

SON OF BIG MAC

a study of the dynamic relationships between
adolescent activity and environmental setting

John Cowder & Robert Shipley

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Masters of Architecture and Advanced Studies
at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology June 1972

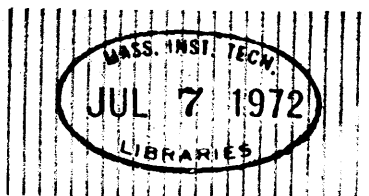
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ABSTRACT

This study began as an expression of our concern over the inability of designers to understand the dynamics of the environments they plan. We have often seen the designer working at monumental scales that never come close to recognizing the neighborhoods in which they are definitely and sometimes critically a part. This study has brought to our attention that there are many important considerations to be made at the small-scale; changes occurring here can, in fact, often result in rather large-scale implications. One reason why planners and designers rarely deal with the smaller scale in a dynamic sense is because the mechanisms for understanding as well as the impetus are lacking. Our primary intent then was not necessarily to discover implications toward designing a better McDonald's restaurant or developing a more functional drop in center for teens. It was, rather, to be one small step in hopes of discovering how one can, and why one should become more in touch with the dynamics of his environment.

Our study represents an effort over a year's time to gain such an understanding of a very singular and rather small piece of environment: "the Corner". To contact and to know this environment we spent over seven months there in the fall and early winter of 1971 observing the scene, getting to know some of the actors, and in a more formal sense, interviewing a few of them. Prior to that period we spent over two months of the previous spring studying this setting in a studio course.

This paper is a chronology of our involvement in the Corner scene. In an abstracted sense, it reflects the development of our understanding of the Corner as well as the progression of events there. We begin our study with an introduction to McDonald's as a public place and to the activity of the teens there; an activity we came to call "hanging". We then discuss the suitability of the restaurant as a hangout, examining first the fit between hanging and setting and then the conflicts resulting from this overlay. An examination of the conflicts between the Corner kids and the management of McDonald's and of their continual confron-

tation led us to the question of controls - how the adult control agents perceived the teens' hanging as a problem; the various tactics employed in its attempted resolution; and how the teens were able to persist in hanging within such a hostile setting. With the succession of control agents and control strategies introduced by the management into the restaurant, and the changing patterns of interaction between control agent and teen, we consider this contest for control of space as a dynamic process. With the appearance of social workers we see a new strategy attempted - that of insulating the teen from his conflict with the environment. A new hangout comes into view - the American Legion Drop In Center, which we consider a product of this dynamic process of control. It is here that we begin to see rather important contrasts between the two hangouts - McDonald's being a public setting and the Drop In Center being insular. In conclusion we observe the social workers themselves coming into conflict with the teens, primarily because of the worker's attitude toward the hanging process - a near reflection of the McDonald chronology.

Apart from the main story we discuss the methods employed in acquiring the information from which the study was taken and briefly examine a few of the more general implications found within the body of the text.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks to Bill Southworth
and the Corner Freaks.

McDonald's



BRING THE KIDS!
BRING THE WHOLE
HUNGRY FAMILY! AND EAT YOUR
FAVORITE FOODS AT SENSIBLE PRICES.
FAST AND FRIENDLY SERVICE.
ALL AT THE NEW MCDONALD'S.



You deserve a break today.

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THE McDONALD CHRONOLOGY
FROM A BUSINESSMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

9

We are indebted to Paul Montour, previous manager for eleven months of the Coolidge Corner McDonald's restaurant, for the following story he has so vividly and descriptively disclosed to us about his life as a manager and operator of perhaps one of the largest, most problematic McDonald's of our time. Unless otherwise noted, all quotes falling within this section are the exact words of Paul Montour.

Looking from a planner's perspective it is understandable that the typical drive-in McDonald's hamburger stand is not going to work in every location it finds itself. It is also understandable that as the economic and esthetic practicality of the paved parking lot decreases, the number of sit-down hamburger restaurants is going to increase. A growing concern for conservative, functional, community-oriented services and esthetic beauty of designs could also have considerable impact upon design decisions within dense urban environments. McDonald's has already felt the pinch of such trends: In Braintree, Massachusetts, civic groups protested the erection of the Golden Arches over the location of a new McDonald's Restaurant. Architectural review boards have been known to force major changes upon the the McDonald Corporation, an organization in which stereotypical duplication has historically been the heart of its identity, philosophy, and economic success.

Before Coolidge Corner, the McDonald's Corporation had established few intown stores. Because of this the Coolidge Corner McDonald's would be a rather unique and perhaps risky endeavor. Experimentation was inherent in the placement of the new facility.

The Corporation had proposed a high-class McDonald's which they originated in Chicago, calling it a Raymond's; a higher-priced hamburger restaurant with a menu of greater variety than the typical McDonald's. They experimented with this idea in several of their stores and found that it did not work as well as they had anticipated. Because of this the Coolidge Corner Raymond's did not materialize. Instead, Montour mentions: "they went with the basic McDonald's 'cause they own the property - they had a twenty year lease - they didn't want to do that but because they had the lease they had to do something, so they put in a McDonald's down there."

The decision was certainly more involved than the previous statement would imply. McDonald's prime target is the family; as one McDonald executive put it: "in which the father is 27, the mother 25, with two children and another on the way, making over \$10,000 and living in the suburb of a major city."¹ They are interested in areas which exhibit substantial family life - apart from major traffic studies, McDonald's also looks for locations near schools, churches,

shopping centers, playgrounds, tree-lined residential streets. Aside from the part about the suburbs, Coolidge Corner meets most of these requirements. Brookline is known as one of the wealthiest communities in the Boston region; it probably has more doctors, psychiatrists, and lawyers than any other regional community including Cambridge. Coolidge Corner is one of Brookline's major commercial districts and has been the locus of expensive dress shops, swanky restaurants, and high-class department stores such as S.S. Pierce for many years. Within a block of the Corner you can find new high-rise apartments for the elderly, and a substantial wealthy residential community including scores of churches and synagogues. Coolidge Corner is roughly centered between two large college markets - Boston University to the east and Boston College to the west. It lies along Beacon Street which is part of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's Green Line. To the market surveyor all these items add up to a potential gold mine for commercial enterprise. There was, however, one characteristic of both McDonald's and the Corner that haunted merchants and residents alike.

"They knew the area. Charley Kickum, who owns the property, is a prominent lawyer in Brookline - he works right around the corner on Bolyston Street. He runs all the legal aspects of McDonald's region out here. From his knowledge and information we kinda figured what was going to happen."

In the fifties the fast-food managements were well known for their attractiveness to the teenage market - guys in their 55 Chevy convertibles, top down and radio blaring, would roar in night after night to eye-up the short-skirted car hops, trade gossip, loiter and lounge around for hours on end, neck in the parking lots, and leave a smoking trail of rubber upon the asphalt exits. This was still a real image in the minds of the residents and merchants of Coolidge Corner. The Corner had a long history as a hangout for Brookline's teens. Recently there had been considerable conflicts because of kids hanging in the shops of the local merchants. To the community - no one wanted another hangout on top of the rest. To McDonald's this was in conflict with their desired image - "Our image is a family type restaurant where...for children... family business... this is what we're trying to project our image. And it turns around that - to the community it's nothin but a hangout." The merchants, however, saw it differently; perhaps they had more insight into the characteristics of hanging. It was the merchants who voted McDonald's into the area - why? Because they knew that it wouldn't be just another hangout for teens - it would eventually be the hangout which would take the teen problem away from the other merchants and place it smack in the lap of McDonald's.

"We went up to the Board (of Selectmen) and they voted on it. All the merchants wanted it. They loved me.

They loved me. That's why they voted it in. Of course they did. They loved us. We hurt a lot of business there - the restaurants pretty much. But most of the other merchants liked it. The pizza place down on Beacon Street and all the se places - that was the best thing that ever happened. The Chinese restaurant... their people used to come in - 'Gee, how you doing?' Even Jack (of Jack and Marion's Restaurant) was happy - took the kids out of his store. They used to come in and steal out of there. It was no fun. Believe me - it was no fun.

"They thought it was going to be another hangout on top of all the other hangouts they had. But it didn't work that way. So in the end they were kind of happy. Not happy, but they could live with McDonald's. The kids were off the street, they were in our store not bothering the people in the street, not bothering the other merchants. It's kind of easy for them (the police) to have one call from McDonald's than ten calls from other places. I knew it - what could you do about it?

"Before they opened the doors they knew what was going to happen. There was no way of getting around it. You still have to try to conduct your business - run your business and put up with the people hanging around."

The making of the McDonald's hangout was almost instantaneous; in an amazing feat of dynamics it was immediately the Corner hangout: "Usually they don't move in very quickly when you open up - it's tough to gather and then they get all their group together in six or eight months, ten months; they go through a summer - 'That's the place to go', you know." At Coolidge Corner, however, it started "right away. The first day. The same kids I kicked out (later) were coming in. I don't know where they came from, but they came from someplace. They were waiting for the place to open. They were all waiting in the Pewter Pot though and then they decided the Pewter pot wasn't as comfortable and the prices were much higher."

"Dope addicts hanging around there is unreal. Once there was a guy in there... I picked him up, pulled him up - 'Hey it's time to leave,' blue as can be. I just dropped him down, didn't say anything, called the cops. Then they came in and looked at him. It's rough. And then that hits the paper. Your name hits the paper and people read that and it's no good for your business. They're finding things in the restrooms - used to have to lock them down. They were beautiful facilities. They wrecked the rest rooms in the first three months the store was open. They would break the windows, break the toilet bowls, break the soap dispensers, jamb them up, anything - pull the tiles off the ceiling! Like you pull the tiles off the ceiling, go up in the loft

and look down in that ladies restroom. Honest! You go in there and there's some kid hanging from the rafters! What do you do with a person like this? What can you really do?

"In Brookline you have to have restroom facilities. It's really unique 'cause the people out there - they don't want McDonald's out there. But we try to get along with them. They can't kick us out 'cause we're on a 20 year lease; there's no way they can kick us out. We're in there. It's funny sometimes the way they make everything tough on us - difficult. Everybody else on the Corner - they don't have restrooms. We have to have them 'cause it's in the ordinance. They don't enforce it with other people. You gotta have the restrooms open. The restrooms in Coolidge Corner... they ought to take a board and just block it right off 'cause that's one of the centers of their problem. The kids go in there and they sell and they buy and you know it and you can't cool it down. There's no doubt about it.

"It's a big corporation - they're new in the business so they do a lot of things as experiments. But we have a lot of people in the office that run the Corporation that in my eyes - they run scared. We put coin operated machines in the restrooms - worked out perfectly - locked them, so forth. Had a deal with Jim Priori who's the head of the Board of Health in Brookline - no problem. Corporation steps in - 'Can't have restroom locks.' 'Why?' 'Top manager doesn't

want it.' 'Why?' 'Take them out.' We had to take them out. That had solved the problem. It really had."

"Coolidge Corner had an awful lot of transients. There were some locals. It's going to take a while for that store to catch on because the people who work down there for any length of time are going to the same place they've always gone - the Italian shop next door, across the street diner, you know. A lot of the older people who live up in the apartments in the back, some of them come to McDonald's. Most of them don't feel that it's the place for them to be. And I had the same problem with the older - the 'jet set' I used to call them. Coming in here in the afternoon and hanging around - staying there for hours. Nice people. Wonderful personality, really funny too, you know. It made me appreciate life - some of these people - the way they act, the way they are, and the way they look. Then they have the kids right next to them - 'blankety blank' - they could care less. If you and I are sitting here in conversation somebody out there can hear it. That aspect of it hurts your business more than anything. People know it out there but they don't want to be associated with it in your particular business. They'll stay away. They'll go to the next place."

All the other merchants were happy. "We were helping them. We had centrally located the problem and they

were happy. What happened - all the people went to McDonald's when it was first opened, tried it, liked it the first time, went back, but because of the occurrence of incidents - they went to McDonald's because all the other places had problems, o.k.? So when all the other places eliminated the problem they (the problems) all went to McDonald's. It was like shit hit - the kids went to McDonald's and the customers went back to the other places but no kids. Business just kept going down..You can see it in the figures. You can see it in the volumes. Our business is based on volume. If they're doing X number of dollars this month and the month after you can compare this year's with last year's - we have comparables down there - we know they're hurting the business. They're hurting the business down there about \$5,000 a month. So in the businessman's pocket you figure 10% of that is profit, that's what they're hurtin the business - that's what they're hurtin you for. The market was there when we opened. It was really going strong. But \$5,000 a month at a wack, that's quite a bit. You add that up into ten months - that's \$50,000 and that's about what it's decreasing right now. It's just cold figures. This is not bull shit, this is what it's going to cost, and that's an awful lot of money with rent like that place."

From the very beginning of the McDonald empire the Corporation had sought to discourage the teenage crowd. The McDonald manual states plainly that "McDonald's units shall not have juke boxes, pin-ball machines, newspaper racks, gambling devices, phone booths, nor shall they dispense cigarettes, candy, gum, etc." - all of these accessories regarded as teenage attractions and amenities.

Professor Doug Moreland of Hamburger University, Chicago, during a recent lecture on the "teenage problem", warned potential McDonald managers: "Watch out for teenagers. They can definitely affect your profit picture by driving away your adults. They are extremely noisy and messy. They'll use profanity, and that can never be allowed at any McDonald's. They'll neck on your lot - and you better nip necking right in the bud. Be particularly careful on the night of a sporting event. The losing team always wants to come to McDonald's and prove they're better than the winner. It can be a really terrifying experience if you have 300 or 400 people descend on you for a rumble. We've had managers injured, many of them badly, although I don't recall any being killed."²

Montour reflects a similar philosophy: "It's a business. It's not a circus. You don't just come in and sit down. They come in and just sit down. And if you come over to somebody - you know - 'Do you think it's time to

leave?' 'Don't bother me,' you know, 'You're botherin me,' they say. I used to tell them once in awhile, you know - 'How much do you need to go someplace? I'll help you out.' I still can't believe it. It's been three years and I can't believe it. Is there any need for that?

"I feel that the kids definitely need something else. It all comes from their families because they're getting the money for nothing; they don't even have to earn it. They don't have to work for it. That's the worst thing you can do to someone. Maybe you don't work either because your old man's paying for you to go to school; but my old man didn't pay for me to go to school. The first thing we did in Brookline - pick out two of the best ones and just carried them on the crew. It helped. Every possible thing we could do down at Coolidge Corner we did. Like giving them food, supplying them with an area, supplying them with anything. I even went to public speaking school with Chief O'Brack who is the Chief of Brookline in the Police Department and we worked together down there. But the only reason I'm out of there is that it just came to a point where... I'm a businessman, o.k.? You look out in the lobby and there they are, and you know it's hurting your business, and that's hard to take. Unless you own it, it's kinda hard to take, 'cause if I owned it I would still be making the money; but that was the toughest part - aching inside.

"They'd come in... They could care less about who was in the store. It's like nobody else was in there. And they'd start talking and their language is intolerable; their actions! You got a family over there with little children, they could care less. That really hurts. I'm working so hard for my business. It's my business. That really hurts me. Even if it's an off day - you can never forget that person, you can never look at him objectively, but you look at him and say (to yourself) - 'I'd like to throw you right out of here.' But they're still your customers. One day, I told them: 'Any time you want to go we'll go. You put on the gloves with me in the rings, just you and me together, and I'll take you on.' None of them, you know, that's not the way they operate. They're chicken. I gain some of their respect, but I'd never tangle with them, not in there 'cause it would hit the papers. I'd have to take it, call the cops and take it in courts. You know... in business that's not the way to solve the problem. You solve it by helping them; making them get a job where they have to work.

"When I was there I didn't look at them objectively. Now I can; now that I've been away from them. When you look at them, you know - umm, you'd like to... I caught one kid one day letting the air out of my tires - just happened to go out the back door - letting the air out of my tires. He didn't see me. Oh Jesus! I could have kicked the kid.

Little kid. He's fifteen years old. Letting the air out of my tires. 'What are you doin that for?' 'You kicked me out.' Isn't that sad? Why couldn't that kid be down in the gym playing basketball, doing something really good with his life? You're probably saying the same thing yourself. Design something whereby they can do something - even slot machines or something."

The teen problem is localized in the Boston market. "You drive out to Framingham, Natick, all the suburban stores - no problem, none at all. The Boston market is different than western Massachusetts. There's a big difference. Big cities - the kids are much smarter; they're different, there's no doubt about it. That's part of the problem. They're smarter as far as knowing their rights. In a suburban store, say like in Marlborough, for instance, you go to a kid - 'All right. Get out. It's time to leave.' you know, the kid goes - no retaliation, no nothin. He won't come back that night. That's why the problems are limited. Whereby in the Boston market - 'Don't bother me.' you know, 'What do you mean leave?' 'Make me.' You have to call the police, make a scene in front of the store - car with a bubble gum machine (old slang for rotary police light), the whole bit - big tall cop running around with a little kid. That doesn't help business. People notice that. It's things of that nature that hurt quite a bit. That's awful, huh?"

"Kids wait. They sit in the windows, they sit on the table there. They wait. Where the problem is - you see somebody waiting there. He's waiting for somebody, o.k.? You see he's on an edge - guaranteed he's waiting for something (dope connection). If you go to that individual and say: 'You gonna get somethin?' He's so tense it's: 'Blankety blank you;' and, you know, right away. You're running a business - he doesn't belong there. Because he knows his legal laws - his rights in the business and it conveys to the younger kids - the younger kids know what's going on. Kids learn quickly there boy. They know what's going on.

"I think you have to handle them. You can't go up to a person, you know - 'Get outta here,' they're still human beings. You just can't try to reason with them. I used to tell them: 'Go down the street and take a two hour tour of the Corner. Leave me alone for awhile.' I had a lot of them in court for trespassing. One time I sat in court for a whole day on Friday. I had six cases. Well, you know - 'Suspended case,' and the judge would bawl the kid out and say 'stay out'. And finally I got to know Judge Colton very well. He's like one of my friends, you know. He didn't like McDonald's at first. He just wouldn't go along - bring somebody in for trespassing - 'It's a first offense. Continue the case.' Couldn't ban the kids from the store. Finally he did give me some cooperation which I was thankful for. He told them to get out and if they

stood out - 'he could kick you out personally if he don't want you in there.' Legally you can't keep somebody out. Legally, in a public restaurant on the street - on a street exit like this - legally you can't bar anybody from your store. We've gone through all the legal channels. In fact one time I went up to Chicago (Hamburger University), that's exactly what I went up for just to learn all the laws and legal aspects to work in the Boston market. Some of the problems are unreal."

If they had given you trouble in the past "then personally you can do something - refuse to wait on them. But if he gives you any rough time, police can arrest them on trespassing under these circumstances, but it won't hold up in court. The fella will be let loose. I've done that just to prolong it. To teach this individual a lesson. If they're not causing any problem, not being mischievous, they have every right in the world. That's a strong point on their part, legally. If they come in the door and buy themselves a drink and sit down and cause no problems they're as good as any customer. But if I don't have anything posted they can stay as long as they want. Legally you have to post a minimum. There's a minimum set - they have to spend so much and stay only so long. And the sad part of it is it's enforced not only on the problem people. At Coolidge Corner that's what I did down there. They have to spend 50¢ and legally only stay 20 minutes. The sign's

there - so when we took them into court it semi-held up for awhile, you know, they're not allowed back there. So the judge said they aren't allowed back there: 'I don't want to see you back in here under the same charge.' So the kids would still come in but when I'd ask them to leave they'd leave a little quicker. If I went out and called the police they'd make sure they were gone - fast. It's ridiculous. When you stop and think about it. You're playing games with them, you know. I didn't take a disliking to the kids or anything - most of the kids are really nice. Most of them were pretty smart too. Of course you have the small percent that were pretty bad."

The typical McDonald's drive-ins also had the problem of being hangouts. "But we found a solution for that. And the solution for that was a Registry of Motor Vehicles man - you have him hanging around in your parking lot in their automobiles. He would come in - we did the same thing here - have him come in - 'Your license plate is on crooked. You don't have the proper lights on your car,' anything. Find things in the book and just put them all in traffic violations. You take the driver's license away from a person... his car is his car... he's going to think twice about that. He's going to go sit in the park next before he comes down here. That's how we solved the problem down here. The American Legion Highway the same way."

The Coolidge Corner McDonald's is one of the few, but growing number of public restaurants which hires official police officers to insure order within the premises. "Of course it hurts. It's got to hurt. It hurts there more than any place. Here it doesn't hurt 'cause that's what the people want to see. We've taken polls - talking to people on a personal, individual basis as they walk through the door. It would hurt the image more if the policeman wasn't there. When he's there they're more relaxed. People really feel that. Jesus, in this place I don't know if somebody's going to come up and smack me right in the head. I don't know. Sometimes I'm afraid. Honest. I've had people say that to me after talking to them - older people, younger people. I had no idea, you know. Imagine a customer saying that to you? It's like a bar room down the street. Imagine that?"

