the midst of confusing relationships. Nearly every relation that has a positive connotation, that has the capability of cementing solid, productive relations, is matched by a sentiment of anger. The system is shot through with resentment and conflict. Even the relations with peers which are the most varied and complex (combining respect, dependence, helping and understanding) boomerang on the drunk. This sort of situation, though, is not that unusual; in fact, these contradictions and ambiguities in interaction sum up the classic alcoholic syndrome. Drunks

Figure 3



often are selfish in interpersonal terms, and therein lies most of the grief and guilt feelings for not only the alcoholic but the family and the circle of friends and acquaintances. The drunks want to have their cake and eat it too; they often make broad demands on the people around them but give nothing in return except broken promises. Then, when their expectations are not met they are "justifiably" angry at the people around them who have failed to measure up in terms of obligatory kindness and understanding, and in a similar fashion may interpret the lack of these relations "due" them as anger on the part of everyone around them. This is what Jellinek (see the section on Theories) meant by "unreasonable resentments".

The differences evident between the roles of peers and family (all kin connections) in this system are crucial not only to an understanding of the status of the drunk in the NANA region, but also to effective treatment planning. The conflicts and contradictions in the system are precisely where therapeutic efforts should be focused if a community-based approach to treatment is to be developed. In a sense, these are maps of problems and resources, not just networks. A description of where angers, fears and resentments fit in and connect the people in the community is a necessary first step toward resolving the problems in the first place, and identifying the specific subgroups who are affected. This will be elaborated more in Section 8 (Recommendations).

An examination of the life change or life stress index also provided some clues about what stresses are typical and the effect they have on personal adjustment in the region. All of the research participants (29 after incomplete results were discarded) completed this index, and Table 28 lists the ranked responses to it. Number 1 (a minor violation of the law) was thus the single most frequent response to the index (an example is included in the Appendices), and the others are listed in decreasing order of frequency. Because the number of recent life changes is often associated with level of overall stress and other indicators of stress (like hypertension, anxiety, depression and so on), one element of the research involved an analysis of recent life changes and the

RANKS OF REPORTED LIFE CHANGES BY CUMULATIVE REPORTS PER CATEGORY

RANK:	LIFE CHANGE:
1	minor violation of the law.
2	jail term.
3	death of a family member.
4	change in job responsibilities.
5	change in financial condition; death of a friend.
6	begin or end school; have a vacation.
7	outstanding personal achievement; change in residence; looking for new friends.
8	have just borrowed money; or plan to.
9	change in personal habits, change in church attendance; planning on going outside.
10	personal unjury/illness; change in health of family member; new family member; change in number of arguments with spouse/partner; change in # family get togethers.
11	marriage; spouse/partner stops or begins working; christmas is approaching; trouble with friends; change in dating habits; fight with friends; unlucky fishing or hunting.
12	trouble with in-laws.
13	divorce; separation; fired from job; pregnancy; son or daughter leaves home; trouble with boss.

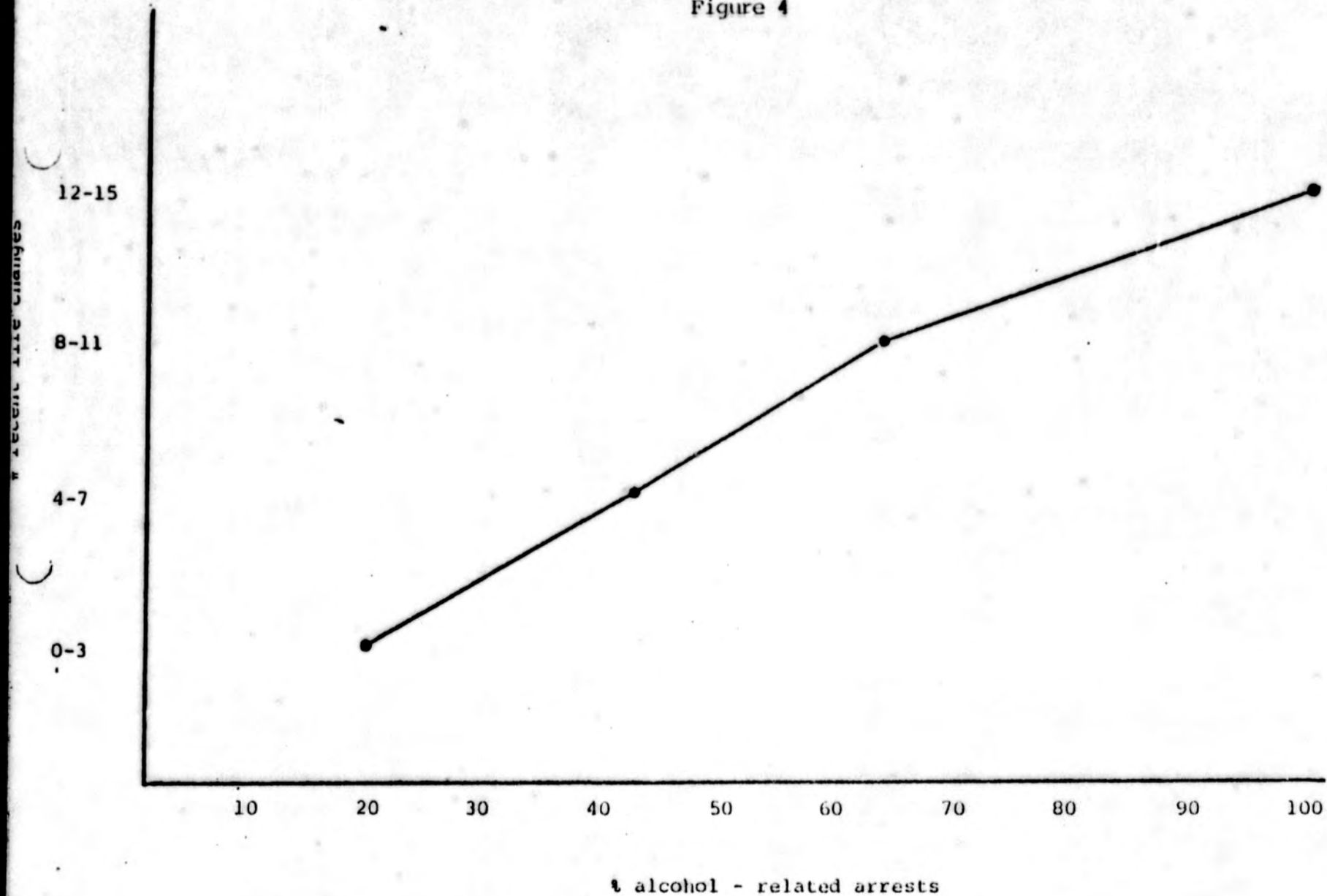
incidence of alcohol-related arrest. Because we had only a limited background history for each of the participants, and because self-reports of drinking problems had already been seen to be inaccurate, alcohol-related arrest seemed to be a single indicator most feasible for our purposes.

The reported life changes were grouped into categories, 0-3 changes, 4-7 changes, 8-11 changes, and 12-15 changes. These are arbitrary groups that were tallied in order to develop a general and provisional idea of possible association between recent changes and arrest incidence. The numbers of reported changes were compared with the incidence of alcohol-related arrest for each group; that is, the people who reported between zero and three changes had a certain incidence of arrest, and that arrest percentage was charted against the life changes. The result of this comparison is displayed in Figure 4. The correlation coefficient (Spearman's rank r), a measure of how consistently the two variables interact, is 1.0, or a perfect correlation. The group that reported up to three changes had an alcohol-related arrest rate of 20%; the group that reported 4-7 had a rate of 42%; the group with 8-11 recent changes had an arrest rate of 63%; and, the group with more than 11 recent changes had a 100% alcohol-related arrest record. The arrest rate, I should add, reflects only a recent period (last six months).

Because these results were so striking, a similar comparison was made without lumping the reported changes into arbitrary groups. The bar graph in Figure 5 summarizes these results. These results are certainly more inconsistent than the first correlation would lead one to believe, but the overall trend toward more stress in association with a greater alcohol-related arrest incidence is still clear. The graph is read in this fashion: the bottom line represents the number of people who responded with the number of life changes listed immediately above. That means that there were two persons who reported two changes, and since there is no bar above that position, none of them had been arrested. There were three persons with three life changes, and 33% (or one of them) had been arrested. At the far end of the graph you see that only one person reported 15 changes, and that person (100%) had been arrested. This comparison shows that everyone with 9 or more recent life changes also had been arrested for

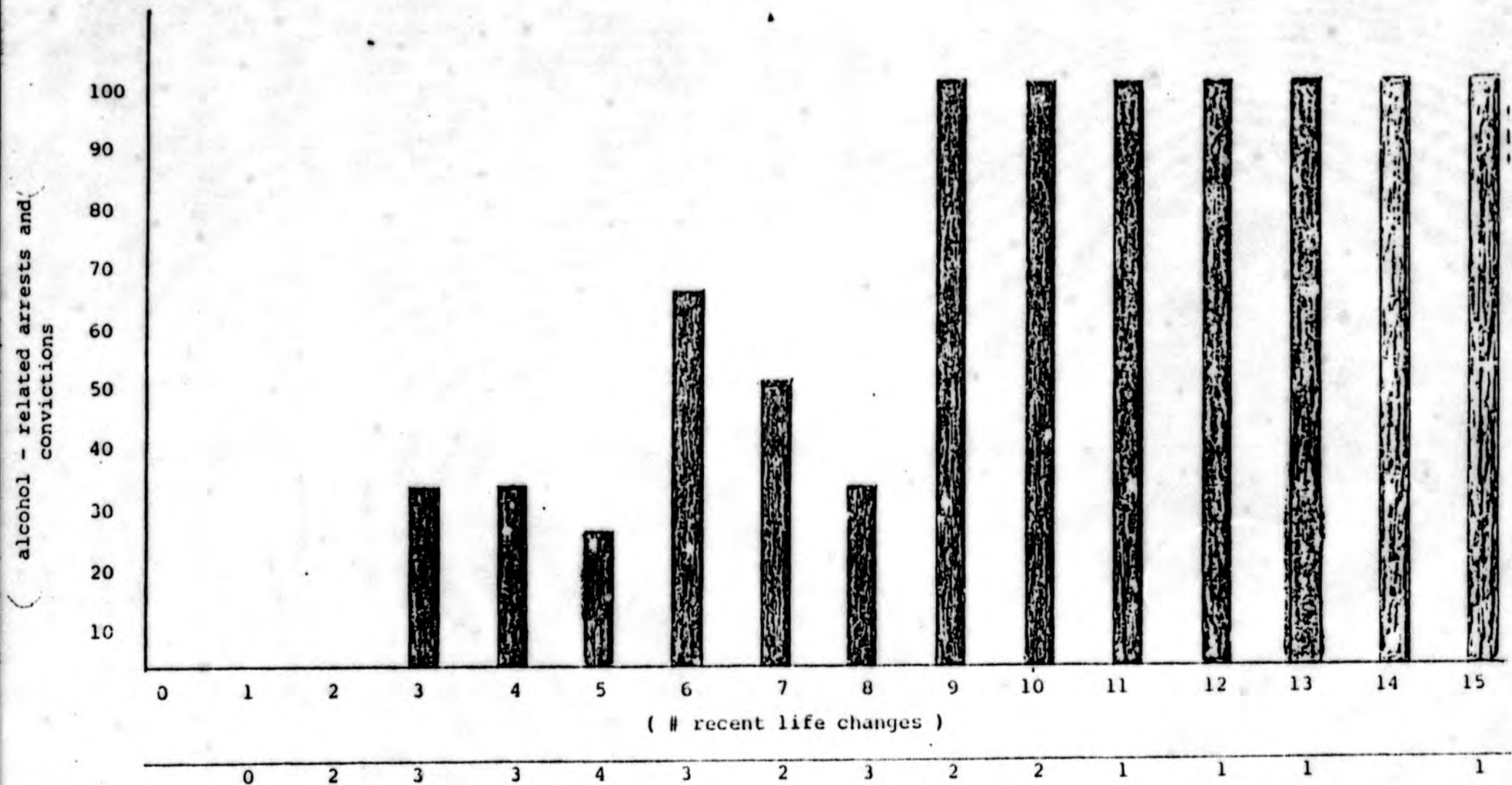
CORRELATION OF RECENT STRESS CONDITIONS AND INCIDENCE OF ALCOHOL-RELATED ARRESTS AND CONVICTIONS : N.A.N.A. REGION