The police "became part of the scene really when they opened McDonald's. On details. The way it goes - if we were able to have a police officer, and the Corporation hasn't gone for it yet, but you need somebody who you're going to hire, supply uniforms, have the individual walk around and tell this individual: 'O.k., it's time for you to leave.' and have the authority to do that. But if you have a private concern he can not come in and say: 'You, you, and you - out.' He's got to go through a channel. The manager has to say: 'Well you, you, and you - out.'

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"The police would do nothing on their own. To keep the problem under control you have to have a police officer and a management personnel out in the lobby all of the time. Financially you can't afford that, that's \$7.00 per hour for a police officer and two hundred bucks a week for an assistant manager. We have to be out there all the time from open 'till closed we got to be in here just to hold the lobby, and that's it. That's the solution to it, but financially you can't afford that. If you analyze it in many, many aspects which, you know - the police officer, management personnel on all the time, somebody to keep a person out of the store, you have to be at the door as soon as he comes in - 'Police officer. Out.' - he'll keep it very well under control; but you can't. How are you going to afford that in a store like that? You still have to make money for the stock holders. It's a unique situation. We can't depend on the drive-in restaurants to bring in the profits for the stock holder. Every store has to hold its own.

"They make a lot of errors down there (Coolidge Corner). Recently they brought in hired police who were unqualified to do the job. They were pretty bad. They just didn't handle it properly. When you're running a business you don't take an attitude of a person where - 'They're not bothering anybody. Let them hang around.' - it will mushroom into something. You treat one the same

way as the other one. They're going to have to hire people to work internally within the store itself with the kids. Police is not the answer, there's no doubt about it. They're the answer for somebody who's drunk or something like that, they solve that problem. Just conducting the flow of traffic is not the answer. We've taken studies on that and the way it looks is you have to take each manager before they work in a store like that, take them and give them a real tough course in psychology and how to handle people and kids, and this is the way you got to do it. They are people aren't they? You just can't push them around - give them something to do. Used to ask them when the kids would come in - 'Why don't you go home and study? Go down to the library and read a book.' 'Down there? They kick us out down there too.'"

In May of 1971, social workers from Brookline Youth Resources began sitting in McDonald's restaurant hoping to have some beneficial affect upon the behavior of the large number of teenagers who frequented the place. This step had been spawned by a closed Selectmen's meeting called by McDonald's in which the McDonald management presented a grim view of the current situation at the Corner - since January there had been some 63 incidents between youth and police in or around McDonald's. One McDonald manager had been beaten severely by a group of teenage youths.

Initially McDonald's offered to pay a social worker to be there. They were already paying \$1,000 per month for police protection - provided reluctantly by Brookline City Police as over time at \$7.00 an hour. There was much harassment in the job, many police resented being called pigs, etc. John Ansty, then the Director of Youth Resources, was determined that Youth Resources could muscle it themselves without financial aid from McDonald's, although he now regrets that he did not accept the offer on the grounds that additional staff were desperately needed at that time but could not be acquired because of financial shortages. "It was John's idea that they come in. We sat down with company lawyers, chief of police - his captains, social workers, selectmen, top manager from McDonald's to bring up solutions 'cause it was a unique situation at the time. A year ago it was unique to that particular area. They didn't have that many stores in intown markets, and Boston, being primarily a big student body territory, whereas the New York market, Maryland, Washington D.C. are not quite that many students, more - just people, business people, see. This made a bigger problem as far as hangout - hanging around by kids. That hurt a lot of business.

"It worked out, you know, pretty good; but it didn't last that long. It worked out pretty good but I think... the idea was to keep the kids out of the store, and that more or less gave them the... (incentive to stay there).

We wanted to keep them out of the store, give them something to do; but what happened is that - I would come in there at night and there would be three or four groups with a social worker in the middle of them, whatever they call it - rappin or something - I dunno, but that's what they were doing. But somebody walks by and they just keep walking by.

"I really felt sorry for a lot of the kids, because, you know - after being there so long you get to talking to a lot of them. You know they're hurtin your business. You'd like to take them and throw them out and the whole bit. But you really can't do that 'cause it boils down to just what they have. Like... John Ansty... we even started a program down there where we would supply the merchandise for cookouts and things during the summer. And he took them out and they had our cups, our drinks, our hamburgers, everything for a cookout. We were giving it to them. It was at this period that things started helping. John worked very closely with me and things started helping."

In October a drop in center was opened up in American Legion Post #7 just around the corner from McDonald's. It drew a considerable number of kids from the Corner and beyond. "When it was open it was o.k., when it wasn't open it was like McDonald's was the drop in center for that night. And it came to a point where mentally and physically I just couldn't take it anymore."

"In Brookline you have to have restroom facilities. It's really unique 'cause the people out there - they don't want McDonald's out there. But we try to get along with them. They can't kick us out 'cause we're on a 20 year lease; there's no way they can kick us out. We're in there. It's funny sometimes the way they make everything tough on us - difficult. Everybody else on the Corner - they don't have restrooms. We have to have them 'cause it's in the ordinance. They don't enforce it with other people. You gotta have the restrooms open. The restrooms in Coolidge Corner... they ought to take a board and just block it right off 'cause that's one of the centers of their problem. The kids go in there and they sell and they buy and you know it and you can't cool it down. There's no doubt about it.

It's a big Corporation - they're new in the business so they do a lot of things as experiments. But we have a lot of people in the office that run the Corporation that in my eyes - they run scared. We put coin operated machines in the restrooms - worked out perfectly - locked them, so forth. Had a deal with Jim Priori who's the head of the Board of Health in Brookline - no problem. Corporation steps in - 'Can't have restroom locks.' 'Why?' 'Top manager doesn't want it.' 'Why?' 'Take them out.' We had to take them out. That had solved the problem. It really had.

The kids don't sit just anywhere in McDonald's. They've developed a section all their own - away from the service area, near a side street, and close to the restrooms and a corner exit and entrance. "That whole section on the corner's going to be cut right in half. You know, where you go downstairs. That whole section's going to be cut in half. McDonald's top management has such an ill feeling on these kids down there that they're going to cut the building right in half - rent out half of it. It's in the plans. It will be going in the first of the year. Definitely. \$50,000 they're going to spend to cut the building right in half. They even have the lease all set up - who's going to rent it next door. Cut it all out - take all the cushioned seats out, put fiberglass seats that are that ' ' big, sets of twos, no fours. The problem never came about until they had seating... you know.

"It started when I was there. We felt we had too much wasted space. It seats 198. There's no way of getting away from it - it's just too big. It's a big mistake McDonald's wise. First of all it's not arranged the way it should be arranged. It's too elaborate for a McDonald's. It's too fancy. Those circular booths is a waste. You need more sets like this. In rows. Just set them right up. There was too much space that was wasted and it gave them an area to hang around - just too much. Too much single business. The business wasn't family business on the week-

end. How many families are there in that area? Somebody from Newton is not going to go to Brookline 'cause it has no place to park. Primarily it's a college area and college market. The lunch market's all single business. It's the only way to go. You either have to drop business more - they feel that they have to lose a little bit of the family business because of the size of the booths - they got to drop some of it. But where they got to pick up is in the rent because it's such a big place to own or rent. So in the long run the real estate's got to pay for itself. In ten years it will be worth two times what it's worth now.

"Each store has percentages. Day is not family business, it's lunch people. Afternoon is not family business, it's shoppers and kids. Supper, dinner, whatever you want to call it - that is strictly family business, it's not in between. Nights is the shopper, the person who probably lives by himself and walk here, and the kids. We'll still have the same mixture of people, it's not like you're leaning to one person. Everybody's a customer. I don't care what the person looks like, as long as the person uses the facilities the way they're suppose to be used as a customer. Anybody who comes up to this counter - they're a customer. I don't care what he looks like or who he is... he comes in - he or she is entitled to the same service that anybody is.

"What they would have done (had they known of the total extent of their problems at the Corner) is what they're going to do, and that's give them the minimum amount of seating, very uncomfortable, you gotta squeeze in to get in there, that type of thing whereby your facilities are there for the person who is just out for one particular thing - to have his lunch at reasonable prices.

"McDonald's is going now... All the stores are putting up now new seating - taking the facilities away from the customers where trouble areas are. Very little seating down there in Somerville or in the new store that's opened in Cambridge. Very little facilities for the customer. Down town that's just where they're going. It's just what we're going to. In the Boston market indirectly - Causeway Street, Tremont Street, Huntington Avenue, that's what they've done. At Coolidge Corner they went the other way thinking that they could attract them, but since then they've realized that they aren't going to. So it's going to be a big investment down there. But it's set the ground rule. We're going to put ten more stores in Boston this year; but it's set the ground work for which way we're going. That's why we held off. We're going to go strictly to the small store with the small seating package. You'd still have a booth. You'd have two aisles and down the center you'd have a bunch of seats with just you and me. And then you'd have the same thing over there against the wall. You'd have the same

number but they're broken up where-by if you're here with your friends you'd be uncomfortable. /

"They're going to pack the market whereby in Boston they're not going to necessarily need all the high-volume stores. If we do the same volume as we're doing here, in Boston, we'll do pretty good. Very good as a matter of fact - per unit, you know."

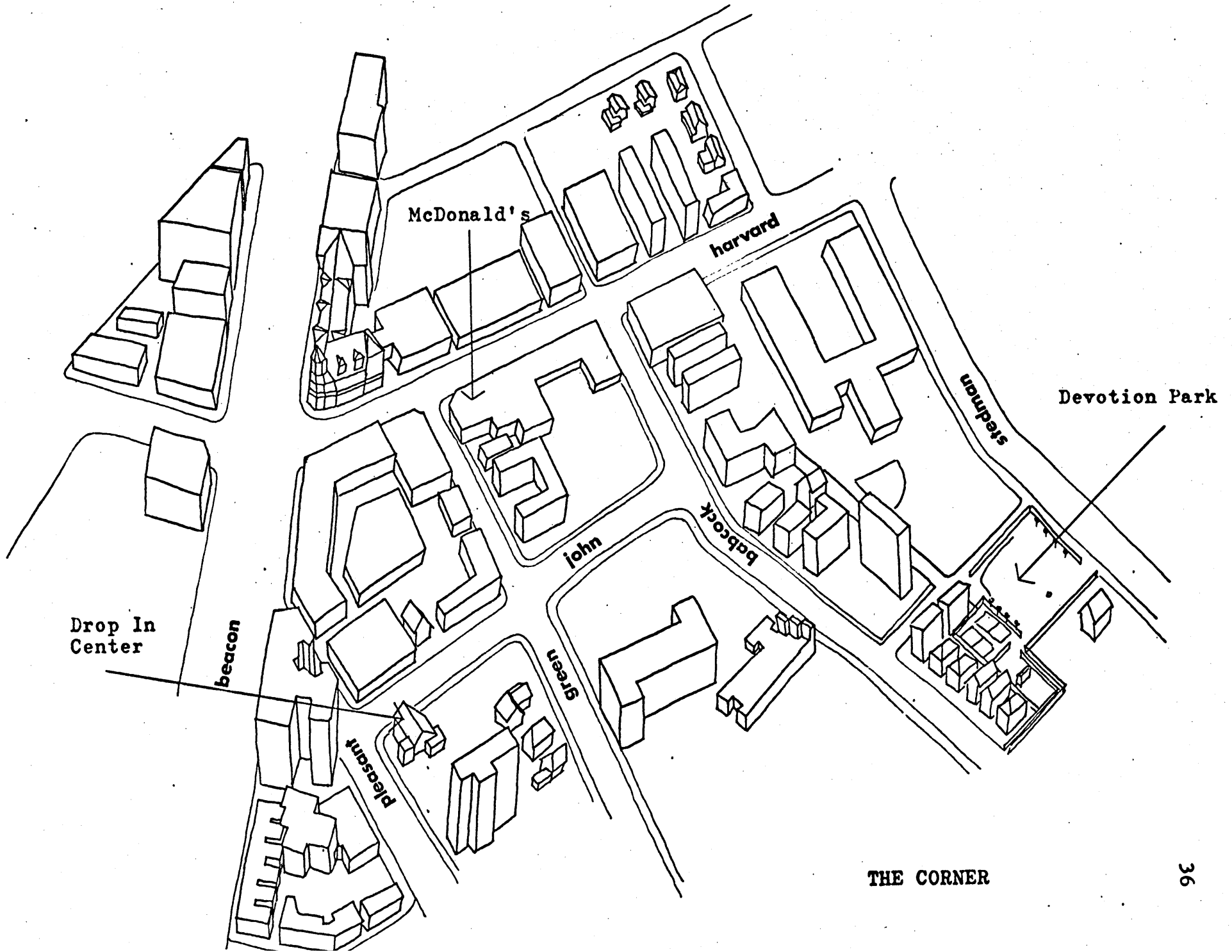
The stand-up facility - "That's the way they're going. Those are the newer stores. That's the way they're going. People will be forced to take their food out. You know - stand-up facilities, small seats, you know, very uncomfortable - fiber-glas - you sit on it and it's like sitting on the floor, so there's no such thing as - they slouch down in the seat and put their feet up on the table. Imagine that? They cut the seats. Twenty-eight bucks to replace them. Their thrill is - 'That guy. I hate him. He keeps kicking me out. I'm going to bring in my knife and cut his seats up.' They do! All fiber-glas now. All McDonald's are all fiber-glas now.

The kids out there... most of them are not bad kids. I'm not defending them. After ten months you get to know some of them. The same bunch, most of them are not bad kids, they act differently when they've been drinking and when they aren't sometimes - they act much different. You have to

to kinda know them. From a businessman's view point I wouldn't want to get friendly with any one of them because they really hurt your business. That store has a potential to do a lot more but because of those kids - this year at McDonald's they're going to cut it in half, take all the conveniences out for the customers they want and just run the store so that the store can survive and make money. It's making money now, but it's not making the money that it should make."

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THE CORNER

INTRODUCTION

COOLIDGE CORNER

Coolidge Corner could be described as a rather wealthy residential/commercial district that has become caught within the drain to suburban shopping centers and large inter-urban department stores. Its once thriving, rich cluster of small shops, arcades and high-class restaurants is in a slow process of closure and transformation. The old S.S. Pierce department store, once the highlight of the very Corner itself - marked by a dominating clock tower surrounded by a rich variety of rustic gabled roofs, has now departed and is inhabited presently by a member of the Big L Discount Drug chain. According to several elderly residents, the old Corner had seemingly lost its importance with the departure of S.S. Pierce. But a few hundred feet away, at the humble intersection of Harvard and Green Streets, where a Brighams ice cream parlor once stood, rests a new focus of the Corner - the McDonald's Town House.

The Coolidge Corner McDonald's Town House is not the typical fast-food hamburger joint that most of us associate with such titles as McDonald's. The Romanesque, brick-arched windows are hardly reflective of the glowing plastic McDonald's "golden arches". The plush and commodious interiors feature polished burned-brick flooring, comfortable orange Naugahyde covered booths (most of which seat from four to six), trimmed

in a tough, but attractive simulated walnut to match the dark panelled walls which backdrop such things as Modigliani prints. A grid of decorative box beams hangs from the ceiling, concealing the hardware of soft indirect lighting. And while one consumes his burger and fries he can listen to the Musac piped in through numerous speakers imbedded in the ceiling. It all very comfortably seats 198 smiling, beaming, all-American McDonald burger lovers.

THE CORNER FREAK

The teen crowd that grouped at McDonald's numbered between 20 and 30. Their ages fell somewhere between 15 or 16. They all attended the same school - Brookline High, a 10 or 15 minute walk from the Corner. To us they seemed to be rather typical of many present-day high school kids. They were all typically long-haired and both sexes wore denims and such things as army surplus clothing. They were most distinguished from other teens however, through their regular presence on the Corner; every day after school they could be found here grouped with their friends for hours on end - thus acquiring the title - Corner Freak or just as appropriate - McDonald Freak.

THE STUDY

This study began as an expression of our concern over the inability of designers to understand the dynamics of the environments which they plan. We have often seen the designer

working at monumental scales that never come close to recognizing the neighborhoods in which they are definitely and sometimes critically a part. We questioned whether architectural monumentality toward "economic vitality" constitutes "human vitality" and the preservation of community. The study has indicated to us that even small-scale changes can ultimately result in large-scale implications; the McDonald's chronology is one such example. One reason why planners and designers rarely deal with the smaller scale in a dynamic sense is because the mechanisms for understanding are lacking. The primary intent of this study then was not necessarily to discover implications toward designing a better McDonald's or developing a more functional drop in center for teens. It was, rather, to be one small step in hopes of discovering how one can become more "in touch" with the dynamics of his environment.

Our study represents an effort over a years time to gain such an understanding of a very singular and rather small piece of environment: "the Corner". To contact and to know this environment we spent over seven months there in the fall and early winter of 1971 observing the kids, getting to know some of them, talking with them, and in a more formal sense, interviewing a few of them. Prior to that period, we spent over two months of the previous spring studying this setting in a studio course.

This paper represents a chronology of our involvement in the Corner scene. In an abstracted sense, it reflects the development of our understanding of the Corner as well as the progression of events there. We begin our study with an introduction to McDonald's as a public place and to the activity of the teens there; an activity we came to call "hanging". We then discuss the suitability of the restaurant as a hangout, examining first the fit between hanging and setting and then the conflicts resulting from this overlay. An examination of the conflicts between the Corner kids and the management of McDonald's and of their continual confrontation led us to the question of controls - how the adult control agents perceived the teens' hanging as a problem; the various tactics employed in its attempted resolution; and how the teens were able to persist in hanging within such a hostile setting. With the succession of control agents and control strategies introduced by the management into the restaurant, and the changing patterns of interaction between control agent and teen, we considered this contest for control of space as a dynamic process. With the appearance of the social workers we see a new strategy attempted - that of insulating the teen from his conflict with the environment. A new hangout comes into view - the American Legion Drop In Center, which we consider a product of this dynamic process of control. It is here that we begin to see rather important contrasts between the two hangouts - McDonald's being a public setting and the Drop In Center being insular. In conclusion

we observe the social workers themselves coming into conflict with the teens, primarily because of the worker's attitude toward the hanging process - in almost a reflection of the McDonald chronology.

THE PUBLIC NATURE OF McDONALD'S *

If laid end to end, eight billion hamburgers could circle the globe 18 times at its fattest point.

Late in 1971 McDonald's Restaurant, never failing to amaze the American public, claimed to have surpassed the 8 billion mark in burger sales while continuing the unbelievable sale rate of 5 million hamburgers a day. With its total outlets nearing 2000, McDonald's has found itself trailing only the Army, the Department of Agriculture, and Colonel Sanders' Kentucky Fried Chicken, as the fourth largest server of food in the nation. Such is proof of the incredible success which, by its inherent nature, provides a flooding pool of national publicity in which the McDonald Corporation flourishes.

Mass media advertising has brought the McDonald image home as the television belches those Big Macs and crispy fries right into your lap, tickling your taste buds, jingling the extra change in your pockets, but never quite

* We wish to express our acknowledgements to J. Anthony Lukas, staff writer for the New York Times Magazine, who contributed a great deal to our understanding the nature of McDonald's through his article entitled: As American as a McDonald's Hamburger On the Fourth of July. July 4, 1971 section 6 Page 5, The New York Times Magazine.

reaching that empty abyss of your stomach. If that's not enough, McDonald's, in all its shrewdness, really knows that the way to your wallet is through your children's fantasies - so come Saturday morning, between those iconoscopic cartoons, Ronald McDonald dances through McDonald Land picking fries and burgers from trees while being persecuted by the nasty hamburgler; creating a popularity among children that is second only to Santa Claus. McDonald's encourages the tired - "You deserve a break today." discourages the dirty - "At McDonald's we're clean." and compliments the thrifty - "At McDonald's you still get change back from your dollar." It's the Boy Scout Creed in disguise. It's as American as hot apple pie in a box.

It is quite obvious that McDonald's is selling more than just food here - it is selling a system. McDonald's was a pioneer of the quick-burger chains. I can still remember everyone's awe at the first "over 1 billion sold" - the large plastic letters were proudly displayed between the already famous Golden Arches. You never wasted time waiting for orders - the process was simple, clean, efficient and routine. After a few trips you knew fairly well what you would get at the counter. Today anyone can cover the basic menu from memory - hamburgers, cheeseburgers, the Big Mac, milk shakes, orange drink, rootbeer, cola, french fries, fish sandwiches, coffee, and hot apple pie in a box. Equality was McDonald's policy - except for perhaps a personal

request for extra ketchup or salt, the menu, merchandise, price and service was essentially the same for everyone throughout the nation. Due to the efficiency of the routine and the economics of space, the kitchen was necessarily revealing - containers were clearly identifiable and strategically placed; hamburgers could be seen stacked in their appropriate troughs. Little was left for the imagination. In essence, McDonald's was then, and still remains, a highly predictable, revealing, easily learned, and economically successful routine borrowed from the era of the self-service laundromat.

The original drive-in McDonald's Restaurant provided clear-cut, no nonsense counter service in a small, enclosed kitchen centered within a large parking area. Unlike the traditional American drive-ins, there were no attractive, short-skirted car hops to extend the service into the street. Beyond the counter the customer was on his own, subject to a few basic rules applied to all of America's public areas - he was to remain orderly, properly dispose of any waste materials, and respect the property and persons of others. From the beginning McDonald's has adopted the written and unwritten order of America's public spaces to function simultaneously and complementary with its service routine.

With the advent of the sit-down McDonald's restaurants the same public rules that apply on the street were naturally

applied to the indoor public space - customers were expected to clean up after themselves and behave in a manner respectable of a place where others would also be eating, much as one would behave within a public picnic area. Except for an occasional floor-boy who would sweep the area (and, with a contract McDonald smile, clean up those articles occasionally left behind by careless customers), service was not provided beyond the counter (ask a McDonald's floor-boy for extra ketchup on your burger and he'll instinctively direct you to the service area). In the typical public restaurant the customer becomes highly involved in the routines of service - being waited upon, making requests for commodities to be delivered to the table, accepting clean-up service as part of the routine, tipping waiters, and paying only after eating. In McDonald's, however, after leaving the service area the customer is little more involved in the mechanics of McDonald's service than he would be walking down the sidewalk with a Big Mac between his jaws.* Unless you want to crawl over that counter, at McDonald's you're on your own in America.

* Although during the course of our study we were frequent customers of McDonald's we succeeded in remaining anonymous to their personnel. This was partly due to the transiency of McDonald employees; but our identity was significantly concealed by the actual lack of communication between employee and customer that the efficiency of the McDonald system demands.

McDonald's America is certainly an important characteristic of the dominant McDonald routine in which one, if he desires to become a customer, must also become a respectable actor. One becomes a recognized actor by degrees - initially there is a presumption that your entry and waiting in line is somewhat related to the possibility of placing your order. Your ultimate acceptance, however, is that ringing of the cash register when the change has left your pocket - you have literally bought your way into the public arena of McDonald's.

At Coolidge Corner the purchase of a coke or cup of coffee affords one much the same opportunity as sitting in a strategically placed park bench; to relax, to wait, to watch, or to talk with a friend. While there is not a park to enjoy, there is automobile, motorbike, and pedestrian traffic to observe and perhaps friends to signal as they pass by. At Coolidge Corner, the fifteen cents is quite cheap, and the park benches are few and far between.

HANGING IN THE ABSTRACT

INTERSTITIAL SPACE

Today our urban public spaces are little more than traffic corridors for pedestrians. There are few places left where one can sit to watch others or group in any large numbers without conflicting with either the circulation itself or the "esthetics" of the place. Deliberately designed public spaces are usually little more than sterile parks of cement benches and year-old trees, a hundred acres of asphalt paving, or inaccessible and hollow courtyards where people never tread. A great emphasis has been placed upon the visual appearance of public spaces but little thought goes into their potentials for human activity. Of course the old human occupation of meeting and observing others still continues regardless of the tremendous repression of our cities. If there no longer are places where people can gather, observe, make contacts, and exchange conversation on the legitimate public level, but we know that it does still occur; where then does this activity take place? For many of us it still occurs within those corridors where others must either go around us or push us out of the way. The need for such activity is sometimes even stronger than the need for human courtesy - one excellent example is the super market, a great technological achievement of our century, where much to the dismay of other shoppers, you can always find a group of friends, carts jammed across the aisles, exchanging

conversation in total disregard for the hot-tempered, swearing, pushy shoppers who have been caught, involuntarily, in the social trap of a friendly encounter. For many of us, such encounters continually hammer upon our consciences till we often find ourselves beginning to obey the constraints placed around us by our environment - we make certain compromises between obedience and adaptation. In the supermarket I tell myself to keep moving along; if encounters are made, make them short or find an opening where least conflicts might occur, using the general rule of "watch where you stand so others may pass by easily". Those interstitial spaces in which we make compromise between our social lives and the ever growing, complicated, and ever programmed environment are seemingly becoming increasingly important to all human activity. As the corridors, for various reasons, become increasingly restrictive, we might find ourselves literally pushed into those interstices where we can gain entrance into public arenas similar to those of yester-year only by accommodating ourselves to the various respected routines within them. It would be a very restrictive environment which did not have such interstices (suppose after a large meal your belt had no extra holes). In a sense, McDonald's has become one of those interstitial spaces, for behind that image of a place where McDonald hamburgers are bought, sold, and consumed there is also a very public stage where such activities as conversing, grouping, observing, avoiding intrusion, finding privacy, and experimenting with the

social environment also take place. Coolidge Corner itself has had a long history of being a social magnet. People have come there for many years for the sole purpose of simply seeing and being with their friends. Although this occurs at every age level to some extent, it is especially important to the teenager who maintains that such activity is an important part of his social development. To one teen Coolidge Corner "has been a hangout for the past twenty or thirty years... My brother used to hang up there when he was my age," he said, "and he is thirty-six." One girl explained:

"On weekends and week nights, everybody wants to see their friends, right. Whether it be at parties that are planned every week, or at dances, or at nightclubs, or at coffee houses, or at a drop in center, or what, you know. Everybody likes to be with friends usually... So Coolidge Corner was picked by I don't know who, as a place to go and see all your friends."

So McDonald's is not only just one of those interstitial spaces; at Coolidge Corner it has also fallen into the historical chronology of an environment where hanging is a tradition as well as a social phenomenon.

HANGING

To many outsiders hanging appears to be a waste of one's precious time and energy; it certainly is rarely profitable in a monetary sense, in fact, as observed in the McDonald scene it often involves a certain monetary expense. To the outsider it doesn't appear to be functional or productive, and many have observed that it often results in disruption, conflict, and "criminal" behavior. It is "sticking around" when most people would have left long ago. For the teen, however, hanging appears to be an important social dimension in their lives, with perhaps the most important factor being that of seeing and being with one's friends; sharing experiences, the feelings of comradeship and high regard for one another.

SCHOOL AS A CATALYST OF HANGING

The institution of the public school has been an important catalyst of the activity of hanging in this respect. Teenage friendships are frequently made at school since it is the compulsory grouping place of all young people between the ages of six and seventeen. Hanging patterns often initiate here and people begin to identify and be identified with them. With regards to this, one teen mentioned:

"The same people that you find in McDonald's will be the same people that you'll find in 220. It's just one big congregation."

220 is an area outside of the high school, just beyond the cafeteria exit, along a back street. Kids congregate here to smoke and talk with their friends between classes or after lunch. They do look a lot like the kids who hang around McDonald's - they dress the same, they look a little freaky, they occasionally smoke dope and frequently use it as a theme of conversation. On occasion a teen-driven car roars by. In many ways it resembles the activity of Coolidge Corner. At the high school there are several distinct hanging territories where groups of teens may define their identities. There are surprisingly clear contrasts between such groups. 220, of course, is reserved for the "freaks", the "athletes" hang in front of the new gym steps, another group can be found in front of the old gym steps, and an especially elite class hangs within a central courtyard appropriately called "the quadrangle".

In our society we rarely find high schools at the neighborhood level - the economics of institutional education forbid such philosophies and children are often bused in from many distant and diverse communities. Brookline is no different - there is one high school which serves the entire city. Mandatory gathering at such a large scale permits cliques of relatively large size and diverse backgrounds to develop. Being with one's friends may not just mean being with one or two special people, but often means interacting within a group of twenty or thirty. The school as an educa-

tional institution has often refused to recognize friendly grouping as socially acceptable within the routine of the educational process and so does not make deliberate provisions for such activity to take place. We asked one girl if she couldn't see all her friends while at school. She answered: "Yeah, like hi and goodbye in the halls." So we find teens gathered outside of buildings which were meant to confine them for entirely different purposes.

Friendships hardly follow the strict time schedules of our institutions - when school is out friendships continue and the need to gather as friends becomes increasingly important. One teen says that "in a way it's kind of a social thing; that's kind of good, because some people aren't themselves in school all the time, they got hangups in school and shit. When you're out of school you usually feel freer, you're more yourself, you know." It is not surprising then to find places like McDonald's and Coolidge Corner as strategic meeting points for large numbers of friends, all of whom attend or have attended the same school, and many of whom come great distances to see one another. One faithful "Corner" girl made a 45 minute trip by bus and trolley several times a week to see her friends. This same girl, who has lived in the same community for fourteen years without making any significant relationships with any of her neighborhood peers, told us:

"Everybody I know is down at McDonald's. In a course of a night you'll meet people from just about every point in the town up there. I mean, if you've got nothing else to do... go down to McDonald's and see all your friends." *

School is a strong reflection of the adult work ethic, part of which, for reasons of efficiency, demands the establishment of and submission to a daily routine. This work routine is quite an important part of hanging activity for it determines just when such activity can and cannot take place - thus hanging usually takes place only during the free periods outside of the work routine. It can be as short as a smoke between classes or as long as the weekend or summer vacation. If one knows the work routine he can predict fairly accurately the time period during which the hanging routine is likely to take place. The predictability of the hanging routine makes meeting a particular friend or group of friends a relatively certain thing - it is knowing in a somewhat mechanical fashion that "somebody" or "everybody" will be "there" at a certain time and place. People then become identified with the places in which they hang regularly as mentioned in the following teen's description:

* This girl had, within the last year, been transferred from an outside private school to the Brookline High School where most of her friendships connected with the Corner had originated.

"Like everybody has their own specific corner they hang out at each point of the town, but if they want to see somebody like a friend who lives down there, they'll go down to McDonald's and they'll see somebody down there that they'll know. Like you've made your friends and you all hang around the same place, you know that, like - 'this person is going to be out at the gym steps, I'll go out and talk with him,' you know."

THE TERMINAL ASPECTS OF HANGING

McDonald's, as a hangout, is used as a terminal, in a manner very similar to the way one might use a bus terminal - certain destinations can be reached by first making the appropriate connections at the Corner. It becomes an important starting point along a chain of activities and places to go. It is here that friends can be reached, decisions can be made about going elsewhere, and transportation can be acquired. One teen described this activity rather clearly:

"See that's what I'm starting to do with Coolidge Corner; like... I use that as a place, a club where I can meet someone... probably sit there and have a coke or something and decide where to go and then we'll split somewhere and if nothing much is happening we'll go back, get a coke, you know."

It is understood that often plans are never made beforehand, but they simply occur spontaneously - someone might know what's happening in another part of town and convey it to the waiting hangers; other groups may already have decided

to go somewhere and return to tell the rest that "nothin much seems to be happening there". McDonald's is the root of a grapevine where events can be known almost as fast as they occur. It's a warning center where rumors can be aired and cautions can be given - problems and conflicts can be avoided even before they occur.

Seeing these twenty or so other teens is often characterized as "making the rounds" - one girl mentioned: "That's a big hang-up. I know I do that - I go down, say hello to everybody, and walk out." For another it is simply "letting everyone know you're still alive." Many of the teens refer to this as the "grand appearance":

"It's like making the grand appearance, like you've got nothing better to do - 'Let's go over to McDonald's and make the grand appearance - Hi, how you doing?'"

There seems to be an intrinsic need to replenish one's relationship to the group. One way to do this is to appear frequently. This serves several purposes. It allows others to recognize the fact that you identify with them; as one teen mentioned:

"I think if you go up there one night a week almost regularly you could call yourself a Coolidge Corner freak."

It also means that you can be found around them, and for

yourself there is a revived sense of competence about how to behave while within the hanging area. Outsiders can be easily distinguished by their failure to accommodate themselves properly. This was apparent in the attitudes of many Coolidge Corner kids to a distinguishable group of teenagers referred to as the South Brookline kids. South Brookliners are somewhat disliked by the Coolidge Corner crowd because of their better-than-thou attitudes. They are always from the wealthy section of town and generally described by the teens as "rich bastards", most of whom hang-out in their own homes:

"When you have a family room in the basement with a pool table and T.V.; when you have three or four bedrooms, places where you can invite your friends and throw a party, who needs to hang-out?"

From our observations these "rich bastards" are frequently bleached-blond females, often very attractive, well-dressed; typical would be a "wet-look" black crinkled-leather jacket, maybe featuring silver studs or stars; all new clothes, but if by chance they have old jeans (a very popular item among teens and students) they were probably purchased from the expensive collections of used clothes stores such as Georges Folly rather than being "broken-in" to the required condition. Coolidge Corner kids claim that they can pick them out immediately, not only from their dress, but also from their actions - "They don't look comfortable in McDonald's".
(do they lack some knowledge of the hanging routine?)

Coolidge Corner kids, on the other hand, appear very relaxed for the most part within McDonald's; you'll often see them sprawled out occupying an entire booth, their feet resting on the table - they're comfortable, relaxed, and unscrupulously a participant observer of all activity within the place. Actions change frequently, however, and it is essential for one to be there regularly and often to keep up with the changes that do occur. One teen mentioned: "Even if I've been away for, say two weeks, I feel uncomfortable there because I don't know exactly how to act at that time." Perhaps one explanation for the curious behavior of the South Brookliners.

THE CLOSING DOWN OF THE ENVIRONMENT

It is often said that "if you got nothing better to do then go down to McDonald's," the implication being that there is frequently nothing better to do. For some McDonald's serves as an appropriate stopping point along the way to something "better"; for others it is simply a dead end. One long-time veteran of the Corner tells it this way:

"Like Brighams, you know... Like when we all used to hang around up there... Like we used to hang around there but not one tenth as much as anybody hangs around McDonald's. I mean like we'd go up there, meet our friends, go somewhere else for the night, you know, meet some more friends, and then during the night maybe we'd come back and see our friends and go somewhere else. But, I mean, kids!

up there - they just sit around and see the same people over and over again... I mean, it's all right to see the same faces, you know, but not twenty-four hours a day.

"The kids that used to hang around Brighams two years ago... they don't hang around that area as much. I mean, these were kids that constantly knew what was happening man, 'cause there was more things to do in Boston to keep people away from Brighams, like the old Tea Party, the Supermarket was open, stuff like that. The old Tea Party introduced so many groups to Boston... like the Jefferson Airplane, The Grateful Dead, The Who, Ten Years After...

"You see, a couple of years ago Brookline used to be pretty good. They had a bowling alley, they had all kinds of places, they had a music store where you could sit around and listen to music and then they started closing them down. They just tore down the bowling alley about a year ago. It was near Howard Johnson's. Five doors up (on Beacon). They wanted a parking lot for the bank and they put in a new drive-in teller window... Now it's a parking lot for the bank and stores there. They didn't hang-out there. They just came there when there was nothing better to do and bowled a few strings. They had a juke box there... On Friday and Saturday nights they used to do a good business there.

"The only good thing with Brookline now is Coolidge Corner Theater (across from McDonald's) 'cause it's the cheapest place around and plus they got good movies there, you know. Cheapest theater in Boston is now \$2.50 and the Coolidge Corner Theater is

\$1.75... usually they have two good double features... This one is clean - half the ones down town... they're shabby inside.

"They're trying to turn Brookline it seems into another downtown Boston; strictly business area, 'cause look what they're doing to Brookline Village. They're tearing that apart. They used to have all kinds of nice little stores down there... now they're putting up office buildings... It's really wierd. They just finished putting up a new insurance building there.

"Up until the summer Boston was alright; now all of a sudden they're just trying to bring it down... They're starting to close down all the coffee houses and like the only ones that are really open right now are like the Crossroads and the Gate and the attendance at the Gate is starting to slow down... Now a new owner wants to turn the Crossroads into a nightclub.

"I think if they'd open up another Tea Party things would be a lot better. There's so many times when I get high, like at a friend's house - I'm listening to a record on the radio or the stereo and I say to myself - 'Why in hell did they close the Tea Party down?' It's something I really miss, you know. And you meet all of these freaks from Boston... that you never seen before and you get high with them. You meet so many people down there."

He also mentioned that places where teens once met are not only closing down, but are also invloved in a rapid change of character and shifts in orientation toward different,

perhaps more lucrative clientele.

"Like during the summer I was hanging around with a lot of different kids over twenty-one. Like Friday night, Saturday night, we'd usually go down to the Earth-side Inn. That was the only place I could really get into without a hassel... sit down there, listen to music... a mixture of a bar room and nightclub... a pretty good place. But now they have changed the name and have a new owner and there's an entirely different crowd in there.

"T.J.'s (a dating bar known to serve and accommodate many teens from Brookline)... I used to go in there all the time. That's another place I could get into. But now all the places around Boston are turning straight... the crowd keeps changing. Like the Earth-side; if you didn't see your older friends up at Coolidge Corner, you'd go straight down there... you knew they'd be down there. But now you can't really know where they go... There's no really good places."

During the summer the city of Boston sponsored a cultural program called Summer Thing, part of which involved giving big-name concerts over the weekends - Rod Stewart, Joan Baez, Poco, Chuck Berry, B.B.King, and the Allman Bros., to name a few. The late concerts, however, posed a problem for the city. As the Veteran put it: "The longer they seem to run the more stoned people seem to get. At 11:00 you're suppose to keep the noise down." So the first concert at the hatch Shell caused some commotion in the neighboring communities - it lasted much longer than planned and resulted

in a considerable amount of noise and vandalism; enough, at least, for the directors of Summer Thing to propose a new strategy: "We'll have the concerts, but on the Boston Commons instead, and from like 6:00 to about 8:30 at night. That way the concerts won't run any longer." But when the concerts were over it was too early to retire for the evening, and besides, everyone was only half stoned - "it just seemed to spread itself out." On a typical, hot Saturday evening on the Corner things would be relatively quiet and inactive "just for part of the night... then after the concerts everyone just came back to McDonald's again." It was easily observed that the concerts were having considerable effect upon the Corner hanging routine. Around 10:00 floods of teens would come in from the concert. Everyone would be stoned by then and the musical vibrations could still be felt among the activity of the crowd - Skinny Gene could be seen bouncing around in the streets, still rocking to B.B. King. McDonald's would be stormed, and groups of teens would gather around the corner entrance to talk till hassled by the cops or management.

The point to be asserted here is that as we see the environment closing down on the large and the small scales, the burden for such closure is ultimately felt by the McDonald management through changes in the adolescent hanging routine.

THE EXISTENTIAL OF HANGING

Many places that pose as legitimate hangouts for teens - such as coffee houses - are frequently so selective that they serve only a fragment of the teenage population. The Gate is an excellent example of this. The Gate is a very successful, free coffee house located in the kitchen annex of one of the more liberal Bostonian churches. It is entered through a narrow, wooden stairway in the back, giving one the impression of evangelical independence. On a small bulletin board a short statement tells anyone where contacts can be made for over-night accommodations. The room is quite small, dark, and usually crowded; thick, homey carpets deck the floor where large, over-stuffed pillows and old wooden chairs rest beside cable-spool tables. One wall near the entrance is entirely mirrored in aluminum foil. Two ancient soda booths stand erect and full in a back corner. Towards the front, red and blue floods against a lavender wall backdrop a folksy singer on a small raised platform. Two plunging, swing-mount mikes connect him to a house-owned reverberator sound system. It is all very cosy and warm. The night we were there three people played. There were many silent periods when groups of people simply clustered about and talked while guitars and free soup and hot dogs were passed around. Others made silent love upon the over-stuffed pillows. As nice as it may sound, the fact remains that these are not Coolidge Corner freaks lying beside us. As one guy mentioned: "Half the kids at McDonald's

wouldn't get along good with the people at the coffee house..." And if they would start coming, "they'd close those coffee houses down fast." As with many coffee houses, the Gate serves primarily college students or high school kids who will ultimately be going to college; the conversations are pseudo-intellectual as is the music, and the setting is reserved and quiet, and somewhat muted, as if the activity were being absorbed as the music into the thick carpeting below. A good number of teens believe in these places quite strongly. One girl, who knew of the Corner and had friends who hung there, but preferred getting out and meeting new faces, argued:

"You know where the kids should go instead of to McDonald's? They got plenty of coffee houses in Boston. That's where I went... The Gate, there's the Stoned Phoenix, there's the Arlington Street Church."

When questioned by a McDonald's friend about why she goes to the coffee houses and sits there all night, she replied in her own rational:

"To listen to music. What do you listen to? Kids all night - 'Do you want to buy this? Do you want to buy that? I got really good stuff...' You get away and meet different people and, you know, face reality or whatever."

It was finally revealed, however -

"They can get out. It's just that, you see, they don't want to."

Places are definitely closing down, changing orientation or occupation, or are becoming particularly selective, and for some teens this poses a considerable constraint on how they meet their friends, what they do, and where they go. On the other hand it is apparent that anyone can find alternatives if he really wants to, especially within the Boston area. There are some teens on the Corner who even have the necessary mobility, money, and social opportunity to seek alternatives to McDonald's but choose instead to hang, almost in defiance of doing anything else; as explained by one teen:

"This may sound strange, but a lot of the kids up there, some of them come from rich families, some of them don't. Like I could pick out a few kids that I've known a long time and their family can't even afford to give them thirty-five cents a day for lunch... And like generally, the kids that come down from South Brookline, they're the ones that are really wasting their lives, you know... They can go up to their parents and say - 'Hey, like give me five bucks so I can go to the drive-in or something;' but they don't, they just come down to Coolidge Corner. But the kids that can't get the money, I can see their point; they just hang around 'cause there's nothing else to do and their parents can't afford to give them two bucks a week for school lunch... Some of the kids up there maybe too young to get a regular job, like the state law of sixteen... Some of them are over sixteen and they can get a job... I don't know. I mean, 'cause a lot of the

kids that hang up there they have the type of parents that can give them ten dollars every weekend... but they take the money, bring it all down to Coolidge Corner and blow it on McDonald's. Meanwhile, the kids that can't get the money wish to hell that they could get the money so they could go somewhere, but they can't... Like all the money that's spent at McDonald's... just the kids that hang there every night, you could buy the town of Brookline with all that. They're just doing nothing up there, wasting their money and their lives up there... I mean, it's all right to see the same faces, you know, but not twenty-four hours a day. I think if they got the idea... like moving around or like meeting new people for a change, you know, some of them might be different."