Figure 4



COMPARISON OF UNGROUPED LIFE STRESS CONDITIONS AND THE INCIDENCE OF ALCOHOL-RELATED ARREST AND CONVICTION

Figure 5



(# responses to life change index by cumulative total)

N = 29

an alcohol-related offense and convicted for it.

We must be cautious about trying to identify cause and effect in these comparisons, however. A substantial correlation only means that the two variables behave in a similar fashion, not that one causes or leads to the other. We might be tempted to ask, does stress or life change cause drinking problems? This has in fact been suggested in many circles; the whole "anxiety theory" of drinking discussed in previous sections hinges on this kind of explanation. Stress management is also a key component in treatment for alcoholism. In strict terms, though, all we can be sure of is that stress and problem drinking are associated with one another, or that the one coincides frequently with the other. But we shouldn't forget that problem drinking itself leads to stress and a number of life changes (such as lost jobs, divorce, loss of friends, arrest and so forth). It may not even be as simple as the "chicken and the egg" problem; that is, which comes first? Perhaps both stress and abusive drinking are consequences of another set of variables that are not identified at present. Nonetheless it is abundantly clear that stress and problem drinking go together for people in the NANA region, especially with regard to exposure to the criminal justice system.

A small number of NANA region residents who were "on the street" in Anchorage were also participants in the research. Twelve persons (after many responses were culled and discarded) made up this small survey of attitudes and opinions about drinking. These persons completed both a background questionnaire (developed following the NIAAA intake format) and a number of questions dealing with qualities of drunks, reactions to intoxication, and alcoholism treatment (see Appendices for an example of the full questionnaire). A summary of the background characteristics of this group are as follows:

<u>SEX</u>	Male 100%
<u>AGE</u>	Average age = 27 range = 16-46
<u>EDUCATION</u>	Average number of years = 9.08 range = 6-13 17% attended vocational school
<u>RESIDENCE</u>	Average time of residence in Anchorage = 3.99 years range = 3 weeks-18 years

MARITAL STATUS

75% never married 17% divorced

8% separated 0% married

LIVING ARRANGEMENT

33% w/families 25% w/other relatives

25% alone 17% w/friends

ECONOMIC STATUS:

Average number of days employed/working in the last
30 days = 3 range = 0-27

Average number of months employed/working last year = 4
range = 0-12

50% rely on subsistence more than 50% of food needs

17% rely on subsistence somewhat less than 50%

8% rely on subsistence to a very limited degree

33% do not rely on subsistence to any degree

FAMILY STRUCTUREAverage number of older brothers/sisters = 2.75Average number of younger brothers/sisters = 2.83

58% lost a parent (by divorce, separation, death) before adulthood

DRINKING BACKGROUND

Self-reported drinking

25% no drinking 8% occasional drinking

17% frequent drinking 25% problem drinking on sprees

25% steady drinking

Self-reported problems

25% no problem 25% slight problem

8% moderate problem 42% serious problem

Average age of first intoxication = 15.64

Other questions on the survey dealt with the drinking habits and drinking problems within the person's family (family drinking patterns are often seen as factors influencing a person's individual habits and problems). The responses were somewhat erratic, but it is clear that reported family drinking habits and problems are not associated with self-reported personal drinking habits and problems. We should, however, always be a bit sceptical about the accuracy of

responses concerning "problems" and sensitive issues, and so more research on these factors is advised. On the other hand it seems that these responses from Anchorage concerning personal drinking problems are probably far more valid than the responses from Kotzebue on the same subjects, although this conclusion is little more than impressionistic at the moment.

Another question looked at the number of times people reported they had tried to stop drinking. A comparative analysis of two groups from our sample was performed. One group (6 persons) reported no problem or a slight problem with drinking; another group (6 persons) reported a moderate or serious problem. These two groups were compared in terms of (1) the age of first intoxication, and (2) the number of times attempts were made to stop drinking. Z-tests were conducted on the two groups and the responses they gave; z-tests are measures of significant difference not unlike the chi-square tests described earlier in the report. The statistical result shows how likely it is that the differences between the groups are due to chance.

The "no/slight" problem group had an average age of first intoxication of 18.2 years, and had tried to stop drinking an average of 2.2 times. The average age for this group was 24.5, with a range of 24-25. The "moderate/serious" problem group had an average age of first intoxication of 13.5 years, and had tried to stop drinking an average of 10 times. The average age for this group was 29.6, with a range of 16-46. The z-test comparison of the groups with respect to age of first intoxication yielded a figure of 4.39, where p is far less than .0002; the z-test for the comparison based on number of attempts to stop drinking yielded a figure of 2.04 where p is less than .05. This means that the difference we see in age of first intoxication, comparing the "no/slight" and "moderate/serious" groups, has a statistical chance of being random and insignificant only two times out of 10,000. The difference between the groups in terms of stop-attempts could be insignificant or random 5 times out of 100. The conclusion we have to come to is that (1) age of first intoxication, and (2) attempts to stop drinking are strongly associated with reported problems. Since the differences based on age of first intoxication are so clear, it would seem wise to consider "early drinkers" in the NWA region an important "at risk" target group for early intervention.

It may be, though, that since the age characteristics of the two groups are different (the "less problem" group shows an age spread of only 24-25 years of age) perhaps the differences are due to age; the "more problem" group, since they are older, may have simply had more time to accumulate problems. This might have something to do with the number of stop-attempts, but it is hard to see how this would influence age of first intoxication. Other differences that show up in opinions and attitudes between these two groups seem to indicate that they are in fact two distinct groups.

One question used to probe for opinions was:

"When a person is drunk, what they say and do is really more honest and more like they really feel" (what is your opinion on that?)

Without regard to the groupings by problems, the overall responses were:

Yes (it is true) 33% No 33% Unclear response 33%

Broken down by problem groups, we find:

<u>No reported problem</u> (none/slight)	<u>Reported problem</u> (moderate/serious)
Yes 50%	Yes 17%
No 17%	No 50%
? 34%	? 34%

In other words there is a complete turn-around on the basis of which group is responding: one group thinks drunks are more candid and honest, and the other does not. It is interesting that the group with least reported drinking problems give the most naive answer (yes) while the problem group responds with the answer that is more accurate in the long run (no). Other results are summarized below.

"I hate to admit it, but when people are drunk they really do have more fun with their friends" (How do you feel about this?)

<u>Overall</u>	<u>No problem</u>	<u>Problem</u>
True 50%	True 67%	True 33%
False 42%	False 17%	False 67%
? 8%	? 17%	? 0%

"If a drunk is trying to recover, the hardest thing they must learn is that their old friends must go and that they must find new friends"

<u>Overall</u>	<u>No problem</u>	<u>Problem</u>
True 83%	True 83%	True 83%
False 0%	False 0%	False 0%
? 17%	? 17%	? 17%

The following questions could be answered in many different ways, and a single person might give answers that could be looked at in more than one manner. The responses listed refer to the sheer number of responses rather than the number of persons who responded in that way.

"Why is it that some drunks get rowdy and out of hand when they drink?"

	<u>Problem</u>	<u>No problem</u>
emotional difference	2	1
chemical effects of alcohol	1	2
different drinking habits	1	0
interaction (i.e. someone else causes the problem, etc.)	1	3
unknown	2	0
superficial response (i.e. some people are good, some bad, etc.)	0	1

"What is the number one way to tell if a person is an alcoholic?"

	<u>Problem</u>	<u>No problem</u>
gross appearance	1	1
behavior	2	0
sheer consumption (drink a lot)	2	5
by admission (a person admits it)	1	0

The next question implies conditions that are not necessarily true nor false;

it was a probe to just see how people would respond.

"Why are there more drunks around now than there used to be, say five or ten years ago?"

	<u>Problem</u>	<u>No problem</u>
lower drinking age	3	0
more people around	1	0
more available money	1	0
more personal problems	3	3
more social problems	2	0
more consumption	0	1

"What kind of treatment program can help alcoholics the most?"

	<u>Problem</u>	<u>No problem</u>
general/everything	0	1
AA	5	3
education	1	2
group counseling	3	1
individual counseling	4	1
residential	2	0

Regardless of how objectively accurate or correct the answers are, it looks as if the group with more reported problems give the most varied and complex answers, the least superficial or naive answers, and if anything seem to reflect more on problems of drinking. The group with fewer reported problems (which is also the group that started drinking later and tried to stop fewer times) also seems to respond with more alcoholic stereotypes. It would be interesting to know who really has more alcohol-related problems; we were unable to document this. But if the answers alone are any indicator, the group with more problems seems to have a broader understanding of alcohol. This goes against the grain of common stereotypes which suggest that people with problems are precisely those who are more ignorant of the range of biological, emotional and social variables associated with abusive drinking.

"Here's Looking At You" is an alcohol education curriculum that is currently in use in many regions in Alaska. The Northwest Arctic School District is using it now in a number of classrooms. The District recently completed an evaluation of this curriculum designed to assess how effectively the curriculum objectives were being achieved. The objectives fall into three main categories regardless of grade level: decision-making, coping skills, and alcohol information. The research staff had the opportunity to assist in a re-examination of the evaluation results. Our efforts were not directed toward measurement of achievement, but rather toward a description of the typical reactions to abusive drinking and reasons for drinking that students seemed to perceive. In particular we were interested in determining if there was any reason to believe that students of different age levels had different perceptions, or if students from different villages did. We looked only at the answers to the following questions:

1. What are some reasons why people around here drink alcohol?
2. If someone had a personal problem and wanted to talk about it, who could they go to around here?
3. What could a person do if their friends wanted them to drink alcohol and they didn't want to?
4. Imagine it is late at night and someone's parents are drinking and fighting. This person has to get up early the next day to do something important. What could this person do in this situation?
5. If someone drank a lot and wanted to quit, who could they go to for help around here?