A good number of genuine Coolidge Corner freaks would appear to have no idealized point of view - as the Veteran described: some are "just doing nothing up there..." At times there is an underlying passivity to the hanging routine itself. Contacts often don't occur for many hours; there is much time spent just waiting around, apparently uncommitted to any other activity. If it is true, as the one teen mentioned, that "they can get out. It's just that, you see, they don't want to," what does it mean to not "want to"? Some of the teens themselves have said simply that they are just too lazy. But from the teen activity we have observed on and around the Corner we could hardly call them lazy. It might be true that if they did get the idea to move around or meet new people for a change, some of them might be different, but then they probably would not

be Coolidge Corner freaks. We have seen it happen quite frequently - the idea does eventually come to leave the Corner, they do find new faces and new interests and often never return to be Coolidge Corner freaks again. Well then, what is happening here?

It occurs to us that hanging on the Corner is, for some teens, a period of moratorium from a world that barely gives him the opportunity to be an adolescent. It is here that he can be neutral, or existential until he can see some fit or compromise with adult society, or until he simply grows up and can shroud his adolescence with age. In America the adolescent hardly has the time or opportunity to discover himself before he is seduced by the norms of adult society.* There are shades of such seduction with nearly every Coolidge Corner teen. In our interviews Corner teens have often spoken about their relationships with friends out of school, over 21, college students, etc. - those recognized through age or occupation as one step above the adolescent on the ladder to adulthood.

* Even the coffee house syndrome is a subtle expression of this seduction - It is not surprising to find most of these houses in church basements or in some way affiliated with religious organizations who themselves are idealized or oriented toward specific adult life goals or viewpoints. The coffee house environment can only accept those adolescents who are prepared to make their compromise with adult society - the "ideal" coffee house adolescent being quiet, reserved, and involved (preferably intellectually) in something that "proves" to the adult society that he is doing "something" without conflict.

With certain disgust, the Corner adolescent refers to teens younger than himself as teenyboppers, faggots, immature, or whatever slander one can fabricate. One guy, who at 24 still hangs around the Corner picking up 14 year old girls, is considered by the teens to be wasting his life as well as being a bit strange, although he takes part in exactly the same activities as the teens themselves. Such is the strength of the drive toward mature adulthood in America.

THE DRUG CULTURE AND THE TEEN

An important characteristic of the Coolidge Corner teen is his identity with dope. When the teens were asked what the one important difference was between Coolidge Corner kids and other teens, there was always the patent reply - "dope". Dope has been part of the Coolidge Corner scene for quite awhile; there is some thought that Coolidge Corner has already passed through one drug cycle and is now into a new one, a theory documented by the Veteran:

"Like when I used to hang at Brighams - like a long time ago - it was mostly just grass and beer and whiskey and stuff, and wine. And then gradually acid came in and then opium and all that stuff started coming in. And then, all of a sudden, when scag (heroin) finally hit the place, everybody just left Coolidge Corner to go their different ways. Like moving down Marlborough Street. A lot of kids started getting into scag down there and their heads just completely changed - they became different people. Then they started leaving Brookline. Then, all of a sudden, everything was quiet again and it started all over again. It was quiet during the time they were building McDonald's. Between Brighams and McDonald's kids still hung up there but not that many."

Some of our interviews suggest that the present Corner kids developed as a "group" through and with the adaptation of McDonald's as a hangout. Part of this adaptation involved the use of drugs. Drugs have played a major role in nurtur-

ing (but not necessarily establishing) the existential philosophy and resulting moratorium. When that pill is downed one has a perfectly legitimate excuse for doing nothing at all, helping to remove the guilt one may have been led to have by the adult world about dropping out. Some teens and social workers on the Corner say that the reasons for taking dope have changed over the years - where several years ago dope, in its experimental stage, was taken primarily as a mind expander, "experience", or to "get into things", it is now taken more for its ability to erase the future and past, and provide a pleasant experience of the present. The wide use of barbiturates or downers might indicate some reinforcement of this rather critical notion. The old depressant/intoxicant alcohol is still very popular at the Corner as exhibited by the beer cans stuffed in the johns, the requests made on the streets, and the parties in the park or parking lot. Marihuana, which can also be used as a depressant, is also very popular and an easily acquired Corner commodity.

In many ways dope has broken some of the critical barriers of the alcohol era. Today a person can carry a capsule in the palm of his hand or pocket, down it quickly almost anywhere (some teens have told us of times when a cap was downed to avoid arrest for possession), and be relatively sure of a pretty good four or five hour "high" for the rest of the evening. The compactibility, concealment,

and cheapness of such products has made them readily available for anyone of any age - it is no longer necessary to find a guy over 21 who will buy that six-pack for you (although it is still frequently done), or discover yourself at the counter of the distributor - class-ring turned over in imitation of a wedding band - asking as calm and mature as possible for a fifth of Seagram's. The distribution system is primarily the teen's own, following closely the same path as the "grape vine"; thus, for most teens there is little need to go through the hassel of the adult distribution systems (many kids simply ask their nearest friend if he has any extras, and usually he does). We were offered joints by the teens on many occasions. Grass is so available and cheap that it is often given away by friends.

THE DOPE MYSTIQUE

To the inexperienced outsider it is difficult to distinguish, from physical appearance, what drug the user is on although there are some distinct and detectable differences in behaviors one drug from another (there is even that certain mysterious affinity between users called "vibrations" that some say allows them to detect degrees of high and orientation of thought - "good" and "bad" vibrations - between themselves). This could be incredibly frightening to the parent who discovers that he cannot distinguish one drug from another let alone whether his son or daughter is genuinely "stoned". And what is the suspicious parent to

do - make his kid walk the line (he could probably do rather well); or smell the odorless dope on his breath? It is often never detected until the caps are found in the dresser drawer or the kid suffers an overdose. For the teen, however, the dope mystique is quite advantageous - it allows him to appear "stoned" in public places of all kinds without definitive detection. He may even find it a rather amusing or challenging experience - "Do I look like I'm stoned?"

It is quite common to see a group of perhaps five or six teens come into McDonald's, perfectly stoned and silent, to simply enjoy a moment of togetherness over a McDonald's cola. There is no evidence of the drug itself - no bulging pockets, no empty cans, no detectable vapors. Even the observing cop has no legitimate way of proving their intoxicated condition. Some teens can even appear quite natural while stoned - our first interview in fact was with a teenage girl who many months later informed us, to our surprise, that she had been "stoned out of the mind" that afternoon. If "highs" can be masked over so effectively then it is entirely possible that all those teens hanging in McDonald's, even those appearing to be sober, are stoned. When several teens let their props fall and reveal to the public that they are indeed "stoned" - eyes watery and bloodshot, head swaddled in their arms, slow, somnambulistic movements - they not only disclose their own condition, but also disclose the possibility that those of whom they are

with are also stoned. As explained in the following interview, this can easily lead to an exaggerated image of the group and the place in which they hang:

WHY DON'T YOUR PARENTS ALLOW YOU TO GO TO McDONALD'S?

"Because of all the 'hippies and dope fiends'".

ARE THOSE THE THINGS THAT THEY SAY? IS THAT THEIR IMAGE?

"Well they're really, really conservative. They're the typical middle-class Americans - 'You're not suppose to go down there and you'll get a bad reputation if you do.' Besides, half my neighborhood is policemen and they tell my parents - 'Oh that's a bad place to go. I wouldn't allow my daughter down there if I were you.' So therefore they're going to keep me away from it because they think they'll get a bad reputation because I'm down there - 'Oh boy, look what they're letting their daughter do. They're letting her go down to McDonald's. Boy she must be really bad or something,' you know.

Another teen made the point even stronger when she added:

"I heard my father's impression one night, and his impression of McDonlad's is, you know - like there's people standing on the corner with wheel barrows full of dope, you know. 'You can get your dope here.' or 'Anybody want to get raped just ah (walk down to McDonald's),' you know; giving out cards and stuff."

The two teens made it fairly clear that simply being at McDonald's does not make one part of the drug activity, although it may make one appear to be part of the drug scene.

One enters such activity on a conscious and deliberate level:

"Wherever you go you're going to find people selling dope. And they don't come and push it on you, right? If you want some you've got to go and look for it, but you have to come up and say - 'Hey, who's selling any dope?' you know. And they'll say - 'Well this kid might be and that kid,' you know."

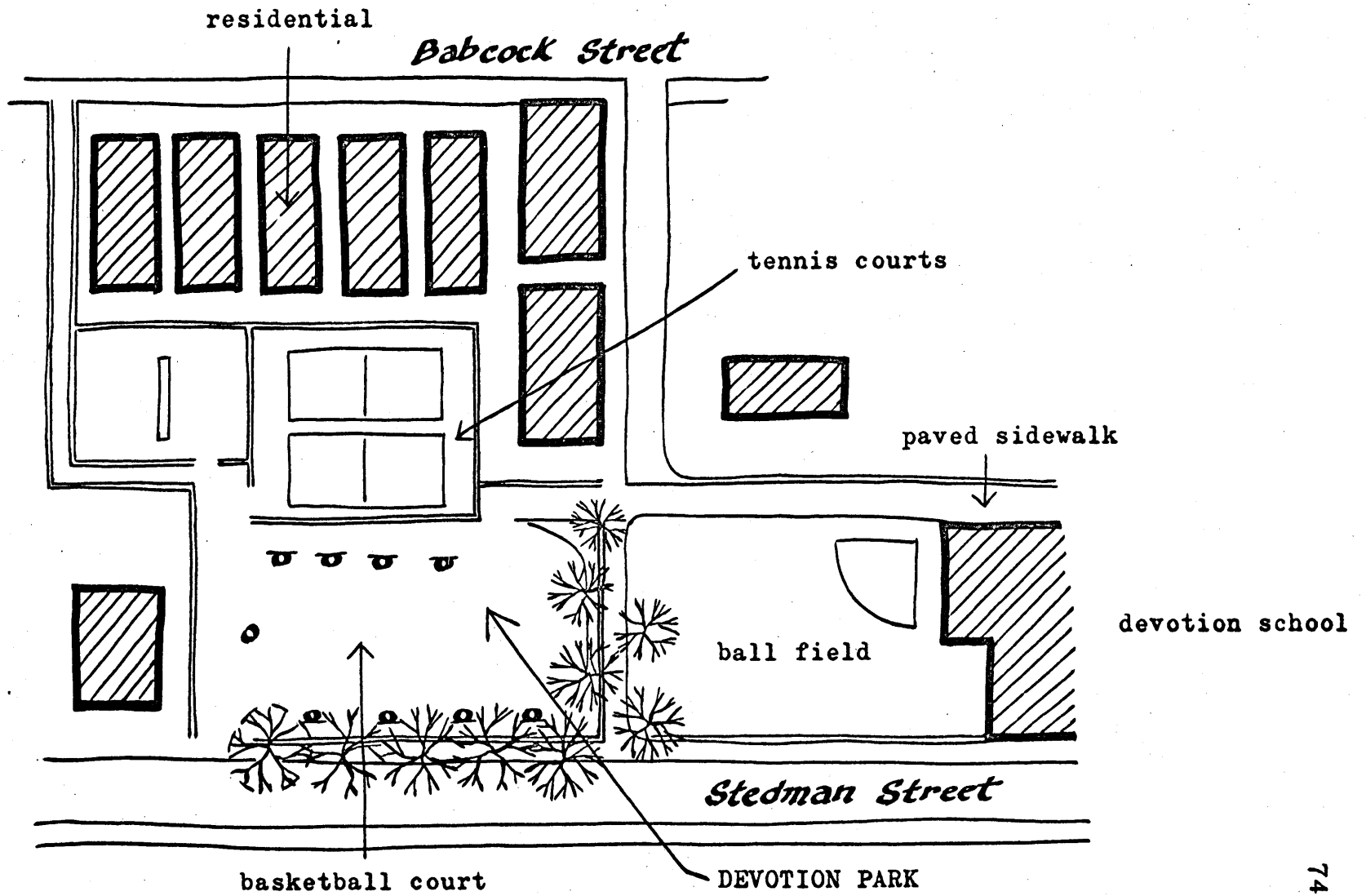
"People don't go around advertising - 'This person is pushing dope, this person is this, this person is that,' you know."

DEVOTION PARK

As expressed in the previous interview, McDonald's is often thought of as the dope capital of the Corner. There are plenty of other places, however, where drug activity is much more appropriate as well as apparent. Because of its public character and its suitability as a hangout for teen congregations, McDonald's functions rather well as a place to make connections for dope or for discovering "who has it" that evening, in much the same way as it functions as a terminal where "outside" information on "what's happening" can be acquired. Of course, dope, being what it is, can easily be exchanged and taken almost anywhere and occasionally this does occur, rather boldly, within the public arena of McDonald's.

WHERE CAN YOU GO TO GET STONED?

"Anywhere around Devotion Park. I've done it in



Devotion Park, in back of McDonald's, in McDonald's, in back of the theater, walking the streets, on the way to the Drop In Center, in the Drop In Center."

If it must occur at McDonald's it will usually happen within the privacy of the public restrooms or along an adjacent street. It is more common, however, to make McDonald's part of a larger routine in which a group initially gathers at McDonald's and then goes somewhere else for part or all of that evening. A particularly popular place to go is, as mentioned above, Devotion Park:

"Anyone can get served in T.J.'s, but the drinks cost, like \$1.50, right," said one teen, "and they stink too. I'd rather go out and get a six pack of beer and drink it down at Devotion than go to T.J.'s and have a Daiquiri."

Devotion is a fenced-in basketball and tennis court near a large baseball field owned and adjacent to Devotion Parochial Elementary School.* It is an easy five minute walk from the Corner and McDonald's. Because it is an open area its popularity is usually restricted to the warm months and summer vacation. One girl, talking to us on a cool October afternoon, described the seasonal effects on Park activity:

* This is the same school, incidentally, that the late president - John F. Kennedy was once suspended from for misbehavior when he was just a kid. It is quite possible that Jack may have hung around the park and Corner himself.

"I've walked down there Friday nights and there haven't been that many kids down there. At one time or another a group will go down and a couple of other groups will go down and have a cigarette; or if somebody has some dope they'll go down and have it; if they have beer they'll go down and have it; but other than that, to me, it hasn't been that busy. During the summer Devotion's more popular... the big thing is beer and everything. During the summer the kids don't have to get up early for school so there's a lot of dope and a lot of beer. Dope's the main thing."

IS DEVOTION A MEETING PLACE?

"No. I don't think so."

THEY GO DOWN THERE IN GROUPS?

"Yeah. Usually groups will go down from McDonald's."

WHERE DO THEY GO AFTER DEVOTION?

"They go back to McDonald's."

This is, of course, part of the old routine of getting stoned and then going "somewhere there's a lot of people so you can freak out". Grouping, as expressed in the statements above, is one social characteristic of dope that is a rather important part of the Coolidge Corner hanging routine. Smoking dope - marihuana or hashish in particular - is often taught by a close friend or group of friends. The first few times one may not even feel the effects of the drug. Group reinforcement and definition of the desirability of the "high" experience, however, will usually persuade the novice

to continue at some future date until the high is eventually experienced. Smoking dope, from its inception on, is primarily a close group experience. Devotion and McDonlad's are both known and respected parts of the teen's hanging routine primarily because of their ability, both socially and physically, to accommodate the group.

Many nights we walked by Devotion Park, along a well lit street, the bright lamps shining against the tall cyclone fencing - there, somewhere beyond the fence, amid the heavily foliated trees and blackness of the night were grouped between ten and twenty teens; the only evidence of their existence - the low rumble of conversation, an occasional howl or burst of laughter, and softly glowing cigarette and grass stubs. Their position was surprisingly safe. From where they stood they could observe every move we made toward them and within the park was a maze of small. pedestrian exits between neighboring homes. It was so safe apparently that the summer before police had paved-over a sidewalk at the top of the hill (where no street light exists) so they could make an inconspicuous, "surprise" entry into the teen-laden park.

According to the teens, hanging did not become an important aspect of Devotion Park until dope became part of the scene; in fact, before the groups started going down there, the park was considered a dangerous place for anyone

to be at night. One girl described:

"I was, for a time, a little frightened of going down there because of the stories I heard and it was true when there weren't a lot of kids going down there. But now there's nothing really bad that can happen there. There's so many kids to protect you. We used to hear of rapes or kids being molested and shit like that, but that doesn't happen now. Everybody goes down there are all our friends - they're not going to do anything."

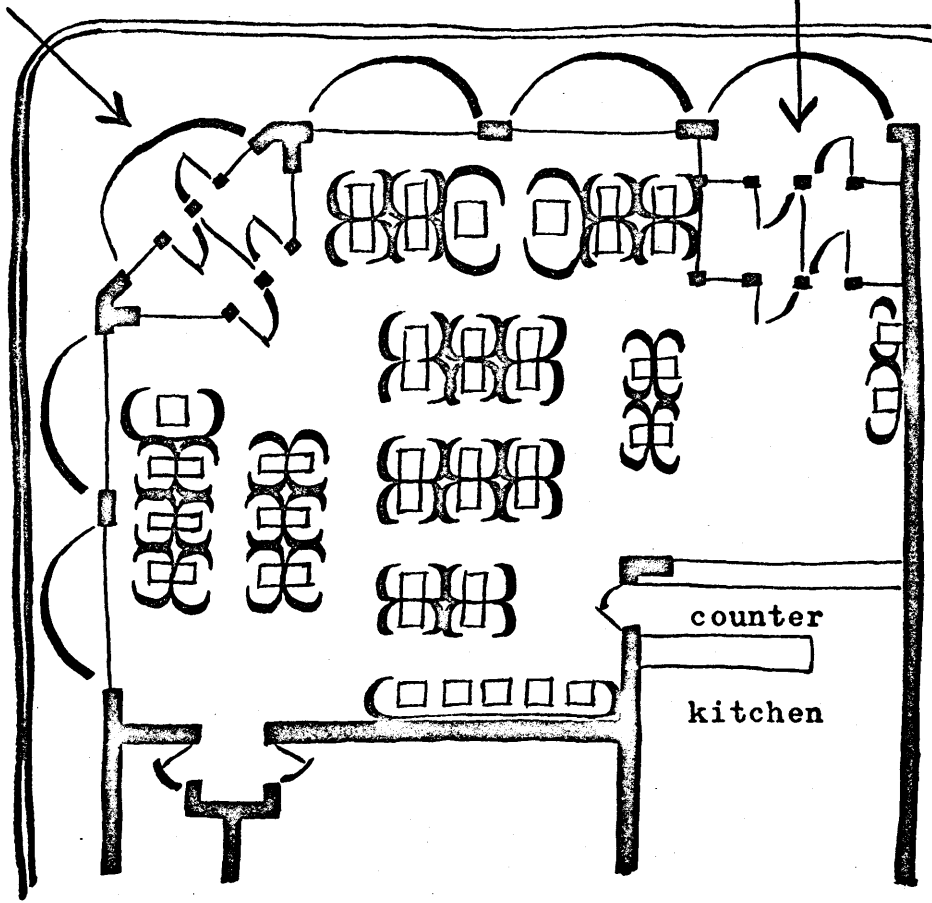
The interesting notion that arises from this is that perhaps the sociogenic properties of dope, accompanied by the fact that the users presently demand places which provide insured privacy, could actually benefit the community by making those dark, mysterious, dangerous places of past eras into "safe" territories surveyed and protected by those who use them.

Harvard Street

corner entrance

side entrance

Green Street




restrooms

counter

kitchen

McDONALD'S RESTAURANT

 = eating booth.

THE FIT BETWEEN HANGING AND SETTING

Paul Montour, manager of McDonald's when it first opened, recalled that the teens began to hang in the restaurant,

"...right away, the first day. The same kids I kicked out (later) were coming in. I don't know where they came from but they came from someplace. They were waiting for the place to open. They were all waiting in the Pewter Pot though and then they decided that the Pewter Pot wasn't as comfortable and the prices were much higher."

The teens with whom we talked do not remember their entry into McDonald's as being quite so dramatic or sudden as indicated above. They recall that they had first heard of this new place from their friends who had been there or had also learned of it through friends. They first came in small groups, in clusters of perhaps only two or three friends, only to find that other friends and acquaintances were also there - and they kept coming back. Whether McDonald's was ambushed by hordes of kids laying in wait at the Pewter Pot as Montour implied or filled through extensive employment of the grape vine as the teens suggest, it soon became a hangout during the first fall of operation. Why do the teens come here? The answers that the kids would tend to give to this question would convey little information about the place; rather they would simply reaffirm the fact that the teens do come here. One teen came to McDonald's

because "everybody meets there, everybody." Its primarily attribute for the Corner kid is that, "that's where the kids are." Hamburgers seem to have little to do with the attraction that the restaurant holds for the teen. If the teens have any feelings about the place, they tend to be rather negative. One teen conveyed her image of McDonald's in one descriptive epithet, "artificial plastic". Often their attitude toward the setting expressed a certain indifference. The physical setting seems to have made much less of an impression upon them than the key personnel here who have considerable impact upon their activity: the management, the police, the security guards, and the social workers. In the opinion of one girl:

"It's better than nothing. There's nothing around. I think it's cold. That's the way it looks to me - cold atmosphere. Not that comfortable. Because I've been kicked out so much, it isn't a warm atmosphere. Like I'd rather sit in the Pewter Pot as opposed to McDonlad's, but there's nobody in the Pewter Pot."

It is striking that in all of the conversations among the teens which we overheard or in which we participated, never did they spontaneously discuss the setting in terms of its physical characteristics or its attributes as a restaurant. It seems as if McDonlad's - as a place - is an essentially neutral ground, a backdrop for their activity. One Corner kid told us that she had never noticed the muzak that is continually piped into the customer area.

It seems to us that the teens gather in McDonald's not because of what it sells or offers as a restaurant, but simply because it is a good place to hang - better evidently than any other available location. According to one teen, "McDonald's has the food, it has the seating and everything, and that's where everybody's going to drive by, and it's still in the center of Coolidge Corner." This analysis is strictly utilitarian in attitude. McDonald's may be a neutral and not very likable place, but it works; one can hang there. The teens quoted above indicated three broad sets of attributes which facilitate hanging: location, the relationship to the street, and grouping area. The amenity of food could be included in the last category. We can briefly examine these three sets and see how they relate to the hanging activity.

LOCATION

In the view of the teen, McDonald's is "in the center of Coolidge Corner - and is often, in fact, referred to as "the Corner". It is actually removed from the intersection of Beacon Street and Harvard Avenue, to which the label "Coolidge Corner" refers, by a rather short block. This intersection is a key transit node. Beacon is a major street and trolley line which radiates out from down-town Boston. Harvard is also an important street upon which runs several bus lines. Teens from all over Brookline can connect with the Corner by either auto or transit. McDonald's is

also a pleasant ten minute walk from Brookline High School, through tree lined, residential side streets. The proximity of the restaurant to this important transit node and to the high school allow it to be a suitable terminal not only for the Corner kids from the immediate area but also for teens from all over Brookline - and for teens from outside the Brookline area as well. Black students, who are bused in to Brookline High from Roxbury, began to appear last winter at McDonald's every Friday night around 10:00 - immediately after the weekly basketball game at school. The restaurant was not only conveniently close to school, but located directly across from the transit stop where a bus to Roxbury can be watched for and secured.

Coolidge Corner is also one of the major shopping areas of Brookline. There are several stores there which could have a certain appeal to teens: two ice cream parlors, a large paper-back book store, two record shops, several clothing stores, and many restaurants and snack shops. These shops fall within a two block radius of McDonald's, and many are located on the same block as the restaurant. While these shops may not function well as hangouts, they do provide an amenity for the teens which mediates hanging on the corner at large. One teen told us that whenever she was evicted from McDonald's she would walk up and down the main streets, observing passers-by and window shopping until sufficient time had elapsed to return to the restaurant.

McDonald's is also located near the other places where teens hang on the Corner. Only two blocks away, Devotion Park provides sports facilities during the day and a dark, insular space at night to drink, smoke dope, and deal. Just across Harvard Avenue, behind the shops, is a municipal parking lot where the teens often gather in warm weather. Behind McDonald's is a maze of quiet, tree lined residential streets, always pleasant for a stroll, and often used at night by the teen who wishes to smoke a joint with a friend or pass a can of beer back and forth.

A STROLL DOWN HARVARD STREET

We obtained a more intuitive understanding of how this larger environment "fits" into the hanging routine during a warm fall afternoon spent on the Corner with two core girls. The afternoon had begun as an interview with the girls at the high school. One of our "subjects", however, had just acquired one half of a gram of hashish from a friend in the halls and felt that its immediate consumption was most urgent. After a few minutes in the middle of the school soccer field, trying to keep that piece of soot lit, it was clear that we were not going to be able to question our companions about hanging on the Corner. Instead the four of us were to decide just how we were going to spend that particular fall afternoon. We first argued that we were all hungry; to be precise, we had the "hungries". There was a small submarine shop near the school, but the

greatest selection of restaurants, we were informed, was at Coolidge Corner. After reassuring each other that we would not eat at McDonald's, we departed for the Corner. We chose to eat at a small pizzeria on Harvard Street, just two blocks from McDonald's. Since our immediate interest was in food and not in who could be seen, the absence of other teens in the restaurant did not lessen our enjoyment of the pizza. Satiated, we immediately left the restaurant - there was no need to linger - and began to walk down Harvard toward the Corner. The girls were attracted by some old denim jackets in a store window. We entered to further inspect the used clothing. Its worn, frayed edges allowed the store to ask for outrageous prices of the teens who would pay for the instant street image. The shop next door offered us a variety of low cost, mass produced "art and craft" items - mod, arty, hip, interesting things to fondle and toy with, particularly before the effect of the hashish begins to wear off. We continued our stroll down Harvard across Beacon to McDonald's which, at 2:00, seemed relatively empty of teens. Just in front of the restaurant, a Corner boy approached one of the girls and asked her if she would pick up a tab of acid for him that evening. Her response, perhaps in acknowledgement of our presence, was noncommittal. Our appetite returned as we walk by an ice cream parlor just beyond McDonald's. One could never hang in its cramped floor space, but the ice cream comes in thirty-one flavors. We succumbed to its temptation. Our walk then continued

down Harvard, past the remaining shops, to Devotion School where we turned to cut through to the play ground just behind the school. Only three teens were in the park, sitting on the slope overlooking the ball field, and they left just as we arrived. We listened to a tape of a previous interview with the girls, each of us incredulous at the sound of his or her own voice... "Did I say that? No..!" Clouds gathered overhead and a light rain began to fall. We immediately left for McDonald's, the most readily accessible shelter. It was 3:00, and several Corner kids had gathered at the restaurant. Though we had to leave, the two girls decided to remain with their friends.

This rather slow paced, meandering fall afternoon on the Corner reveals, we think, the relative richness of this location as a place for the teens to hang. It illustrates the respective roles of McDonald's and the other shops on the Corner. The other stores appealed to us directly through their dominant routine: the pizza, the old denims, the novelty items, the ice cream - the goods that the shops displayed or sold. McDonald's only became "attractive" when it was full of teens. Yet, throughout the afternoon, it remained a focus. At every decision point, we considered whether or not we would go to McDonald's. Amenity, novelty, interest pulled us in other directions, but our primary orientation to the other teens, to "everybody", drew us back to the restaurant. It is also striking that in spite of the

meandering quality of our afternoon, our journey was basically just a walk down Harvard Street, from one end of Coolidge Corner to the other. It was spontaneous, eventful, impulsive in pace and direction, yet routine at the same time; we stopped at shops that we had all visited before on quite similar walks about the Corner. No doubt the hashish gave assistance in directing our attention to novelty and detail. However, we were responding to what was there, and our experience reflects and affirms the richness of the Corner.

RELATIONSHIP TO STREET

Paul Montour, the manager of McDonald's, stated that the teens, "were all waiting in the Pewter Pot and then they decided that the Pewter Pot wasn't as comfortable" and came directly to the new restaurant across the street. The Pewter Pot shares the same location attributes as McDonald's, yet, since the latter opened nearly two years ago, the teens have not hung there. They would still patronize the restaurant in small groups for its food and atmosphere. One girl with a particularly merciless attack of the hungries, spent much of one Friday evening in anticipation of their clam chowder, and was finally able to tear herself away from the prime time Corner scene to satisfy her craving. Clearly, McDonald's would not do at such time. However, in spite of its superior amenity value as a restaurant, we doubt that the Pewter Pot is nearly as satisfactory a place to hang. One of the major differences between the two restaurants can be found

in their relationship to the two streets which both face. The Pewter Pot has only two windows opening onto the street. Both are rather large, bowed windows, grilled in neo-colonial fashion to convey its "warm, traditional" identity to the public. The dimly lit seating area is set back from the windows behind the lobby and cash register. Both transmit little information about what is happening inside the restaurant to passers-by on the street, nor do they allow its patrons to learn much of street activity. In general, the restaurant seems to be a very insular space, cut off from the street, with little potential for communication between customer inside and pedestrian outside.

In contrast to the insularity of the Pewter Pot, McDonald's reveals its interior to the street through a continuous facade of enormous arched windows. The rows of seating are parallel and adjacent to each set of windows on both streets, although Harvard sets the dominant direction for the seating (which parallels the main circulation route through the store, from corner entrance to service area). The lighting level is such that the windows are fairly transparent, in and out, both day and night.

As the Pewter Pot, McDonald's seems to convey a certain identity through the character of its facade. However, the tasteful, quiet exterior of McDonald's, with the Neo-Romanesque brick arches and their rather subtle

recessive molding, probably allude more to the now defunct Raymond's than it does to the world famous golden arches. Rather than rely only upon surface graphics to convey identity, McDonald's advertises itself by opening the interior and its activity to the street. The transparency has allowed the restaurant to identify itself in a much more direct fashion than the Pewter Pot. The approach of McDonald's is honest and boldly self confident. It assumes that there is little risk in such public exposure, that the activity inside will never be such as to turn potential customers away. It also assumes that the activity inside is in itself so transparent, so well known to the public at large, that it needs little other identification. Their customers, sitting in the booths with colas and Big Mac before them, have taken the place of those grandiose arches of gold, to become a primary means of communicating an identity.

Even though McDonald's seems to have entrusted to this transparency a vital role, the projection of its identity, it takes little advantage of its potential as a medium for communication. In routine use of the restaurant, interaction through the windows is minimal, allowing passers-by to catch fleeting, enticing glimpses of the multitude of customers at their repast while the patrons inside enjoy the amenity of the street-scape. It is ironic that the pedestrian oriented corner McDonald's does not engage the street in a more active way, since it represents a mutation of the

traditional auto-oriented drive-in, in which brick paved aisles replace the asphalt driveway, fixed booths and tables succeed the versatile flexibility and variation of the automobile, and now people move down those corridors instead of cars. This potential for interaction between interior and exterior, service and street which is implicit in the transparency and openness of McDonald's, is realized only through the hanging process of the teens.

This transparency, in our judgement, serves the hanging process well. It allows the teen to use the restaurant as a terminal by facilitating communication between those hanging within the store and those in the movement corridors without. It allows teens who are walking or driving by to "check out" activity within the restaurant without committing his money or himself to those inside and without disrupting the flow of his activity on the street. During our stroll down Harvard Street that fall afternoon, we had little inclination to break our easy going inertia that we might enter McDonald's to learn who, if anybody, was inside. Fortunately, the transparent facade conveyed all of the necessary information. In the same way, those inside can keep in touch with the street without cutting off the flow of activity within the store. They can learn if particular friends have arrived or if those kids from South Brookline have driven by in that new Cutless convertible again. In some ways, hanging is a very passive activity; one waits for

things to happen or one lets things happen. The transparency allows the teen to learn of what is happening beyond its interface without making an initial commitment. One can check things out before becoming involved. It allows the teen to keep his future course of action open.

The teens will do more than just "check out" a situation, however. Two friends will engage in a more extended and personal dialogue across the glass facade, inaudible to each other, but able to utilize eye contact, facial expression, gesture, and sign. One teen might pantomime, or he might mouth the syllables and spell out words in the air. The communication can be more abbreviated; one teen may simply signal another, by a wave of the hand or a tap on the glass. Interaction, in Goffman's terminology, is often "focused", occurring between two or more individuals, each an active participant in the give and take of the visual conversation.¹

The transparency of McDonald's created another zone in which the teens can hang, an intermediate zone between street and the floor area of the restaurant. This interface zone grants the teen a certain freedom of movement. He has the potential for involvement with other teens who are either within the restaurant or in transit on the street, and he maintains the option to shift involvements from one to the other. For the teen, interior grouping area, interface, and

the immediate traffic corridors comprise one setting for visual interaction. The transparency defines both inside and outside as one scene for hanging on the Corner.

SETBACKS

An important element of the facade of McDonald's is the beveled corner entrance. Stores will often have such an entrance at busy intersections because it can then serve traffic on two axis and it places the "front door" at a definite locus which frequently has a strong identity. The truncated facade of McDonald's is not located on such a prominent intersection. Green is a lightly trafficked side street winding into the surrounding residential area. By beveling its facade, however, the restaurant is able to orient an entrance to the key intersection of Beacon and Harvard only a short block away. At this scale, McDonald's seems to rely only upon its name in bold but simple type and the rather subtle imagery of the red brick arches (subtle for street-scape and for McDonald's) to convey its identity. This corner entrance is essentially McDonald's front door, its most public face. It is also a location in which the teens frequently hang.

The corner entrance has several attributes which support its use as an important terminal location by the teens. It allows the teens who hang here to maintain several different orientations simultaneously. He has

contact with the considerable traffic on Harvard, with the teens who often gather on Green, and with those inside McDonald's. Its orientation to Coolidge Corner grants them visual access to the bus and trolley terminals from which many teens would arrive. Automobiles which would legally turn onto Green from Harvard must approach from this direction also, as would teens walking to the Corner from school.

The truncation of the facade creates a space which is set back from the general movement of pedestrian traffic, allowing teens to hang in the interface without obstructing the intense movement of pedestrians on Harvard. By shifting to the Green Street side of the "setback", they can avoid blocking the flow of customers in and out of the restaurant, while still maintaining sufficient proximity to mingle with teens entering and leaving the restaurant. Green Street can also be viewed as a setback from the persistent flow of automobiles and pedestrians on Harvard Street. Harvard is usually far too busy to allow other than the most fleeting visual contact between teens in automobiles and those on the sidewalk or in the restaurant. Green Street, with its light traffic and unobstructed curb adjacent to McDonald's (a posted no parking zone) serves as a terminal for interaction among teens on foot, in auto, and on motor bike. The proximity of interior seating, windows, sidewalk, (illicit) curb parking, and the corner entrance creates a potential for interaction between the floor area of McDonald's and

the street. This setback facilitates "cruising" by the teens. They can slow down as they drive past the restaurant to "check it out" without risk of obstructing traffic. If they should sight a familiar face or want to enter McDonald's, they can pull over into the no parking zone. Here, they can wait for a friend or a connection or, sitting in their car, simply wait for something to happen - just as the kids in the booths inside the restaurant. The setback hardly accommodates as many automobiles as the parking lot of the traditional McDonald's drive-in. However, it seems to adequately serve the few Corner teens who have access to cars and their many friends who take advantage of this privilege.

GROUPING AREA

We never talked to any of the older group which had hung at the Pewter Pot, but we surmise that this restaurant was never a very suitable place to hang. Aside from its lack of visual contact with the street and its rather high admissions of a fifty cent minimum, it represents a rather small, dimly lit seating area which would hardly be adequate for the thirty or forty teens that gather on the Corner on a normal weekend night. The seating is laid out in rows within a long rectangular space and is split in by an opaque partition which runs the length of the restaurant. Although this configuration creates a rather pleasant, intimate atmosphere, it would allow little communication, verbal or visual, among the few teens who could find seating.

McDonald's, in contrast, is an enormous well lit interior space, seating as many as 198 customers. Generally, the restaurant is filled to capacity only during the lunch and dinner hours. In the late afternoon and evening periods, when the kids tend to hang, the seating is usually only half full and can easily accommodate the Corner regulars and the other groups of teens who make the "grand appearance". The capacity of this space was indicated by its ability to seat the additional thirty or more black students every Friday night during prime time this last winter. Although the restaurant is slightly irregular in plan, it is a fairly centralized space. It is also a very open space. The booths and the low partitions between them are only about three feet high. There are few seating areas from which one cannot view the entire floor area, and those few, next to the service counter are avoided by the teens. This centrality and openness of the space facilitates visual communication among the teens and allows them to interact as a group. A more elongated or partitioned space, such as the Pewter Pot, could tend to force the teens to gather in smaller clusters and could restrict their freedom to shift involvements from one cluster to another.

The teens tend to sit in a single section of booths, that is adjacent to Green Street and just below the lobby area by the corner entrance. Here they can maintain visual contact with the teens who hang outside on Green Street and

can communicate easily with those grouping in the lobby or the setback. Other customers would rarely sit in this area during the late afternoon and evening when the teens were present, and consequently, the kids were usually free to sit in the "section".

The routine of sitting in a comfortable, spacious booth with food, drink, and one's friends, and with full view of the floor area and of the immediate street-scape seems to match with the processes of seeing and being seen, conversing with one's friends, awaiting an arrival, or simply waiting for something to do. However, the layout of booths and aisles tends to line them up in rows and limit their visual orientation, and it distributes them in a particular grain and density about the space. This configuration of two rows of adjacent booths does allow a large number of teens to occupy a relatively small area and thus be in conversational range of each other. The occupants of one booth can converse easily with those of the adjacent booths and with some of the occupants of the booths in front and back and on the diagonal. Therefore, with six to a booth, more than twenty teens can verbally interact as a group.

The only spaces in which the teens can stand and circulate are the aisles and the lobby area. The lobby is strategically located, being an interior extension of the corner setback and sharing its unique properties as a terminal.

A large number of teens, perhaps fifteen or twenty could assemble in this space although we have rarely observed more than ten. Too many, of course, would obstruct the flow of customers through the corner entrance. The aisles are more restrictive of circulation and gathering, particularly since the booths are fixed to the floor. Their width of several feet prohibits more than a few teens assembling in conversational clusters and it limits the movement from one group to another to a strictly linear pattern. However, the teens show no aversion to rubbing shoulders with one another; on the contrary, they seem to thrive on it. This rigid pattern of booth and aisles suggests a social routine of circulating the aisles from booth to booth, which seems to parallel the terminal nature of hanging. If these were the only constraints upon the hanging process in McDonald's, then the teens could no doubt manage quite well.

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CONFLICT BETWEEN HANGING AND THE McDONALD'S ROUTINE

The success of any restaurant as a business is dependent, in part, upon its ability to generate turnover among its customers. Because of the limited range of low priced items that it sells, McDonald's must rely heavily upon turnover. There is a basic biological limitation as to just how much can be spent for each consumer at McDonald's; a customer can eat only so many Big Macs (the top of the line). Their routine seems to be well designed for the maintenance of such turnover. In particular, it has restricted the interaction between staff and customer to a single operation at the service counter, where an order is placed, filled and payed for in a matter of seconds. In minimizing staff involvement in this process, however, McDonald's has emphasized the role of the customer in the routine. In fact, the customer is asked to perform routine tasks that in many other restaurants would be the responsibility of the staff. He is responsible for placing the order, conveying food items to his seat, selecting the seat, and for cleaning up after himself. The efficiency of the McDonald's routine is greatly dependent upon the cooperation and good faith of the customer.

The ideal patron, from McDonald's perspective, would proceed through each of these tasks with directness and dispatch, in recognition that any hesitation or slack on his part could slow the flow of food and customers through

the whole system. In this respect, there are certain behaviors which he would not tolerate of himself or others. He would never linger over his food nor remain in a booth long after finishing his meal. He would be particularly careful not to obstruct circulation by standing in the aisles, for example, while talking to a friend. His respect for the conventions of public behavior as well as for the restaurant's routine would prohibit him from conversing with anyone more than several feet away. He would not raise his voice beyond a normal conversational tone. Any extended conversation would occur within the confines of the booth. In general, he always subordinates his own behavior to McDonald's routine. Within the routine, he may allow himself to engage in many varieties of activities: casual conversation with friends, reading, watching passers-by in the street. However, the outward form of these activities always conforms to the limitations and requirements of the system. The ideal customer, of course, finds that there is little conflict in conformity.

It seems to us that if the teens were free to hang in McDonald's without constraint, their behavior would thoroughly and consistently violate the standards of our "ideal" customer. In fact, the teens were rarely free of such constraints. As we shall later discuss, they usually hung in the company of a management official or a policeman hired by the management. However, we can imagine an evening in which, save for a few other customers scattered about the

restaurant, the teens have the floor area to themselves.* It is a Friday night at McDonald's between 10:00 and 11:00, during "prime time", when, according to a Corner girl, "everyone gets high and then comes to McDonald's." There would be a dense massing of teens milling about in the "section" and lobby, and spilling out into the foyer and, weather permitting, down Green Street. One or two cars, each filled with kids, may be parked in the "no-parking zone". The corner entrance and the aisles through the section would be practically impassable. A few teens might be sitting quietly in the booths, one or two couples in each others arms, others stretched out on the table, surprisingly oblivious to the activity about them. Most, however, would be standing - perhaps leaning against booths, tables, walls, but standing - usually in mono-sexual clusters of four or five kids. This dense pattern of clustering teens would be in a continual state of flux. Involvements would shift from one group to another; clusterings dissolve, new ones emerge. At one moment, the whole group may suddenly shift outside. Half of the teens may break off and move down Green Street, toward Devotion Park. Kids would leave; others would arrive to take their place. A contingent of seven or eight girls from South Brookline might make the "grand appearance" and

* This imaginary evening is based not only upon our observations at McDonald's but also at the Drop In Center, where, for several months at least, the teens hung free of such constraints.

find a booth of their own in or near the section, or sighting a familiar face, disappear into the crowd. Occasionally, a teen or two would walk over to the service counter to place an order. Some would be in and out of the restaurant several times before they order so much as a cola. Others would never go near the counter during the two or three hours that they hang at the store. Finally, by eleven or twelve o'clock, several hours after it all began, the kids would have returned the restaurant to its staff and their early morning patrons. All that would remain of their presence would be a floor and sidewalk littered with cigarette butts, a scattering of cola cups, napkins and food wrappings, and, if one looks closely, a roach or two. The restroom - at least, the mens room - would be cluttered with beer can empties, six pack cartons, and snap rings, the size of a dime - stuffed down the waste basket, in the sink, stopping up the commode. The floor boys would begin to sweep away the litter. In ten minutes, there would be no trace of the teens presence.