Eight classes were represented in the sample: two from Kiana (6th grade and junior high), one from Selawik (junior high), and five from Kotzebue (two 6th grade, one 9th grade, one junior high, one 10th grade).

There are three types of questions here. One type deals with reasons for drinking; another type looks at reactions to drinking situations; the last type inquires about how to seek help. We quickly found that there were two basic sorts of answers to the reason question (#1): there was drinking for

advantages (like to make you feel better, to be at ease in a group, etc.), and drinking for recreation (because you are bored, it is exciting and fun, and so on). For the reaction questions (#3 and #4), it seemed that people reacted by being assertive (by taking a stand and doing something), or by being passive (by doing nothing, or simply avoiding the situation). Finally, for the help questions (#2 and #5) people responded by suggesting personal resources for help (friends, family), or by suggesting organizational resources (such as doctors, pastors, counselors). Our description is based on these types of responses for the various classes in the three communities. The breakdown of answers is as follows: (total numbers are reported)

"What are some of the reasons why people drink...?"

	<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Recreation</u>	<u>?</u>
KIANA:			
6th	2	4	
jr.high	10	13	3
SELAWIK:			
jr. high	8	17	1
KOTZEBUE:			
6th	16	1	
6th	13	7	
9th	4	5	4
jr.high	47	38	12
10th	14	8	

The Kotzebue pattern favors "advantages" over "recreation", whereas the pattern in the "village" schools is just the opposite. It also seems that the younger students are more uniform in whatever response they give, while the older students tend to give a less uniform answer. It is perhaps predictable that Kotzebue, as a more urbanized center, shows a response more in keeping with

the more Westernized notion of alcohol consumption as a form of "self-medication" that eases troubles and smooths social interaction (that is, people drink for advantages that alcohol confers).

"What could a person do if their friends wanted them to drink...?"

	<u>Assertive</u>	<u>Passive</u>	<u>?</u>
KIANA:			
6th	2	4	
jr.high	5	10	
SELAWIK:			
jr.high	17	7	
KOTZEBUE:			
6th	12	6	
6th	8	8	
9th	6	2	
jr.high	44	33	
10th	7	12	

The pattern here is a bit murky; Kiana clearly prefers the "passive" response, while Selawik is "assertive" and Kotzebue mixed but overall "assertive".

"Imagine it is late at night...What could a person do...?"

	<u>Assertive</u>	<u>Passive</u>
KIANA:		
6th	4	2
jr.high	?	?
SELAWIK:		
jr.high	5	16
KOTZEBUE:		
6th	6	8
6th	?	?

	<u>Assertive</u>	<u>Passive</u>
KOTZEBUE:		
9th	3	6
jr.high	35	41
10th	9	12

Here Kiana reverses its pattern and is the most assertive, although the numbers are very small and may reveal little. The general trend for this question is toward a passive response. Note that the answers overall were far more assertive for the previous question; that one, however, dealt with friends and not family, as does this one.

"If someone had a personal problem...who could they go to...?"

	<u>Personal resource</u>	<u>Organization</u>
KIANA:		
6th	4	2
jr.high	17	13
SELAWIK:		
jr.high	28	25
KOTZEBUE:		
6th	4	18
6th	4	14
9th	3	4
jr.high	28	47
10th	8	9

This pattern is very clear. The village response is chiefly personal, while the most prominent response from Kotzebue is organizational. This is clearest of all the younger the group: the 6th graders show the most uniform preferences of all, regardless of which way the preference goes.

"If someone drank a lot and wanted to quit...?"

	<u>Personal resource</u>	<u>Organization</u>
KIANA:		
6th	6	1
jr.high	7	13
SELAWIK:		
jr.high	14	25
KOTZEBUE:		
6th	4	15
6th	1	16
9th	3	7
jr.high	22	59
10th	1	10

The help-seeking pattern that appeared in the previous question responses is gone except in one class (Kiana, 6th grade). For drinking problems (as opposed to general personal problems) the dominant response is organizational; friends, family and relatives are not typically seen as persons to approach for help. These responses, however, were drawn from a student evaluation involving an alcohol curriculum, and as such organized treatment of alcohol abuse by professionals was focused on. It may be, then, that these answers reflect specifically course content, and may not be comparable with the information about general personal problems. On the other hand, we have already discussed the perceptions people have in the region about alcohol and interpersonal relations, relations that seem to be marked by strong hostility and conflict. Perhaps these answers reflect a broad common awareness that there is a profound resentment and alienation between abusive drinkers and their friends and families, an awareness that is clear in other data.

Although the patterns discussed here are fluid and somewhat inconsistent, there is good reason to believe that there are basic differences between drinking attitudes of young and old, and villagers versus the more urbanized

Kotzebue residents. This idea isn't new, of course. Many people in the region feel that Kotzebue is significantly different from the other villages, and it wouldn't be the first time someone has suggested that the young people seem to have different ideas. What has been lacking so far, though, is some understanding of how these ideas are different. These results allow us to pinpoint some of these specific differences. The more traditional villagers, and the younger people as a whole appear to:

- (1) see drinking as something done for recreation, rather than for advantages derived from drinking
- (2) react passively to drinking problems that directly affect them, rather than assertively
- (3) prefer personal resources when in need of help (for villagers primarily) of a general nature

But

- (4) all prefer organizational types of help when the problem relates to alcohol

This section is not intended to take the place of the findings reported earlier in the report, but only to call attention to some of the most important conclusions and data with critical consequences for alcoholism services.

RECOMMENDATION: The Mauneluk program should take active steps to educate the public and provide crisis intervention relating to violent death associated with alcohol (accidents, suicide, homicide). The rate of increase in the incidence of these deaths is alarming, and the connection with alcohol abuse cannot be denied; the Inupiat are especially at risk compared with other Alaskan Natives (see Tables 6-12, pp. 70-77). Records of the Kotzebue Volunteer Fire Department from 1976 through 1978 show that alcohol-related accidents or injuries are the second most frequent reason for an ambulance run (after invalid pick-ups). Coordination with other local social services is strongly advised.

RECOMMENDATION: The Mauneluk program should provide these services (above) in a targeted manner based on the documented risk populations and situations. These violent deaths vary by season, place, and age group; services should be streamlined and targeted appropriately. Rates for men are higher; suicides predominate in the summer, while homicides seem to predominate in the winter; accidents are most common in the summer; Kotzebue is probably more at risk for homicides while the villages are more at risk for suicides and barely more at risk for accidents; the young adult (20-29) group is at risk, while the next younger age bracket is now becoming a major risk group (see Tables 7-15, pp. 1-81).

RECOMMENDATION: Treatment planning, program development and funding proposals should all be geared to the facts of NANA's position in the state in terms of alcohol-related mortality and morbidity. NANA ranks second or third compared to all other Native corporation areas in numerous measures of alcohol and mental health problems (see Tables 16-27). Realistic measures

including both appropriate services and appropriate funding levels and overall policies and priorities in the region should match up with the real conditions.

RECOMMENDATION: Alcohol and mental health services should likewise be developed on a targeting basis, depending on the distribution of risk factors in the NANA population. Certainly services should be available to all, but it is a simple fact that some subgroups suffer more than others. If targeted services appropriate for variable needs are not provided, then these subgroups are essentially discriminated against. Women in the region show more discharges for mental problems than do men (Table 20); men have more accidents, many of which are alcohol-related, than women (Table 21); age group differences have already been noted. It may be, of course, that these patterns are not due exclusively to real problems but rather help-seeking behavior differences and the like; it is up to the program, however, to determine if this is so.

RECOMMENDATION: Alcohol and mental health aftercare and follow-up efforts must become more aggressive, especially for alcohol services. The trend in the NANA region is for a revisit rate to be high for mental health services, but low for alcoholism services (see Tables 22-25, pp. 90-93). This means that for these persistent problems that cannot be adequately dealt with in one visit, the rate of second and subsequent visits for alcoholism services is lower than the rate for initial visits; people just don't come back as often for on-going treatment. This is not the case as much for mental health services, where the return rate is somewhat higher than the first visit rate.

RECOMMENDATION: A strong element of any public education effort in the region should strive to legitimize alcohol abuse, in the sense that residents should be relieved of the stigma associated with admitting a problem; it must become OK, and not a disaster, to admit to the problem. Looking only at the available records of previous NANA region clients, the single most frequent intake and progress notation reflects a failure or resistance to admitting a problem even when the symptoms are overwhelming. This is no easy task, for indeed stigma is the first and foremost hurdle to overcome in treatment. It is, though, apparently

a serious problem for regional clients.

RECOMMENDATION: Targeting of services should also take differences in client perceptions into account, and provide appropriate counseling approaches, lessons, assignments and topics for individual counseling based on these typical differences. Court-referred clients and non-court persons are apt to be different in terms of how they conceive of drunks, how people can be helped, reasons for drinking, and so on (see pp. 105-107). These are basic attitudes that will have a profound bearing on the nature of individualized treatment planning and methods. These attitudes are background characteristics every bit as important as drinking history and personal guilt or stereotypes about alcohol consumption, all of which are factors requiring assessment at intake and during the term of treatment. Other subgroups to be aware of are the less versus more traditionally oriented (i.e. more or less subsistence reliance), males versus females, and possibly the more versus less employed people (see pp. 107-108). Care should be taken to monitor these differences in attitudes as time goes on, in order to develop more support for the validity of these conclusions or reject them if they are too weak.

RECOMMENDATION: These attitudes should also be seen independently of the groups that report them, too, in order to identify "problem concepts". That is, regardless of who feels that drunks are normally "sick", the very fact that "sick" is associated with drunkenness is important for treatment planning. This finding is evidence of a pattern of perceptions about drinking conditions. Some of these "problem concepts" that should be addressed in groups and exercises are sickness, respect, friendliness or gregariousness, depression, and worry.

RECOMMENDATION: Targeting of services should take differences between subgroups based on their perceptions of personal relations into account when identifying appropriate services and problem areas for clients. In terms of personal relations and their perceptions, these groups clearly show significant differences: traditional vs. non-traditional persons, court-referred vs. non-court persons, married vs. unmarried. The problem concepts are: understanding,

obedience, respect, ordering around, meanness and anger. The problem relations here are friends, children, drinking partners, brothers and sisters, families and bosses (see pp. 112-115).

RECOMMENDATION: Two key groups are obviously embroiled in the perceptions of drinking and personal relations, and these groups should comprise a major portion of the content and approach of treatment for regional clients. These groups are (1) peers and friends, and (2) family/kin relations. The drunk is perceived as being in the midst of confusing, hostile and unbalanced relationships and sentiments involving these groups, both of which are quite distinct. The keys to the apparent alienation and rejection experienced by the drunk, as well as the polarization of responsibilities and social obligations, will be found here. These groups and the relations perceived between them are not only problems; they are resources for program development and treatment planning. The drunk is perceived as having strong obligations and sentiments for the parents; yet the parents are seen to respond with nothing more than superior gestures and anger. This is a problem, but there is a strength here too. Those kin obligations, especially to the parents, are intact. That is a strength to act upon. These perceptions alone are but part of the answer. These groups themselves should be involved in the treatment. There are few findings in the research that should be stated more emphatically than this: the families should be actively involved in client treatment, and peer groups should too. There are many differences apparent between them, of course, and those differences can be the distinction between the joint sessions or activities. The research reveals particular characteristics for the family perceptions (and still others for say, parents versus brothers and sisters) as compared with peer/friend relations (further distinguishable as friends versus drinking partners, and so forth). These differences can provide the format for separate therapeutic activities or lesson areas. Examples would include: being a friend; keeping friends; sibling relations; parent-child responsibilities; temper and anger management; obedience and respect; and so on. Numerous clues for topic areas and problem relations are revealed in pp. 112-124.

RECOMMENDATION: The program should also develop targeted services and methods for identifying possible "risk" clients through the use of life stress

or life change evidence. A life change index like the one used in the research could be administered to clients, but this is not absolutely necessary since this type of information might be readily revealed through the intake interview and a background survey. It should not be assumed that life changes cause a greater alcohol abuse risk; all we know is that alcohol problems and life changes are associated with one another.

RECOMMENDATION: Alcohol information and education efforts should not necessarily target most services and the greatest emphasis toward an identified "heavy drinker" or "drinking problem" group. Efforts should be directed toward the general public. If the results of the research on transients in Anchorage can be generalized beyond that group, for instance, it seems that the group with fewer reported problems has a more naive, superficial awareness of drinking and alcoholism (see pp. 132-134). Targeting of educational and informational services will have a more valid foundation if it is based on residence and age. The examination of the "Here's Looking At You" curriculum indicates that there are real differences in alcohol awareness and attitudes depending on whether one lives in Kotzebue or the villages, or depending on age category (see pp. 135-140).

RECOMMENDATION: Efforts aimed at increasing the acceptance of mental health and alcoholism services in the NANA communities must recognize differences between communities. Efforts of this sort are apt to be more successful if they recognize these differences from the outset and if they are developed in harmony with already existing attitudes and already acceptable help resources. For personal problems in general, the village attitudes favor personal/family resources (friends, family, relatives) while Kotzebue, with a more urbanized climate of opinion, seems to favor organizational resources (counselors, social service staff). It seems that the program must work at making organizational services legitimate and desirable in the villages while recognizing the strength and preference for family-level help. In Kotzebue, on the other hand, the program should not over-shadow family-level resources and instead work at actively recruiting them and making them legitimate.

RECOMMENDATION: An open, welcome atmosphere should be promoted within the program, not only for potential clients but for the public at large. The Mauneluk Board and other leaders should be invited to tour the program, participate in program events, and so on. This type of atmosphere is one of the more important common denominators of successful Native programs. It does more than generate community support and acceptance. If, for instance, the public is aware that (since they are welcome to drop in to tour the facility and chat with staff regardless of their need for services) you can step into the program facility for reasons other than a need for counseling, potential clients or potential informal referral sources (mothers, brothers, friends of problem drinkers) may at least come into contact with the program in a neutral way. That is, by coming to the program, you are not necessarily broadcasting to the world that "I HAVE A PROBLEM". Perhaps weekly open houses with coffee and other refreshments can be combined with an informal introduction and overview of the program that will not be threatening to potential clients that might want to check the program out, "test the water" so to speak, before committing themselves to a course of action.

RECOMMENDATION: The program should explore the possibility of developing a participatory style of management emphasizing team-work and joint responsibility and decision-making. This normally does more than relieve some of the administrative burden, since this is a way of incorporating traditional culture in a program, too. Unity, team-work and mutual decision-making are strengths of the Inupiaq culture that have a real place even today in bureaucracies and large organizations. This is not an unorthodox or nostalgic idea at all; the Japanese corporate structure follows this format exactly, and Japanese management consultants are busy world-wide showing corporations how to do this. The NANA people don't need Japanese consultants to show them how, since they already know how. It works, it is cost-effective, and it insures harmony and commitment in an organization. One way this can work is as follows. If a decision or plan must be developed, a junior staff member is given the task of writing up a brief draft plan; the plan is circulated to all staff, who include their recommendations; the plan goes back to the junior staff person who incorporates the recommendations; the plan goes back to the others who approve it if the recommendations now fit and the plan looks good; at this

point staff consensus has been reached and the administrator approves the plan unless clear regulations or policies have been side-stepped. If the decision or plan fails, then nobody is at fault since everyone was in unanimous agreement; if it succeeds, everyone shares in the success since everyone participated in the decision.

RECOMMENDATION: Special effort should be made to perform exhaustive intake and case management assessments throughout the term of treatment that will address not only specific treatment or alcohol-related needs, but legal, emotional, family, social, economic and medical needs in the broadest sense. Intake assessment and on-going evaluation should naturally take all client risk areas into account. It is too easy to adopt the "blindness" that typical and normal record keeping and case management systems give you; these "blindness" reflect needs and problems that are typical for a state or nation as a whole, but not a specific subgroup. Staff can do everything strictly required of them by funding agencies and still fail to serve their clients. It has been shown throughout this report that NANA clients have profound needs in all of the areas listed above that make them separate and distinct from other populations. They have a tremendous number of accidents (ranking first in the state), many of which are alcohol-related; local Magistrate Court records show that 93% of the criminal cases in 1979 were alcohol-related, and so far for 1980 the figure is 96%; 100% of the NANA referrals to the Alaska Psychiatric Institute for alcohol-related diagnoses fail in treatment and are returned to jail; the Kotzebue IRA reports that over 46% of the families receiving IRA social services have definite alcohol problems. The need to carefully monitor and identify all these associated factors for program clients cannot be over-emphasized. Standardized intake and monitoring tools should be developed that are sensitive to NANA region needs.

RECOMMENDATION: Because these associated needs are so great, the need for coordination of services and information sharing with others is great. The need to involve families and other community residents has already been noted. In a technical capacity the other local services should be drawn into a network of referral and information exchange that will maximize service delivery in all risk areas. The Wellness Program, Tribal Doctor, Manpower and other programs are but a few of those that have a place in this network; the HESS Task Force also

provides a resource.

RECOMMENDATION: The community and local leaders should be involved with program staff in efforts to create an Inupiaq focus in the program. Native strengths and resources should become program strengths and resources. This effort should not rest with the addition of Inupiaq "components", like periodic cultural activities, that are simply add-ons to other program elements (although cultural activities like feasts, participation in holiday events and so on are suggested too). The participatory management approach is an example of how cultural strengths can be integrated into the total fabric of the program. Other ideas include:

1. closed Native AA (or other) meetings with no whites.
2. Inupiat-facilitated sessions on Native culture and identity
3. subsistence hunting and fishing by clients in order to provide food for the residential facility; this is quite feasible, and will soon be done at the Nenana Senior Center and is currently done at the Bethel Tundra Women's Coalition shelter for abused families. This will provide a sense of belonging, enrichment, client participation, and a sense of cultural continuity in an alien setting.
4. Inupiaq interpreters for meetings with a large senior citizen participation.
5. sessions devoted to exploring Inupiaq emotional concepts, in conjunction with interpreters, elders and Tribal Doctors.
6. therapy sessions with Tribal Doctors without white participation, centering on general health and body/wellness awareness.

RECOMMENDATION: The first group of clients treated in the new program should be encouraged to develop an "alumni" group that can be recruited later to assist in the program. In fact, each set of clients coming through the program should be encouraged to do this; perhaps clients could be grouped into "clubs" or "classes" that would provide some sense of group identity outside the program itself. Outside activities like sports, recreation, social events and so on could

be centered around these cliques. Since peer relationships and friendship have already been identified as critical problem areas, these "clubs" could provide a format for positive learning experiences and models for new behavior. They should be autonomous groups with no meddling by program staff, although staff could set up the general format. Since in a residential setting there will be many chores and assignments to be performed by clients, these clubs could also provide the organizational structure for program-related jobs. Club A would be responsible for a certain set of chores, or tending the subsistence nets for one week, and then club B would rotate into that slot afterwards. Competitive sports could also be based on the clubs as team structures. The specific assignment of chores or club-related activities, though, should be in the hands of the club leaders. Staff concern should be only that the jobs get done. This is a plan that is also responsive to local needs (since staff members will be undoubtedly looked upon as bossy "know-it-alls", and this takes some of the responsibility for assignments out of their hands) and cultural values on team-work.

RECOMMENDATION: Measures of client performance and success through the treatment process should be developed that are very clear to the clients. The clients should be able to know in a concrete way, without ambiguous abstractions, just where they are at any moment. Some kind of graphic display with stages of severity or scales referring to emotional, physical and social conditions is needed, so that the client can be shown clearly where he was when he came in, and where he is now. Clients won't be responsive to treatment unless they have a clear idea what is happening to them, why treatment plans are made, and what kind of progress they have achieved.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff unity and agreement on program philosophy and goals is a key to good personnel relations and program success. Training workshops or in-service sessions should be devoted to the development of consensus on these issues, and compromises worked out that are satisfactory to all.

RECOMMENDATION: At this early stage in program development substantial effort should be directed toward setting up a cohesive administrative structure.

The "growing pains" of new or expanding programs most frequently stem from difficulties at the administrative level, and seldom have anything to do with treatment or service-related problems. However, since administrative confusion has consequences for all staff and service delivery, it often seems that the problem resides at the lower level. Basic awareness of this fact is often enough to ease some of the confusion involving channels of communication, job duties, and levels of responsibility.

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PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE JUSTICE SYSTEM
IN ALASKAN NATIVE VILLAGES

by
JOHN E. ANGELL

1981

PREFACE

Until very recently Alaska was a poor state. For example, in 1969, the year the state received \$900 million in bids for Prudhoe Bay oil and gas leases, the state budget was \$150 million. The task of the state government was to spread its limited revenues over a large geographical area and a wide variety of programs and projects.

Although greatly increased revenues have been in prospect since then, it took 10 years for that prospect to be realized. Last year for the first time the state's revenues increased dramatically. With that increase has come a new task for the government. That task is best described as "catching up"; that is, using the revenues to provide goods and services that had been too expensive in the past.

Among these goods and services are many in rural Alaska, a large, thinly populated area where the cost of programs and projects is substantially higher than elsewhere in the United States. In addition to the higher costs, the government faces many problems in delivering goods and services in rural Alaska. Among these are lack of communication and transportation facilities, lack of information and planning, and a markedly different cultural and social heritage.

Nowhere have these problems been more evident than in the state's provision of public safety and criminal justice programs in rural Alaska.

We are, in truth, just beginning to address this problem in a comprehensive fashion. So John Angell's description of the problems and suggested solutions are timely. Increased state efforts in telecommunications, alcoholism prevention and treatment and air transportation will, I hope, solve some of the problems noted. Others will require still more effort.

FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Nearly every conceivable aspect of the urban criminal justice system in America has been studied, described, classified, diagnosed, restudied and redescribed during the past 20 years. An extensive, continuous flow of information about it has touched nearly everyone. Only the most uninformed Americans do not have at least general knowledge about the problems related to public safety and justice.

The available information is not, however, complete. Little is known of the serious public safety and justice problems in remote Native villages in the wilderness areas of Alaska. As Russians, Englishmen and Americans have imposed their dominance, the people living in these communities have been deprived of their traditional social control methods by governments that have not been able to provide alternatives. Consequently, these Native Americans have been obliged to endure unusual crime and personal safety risks.

In contrast to the past, the State of Alaska now possesses sufficient resources to deal with problems facing rural Alaskans; however, appropriate action is hampered by a general lack of public appreciation of the problems. This monograph is directed at filling some of the existing informational gap. Perhaps the availability of information will serve to stimulate more intensive efforts toward correcting deficiencies.

This document could not have been produced without unique cooperation by many organizations and people. Much of the information for it was collected in 56 rural Alaska Native villages by Alaska State Troopers (who provided transportation into most of the communities); employees of Sealaska, Doyon, Calista, Nana and Bering Straits non-profit Native corporations; and staff members from the Alaska Criminal Justice Planning Agency and the University of Alaska Justice Center. The villages studied, although not randomly

selected, are outwardly representative of the Native villages in rural Alaska.

The names of many people who provided assistance did not come to my attention. Some invested resources, others personal time. Among those who I know to have made substantial contributions by providing information, transportation, support or advice related to aspects of this document are Charles Adams, Chris Anderson, Tom Anderson, John Angaiak, William Angaiak, Fred Angleton, Crystal Brand, Steve Conn, Mark Crewson, Jackie Daily, Richard DeRemer, Paul Edscorn, Roger Endell, Tom Ellana, Glen Godfrey, Dave Gosselin, John Havelock, Bill Horr, Dorothy Isabelle, Jim Lansberry, William Manumek, Don May, Ben Maxon, Leonard McCarr, Blair McCune, William McMillion, Tom Moxie, Neil Murphy, George Neck, Sam Peter, Peter Ring, Jim Sanders, Gayle Shoemaker, Roy Seagrave, John Sharp, Debbie Sparks, Yako Tinker and Lisa Waters. I am indebted in a variety of ways to each of these people.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to Phyl Booth, Darline Creen, Deirdre Ford and Louisa Snyder for providing the editorial and clerical assistance which has resulted in the completion of this work.

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The shortcomings of this monograph are in spite of the efforts of the people involved and no doubt are a consequence of my failure to completely accept their advice.

John E. Angell
University of Alaska, Anchorage
Anchorage, Alaska

January, 1981

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Alaska, with fewer inhabitants than Portland, Oregon, has a land area larger than Texas, California and Montana combined (Chart 1). The Southeastern part of the state is as far east as the state of Washington and the Western part is within sight of Russia. It spans four time zones--there would be a fifth but the international date line is bent westward to keep part of the state from being a day ahead of the rest of the United States. The distance between the state capital, Juneau, and the northernmost part of the state is roughly equal to the distance between New York City and Kansas City.

Although over three-fourths of Alaska's people reside in commercial cities similar to those found in other states, the majority of the remainder are Eskimos, Indians and Aleuts who reside in small villages in remote, roadless regions of the state. Although Alaskan Natives in these communities do not--and never have--resided in the igloos of American mythology, they often live at a poverty level in some of the most isolated places and austere conditions in the United States. The most luxurious conveniences in many of these villages are electricity generated by local power plants and satellite television which provides live broadcasts from such far-away places as New York, Philadelphia and Los Angeles. In the winter, ice cut from nearby lakes is often stacked outside houses to be melted for water, and containers referred to locally as "honey buckets" serve as toilets in homes.

Few Americans have any understanding of the lifestyles and problems of these traditionally peaceful and unassuming Native people. Although their situation is more conspicuous in Alaska than it is elsewhere, even the average Alaskan has very little current information about Native village life. Comprehensive factual data concerning present crime rates, policing methods and local deviancy control mechanisms in rural Alaska simply do not exist.

GEOGRAPHIC SIZE COMPARISON

Alaska vs. "Lower 48"

2

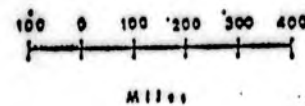
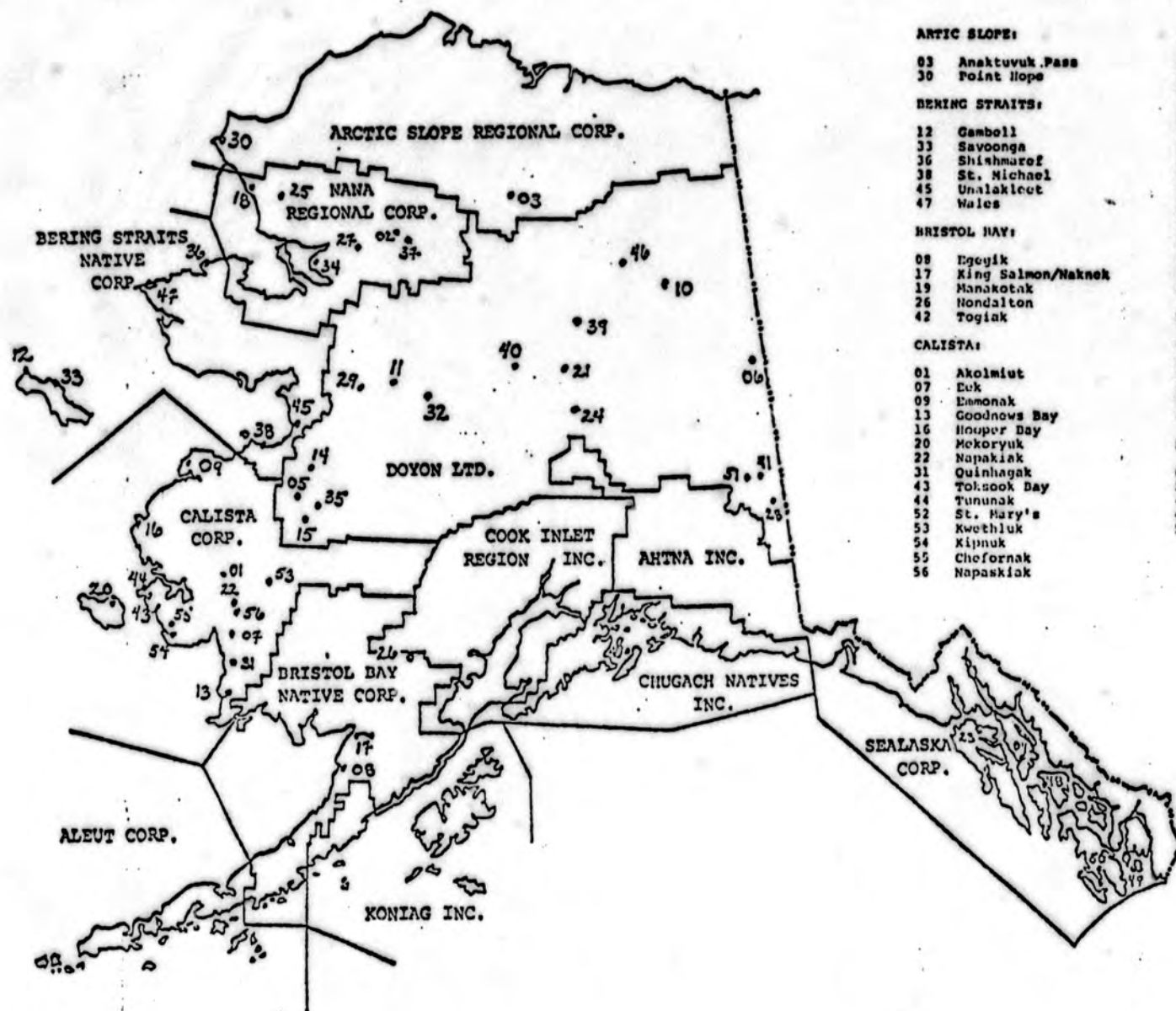


CHART 1



ARCTIC SLOPE:

- 03 Anaktuvuk Pass
- 30 Point Hope

BEARING STRAITS:

- 12 Gambell
- 33 Savoonga
- 36 Shishmaref
- 38 St. Michael
- 45 Unalakleet
- 47 Wales

BRISTOL BAY:

- 08 Egegik
- 17 King Salmon/Naknek
- 19 Manakotak
- 26 Nondalton
- 42 Togiak

CALISTA:

- 01 Akolmiut
- 07 Eek
- 09 Emmonak
- 13 Goodnews Bay
- 16 Hooper Bay
- 20 Mekoryuk
- 22 Napakiak
- 31 Quinhagak
- 43 Toksook Bay
- 44 Tununak
- 52 St. Mary's
- 53 Kwethluk
- 54 Kipruk
- 55 Cheforiak
- 56 Napakiak

DOYON:

- 05 Anvik
- 06 Eagle Village
- 10 Fort Yukon
- 11 Calona
- 14 Grayling
- 15 Holy Cross
- 21 Minto
- 24 Nenana
- 28 Northway
- 29 Hulato
- 32 Bully
- 35 Shageluk
- 39 Stevens Village
- 40 Tenana
- 41 Telling
- 46 Vuntut
- 51 Tok

NANA:

- 02 Ambler
- 18 Kivalina
- 25 Noatak
- 27 Noorvik
- 34 Selawik
- 37 Shungnak

SEALASKA:

- 04 Angoon
- 23 Hoonah
- 48 Kake
- 49 Metlakatla
- 50 Hydaburg

CHART 2

Consequently, Native villages are stereotyped as tranquil, secure communities occupied by carefree people who have few of the public safety problems of urban residents.

The typical Native village in Alaska has between 70 and 1300 residents and is located over 100 miles from a commercial city. It is accessible only by aircraft or wilderness travel (Chart 2). Most villages do not have roadways to even one other community. They are without the conveniences which would be considered essential if judged by the standards of people in even the poorest areas of the other 49 states. Not only are they without a sewer system or running water, but in all likelihood they do not have a fire extinguisher or any organized method for fighting fires.¹ They usually have at least two government employees--a health aide (a local resident who usually has received training in the rudimentary knowledge of medical problems) and a white teacher brought to the village to teach primary school children.² Most villages have one or more "stores" which stock basic dry and canned goods for sale at high prices.³ Nearly all have at least one "community" radio-telephone which is frequently inoperable.⁴ When the community telephone is not working, emergency calls can at times be made on a radio provided by either the school or health system. But, obtaining emergency assistance is often impeded by adverse flying weather and unavailable emergency response personnel.

Most Native communities are classified as Second Class Alaskan cities to qualify them for limited amounts of state revenue sharing and federal funds. Hence, each has an elected city council, and a mayor who is the chief administrator. These officials usually serve without pay.