Viewed holistically, two sets of activity could hardly be more dissimilar than the routine of McDonald's and the hanging of the teens. Examine in a linear fashion, step by step, the routine seems to violate the hanging process at every point. A teen just entering McDonald's would probably have little inclination to walk directly to the counter and make a purchase. Generally he would first greet his friends sitting in the section - perhaps to find out what has been

happening or to learn the whereabouts of a certain friend. He would not have entered the restaurant in the first place if he had not sighted familiar faces in the section. He might anticipate being in and out of the restaurant over the next few hours, and could hardly afford to make a purchase with each entry, let alone consume a cola, fries, and hamburger. With the manager standing nearby, the teen would have little choice. With newly purchased cola in hand, he may still feel little inclination to sit down, as the manager would require. He would rather circulate the aisles, from booth to booth, talking with friends and acquaintances. Confined to a booth, how could he signal a friend across the floor without raising his voice or converse with other teens two booths over. With cola finished after only ten minutes, he probably would not be ready to leave - to turn over his booth to another customer. If he has yet to make a connection or to decide where else to go with his friends - and where else can he go - then, he would probably wish to remain. However, the price of hanging on would be at least the fifteen cents required to refill that cola.

The McDonald's routine, of course, does not prohibit all aspects of the hanging process. While the fifteen cent access fee could add up to a considerable sum if paid every twenty minutes, it is still cheaper than most other restaurants, and it grants teens the opportunity to see and be seen by their friends and to talk at length with several of

them. However, as long as the teens subordinate their behavior to the McDonald's routine, they compromise the hanging process. In terms of its routine, the restaurant seems to hardly be a "fit" environment in which to hang. Not only does this public setting prohibit the use of alcohol and drugs, but it denies some basic tendencies in interaction of hanging - particularly, that of continually shifting involvements. The routine denies the essential fluidity and mobility of interaction in hanging.

THE TEENS AS MISFITS IN McDONALD'S

We have examined the fit between hanging and the setting of McDonald's largely from the perspective of the teens: that is, we have considered how the setting fits the activity. The management of McDonald's, of course, would pose that question in reverse order, asking how the activity fits the setting. Clearly, if the teens were to hang freely in the fashion described in the last chapter, then their activity would consistently violate the McDonald's routine. In the management's perspective they would be considered misfits. The management's concern over the teen's presence involves more than just the obstruction of the flow of customers and food through the McDonald's system.

ILLICIT ACTIVITY

In the view of the previous manager, "Dope addicts hanging around there (McDonald's) is unreal." He saw the restaurant and the restrooms in particular as "...one of the centers of the (drug) problem. The kids go in there and they sell and they buy and you know it and you can't cool it down. There's no doubt about it."

McDonald's may have been "one of the centers", however, we doubt, as discussed earlier, that it was the main arena for drug activity. According to the teens, it was not "the primary place to get wrecked". Rather, it was the place

to come after getting "wrecked" in Devotion Park, on the street, or in an automobile. However, McDonald's was a terminal where connections of all sorts were made, and the restrooms or the sidewalk outside were always a convenient few steps away. While the ingestion of drugs leaves few traces, the wastecans filled with beer can empties in the (mens) restroom gives testimony to some of this activity. Certainly, the illegality of these behaviors would define the teens as misfits.

Other activities of the teens were not only illicit, but had an immediate economic impact upon McDonald's as well. According to the manager, "They cut the seats. Twenty-eight bucks to replace them. Their thrill is, 'That guy. I hate him. He keeps kicking me out. I'm going to bring my knife and cut his seats up.' They do!" The restroom, because of its privacy was also a target:

"They wrecked the restrooms in the first three months the store was open. They would break the windows, break the toilet bowls, break the soap dispensers, jamb them up, anything - pull the tiles off the ceiling!"

IDENTITY

While the management would be concerned about vandalism against their property and may take issue with the use of certain drugs on their premises, their real concern is with the effect of these activities upon their customers and,

ultimately, upon their business. Managers are warned of the teen problem during their training at Hamburger University in Chicago. One professor told his aspiring students to, "...watch out for teenagers. They can definitely affect your profit picture by driving away your adults. They're extremely noisy and messy. They'll use profanity, and that can never be allowed at any McDonald's." The manager concurred with the professor's assessment of the effect of the teen's behavior upon customers:

"They'd come... they could care less about who was in the store. It's like nobody else was in there. And they'd start talking and their language is intolerable; their actions - you got a family over there with little children; they could care less. That really hurts. I'm working so hard for my business. It's my business. That really hurts me."

Along with his fear of customers being repelled by the behavior of the teens in the store, the manager is concerned that the restaurant has taken on the identity of the teens in the view of many potential customers, and, consequently, they have taken their business to other stores. He perceives the problem as involving a conflict between the image that he wishes the store to project in the community and the image that the teens have already established in the community:

"Our image is a family type restaurant where... for children... family business... this is what we're trying to project, our image. And it turns around

to the community, it's nothing but a hangout."

His concern that his restaurant will become identified with the teen's use of drugs is reflected in his striking interpretation of this incident involving a "dope addict":

"Once there was a guy in there... I picked him up, pulled him up - 'Hey, it's time to leave.' Blue as can be. I just called the cops. Then they came in and looked at him. It's rough. And then that hits the paper. Your name hits the paper and people read that and it's no good for your business."

McDonald's identity as a hangout and a trouble spot was no doubt reinforced by the presence of the police. The large numbers of teens on the corner, their use of drugs, and their conflict with the management led to the frequent appearance of the police at the restaurant. Two squad cars parked on the corner, blue light flashing and spinning, uniformed officers breaking up crowds of long-haired, slovenly dressed young people, the paddy wagon carting away teens for interrogation or arrest - these images could only fortify the identity of McDonald's as a "freaky, hippy" hangout. The police were there, so clearly the restaurant was a scene of dangerous, lawless activity - what better confirmation of the rumors one has heard about those unruly kids.

This tendency to identify McDonald's with the hanging activity would be supported by the public character of the

restaurant. The prominence of the corner location, the orientation of the beveled facade, the transparency of the interface, the openness of the interior, all bring the activities of the teens, police, and the management before the public. Brookline's residents can not only hear and read about events on the Corner, they can drive down Harvard Street and witness the activity at first hand. If they do any shopping at Coolidge Corner in the afternoon or go to one of the other restaurants for a late dinner, they will find the Corner scene difficult to ignore. The irony of the situation is that this public identity as a hangout is being supported by the very attributes in which McDonald's had entrusted its image as a family restaurant. Now, through these same attributes, it projects its unwanted identity as a teenage hangout. It is a double irony, for, as we discussed earlier, it was these characteristics which defined McDonald's as a suitable hangout in the first place.

The manager asserts that the ultimate effect of the teens upon the customer was a marked decline in business:

"The kids went to McDonald's and the customers went back to other places... Business just kept going down. You can see it in the figures. You can see it in the volumes. Our business is based on volume... They're hurting the business down there about \$5,000 a month... The market was there when we opened; it was really going strong. But \$5,000 a month at a whack, that's quite a bit. You add that up into ten months - that's \$50,000, and that's about what it's decreasing right now. It's just cold figures."

THE ADAPTATION AND CONTROL OF A HANGOUT

The conflict between the management and the teens was critical. The management clearly saw their business being threatened by the presence of the teens. In their view, the kids were minimal customers, they destroyed the facilities, and they drove away the other customers. On the other hand, conformity to the McDonald's routine by the teens would deprive them of the ability to effectively hang. Neither hanging nor routine could be substantially accommodated to the other without risking its vital process. In such a situation, the issue was one of control, of who could maintain control over the floor area of McDonald's. In the next two chapters, we will consider how the teens could gain control over space in McDonald's. In the following chapter, we then review the management's attempts to implement their "legitimate" authority over the floor area of the restaurant.

ADAPTATION OF McDONALD'S

The teens were able to adapt McDonald's as a hangout by taking advantage of the public nature of the restaurant. There are two important aspects of its public character that allow the teens to gain a certain measure of control over its floor area. First, they can obtain right of entry into the restaurant through making a small purchase. This purchase entitles the teen, as it does any customer, to sit in any unoccupied booth on the floor for at least fifteen or twenty

minutes. According to the manager, "legally, you can't keep somebody out. Legally, in all public restaurants on the street - on a street exit like this - legally, you can't bar anybody from your store." The manager can deal with troublesome individuals but not with the group as a whole:

"If certain teens have given you trouble in the past... then personally, you can do something - refuse to wait on them... If they're not causing any problem, not being mischievous, they have every right in the world. That's a strong point on their part, legally. If they come in the door and buy themselves a drink and sit down and cause no problems, they're as good as any customer."

Second, and more important, the teens can take advantage of the limitations in the management's power to control the floor area. The public nature of McDonald's derives in large part from its reliance upon the customers' sense of proper behavior in public places to maintain order on the floor. His sense of propriety is the basic control mechanism. In some respects, the store is well designed for such a control system. The openness and the transparency of the interior space exposes the behavior of each customer to every other customer and to passers-by on the street as well. The weakness of this system is that it exposes the restaurant to the actions of the less "conscientious" customer. It has no built-in routine defense against those who do not wish to conform to the McDonald's routine or to the conventions of public behavior. With the exception of the floor boys,

contemporaries of the Corner kids who perform general custodial work, the routine employs no staff on the floor. For "efficiency" all staff have been concentrated in the service area behind the counter. The only staff who regularly communicate with the floor area are the counter help who are also of the same age as the Corner teen. Although their job is very routine it is quite demanding. They take the customer's order, one at a time and fill it on the spot, selecting the proper items from bins just behind the counter and then taking payment from the customer. This operation, which may take over an hour in a restaurant employing an equivalent number of waiters is condensed to a fraction of a minute in McDonald's. Their routine affords the counter help little opportunity to keep in contact with activity of the floor area or to deal with patrons in any fashion other than that proscribed by the routine transaction. Their age and the transient nature of their work denies them the authority - or the incentive - to contend with infractions of the routine. Dealing with peers would be particularly difficult. Ironically, their job has displaced that of the waiter and waitress, which provides for regular and frequent contact with customers on the floor.

The status of the restaurant is ambiguous. Its public nature derives, in a negative sense, from the absence of routine controls over the space. Yet, while public in terms of floor control, it is private in proprietorship. Although

the management has authority over the entire restaurant, their power to control the "public" space beyond the service counter is severely limited. However, the responsibility of those who have authority over publicly owned space - the streets and sidewalks - ends at the front door of McDonald's as it would at any restaurant or shop. Neither public nor private agent controls in a regular and routine fashion this privately owned "public" space.

This ambiguity represents an opening in the network of authority and control on the Corner through which the teens can slip. The floor area of McDonald's is open space within this network which the teens can enter and occupy. Through a process of adaptation, they can hang there in relative freedom. The kids adapt McDonald's as a hangout, not through manipulation of the physical setting, but through manipulation of their own behavior. This adaptation reflects an ongoing and subtle process of give and take - of accommodation of behaviors to the setting and of assimilation of the setting to the hanging process.

The teens assimilate the setting essentially through "deviancy". Only by violating the McDonald's routine could they hang "freely" within the restaurant. Yet, through this deviancy, they incorporate certain aspects of the setting into their stream of activity and, thereby, affirm a potential for interaction within the setting never realized within its

legitimate function. In that sense, the setting as a hangout is not only a contradiction of the setting as a restaurant, it is also, in some respects, an extension of it. Our chapter on Fit is basically a discussion about how certain attributes of McDonald's have become incorporated into the hanging process. In it we noted, for example, how the teens would interact between booths as well as within a booth. Such activity would be in violation of the routine, yet it could also be considered an extension of the grouping function implicit within the booth.

In order to assimilate the restaurant as a hangout, the teens must make certain accommodations to the setting. If, instead, they would hang with complete abandon, they would soon find the network of control and authority closing fast about them. Certain behaviors had to be constrained. Because of the public nature of the setting, the teens had to restrict themselves to activity that would bear public scrutiny. In particular, they would not dare use or deal conspicuously in drugs and liquor in the restaurant or its immediate vicinity. These activities would be illegal anywhere for the teens, but they would be particularly visible in a public space such as McDonald's. This compromise was not self defeating, for the kids could still use Devotion Park and the street for the actual handling of drugs, and they could still come to McDonald's while high. Furthermore, they could and did occasionally use the restrooms for such

activity, where the insularity and privacy provided the necessary cover. This accommodation left intact the basic terminal aspects of hanging: to see and be seen, to talk, and to wait. Since these behaviors are quite legal in themselves, they can well tolerate public exposure.

Hanging, even if purged of such illicit behavior, still conflicts with the McDonald's routine. To hang on the floor, the teens would engage in a continual process of minor compromises with the setting. When threatened by the management, the teens could not hide nor manipulate the setting as a defensive measure. However, they could manipulate their own behavior. They could momentarily assume the role of customer - through actual participation in it of mimicry of it - and submerge themselves in the routine until the immediate threat has passed. In subordinating their behavior to the routine, they compromise the hanging process: conversations must be cut short, seats must be found, and precious money and time must be spent at the service counter for still another cola. However, these compromises are minor and only temporary, and through them the teens maintain the "right" to hang in the restaurant. The management seemed to be at a decided disadvantage in this contest for control of the floor area. They could only assert control over this arena by stationing non-routine control agents on the floor: a manager at first and later police or security guards. Since the teens generally would

not engage in overtly illicit activities at McDonald's the control agents could not evict them out of hand. They could only wait for the teens to deviate from the McDonald's routine. At that point, he could instruct them to conform. If they refuse to comply they risk eviction. However, if they do comply, then they maintain the option to later violate the routine. The teens' advantage over the management is that they always hold the option to either deviate from the routine or to accommodate themselves to it. As long as they play the latter option, the control agent must wait for the teens to deviate. Yet, who can outwait the Corner kid? After all, he has "nothing better to do" than to wait for "something to happen".

On a typical weekend night, there would be, at the most, two control agents and perhaps as many as forty teens on the floor. Each teen holds that option. We could not guess how many different ways and in how many permutations forty teens could violate the routine. If one teen would tend to act alone then the control agent could single him out and probably deny him access. However, if they all tend to play their options at the same time (and the social nature of their deviancy suggests that they would do so) then the teens have the cover of anonymity; even if the control agent could evict them, he could not deny the group future access.

Another defensive measure is to receive special license from a control agent to deviate from the routine. Often a teen would engage a policeman or security guard in casual friendly conversation and thereby would be allowed to stand around in the lobby or the setback and perhaps not make a purchase. Since the control agents frequently behave in a manner not sanctioned for the normal customer - such as circulating up and down the aisles - this device extends the range of legitimate activity for the teens. While the teen makes certain accommodations to the control agent in employing this routine, he gains a relief from the continual contest for the floor. The manager could rarely be so exploited by the teens. The police and security guards, however, who spent many a dull hour on the floor with the teens, were often quite willing to grant this temporary license in exchange for a little conversation.

Perhaps the ultimate form of accommodation is to retreat. This involves either shifting beyond the domain of authority of the threatening control agent or retreating to less controversial ground. For example, the teens may shift from the setback (where they occupy a highly visible position and possibly obstruct the front door) across the street to the Pewter Pot where their presence will not be so offensive. In shifting territories, they may somewhat compromise the hanging process. Generally, the spaces which best serve the terminal function, such as the lobby

area inside McDonald's or the setback just outside, are those which carry the greatest risk of management retaliation because of circulation and identity conflicts between hanging and the dominating McDonald's routine. However, in making this compromise, the teen is usually able to remain on the Corner scene, so that he may at least communicate visually with others. If the threat is particularly menacing, the teen may leave the scene and retreat to the parking lot, to the streets, or to Devotion Park. This retreat would place him only several minutes from McDonald's. If his offense was not too critical, and it rarely is, he should be able to return inside in a half hour. The main limitation of this defensive routine is that its application is subject to the seasons. Until the advent of the Drop In Center, the teens really had no retreat from McDonald's during the winter.

THE CONSTRUCTS OF CONTROL - DISCOVERING THE LOOPHOLES

There was an interesting phenomenon occurring in McDonald's that would tell us a great deal about the characteristics of the teen hanging routine. The teens did not hang just anywhere within McDonald's, they had established a particular territory and it was here that one would find them night after night. This particular area we have labeled H in figure 1 ; it is adjacent to Green Street and lies

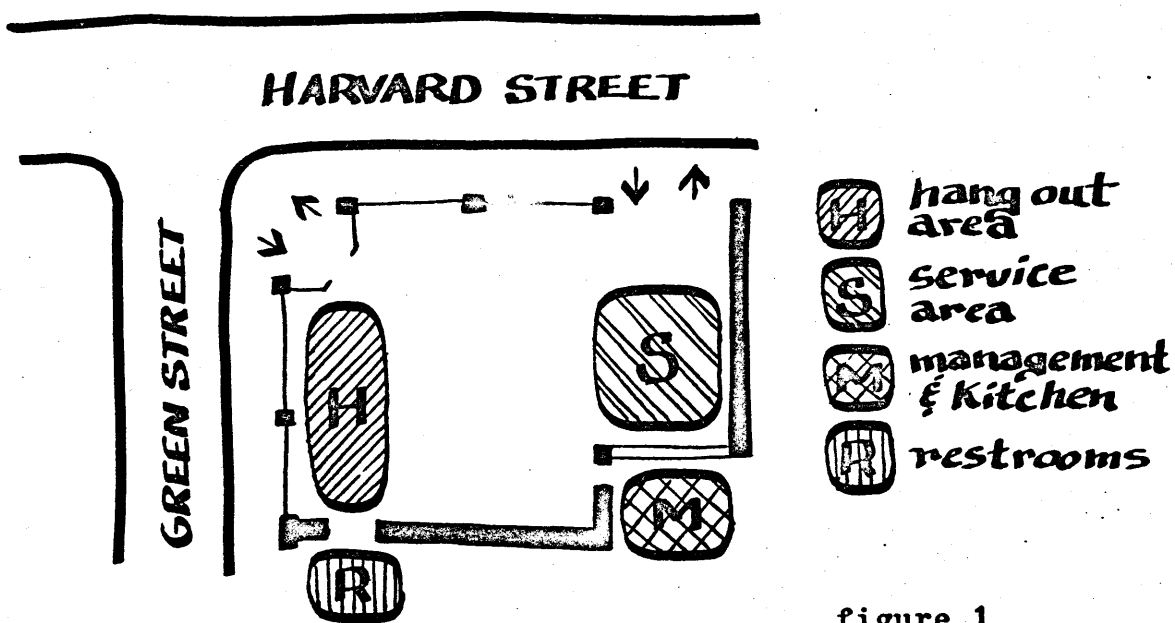


figure 1

between the corner exit/entrance of McDonald's and the public restrooms in the back. Our question was - Why have the teens selected this area in which to hang? There were many possibilities - the management may have forced them there through coercion. The teens may have been attracted there because of certain social and physical amenities of the place (many of which have already been discussed). The teens may have

selected this spot to avoid conflicts with the management or other adult actors and still enjoy the social amenities of hanging. There seemed to be certain truths in all of these. What impressed us was that the teens had not only discovered, but were also utilizing the particular loopholes or interstices that could be found in the rather dynamic relationship between the McDonald's routine and the physical space they called their "Town House".