Slightly over half of the rural villages in Alaska have a part-time person who is considered the police department.⁵ There are no other representatives of the "justice" system in most communities except during an emergency or the existence of a special problem. A few have a makeshift cell that can be used for the temporary detention of dangerous, disorderly, suicidal or drunk prisoners. Otherwise such people are handcuffed or taped to secure objects such as beds or posts until they calm down or assistance--usually from a State Trooper living in a faraway community--is obtained.

Native villages are frequently surrounded by state or federal land and have no appreciable property tax base. The lack of available jobs eliminates the productivity of income or sales taxes. Therefore, the revenues used to operate the village governments are almost entirely state and federal grants in aid. Total government operating expenditures average less than \$100 per capita.

Aircraft fly into each village about once a week--a practice made necessary by U. S. mail delivery. Mail planes carry passengers and serve as a primary method of transportation between these remote communities. Mechanical transportation (usually all-terrain vehicles or snow machines) is used within the immediate area of a community.

CHART 3

ALASKA POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE

Age	Reported Village Distribution	1970 Alaska Distribution
65 and above	5%	2%
50 - 64	8%	9%
30 - 49	16%	25%
20 - 29	18%	21%
0 - 19	53%	34%

Native communities have a higher proportion of young and elderly people than the state as a whole (Chart 3). This situation may be the result of the fact that few jobs are available in the local communities, and people in the child rearing age category of 20 to 50 tend to travel to the commercial cities in search of employment. Hence, the lower than normal proportion of residents in this age range. The unique age distribution plus the longstanding practice of sending high school age children to residential, regional schools in distant commercial cities seems to

be contributing to an increasing amount of conflict and delinquency in many of the communities.

The primary languages spoken in Native communities are nearly equally divided between English and Athabascan or one of the Eskimo dialects. English is a second language in every community where it is not the primary language.

The environment combined with tradition limits the practices of agriculture for food production. Processed foods from the Outside are both expensive and foreign to the traditional Native diets. Approximately half of residents of communities are heavily dependent on subsistence methods (i.e., hunting, fishing and wildberry collecting) for much of their food. Reliance on this method of livelihood has been only slowly diminished in recent years.

The lack of opportunities for stable employment is no doubt a significant factor which binds so many to subsistence methods. About one-fifth of the adults in villages have paying jobs as a primary source of livelihood, and nearly all of these people hold government positions. Many employed residents are whites who moved to the community to accept jobs rather than local Natives. The average family income is less than \$10,000 per year. All regions of Alaska have Native villages where over 90% of the inhabitants depend almost entirely on hunting, fishing and wild food gathering for survival.

The tension created by the growth of an economic system where money is essential for goods and services and the lack of local jobs has a multitude of consequences. The working age people who migrate to commercial cities in search of work often lack the appropriate knowledge and skills, and are unsuccessful. They associate with other unemployed Natives, adopt a defeatist attitude and many times become participants in the skid row scene of Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. They return to their home villages with alcohol problems and negative attitudes about the urban areas and people. The damaging psychological and social consequences of this situation can be seen in both the urban centers and rural villages.

Family life within the villages is being affected by these situations and it concerns Alaskan Natives.

Cultural conflict is conspicuous in expressions of concern such as the following made by Native leaders:

- We are moving away from traditions. There is more drinking now than in the past. Young have less respect for older people. Younger generation getting into white man's world. More outside drugs are coming in.
- Youth don't listen to their parents. The older people do not have the same position of respect they used to have.
- Youth are using alcohol and drugs. Youth are receiving all of the attention--elderly are being overlooked.
- Young children haven't learned anything (in school). Old people still have to teach them everything. Youth have changed their behavior today for the worse.
- Children don't understand or speak Eskimo. Subsistence was easy ten years ago. Today, money is needed for everything.
- Young people today act like they are boss of older people. Older people don't have much control over young anymore.
- There is a feeling youth are getting too modernized. There is a growing communication gap and lack of recognition of elderly.
- Women's lib has occurred in most families. Young people are not looking forward to future for living--there are few that are getting their education. Young kids returning from school like to play around and do not have a way of getting along with their elders. They act as spoiled kids, with high manners.
- Youth have adopted more of white man's ways. Youth don't know how to work (can't make sleds, mend nets, etc.).
- Each age group seems to be drifting further apart. Family outings are frequent, but com-

munity outings are less frequent. No youth facilities when boarding school students return home.

Village residents are particularly concerned about the increasing use of alcohol and drugs by young people, and the impact of cultural changes which are often viewed as incompatible with life in the wilderness areas where they live. Urban residents are unhappy about those aspects of these problems which affect their recreational opportunities and cities. The two groups seldom perceive the relationship between their problems.

Despite shortcomings and difficulties, the life in rural communities is preferred by those who were reared there. Village life provides a sense of security that only accompanies close social and family relationships and familiar surroundings. Contrary to the popular Alaskan opinion, however, the life in Native villages has seldom been and is not now simple, tranquil or easy. Alaskan Natives exist in a margin between their past and the dominant practices in the world outside their enclaves. A sound understanding of the public safety and justice problems facing these people must include a general familiarity with both the historical background and present situation in Native communities.

FOOTNOTES

1 In many communities in the winter, only snow is available for fire fighting. According to Alaska Department of Public Safety estimates, the residential fire loss rate in rural Alaska is the highest in the United States.

2 Health aides are given training in first aid and emergency medical services by state and federal governments. They are usually local residents and they receive basic support from regional hospitals located in the commercial centers of each region and Anchorage. All critical cases are transported to Anchorage, Fairbanks or Juneau. Elementary teachers often reside in the village; other education is provided at regional dormitory style schools in commercial cities. Children return home in the summer.

3 Food and dry goods prices often run four to six times as high as the average in the United States. For example, in some places eggs sell for \$2 a dozen, milk is \$3 a half gallon, and bread is over \$2 a loaf. A 750 lt. bottle of whiskey in most villages costs \$40 to \$60.

4 The addition of village telephones was made possible, in recent years, by communications satellites. The state has made a concerted effort to ensure that every community has a means of emergency communication, although communities often do not have working telephones nor radios.

5 The Alaska State Troopers residing in commercial centers of the state have traditionally responded by aircraft to emergencies in villages. Since 1970 they have attempted to establish Anglo-American type laws and justice operations in the Native communities. Further, they have trained local residents in law writing, policing and judicial operations. (See John Angell, Alaska Village Police Training: An Assessment and Recommendation. Anchorage: Criminal Justice Center, University of Alaska, 1978.)

CHAPTER II

TRADITIONS, PRACTICES AND PROBLEMS

The term "bush justice" is used in Alaska to define a general area encompassing the nature and methods of social control and public safety of predominantly Native communities in the rural areas of the state. A person with even the most superficial familiarity with the history, customs or lifestyles of Alaska's Native people would suspect that the bush justice situation is markedly different from the justice and public safety conditions existing elsewhere in American communities.

Among the fundamental issues concerning Alaska bush justice are the relationships among Native customs, formal laws, law enforcement and the crime and deviance situations in Native communities. This chapter will be devoted to the exploration of some aspects of these relationships.

SOCIAL CONTROL TRADITIONS

The anthropological and historical literature about Alaska Natives provides numerous examples of differences not only between Native and non-Native values and customs, but also among the various Native groups indigenous to Alaska.¹

The Tlingit Indians in the Southeastern part of the state were originally organized into heredity clans. The only punishable offenses within each clan were incest and witchcraft.² Many inter-clan offenses pertaining to life, property or honor were settled by payment of goods from one clan to another:

Murder was generally punished by death--a man of equal rank being selected from the murderer's clan. In case the murderer was of much higher rank than the man murdered, his clan would offer restitution by a payment of goods. This would also be true if there were slight differences of rank between the murdered man and the man selected to pay for his

loss. Equality was demanded and differences were always made up by payment of goods.³

In contrast to the retributive approach of the Tlingits, the literature indicates the prevalent social control mechanisms of Northern Eskimos included conflict-avoidance, and the use of subtle oblique sanctions such as laughing in wrongdoer's presence and ostracism. Forceful methods of retribution were seldom used, and only rarely, such as in cases of multiple killings, would kinsmen or villagers--selected by group consensus--conduct the execution of a murderer.⁴

These Northern Eskimos, reportedly, avoided giving an order to another; therefore, no formal legal or judicial authority existed.⁵ They relied mainly on the fear of stigma for controlling behavior. One author observed:

They built a society without formal laws or punishments, without courts and prisons. If a man committed a serious criminal act, the people did not strike him down - they ignored him, until finally, finding his life unbearable, he would convict himself and walk alone out of the village to his death on the frozen tundra. The greatest cause of death among adults on the Arctic Slope is still classified in public health statistics as "accidental."⁶

The Inland (Nunamiut) Eskimos traditionally formed hunting bands consisting of kin groups with a recognized leader called an "umealik." The "umealik" was a successful hunter who led the migrant band in its pursuit of caribou herds. A hunting band leader usually had several household groups under his informal control. In these communities the practice of extended family control--where the household head relied on verbal admonishment or mild advice--was used for social control, and only in extreme cases did the person in authority resort to authoritative sanctions.⁷

An "umealik" relied almost exclusively on non-physical, i.e., verbal and psychological sanctions. Public reprimand, admonishment, giving the culprit a derogatory name by which he would be called for the rest of his life, or,

in the more serious cases, ostracism and eviction were adjudicated especially in convictions for murder. Only in cases of criminal recidivism did the "umealik" invoke the penalty of execution.⁸

The interior Athabascan Indians were matrilineal groupings with patrilineal inheritance of leadership and judicial responsibilities. Deviancy control was based upon three primary assumptions:

1. The authority of the leader was viewed as absolute.
2. An individual called before the village authority was deemed to be guilty of conduct at variance with recognized village norms.
3. The appearance before the authority was to make amends.

Sanctions involved remuneration of goods to victims, as well as loss of public reputation for the transgressor, and occasional execution or banishment used--particularly for repeat offenders--as a "punishment" decision.⁹

Cultural influences are not easily nor quickly neutralized, and despite intensive pressures for change placed on Alaska Natives during the past 80 years, traces of the traditional social control practice or "law ways" can still be found in their community operations and personal behavior. These traditional practices, although generally unrecognized, will most likely continue to influence both the level of acceptance and the operation of Anglo-American justice operations in Native communities throughout the foreseeable future.

An illustration of the subtle yet powerful influence of an element of the culture of some Natives on their behavior vis-a-vis agents of criminal justice can be found in their reported abhorrence of the practice of lying.¹⁰ These Native groups have historically viewed even minor deviation from fact as a form of unacceptable behavior so serious as to merit banishment or death.

Such severe retaliation probably has not been imposed for at least two generations. However, according to law enforcement officers who have worked both in the state's larger cities and in remote Native communities, rural Natives still adhere to a much higher degree of accuracy and precision in statements made to the officers than do non-Natives in urban areas. These Natives usually responded with straightforward, truthful and self-incriminating answers to questions by police officers who suspected them of deviant actions.