THE ROUTINE

According to the McDonald routine those entering the restaurant are expected to place their orders at the counter in the area we have labeled S (for service). Rarely will one ever see the Coolidge Corner teen sitting around this area even though the routine itself has occasionally provided a sufficient camouflage for groups of teens to "fake a wait" (that is hanging in the false image of waiting in line - occurring especially on Friday and Saturday nights when lines are large, crowded, and irregular; when McDonald's is filled primarily with younger people, thus the group structure will not be easily revealed; and if it is detected one can easily give the excuse of waiting in line). When asked about why the teens did not sit in this area one girl mentioned that she simply felt uncomfortable there - "You're out in the middle here. You're exposed." And truly you are. How many of us, if we had the choice of the entire restaurant, would choose to sit near the service area? We all know

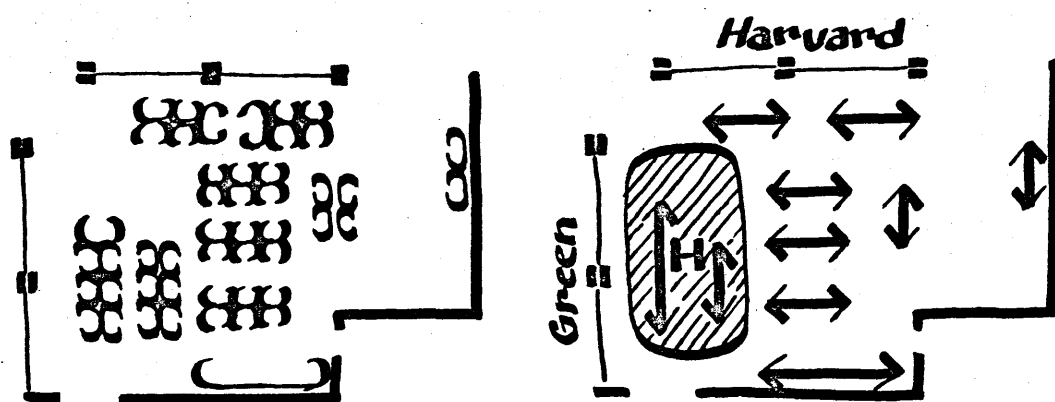
how uncomfortable it feels to have some hungry, waiting crowd staring into the depths of your burger, watching the bubbles ascend in your straw, and observing every succulent mouthful. There is also the fact that those persons who wait in line are often other than teenagers themselves - a high proportion are businessmen and young families, a mix of people some of whom feel very threatened by the presence and activity of teenagers and are therefore both a potential danger to the security, privacy, and comfort of any teen within that proximity and also a serious concern of the customer/volume oriented McDonald manager. An important aspect of that area is that the management (area M) is very close - within ten walking feet. His predisposition to teens as threats to customer volume and the McDonald family image is possibly the most real issue of all and a point made very clear to the teens in many ways. It may also simply be that sitting near service areas begins to destroy the very public nature that can be felt in the rest of the space - those long lines, the routines of service, the mechanical clicks and jingles of mixers and cash registers - constantly forcing one to realize that he is within a system of business.

BUILDING BARRIERS

"First of all it's not arranged the way it should be arranged." - Paul Montour

In most public eating places physical barriers occur in a deliberate attempt at preventing contacts between

user groups - bar rooms, kitchens, and dining areas are separate; walls, panels, screens, booths, tables, chairs, and counters provide not only privacy and separation, but also give one a sense of direction, an outline of routine, and the assurance of concord between a mix of actors and activities. At McDonald's the most obvious is probably the service counter, behind which employees can be relatively sure that those they are working with are familiar with the routines of that area and will thus function harmoniously and efficiently, never conflicting with the untrained, unfamiliar customer. Another important control barrier within McDonald's is much more subtle in character and barely recognized by the customer. This is the arrangement of a combination planter, trash disposal, and sitting booth which composes the majority of the furniture pieces throughout the public area of McDonald's. It was so subtle, apparently,



ARRANGEMENT

figure 2

DIRECTION

figure 3

that even the McDonald Corporation did not realize the implications of their arrangement until the hanging scene made itself physically apparent. It is a very spacious arrangement of booths seating nearly 200 persons in a space capable of much more (see figure 2). There are two general directions to the arrangement - those booths aligned parallel to Green Street and those parallel to Harvard Street. If we look at DIRECTION diagram figure 3 we can see that most of the seating booths are arranged parallel to Harvard, but the hanging territory (area H) is parallel to Green. Such a shift in direction provides several amenities to hanging within the confines of McDonald's.

The hanging area (area H) is one spot least involved in the flow of the McDonald routine. The first part of that routine being that of entering and getting into line. Passing through the hanging area will not take anyone to the service area from any entrance (as shown in figure 4, typical routes to the service area from the entrances do not include area H).

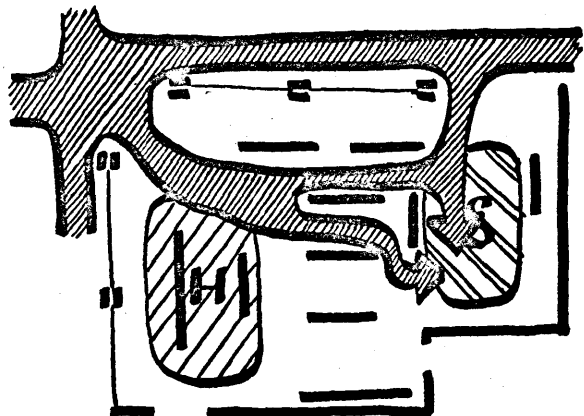


figure 4

With the possible exception of using the restroom, the only reason to pass through the hanging territory is to come into contact with it. Because of the booth arrangements, persons coming from the service or managerial areas are forced to walk around area H rather than entering it directly (see figure 5). If we include this characteristic

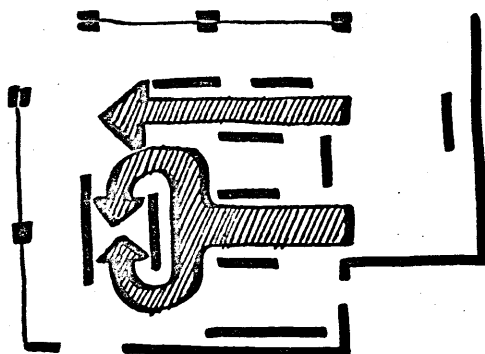


figure 5

with the fact that area H is also the most distant point from the service zone we may conclude that the service image and managerial ties are most minimal at the area where the teens hang. Symbolically, if not actually, area H is a distinct and separate section within the total configuration of the floor.

THE RESTROOMS

"The restrooms in Coolidge Corner... they ought to take a board and just block it right off 'cause that's one of the centers of their problem."

- Paul Montour

For the general public restrooms are a refuge for that most secret of inhibited acts - that of discharging

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wastes from the body. A separation of the public from the private and the bi from the mono-sexual. Society's inhibition over this act has, in almost every case, placed this facility in the most distant of locations - at the end of the longest corridors; hidden behind walls, screens, translucent panels, and various greeneries; planted in the depths of basements. A public restroom takes up a considerable amount of space and, except for those 25¢ pay booths, provides little or no profit for the owner's investment; for this reason alone it will rarely find itself among the more accessible, revealing places where lucrative services abound.

In the eyes of the McDonald management, the restroom is a breeding ground for deviant behavior; and many an owner can tell you precisely what that means - "Dope addicts hanging around there is unreal... They're finding things in the restrooms - used to have to lock them down. They were beautiful facilities. They wrecked the restrooms in the first three months the store was open. They would break the soap dispensers, jamb them up, anything." With a place so removed from all other activities, so isolated; a place publicly accessible yet so private; a place deliberately designed to release particular inhibitions, why shouldn't one find inhibitions of a different sort also released within the same confines? In a way it's the "handwriting on the wall" that tells the story. You needn't be a psychologist to know that the restroom is one of the best places to make a

dope deal or to guzzle down a couple of beers you had stuffed under your coat, then flush the can vehemently, revengefully down the commode. It's a retreat from the ever observing world - a place where a girl can be comforted by her friends without shame, a place where a downer can be dropped or where a troubled stomach can be emptied. In this respect the restroom as a private retreat becomes an important part of the teenager's world within McDonald's. It's inherent privacy makes it one of the safest places of all within the public realm. The teen, posing as a legitimate McDonald's customer, can use the restroom whenever he pleases. His right to such a facility is supported by law - "We have to have them 'cause it's in the ordinance." If we look at figure 6 we see that the hanging area is directly in line with the restrooms from the corner entrance. We have often

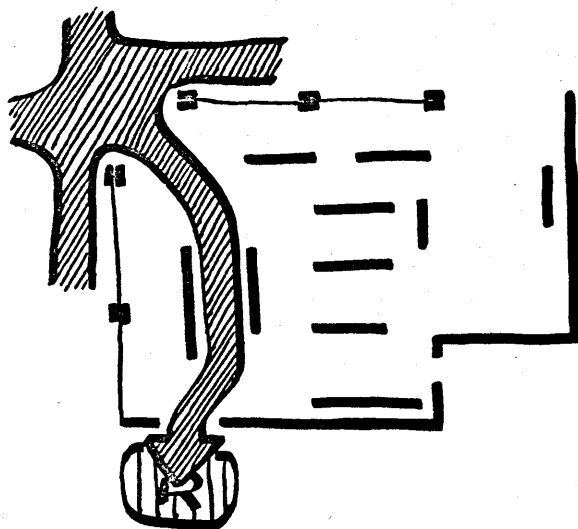


figure 6

seen the restroom used by the teens to camouflage one as a customer - come in the corner entrance, go straight for the restroom (as many customers do), on the way, take advantage

of the terminal aspects of McDonald's and check out who's there; use the restroom, come out as if a customer, sit with your friends and pretend that one of their sodas is your own. This is one of the best examples of the teen's awareness and utilization of a loophole in the McDonald system. The other factors we have mentioned before such as distance from the management and arrangement of booths are often strong enough themselves to allow a teen to be much more open - spot a friend through the window, come in the corner entrance and sit down with him. If you're lucky the manager won't hassle you, but if he does, simply buy a cola.

INTERFACE

Most of us are familiar with the term - corner. It is frequently used by young and old alike as the place to meet a friend, to catch a cab, or to have someone pick you up. It is generally an area of high exposure and high surveillance. At McDonald's the corner is well known to the teens for its high level of exposure to the street and to the interior of the store. On many warm evenings the teens gathered at the corner entrance to McDonald's (inside and out) to exchange conversation and catch a friend who - coming down Harvard, sees your signal, and pulls off unto Green to say hello or to pick you up. The large, arched windows of McDonald's throw a considerable amount of light into the street around the hanging teens. While being highly exposed, the corner is also an area of high risk, for

the management or patrolling policeman can observe you just as well as your friends can. When the conflicts occur, the dynamics begin. As soon as the hanging teen is approached by the management at areas 2 or 3 in figure 7, he can easily

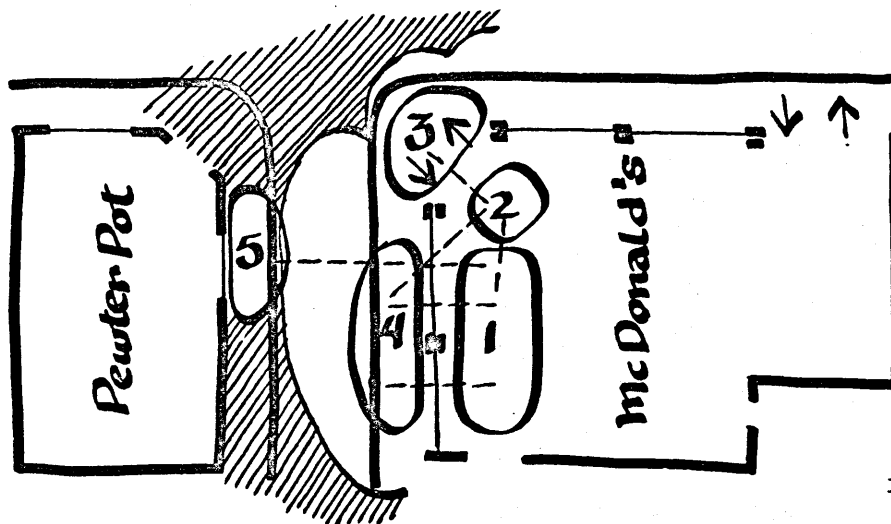


figure 7

shift his territories - by going to area 2 - the traditional hangout "section", or move down Green Street to area 4 or 5. The advantages to area 4 are that it is no longer blocking McDonald's entrance (a legal offense for which a teen can easily be arrested), it is beyond the legal jurisdiction of McDonald's, it is still near the corner, it is adjacent to the curb where friends' cars are often parked in waiting, it has beautiful illumination from McDonald's, and one can still make contacts with friends inside by mouthing or signalling through the window. Unfortunately McDonald's is likely to have hired a city cop to patrol its premises. The city cop can extend McDonald's jurisdiction at will into any part of the street he so pleases. That brings us to area 5, hidden in the shadows of the Pewter Pot -

there are parked cars to sit on and still an excellent view of the teens' activities within McDonald's and on the corner. When the hasselling continues into this area (we were hasselled there by the cops on several occasions), there are still the options of the steps behind Coolidge Corner Theater or the popular Devotion Park.

THE DYNAMICS OF CONTROL - McDONALD'S

In maximizing efficiency, McDonald's had sacrificed control of the floor. It had no routine way of dealing with those who do not behave according to public convention. Faced with the on-going presence of the Corner regulars and their inability to deny access to them, the management had no choice but to find non-routine ways to insure conformity by the teens to the McDonald's routine. Hanging presents particular problems of routine enforcement. Unlike the single isolated incident, which however intense, would yield to some application of force and could be forgotten, hanging represents, for the management, a chronic condition which must be dealt with continuously. The management is at a disadvantage. They cannot make hanging go away; they can only try to make the teens behave according to the rules. Therefore, they must continuously apply some measure of control whenever the teens are present on the floor. The teens always have the advantage of having at least two options; they can play the game by the management's rules or they can create an incident. The management has no options if they wish to maintain control.

THE MANAGEMENT GOING IT ALONE

There were three general ways by which McDonald's attempted to assert their control of the floor: by the addition or change of control agents on the floor, by altering

the routine, and by manipulation of the physical environment.

Perhaps the first means employed by the management was to station themselves on the floor. This approach was probably less of a program for control than it was simply a direct, spontaneous response to an immediate threat. The managers were the only actors on the staff who had the freedom, the authority, and probably the incentive to deal with the teens. Both the floor boys and the counter help were roughly the same age as the teens and the routine of the counter help in particular was far too demanding to allow them to engage in floor control. Either the manager or one or more of the four assistant managers would patrol the floor, circulating up and down the aisles, waiting for the teens to violate the routine. They had to play by the rules of the game; they could check the teens only when someone deviated from the routine. Until that moment they had to hang on the floor with the teens - and wait. The kids could behave perfectly, follow the routine explicitly and still the manager or his assistants would have to remain on the floor. If they would dare leave, the teens would be free to carry on as they wished, perhaps yelling back and forth across the floor, blocking the corner entrance, shooting paperclips at the older customers, swearing, burning straws, necking, cutting the simulated leather upholstery. The manager could not be certain of the security of the routine unless he was out there with them. However, when a teen

deviates the manager can only instruct him to re-enter the routine - unless he has committed an act of vandalism or assault. If kids are standing in the aisles he can ask them if they intend to buy anything. Their refusal to make a purchase would give him the opportunity to evict them from the restaurant. If they oblige him then the manager ultimately loses by winning that round, for the teens have maintained the option to disrupt the routine. Even if they conform, they will probably be minimal customers: they will take the longest time to walk to the service counter, following the most wayward path, lingering at this and that booth of friends. They will purchase the minimal order. Hamburgers will be consumed ever so slowly, cokes will sit half finished on the table. The manager will have to constantly follow these teens as they progress, as slowly as they possibly can, through the routine. In the end, he will not maintain the integrity of the dominant routine so much as he will give a certain form and structure to hanging. In leading, pushing each adolescent customer through the routine, step by step, the manager is simply, to borrow the term of one manager, playing a "game". We overheard two teens identify this game as they entered McDonald's one Friday night: it is called, "Let's see how long we can stay in here this time."

As long as the manager remains on the floor he has the assurance that the teens will behave more or less according to the dictates of the routine. However this security

is achieved at considerable cost. The assistant managers, who were hired for manager training as well as floor control, were each paid roughly \$200 a week. Perhaps the greatest cost was simply the time that the restaurant's top personnel were required to devote to the adolescents. The efficiency of the McDonald's routine is based in part on the concentration of all staff production and distribution in one small service area. The manager's primary task is to manage this assembly line. There are only a few routine floor functions, of a custodial nature, which the manager must oversee under normal conditions. Now, due to the trade off of floor control for efficiency inherent in the McDonald's system, the manager and his assistants patrol the floor for hours every day, performing a task that waiters and waitresses in most restaurants would fulfill. The irony of the situation does not escape the manager. He recalls that it was, "like a big baby sitting program. You baby sit for all the people. We ought to get paid for baby sitting."

Montour's imagery is paradoxical. In their effort to control the behavior of the teens, the management, in effect, had become caretakers for them. While they have no concern for the welfare of the teens, they have been locked into a situation in which they inadvertently provide shelter and amenities for the teens, and in which they must continually oversee and give direction to their activity. They have been drawn out of the private, specialized routine of the

service area into the public domain of the floor where they are involved in a more generalized, less routine control process which deals with issues that far transcend the routine of selling hamburgers. McDonald's, after all, has centralized the hanging problem for the town of Brookline. The management fulfills the dual function of both policing the teens activity and giving support to it. However, the management can only confront this "public" problem as private individuals. Their authority is limited to the enforcement of the McDonald's routine, and it extends no further than the front door.

Montour suggests another paradox. Not only has the management been drawn into the public domain, they have been drawn into the orbit of the Corner teens as well. To control hanging by the teens, the management must literally hang on the floor with them. Their motivations in hanging may be different, but the similarity between the outward behaviors of the manager and the teens on the floor is striking. Much as the teens, the manager hovers over the section, in anticipation of some infraction. His orientation is toward the group. He continually shifts his involvements from one cluster of teens to another. In fact, the teens would be pleased to have his freedom of movement, to be able to circulate the aisles, and to have the opportunity to not only sit and watch the crowd but to also perform before it.

ALTERING THE ROUTINE

The management attempted to control hanging through altering the routine by posting time and purchase restrictions to be applied to the seating areas. Customers who eat in the restaurant are limited to twenty minutes and must make a minimum purchase of fifty cents. Without posted limits, the management has virtually no means to control access save that of requiring purchase. According to the manager, "If they come in the door and buy themselves a drink and sit down and cause no problems, they're as good as any customer. But if I don't have anything posted they can stay as long as they want." He admits that "the sad part of it is, it's enforced not only on the problem people." If this policy could be enforced then hanging could hardly continue at its present scale. Few teens could afford to pay fifty cents every time they entered McDonald's nor could they pay every twenty minutes for the duration of their stay. This policy still requires the presence of the manager or some other control agent with equal authority on the floor. It cannot be enforced at the point of purchase when orders are placed as in a normal restaurant with waiters and waitresses. The counter help are too restricted by their rather demanding routine to enforce the limits. It would be particularly difficult for them to do so when the restaurant is busy and the customers are lined up at the counter, a time when the policy would be most useful in maintaining turnover. Furthermore, a customer making a purchase at the counter has the

option of either taking the food out or sitting in a booth. While the policy gave the manager on the floor another device to employ, it did not solve the basic problem of floor control. As the manager tells us below, it was somewhat effective in denying access to particularly "troublesome" individuals, but had little effect upon hanging in the main.

"The sign's there - so when we took them into court, it semi-held up for awhile... So the judge said they aren't allowed back: So the kids would still come in but when I'd ask them to leave they'd leave a little quicker. If I went out and called the police, they would make sure they were gone - fast."

While we frequently saw the time limit enforced in McDonald's, we never witnessed enforcement of the 50¢ minimum - although one Corner girl did confirm its application. She maintained that the minimum was only applied to the Corner teens. We never observed the time limit imposed upon other customers, except for a few other young people who the management may have confused with the teens - although other patrons, particularly the elderly hang in the restaurant much as the teens. While the ruling did add some new rules to the game of floor control, it did not seem to lessen hanging in McDonald's.

MANIPULATING THE ENVIRONMENT

The restrooms were a particular sore point with the management. McDonald's has restroom facilities because of municipal regulations. The manager regarded this requirement as being discriminatory: "It's funny sometimes the way they make everything tough on us - difficult. Everybody else on the Corner - they don't have restrooms. We have to have them 'cause it's in the ordinance. They don't enforce it with other people. You gotta have the restrooms open (unlocked)." Montour felt that this discrimination reflected the town father's apprehension that McDonald's would become another teenage hangout. This attitude would be ironic if Montour's intuition is valid because the restroom was to become a safe territory for the teens where they could pass and use drugs and alcohol and where they could bent their antagonisms for the dominating setting. As we mentioned earlier, the manager felt that the restrooms were, "one of the centers of the (drug) problem... they ought to take a board and block it right off." The management could not board up the restrooms, but they did put coin operated machines on the doors to the restrooms."It worked out perfectly... had a deal with Jim Priori, who's the head of the Board of Health in Brookline - no problem." However, "The Corporation steps in, 'Can't have restrooms locked.' 'Why?' 'Top management doesn't want it.' 'Why?' 'Take them out.' We had to take them out. That had solved the problem. It really had." It may well have solved the "problems" of vandalism and dealing in the restroom, but it

is doubtful that terminal activity on the floor was much affected by the installation of the locks.

McDonald's has again come up against the public character of their establishment in their efforts to control the teens' activity in the restroom. Discriminated against or not, they and other restaurants like them, are required to have restrooms because of their semi-public aspect and because Brookline like many American cities does not provide actual public restrooms. This function generally has been consigned to private facilities used by a large consuming public: gas stations, restaurants, theaters, and large department stores. Of course, it is this public dimension that allows the teens to hang in McDonald's and to take advantage of the restroom. The constraints imposed by the Corporation upon the manager again indicate the limitation of his authority to control the floor area. It is ironic indeed that it should be the top management of McDonald's who protects the public's right to restroom facilities and not the local public officials.