Upon being apprehended by police, an intoxicated person from an Anglo culture can be expected to insist that he has had only "two beers." A Native in the same situation will more often than not give a precise accounting of the amount of alcohol consumed. After recently observing a young Native who was facing manslaughter charges stemming from a snow machine wreck on the North Slope explain openly to a police officer how he had consumed eight water glasses of Jack Daniels whiskey prior to the accident, it has been interesting to read in the Anchorage newspaper of prominent, white government officials, who with a blood alcohol test of above .20 have been arrested for driving while intoxicated, insisting they had only a couple of beers before driving.

Such differences in values in all likelihood have far reaching implications for a Native person's understanding of the Alaska justice system. How can a person understand the logic or rationalize the exercise of constitutional rights when he is morally opposed to any behavior that is not completely straightforward? Could such a person maintain respect for a legal system viewed as encouraging morally deplorable behavior? If Natives view lying as being seriously wrong, how does it influence their perspectives about appropriate laws and justice procedures? It is easy to understand why rural Native defendants are often perplexed when advised by defense counsel to enter "not guilty" pleas at judicial proceedings. After all, they explain to defense attorneys, they did commit the acts, and it would be wrong to claim they are not guilty of them. This characteristic of truthfulness alone could account for a higher conviction rate of Natives than other Alaskans.

In addition to the influence of the customary perspectives concerning right and wrong on behavior, traditional practices for dealing with deviants also influence the way Native communities deal with present day deviancy. For example, the tradition in some Native groups of expecting a victim, or the victim's family and friends, to assume personal responsibility for initiating recourse meant that weaker victims were in some cases compelled to absorb damages inflicted by aggressors because they were physically unable to institute appropriate recourse. Such tolerance among some Natives still exists.

The broader community became involved only after the behavior of an aggressor was perceived as a substantial threat to the entire community. Repeated acts of community-damaging misbehavior were commonly handled by serious discussions between elders of the community and the wayward person. Several such discussions--or warnings--usually preceded any overt action against the person. People who engaged in unacceptable behavior were tolerated until their cumulative behavior became a basis for direct action. When the day of reckoning was reached--often after several years of tolerating misconduct--action was taken. In such cases the person might be banished from the community.

The federal and state constitutions that have been imposed on the Natives hamper continued use of banishment; however, the influence of this traditional way of handling unacceptable behavior is apparent in the present day procedures for handling deviancy in some communities. Native communities still initially dispose of most cases of minor deviancy themselves. The normal practice involves a village council accepting referrals from the village police and rendering decisions about the disposition of the accused. For first offenses, the offender is almost inevitably issued a warning.

Where the case involves a matter that causes widespread concern, the council may call a meeting of all village people and a consensus is reached on the appropriate course of action. Minor misbehavior may be handled by requiring the offender to perform work such as cutting wood, shoveling snow or carrying water for the village. Repeated misbehavior or misbehavior that is considered extremely offensive is nearly always referred to the Alaska State Troopers.

On occasion, Alaska State Troopers are summoned to villages and presented with someone the villagers wish removed for committing crimes. Upon checking the facts, it often becomes apparent that the accusations against a person involve crimes which have occurred over a period of 10 to 15 years, and little evidence of the criminal acts still exists. Even if the evidence is strong statutes of limitation prevent prosecution. Troopers are placed in a difficult position of explaining why it is not possible for them to remove the person from the village.

It seems quite likely that State Troopers are the last in a line of government officials, starting with the Revenue Cutter Service and Federal Marshals, who have been adopted by the Natives as agents of banishment. They serve the villages by removing people whose behavior is so unacceptable the village residents no longer want them in their community. Since the village cannot send a wayward person off into the wilderness, the Troopers provide a palatable alternative. The traditional Native practices and the Anglo-American justice system, thus, have been integrated to form a less-than-perfect accommodation.

Not enough attention has been paid specifically to developing an effective hybrid system that incorporates considerations of Native culture and serves the social control needs of Native communities.

DEFINITIONS OF DIFFERENCES

Unique differences in the rural and urban social control systems of Alaska are widely enough recognized to be reflected in the vocabulary of Alaskans. "Villages" are rural Native cities; "towns" or "cities" are non-Native communities. "Bush justice" is the social control operation in the rural areas occupied primarily by Natives; "criminal justice" is the system in the urban areas of the state. "Village police" work in Native communities; "police officers" are in the urban commercial centers. Such recognition of two systems might serve a worthwhile purpose, but it does not. Instead it designates the existence of a problem.

The two systems denoted by the language are not equally viewed nor viewed as equal. Information con-

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cerning the "Alaska criminal justice system" is extensive; however, there is more information available about the "bush justice system" of early territorial days than there is about its present day operations.

The Alaska criminal justice plans from 1969 through 1977 contain only passing reference to the rural Native villages of the state.¹¹ The references made to Alaska Natives in the 1969 state plan relate to the possibilities for civil disorder,¹² the need for recruiting more Natives into the Alaska State Troopers,¹³ and the arrest rate of Natives.¹⁴

Although state plans contain gradual increases in the amount of attention paid to Natives and Native communities, the 1978 Criminal Justice Plan is the first to devote any substantial amount to the Native communities and their criminal justice problems.¹⁵ The shortcomings concerning information about the rural communities remain apparent even in this document. For example, the crime statistics available were not arranged to reflect the crime rates in Native villages. Crime statistics for predominantly white communities are reported by the community; however, the crimes that occurred in the Native communities with comparable populations are reported as "the rest of the state." A second example can be found in the description of local policing, nearly all of the state's predominantly white communities with police are listed--including such communities as Whittier with 186 residents and North Pole with 265. The list does not, however, include substantially larger Native communities such as Hoonah, Hooper Bay, Selawik nor Togiak--all of which have several police officers.

Other justice system-related documents containing present rural data obtained in the larger isolated commercial cities with substantial Native resident populations (i.e., Barrow, Bethel, Kotzebue and Nome) rather than from the more traditionalistic and remote villages.¹⁶ This data describes regional centers, but not rural villages. The smaller and more isolated Native communities are as different from Nome or Barrow as they are from Juneau or Fairbanks.

The sketchy rural data render it impractical, if not impossible, to make quantitative comparisons of the

justice situations in rural Native communities with those in non-Native commercial centers of the state. As a consequence the information about contemporary crime and social control in rural Native communities is not discernible and, from the standpoint of justice operations, Native communities are invisible entities. As a result of this situation, the urban justice system has received a disproportionate amount of the state's resources.

The problems of rural Native communities cannot be recognized, much less solved, until systematic approaches for the collecting and processing of information are instituted. If the crime and justice situations in Native communities are to be sufficiently illuminated for problem identification, planning and policy development, continuous data reporting and processing arrangements will have to be established.¹⁷

ROLE OF ANGLO LAW

Native communities have been encouraged to enact their own ordinances for handling situations and behavior the villagers find objectionable. These ordinances usually deal with curfews for people under 18, stray dogs, trash and garbage, the operation of snow machines, consumption of alcohol and use of citizen band radios (Appendix A). In some cases local ordinances also deal with the protection of fish and wildlife resources. In many cases these ordinances were adopted in response to suggestions by Alaska State Troopers who visited the various villages and trained village police officers. These troopers persuaded villagers that no enforcement was possible unless written descriptions of the undesirable behavior existed.¹⁸

Many city ordinances have legally questionable provisions. Some are saliently unconstitutional. Since nearly all villages are second class cities, the use of improperly constructed ordinances places the municipalities in a vulnerable position of liability for damages.

Although some Native communities have created their own ordinances for misdemeanor offenses, few if any use them for handling serious criminal acts (Chart 4). Felonies are generally handled by the application of state laws. Few of the local people have access within the village to the Alaska Statutes, and public officials believe that most residents are not familiar with the laws of the state. It is commonly contended by villagers that people would follow the law if only they knew what it was. Aside from actions by locally assigned State Troopers, little effort has been devoted to informing Native people of the law or Anglo legal methods. In light of the legal preparation and perspective of state police officers, a public policy of placing such responsibility with the police needs careful consideration by policy making officials of Alaska.

CHART 4

HOW ARE CRIMINAL OFFENSES HANDLED?

STRATEGY	TYPES OF CRIMES									
	FELONY		MISDE- MEANOR		DELIN- QUENCY		ALL		N.R.	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State Laws	28	55	2	4			14	28	7	14
Village Ordinances			24	47	1	2	11	22	15	29
Ignores			1	2	2	4	1	2	47	92

Alaska State Troopers use Alaska State Statutes nearly exclusively as a basis for their enforcement efforts in Native villages (Chart 5). In contrast, village police rely predominantly on village ordinances and personal persuasion in dealing with offenders. The local police officers feel that most of the people living in their communities agree with the laws being enforced. Village police believe that most people agree with the laws enforced in the village (Chart 6).

CHART 5

METHODS USED TO HANDLE VILLAGE CRIME

METHOD	VILLAGE POLICE		ALASKA TROOPERS	
	#	%	#	%
State Laws	15	31.9	38	80.9
Village Codes	17	36.9		
Personal/Warnings	8	17.0		
Other	1	2.1	1	2.1
No Response	6	12.7	8	16.9

More than one-half of the elected village officials feel the current ordinances are inadequate and new village laws are needed to handle crime and delinquency problems in the community (Chart 7). The ordinances are not by any means comprehensive and they suffer from a lack of precision. Most people believe the deficiencies exist because state justice officials in the rural areas have not provided adequate assistance to rural communities in the preparation of city ordinances.

CHART 6

AGREEMENT WITH LAWS ENFORCED
IN VILLAGES

EXTENT OF AGREEMENT	VILLAGE POLICE		ALASKA TROOPERS	
	#	%	#	%
Strongly Agree	16	34.0	16	34.0
Agree	18	38.3	16	34.0
Not Sure	4	8.5	6	12.8
Disagree	2	4.3	1	2.1
Strongly Disagree	1	2.1	1	2.1
No Reply	6	12.6	7	14.9

There does not seem to be any inclination among Native community leaders to reject the concept of written law. While the customary ways for dealing with deviancy seem to have an important albeit inconspicuous and compatible, influence on the way misbehavior in the communities is handled, there is one significant area where Native traditions and the Alaska legal system sharply clash. The conflict stems from the State's adoption and enforcement of fish and wildlife laws and regulations.

CHART 7

VILLAGE OFFICIALS PERCEPTION OF NEED FOR NEW LAWS

ARE NEW LAWS NEEDED?	#	%
Yes	28	54.9
No	22	43.1
No Response	1	2.0

HUNTING AND FISHING REGULATION

Given the dependency of people in the rural areas on subsistence hunting, fishing and food collecting for livelihood, tension over wildlife enforcement is not surprising. Native community leaders are in practically unanimous agreement that fish and wildlife laws and regulations are the major source of conflicts between Natives and the Alaska justice system.

The explanations of the problems in this area by village residents are relatively consistent across the entire state. For example, as reflected in the following statement by a Native official, there is a strong perception of long range damage to Natives by the imposition of Anglo-type fish and wildlife practices:

"Native people have a lot harder time now that there are fish and game laws. They look at food stamps, public assistance and other sources for food and so forth. A lot of this

has hurt the Native pride of living and how it is depended on."

The statement of another village official conveys a sense of the serious short-range impact of many fish and wildlife laws on the ability of village residents to feed themselves:

"Families sometimes run short on food toward the end of winter. Fish and game laws do not permit people in dire need to hunt waterfowl."

The Fish and Game Board's approach to the regulation of hunting and fishing is attacked as restricting hunting and fishing by Native people who rely on these techniques for sustenance so that game will be available to people who hunt solely for sport. To quote a person with this perspective:

"Emphasis is on trophy hunting and thrill sports instead of subsistence fishing and hunting. Fish and Wildlife should not sacrifice subsistence hunting for benefit of trophy hunting."

The general conclusion about the state's efforts in the regulation of hunting and fishing is reflected in the following statement:

"State doesn't understand subsistence way of life. Need to get more input from villages. State has never tried to understand laws from (a Native) community point of view. (There is) no follow-up when input is obtained. Enforcement of Fish and Game is weak and irregular; Outsiders can break law without fear. Fish and Game too political; (there is a) lack of understanding of villagers and cultural background."

In most instances, local Native community leaders have been pleading for understanding much as they are issuing demands. Throughout Native communities the message is similar. A North Slope village official observed,

"Most of the older people have no taste for white folks' meats. The prices are too high

on meats. Large families have small chance to get wild meat. Give local people at least some permits to hunt."

Some point out that wildlife use in religious activities such as Potlatch is as important to Natives as the use of wine in some Christian ceremonies. Even though non-Natives understand perfectly well why the use of wine for communion cannot be banned, they have a more difficult time understanding Natives must have fresh moose meat for funeral services.

The North Slope is in the geographic area where Native people depend heavily on whaling for food. In an effort to prevent annihilation of the species, bowhead whale hunting may be completely prohibited by the federal government within the near future. This is an instance where exclusive reliance on legal strategies to solve a biological problem will probably have long-range social consequences far beyond anything anticipated by policy makers. There is a critical need to redefine the problem to include greater consideration of the impact of such actions on the lives and existence of Alaskan Natives.

The dilemma which Alaskan citizens and policy officials must face is clearly reflected in a statement made by a Southwestern Alaska village official:

"Some laws are needed to prevent the abuse of fish and game; on the other hand, there are families starving who need the food these laws prevent them from receiving."

Some leaders offer simplistic solutions such as the following for problems related to fish and wildlife enforcement.

- It would be better if the Fish and Game would enforce (laws) on the people that are wasting food, especially the head hunters; (Natives) must have subsistence hunting and fishing.
- Allow subsistence hunting and fishing limited to game that is used for food--not wasted. Local council (should) enforce game laws.

Other Natives, however, have ambivalent feelings concerning the appropriate course for future state

action. Some believe it would be sufficient to involve local villagers in both the establishment and enforcement of hunting and fishing regulations and laws. Others feel that consultation by legislators and the Fish and Game Board with Native groups before and during enactment of laws and regulations would be adequate. Other rural Natives do not believe that their need for wild meat and fish can be adequately assessed nor prioritized by state policy officials who are not familiar with their lifestyles, values and needs, or as one said, "(by people) who have never lived a subsistence life nor been in a Native village overnight."

Some people foresee problems with placing control of fish and wildlife entirely and exclusively within local authority. For example, one Native pointed out existing state-established quotas on fish are not respected by others downstream who take most of the fish. He said there should be a lower quota and stricter enforcement at the Yukon mouth so more fish would be available for the subsistence of people upstream. Local control of fish and wildlife could not provide such regulation.

A need for some type of fish and wildlife regulations to ensure maintenance of the supply and prevent abuses by thoughtless or greedy people is felt by most Natives. However, they feel regulations should ensure that the livelihood needs of people, who have relied on wildlife for survival throughout history and have few other options for survival, should remain first priority.

The recently passed law giving priority to subsistence users of fish and wildlife, and the present movement within the state to rely more heavily on regional fish and game advisory boards, seems to indicate some of the Native concerns in this area are beginning to receive policy level attention. It is quite clear, Alaskan Natives in rural communities have grave concerns and strong feelings of apprehension concerning this issue. It is a fundamental issue which impacts their identities and future lives. It is likely, however, that without greater understanding by urban residents, the public pressure will be directed at eliminating state policies which protect subsistence hunting and fishing. Without more attention to improving public understanding, this area is certain to

be a source of major social conflict and problems in Alaska's immediate future.

SERIOUSNESS OF CRIME

The inadequacy of crime statistics from rural areas of Alaska makes it difficult to assess the seriousness of crime in Alaskan Native Communities or compare it with crime in other parts of the state. Community leaders tend, however, to be more concerned about socio-economic than crime problems in their communities. When considering the total situation, unemployment and economic matters are perceived by village leaders as the most significant problems facing Native villages (Chart 8). This perspective appears to be closely linked with the subsistence hunting and fishing problems just discussed. It is logical that food and shelter are viewed as more important than social control and community tranquility.

CHART 8

MOST SERIOUS COMMUNITY PROBLEMS

PROBLEM MENTIONED	FREQUENCY OF MENTIONS	
	#	%
Economic/Unemployment	21	41
Alcohol/Drugs	18	35
Crime/Delinquency	4	8
Lack of Community Services	3	6
Social, Health, Population	3	6
Miscellaneous	2	4

Alcohol and drug problems are also seen as more critical and pressing than crime problems. Perhaps these substance-use problems are perceived by rural residents as inseparably linked with the deviant behavior and crime in the communities. The alcohol situation has been a conspicuous source of constant concern since before Alaskan territorial days; however,

the sale and use of drugs--mainly by the younger people--are felt by village authorities to be new and rapidly growing problems facing Native people. The control of alcohol and drug use in villages is usually viewed as the most effective way of preventing and controlling wayward and criminal behavior in these communities.

Crime and delinquency are felt to be the third most significant category of problems facing Native communities. In most communities, crime and delinquency is ranked slightly higher than the categories of inadequate community services such as fire, police and youth centers and social, health and population growth problems. All of these problems are obviously closely interrelated.

The relatively low ranking given crime problems may also be a function of a perception of crime as an urban problem. Most village officials feel crime is relatively less serious in their communities than in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau (Chart 9). Only a small proportion of the officials believe crime in their community is more serious, in contrast to 90% who view it as about the same or less serious than in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. It is important to consider whether such impressions are well founded.

CHART 9

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME IN VILLAGES
VIS-A-VIS ANCHORAGE, FAIRBANKS, JUNEAU

SERIOUSNESS	OFFICIALS' PERCEPTIONS	
	#	%
Much More Serious	2	4
More Serious	0	0
About the Same	10	20
Less Serious	19	37
Much Less Serious	17	33
No Reply	3	6

A comparison of actual crime levels in urban areas with those in the rural villages is hampered by two conditions. First, as previously mentioned, crime statistics for Alaska are reported and tabulated in a way that makes it difficult if not impossible to identify either rural regions or individual Native communities. Municipalities of the state with the economic base to provide the normal public services produce crime reports and statistics and provide these statistics to the state. These statistics are tabulated in state reports by state. The rural villages, however, do not have the resources to engage in such reporting, and crime statistics from all areas outside the cash economy municipalities are accumulated and reported by the Alaska State Troopers. These statistics are compiled in state reports under the encompassing categories of "Alaska State Troopers" or "rest of the state." As a result, it is not possible to distinguish between the crime in suburban areas near Anchorage or Fairbanks and the Native communities.

CHART 10

COMPARISON OF ALASKA VILLAGES, ALASKA STATEWIDE,
AND UNITED STATES CRIME RATES

CATEGORY OF CRIME	RATES*		
	ALASKA VILLAGES	ALASKA STATEWIDE	UNITED STATES
Homicide	28.4	10.9	8.8
Rape	99.2	50.3	26.4
Robbery	127.6	96.5	195.8
Aggravated Assault	326.0	286.5	228.6
Burglary	936.8	1310.2	1439.4
Vehicle Theft	446.5	3272.6	2921.3
Simple Assault	354.3	783.7	446.1

*Per 100,000 population in 1977.

Second, the crime patterns in the rural communities are undoubtedly different from those of the urban areas of the state. For example, the difference

in physical possessions such as automobiles and jewelry between villages and urban areas no doubt influences the theft rates. The overall crime rates in urban areas are substantially inflated by these differences. Therefore, even if usable official crime statistics were available, their appearance is likely to be skewed.

Crime statistics obtained directly from local police officers can be used for a gross comparison of the crime situation throughout the state. Such a comparison supports a conclusion that the impressions of the officials about a lower crime rate in villages is in some respects erroneous (Chart 10). If the village police reports of the crimes of homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assault are accurate (and they appear to be consistent with other available information), the ratio of these crimes to population is greater in Native villages than it is in urban areas. In regard to crimes of violence, the villages are nearly twice as hazardous places as urban areas of the state. Further, they are considerably more hazardous than other places in the United States.

Property crimes, on the other hand, seem to occur less frequently in villages--perhaps as a consequence of the available property and personal relationships in the Native communities.

PUBLIC SAFETY EMERGENCIES

The preceding statistics concerning incidence of crime in the individual villages themselves do not adequately illustrate a frightening public safety situation facing many remote villages of the state. In most villages when a life-threatening emergency occurs, it is not uncommon to spend hours, and on occasion days, attempting to get a request for assistance to a law enforcement official outside the community. Once communication is established, an officer may not be able to respond quickly. In some cases, the Alaska State Troopers in rural areas are faced with such severe personnel shortages and transportation problems that responses to many village requests are impossible.

The public safety emergencies occurring in rural Native communities of Alaska exceed the imagination of

people who have spent their lives in populated areas of the United States. One emergency that occurs with some frequency in these communities involves an intoxicated person roaming around the community firing a high powered rifle randomly into the air or at objects. A village police officer recently described one such incident where all of the people in the village ran to a local elementary school for shelter. They barred the doors, turned out the lights and hid quietly--some under desks--until the rampaging drunk stopped shooting and went to sleep. Although this incident lasted many hours, it was never officially reported outside the community. A dangerous incident such as this one would be handled expeditiously by police in an urban area, but in an Alaskan village it may keep an entire community in terror for hours and days.

A similar case occurred recently in another community. It involved several armed young men--apparently from another community--who took over the village hotel and occupied it for an extensive period of time. Inside the building, they drank and ate, and vandalized the building. Periodically they fired shots out through the windows towards the village. The village population felt helpless and simply hid in their homes until the crisis was over and the young men left.

Such emergencies obviously do not happen every week or even every year in each rural community in the state; however, it is deplorable that they can occur at all without receiving the attention of Alaska criminal justice agencies or the general public. Similar incidents in other parts of the United States or the urban communities of Alaska would not only receive considerable media attention, they would cause a tremendous public outcry.

Given the inadequacy of the present emergency response system, there is a substantial probability of eventual disasters occurring in some communities.

CONCLUSIONS

Even though the Anglo-American legal system was imposed on the Natives of Alaska over a century ago, the transition from traditional Native law-ways and