PUBLIC FUNCTIONARIES IN McDONALD'S - THE POLICE

Teens have always hung on the Corner - at least, for as far back as those with whom we spoke can remember. It seems safe to assume that the police of Brookline were there watching over them all the time. A group of teens who hung at the Pewter Pot and the old Brighams before McDonald's

were involved in drugs much as the present group. The Corner veteran, quoted earlier, recalled that "when scag finally hit the place, everybody just left Coolidge Corner to go their different ways." His own arrest for heroin and his subsequent commitment to Massachusetts Mental Hospital attest to police activity on the Corner at that time. However, other teens felt that there was less police activity on the Corner before McDonald's was built:

"Like there was no trouble there. There was never a large congregation of kids. It's almost like the Brighams down in Boston near Kenmore Square - a variety of people, some college kids stopped in once in a while, just a variety of normal people. But McDonald's is now known as a freaky, hippy drop-in." While the police "...still hung around that same corner... they used to have just one cop walking the beat. Now they have two squad cars."

The period after the dispersal of the earlier group and during the construction of McDonald's in the summer of 1970 evidently was a fallow one. "Then all of a sudden everything was quiet again and then it started all over again. It was quiet during the time they were building McDonald's. Between Brighams and McDonald's, kids still hung up there but not that many." The kids were not hanging in just one location then but rather were utilizing the many restaurants then on the Corner. While the Corner was quieter, the policeman on the beat had a number of different locations to survey.

With McDonald's, "it started all over again." The teens, perhaps more than ever before on the Corner, were concentrated in one location. The police were quick to take advantage of this concentration. One teen mentioned:

"So like at McDonald's, the detectives found out that McDonald's is the place to gather now so they started riding by there regularly, almost every night they'd park there and look at us, you know... And then on big nights like Friday and Saturday nights when there was a large congregation of kids, they always drive by and usually kids park on the street next to McDonald's - the wrong side of the street - and people are always making wrong turns onto that street so they're always around there."

The police adapted McDonald's to their routine much as did the Corner kids. They utilized it as a terminal. For the police, as for the teens, its major attribute was probably that "everybody" was there. As the Corner teen, the policeman on the beat is interested in seeing who is there and what is happening. The openness and transparency of McDonald's, its active and well lit interface made all activity there immediately legible, for the police as well as for the teens. In using McDonald's as a terminal, the teens tended to hang in those areas of maximum exposure: in the section next to Green Street, the lobby area, and the setback. The nature of the space and the nature of the teens' activity made this hangout most suitable for

police surveillance. McDonald's prominent location in Coolidge Corner made it very convenient for the police to cruise by during the evening's patrol routine. They could simply turn down Green from Harvard, park on the wrong side of the street adjacent to McDonald's - through professional license - and have the entire Corner scene revealed to them through the golden arches of the town house. The neutrality and public nature of McDonald's gave the police ease of access just as it did for the teens. While the police do not need to acquire right of entry through purchase, their entry into the restaurant is far less intrusive than it would be in the more insular, intimate Pewter Pot. In entering McDonald's, the police would hardly leave the street.

McDonald's became a place for the police to make connections. They could count on finding certain sought after faces at the hangout just as the teens could count on seeing certain friends. McDonald's became the scene of the bust. As one teen described:

"Like all of the kids would be sitting around McDonald's, right? - just talking to each other - and then all of a sudden through the door you'd see three detectives and two patrolmen come through the other door and all of a sudden they'd go over to a kid, pick him up and take him out, you know. And it looked strange. All those kids sitting around, having a good time and all of a sudden these cops come in, pick up one kid and walk out again. It really looked funny."

The police came to McDonald's not only because that was where the teens were but also because the management could not maintain order on the floor. Unable to control the teens' activity, the management turned to the police. They contracted them to patrol the floor at \$7.00 an hour. The irony of this situation is implicit in the McDonald's system. Its public character allowed the teens to claim the restaurant as a hangout, so it now demands the presence of city police to maintain "order". However, as a private firm, which has incorporated these public attributes into its system to generate turnover and maximize profit, McDonald's must buy the services of these public servants.

By the early spring of 1971, when we first began to visit the Corner, the hired policeman was an already familiar figure to the patrons of the restaurant. He would be on the floor from about 2:00 in the afternoon (when the kids would make their first "grand appearance" after school) on to the dinner hour when the restaurant would fill with customers who have come strictly to pursue the business of eating. By 8:30 or 9:00 in the evening, he would return to his vigilance, which he would maintain until the teens have left around 12:00. Then the floor would be given over to a quieter crowd of college students and couples who have chosen to spend their night on the town at Coolidge Corner. He would sit in the section, perhaps reading a newspaper or sipping a cup of coffee, or he would stand idly at the head

of the section toward the rear of the restaurant. Occasionally he would stroll listlessly about the floor, pausing to pass the time with a manager or even one of the kids. As the section would begin to fill he would patrol the floor in a more determined fashion, circulating the aisles at regular intervals, frequently interrogating the teenage occupants of a booth. His questions were familiar although the tone of authority was new: "Are you going to buy anything?... Your twenty minutes are up." Clusters of teens who have gathered by a booth or in the lobby would be dispersed; the setback would be frequently cleared. During prime time, as the crowd of teens would spill over into the street, he might be joined by the cop on the beat or even, momentarily by a couple of squad cars, who with blue lights spinning, would quickly disperse the teens.

The policeman who is stationed in McDonald's has not replaced the managers on the floor so much as he has taken his place along side of them. His function as a floor control agent seems to be essentially the same: to make the teens conform to the McDonald's routine and to the conventions of public order. In this sense, he has accommodated his policing function to this dominant routine. The ambiguity that exists between public order and the business routine of selling hamburgers has been extended with the hired police. Whereas the manager had been drawn into the public orbit by the teens' presence on the floor; the police, as public functionaries,

have been drawn into the private sphere of McDonald's. All of the direct action which we observed taken by the police against the teens in McDonald's seemed more concerned with maintaining the proper overturn of customers than with public welfare. We neither observed nor heard of any action against drug use in the restaurant, although drug activity on the Corner is ostensibly one of the primary factors behind the increased presence of police at McDonald's. The possible deterrent value of a posted policeman should not be discounted. However, as we mentioned earlier, McDonald's was probably never the place to deal, and it certainly remained "the place to come when you're stoned" even after the police were hired by the management. If drugs are deemed to be the central issue, then one wonders how the displacement of the terminal where the children of Brookline pass dope would substantially alter patterns of usage and traffic in drugs.

In contracting the police to patrol the floor, the management had incorporated the very image of authority - the uniform, the holstered pistol, the badge - into their identity as a public facility. This uniformed presence may have been directed to McDonald's other customers as well as to the teens. Paul Montour, the manager who first brought in the police, told us that the presence of officers,

"...doesn't hurt, 'cause that's what people want to see. We've taken polls - talking to people on a personal, individual basis as they walked through

the door. It would hurt the image more if the policeman wasn't there. When he's there, they're more relaxed. People really feel that. 'Jesus, in this place, I don't know if somebody's going to come up and smash me right in the head. I don't know. Sometimes I'm afraid. Honest. I've had people say that to me after talking to them - older people, younger people. I had no idea, you know. Imagine, a customer saying that to you! It's like a bar room down the street. Imagine that!"

The manager may well have been expressing a more personal apprehension. We had heard of one beating a manager allegedly suffered at the hands of the teens, although we have never witnessed such an incident. With the hired police, the manager had an agent who could more than meet any threat of violence from the teens.

As an instrument of the management, the police extended their range of control. Whereas the manager's authority extended just beyond the front door - and he could hardly abandon the store to patrol the sidewalks - the hired policeman had authority over the streets. While he can no longer enforce the loitering laws upon one or two idle teens, he can disperse a crowd which, in his opinion, obstructs pedestrian flow on the sidewalk. Furthermore, the policeman could give his full attention to activity on the floor and in the interface. Unlike the regular staff, he had no task within the routine other than that of floor control. However,

even though the police were hired by the management, they remained public officials and their responsibility as such occasionally would direct their attention out of the restaurant. Because of the visibility in McDonald's, they were easily identified as the cop on the corner. One always knew where and when the police could be found. McDonald's temporarily lost their hired officer one Saturday evening to three young people who had accidentally locked the key in their automobile and had asked the officer for assistance. These were not customers of McDonald's; they had simply entered off the street seeking the policeman's aid. In this case, the policeman's presence as a private agent of the management only reinforced the public nature of the setting.

The main limitation of the police as floor control agents is that, like the manager, they can be no more than baby sitters to the teens. In spite of their uniform, they can only ask the teens to conform to the routine, unless the teens transgress the conventions of public order in a more serious fashion. Moreover, the police evidently did not share the managements zeal in imposing the routine upon the teens. In Montour's opinion, "The police would do nothing on their own. To keep the problem under control, you have to have a police officer and a management personnel out in the lobby all the time." This combination of manager and policeman seemed to be effective in constraining teen acti-

vity on the floor. For half an hour one Friday afternoon we watched this team in action. It is 2:00, just after school, and the lunch crowd is just beginning to be displaced by the Corner kids. Ten to twelve teens, mostly girls, sit toward the rear of the section. Although their behavior is quite routine and most have sandwiches as well as colas, their activity is closely observed by the manager who stands just behind them. He shows little interest in the rest of the store. The manager moves to the lobby area and watches the continual arrival of the teens. A policeman, who had been outside and evidently had not yet reported for duty, enters the store and talks briefly to the manager who seems to point out a certain boy to him on the near side of Green Street. The officer then steps out and speaks briefly with the boy. The exchange reflects no animosity. The policeman then returns to the manager, "...O.K., he's been advised." The boy, now advised, shifts down Green Street, further away from the corner entrance. Ten minutes later, the kid is once again sitting on the curb across the street in front of the Pewter Pot.

This incident reflects several aspects about the control of the floor area of McDonald's. It indicates the policeman's relationship to the manager as a hired functionary, a relationship in which the officer executes the policies of the management and in which the manager provides the strategy and the incentive. It reflects the capacity of the

policeman to control the street interface and the ability of the teens to remain on the scene through the defensive routine of shifting territory. It also shows the dual aspect of transparency as it relates to control. The transparent interface not only allows communication between teens inside and out, but it also allows the control agent within the restaurant to survey teen activity without. The operation was simple, direct, and effective - with little overt confrontation. Yet in the half hour that the manager was on the floor, that incident represented the only active control operation. All that was accomplished was that one boy, evidently considered to be a "trouble maker", was constrained from entering the restaurant. Of course, he was able to remain on the corner within visual communication of the teens inside McDonald's. Throughout that half hour, in spite of the presence of manager and policeman, the section kept filling with teens. Montour's evaluation of their team work is to the point:

"We have got to be out there all the time. From open to close, we got to be in there just to hold the lobby, and that's it. That's the solution to it, but financially, you can't afford that. If you analyze it in the many, many aspects which, you know - the police officer, management personnel all the time, somebody to keep a person out of the store; you have to be at the door as soon as he comes in - 'Police Officer, Out.' - He'll keep it very well under control, but you can't. How are you going to afford it with a store like that? You still have to make money for the stock holders."

SECURITY GUARDS

"They make a lot of errors down there (Coolidge Corner). Recently they brought in hired police who were unqualified to do the job. They were pretty bad."

Paul Montour is referring to the security guards hired by the management in early September of 1971. A quick glance could easily confuse the uniformed, gun toting representatives of a private detective agency with the police. These guards were under the complete control of the management, whereas the police officer was required to respond to a higher calling if the occasion should arise. Yet the guard has all the trappings of authority. This image of authority is the key according to Montour; "...you need somebody who you're going to hire, supply uniforms, have the individual walk around and tell this individual: 'O.K., it's time for you to leave.' and have the authority to do that." The guards did have certain policing powers. They could, for example, hold individuals for arrest until the police arrive. For the most part, however, his routine was the same as that of any other floor control agent in McDonald's: idle hours watching activity in the section, occasional small talk to pass the time, now and then dispersing a small gathering of teens or enforcing the time restriction upon a booth of Corner kids.

The ambiguity in McDonald's identity as a privately owned "public" space reaches a new level of complexity with the introduction of the security guards. The police were public officials for hire. The security guards are private agents posing as public officials. Their status as pseudo-cop was their main limitation. The Corner kids would respond to the power but would never quite acknowledge their pretence of public entrusted authority, as was indicated by an incident which we witnessed the first occasion that we saw a guard in McDonald's. An older boy, perhaps a college student, with longish hair, sat in a booth adjacent to the section, finishing a hamburger and cola. It was a Tuesday evening and McDonald's had few customers. The guard approached the youth and evidently told him that he over-stayed the allotted twenty minutes. The boy responded that other customers had been in the restaurant over twenty minutes; why didn't he ask them to leave? "I'm only doing my job," he responded. "I don't think you know how to do your job," said the youth; whereupon he called the guard "pig" to his face, turned about and left. The guard then walked over to the would-be social researchers sitting in the section and informed them that they should also leave. Although their coffee was only half finished, they left without protest. We doubt that a teen would dare speak so boldly to a policeman - one who did attempt to debate with an officer ended up in a paddy wagon. It is also difficult to imagine a policeman responding that he is only doing his job.

FLOOR CONTROL AND CONVERGENCE

Just as there is a parallel and convergence between the behaviors of public and private control agents in McDonald's, so there developed a convergence in behavior between the control agents and the teens. The police and the security guards were drawn into the orbit of the teens as were the manager and his assistants before them. The dynamics were expressed by Montour. To control the teens' activity on the floor, "...we have to be out there all the time, from open till close, we got to be in here just to hold the lobby, and that's it." The parallel is carried further by the police and guards since they have no responsibility within the routine other than floor control and consequently are freer to hang with the teens. The police, perhaps more secure of their status and authority, were bolder than the guards in adopting the hanging patterns of the teens. They would sit in the section with Corner kids or stand by the corner entrance in the lobby area. The security guards tended to hang back toward the service counter. The police used the interface in the same fashion as the teens. They would park on the McDonald's side of Green Street - the wrong side of the street - unless a more serious incident were underway, at which time they would simply park right on the corner, their squad cars jutting out into the intersection tying up traffic. Less pressing occasions might find a policeman going into McDonald's for refreshments while his cruise-mate waits in the car. The

cop on the beat might saunter down to the waiting car, lean against the window and discuss the events of the evening or perhaps last night's bowling match while the radio crackles and sputters. If a call comes over the radio the squad car may suddenly squell off down the quiet residential street amid flashing lights and wailing sirens, leaving a track of burnt rubber of which many a Corner kid would be proud (a few hold such behavior, so typical of the greasers and the beeros, as beneath their contempt).

We sit in McDonald's late one Friday evening, just after "prime time". Most of the teens have left - the evening always peaks in a flurry of activity before the Corner kids must depart for home. The policeman on duty finally has a chance to relax. He comes over and sits in a nearby booth adjacent to Green Street by the corner entrance. He motions through the window to someone outside. Moments later, another policeman enters and walks over to his booth. They exchange a friendly greeting and talk, the second officer standing all the while - unsanctioned behavior in McDonald's. Finally he sits down and both continue to pass the time in small talk. Neither make a purchase. We finish our drinks, our ticket to the booth and leave; the two policemen still "hang" in McDonald's.

Both the police and the Corner kids stand outside the law. Both exploit it. The police earn the livelihood

through its enforcement; the Corner kids hang as a group through its violation and adaptation. Both act in regard to the same set of rules and laws in McDonald's, and both behave in patterns of striking outward similarity.

The continual exposure of teen and control agent to each other afforded each the opportunity to become more knowledgeable about the other. In part, this opportunity would reflect the public character of McDonald's which kept each group so much in the view of the other. It also would reflect the nature of hanging in itself, which gave the various groups long hours in the restaurant together, each waiting for the other to break the routine. Many of the teens know individual police by name. One girl could identify two plain clothesmen who often patrol the Corner. She knew their names, the type of car they drive - a 1969 maroon Fairlane hardtop, 'unmarked' car - and their license number. The teens also learned how individual police or guards would respond to certain situations. Experience taught them that generally the security guard nicknamed "Penelope" would be far more tolerant of their activities than the manager or his assistants. They knew which policemen they could engage in conversation in the restaurant and thereby gain special license to violate the routine. This type of knowledge gathered in bits and pieces, was of strategic importance in holding and defending spaces. While the police were never interviewed, we suspect that

the

they developed the same type of tactical information about the teens. For example, one of their basic strategies was to pick out certain "trouble makers" and forbid them access to McDonald's.

This exposure also gave the teens and control agents the opportunity to develop personal contacts. All shared the tedium of hanging, and casual conversation would often arise among individuals of opposing parties to pass the time as each waits for "something to happen". The individual policeman or guard often had no one other than his charges to turn to for human contact. The Corner girls played a particularly important role in this interaction. Most of the police and guards were in their late twenties or early thirties (as are almost all of the various functionaries associated with the teens; social workers, manager, and the pseudo spacio-socio researchers as well) The girls frequently exchanged pleasantries with the police, addressing them by their first names. At times, the familiarity made subtle mockery of their authority. The two plainclothesmen, Quinn and Lynch, sitting near the section one Friday night received a friendly "hi ya Quinch. Howya doin?" from a particularly attractive Corner girl who proceeded to express her pleasure that they were doing so well. The police, however, would occasionally express their dominance in a less subtle fashion. One hired policeman sitting in the section called a particularly attractive blond over to his side, had her

bend down so he could whisper into her ear an order for sandwiches from Jack and Marions, and slipped her the money. She left dutifully. Whether these interchanges simply fed the fantasies of older men or actually tended to cool the confrontation between the teens and the police can only be conjectured.

This informal contact had a particular strategic value for the teens. They would exploit it, as we discussed earlier, to gain special license from control agents to violate some aspect of the routine. A particularly illustrative incident occurred during prime time one Friday night. A crowd of teens had gathered by the corner entrance in the lobby. A policeman briskly entered through the corner foyer and immediately commanded kids to leave, "Let's go, Comeon, let's go," clapping his hands as one would to disperse a pack of dogs obstructing a sidewalk. The crowd slowly broke apart; most teens leaving the scene. A Corner boy then approached the officer, smiling, his arm outstretched. They exchanged a friendly greeting and a power to the people handshake, and then stood talking in the emptied lobby area. Some time later, the policeman stood by another booth toward the rear of the section, talking with several Corner boys, two of whom stood with him. Two other boys came over to take part in this usually unsanctioned activity, which continued for some ten minutes.

Such interaction can reveal schism among the control actors and expose one control actor to censor by another - often before an audience of Corner teens. We often saw a group of teens clustered around a policeman only to be instructed by the manager to either make a purchase or leave. The censor upon the police and guards always remained implicit. However, we shall see that the managers censor upon the social workers was quite explicit and was a major factor in the development of the drop in center.

We were able to perceive how the relationships between security guards and teens grew increasingly friendly and more personal during the few months that the guards were stationed in McDonald's. At first, the security guards seemed to deal with the teens in a cold, impersonal manner. They strictly enforced the rules, as the incident with the college youth indicated. Within several weeks, however, the guard involved in that incident, was on rather friendly terms with several Corner teens. The guard would approach the teens directly for conversation while the police would generally wait for others to approach them. The guard seems more tolerant of the teens' behavior than either the police or the management. A radio goes on and is ignored at first by the guard. When he does ask the teens to turn it off, he becomes involved in what appears to be a very friendly conversation. The teens laugh over a story that he tells. He flirts with a girl, chiding her for her behavior in

McDonald's the previous night. Their earlier encounters in the restaurant seem to be the subject of much of the banter and provide the common basis for their relationship. Finally, the manager terminates the conversation by evicting the teens while the guard stands idly by.

The guard seems to give the teens his total involvement when he speaks to them in casual conversation. He will look directly at them and show little interest in other activity on the floor. We observed not long after the above incident a conversation between several teens and a policeman just outside of McDonald's. The officer's eyes would continually wander, surveying the public domain for which he was responsible. His hands were on his hips; his figure imposing. He seemed to be only half involved in the conversation. This distinction in behavior could be purely coincidental, but it does seem to parallel the difference in status between the guard and the police. The policeman's first identity in McDonald's is as a public official whereas the guard's is as a hired functionary. The guard's only task is to hang with the teens and constrain their activity. He has no one but the teens to deal with and consequently he can only turn to them as potential comrades in this situation. More than any other floor control agent, he is drawn through the process of controlling teen activity into the domain of the Corner kids.

Montour's evaluation of the security guards reflects their developing relationship with the teens. "They just didn't handle it properly. When you're running a business, you don't take the attitude of a person where - 'They're not bothering anybody. Let them hang around.' It will mushroom into something." The particular guard described above was transferred after two months on the job. One of the teens expressed her disappointment over his transfer:

"He was a real nice guy; real friendly. He would tell the kids, 'I'm sorry, if you don't hold it down, I'll have to ask you to leave... I don't want to do this but I'll have to if you don't hold it down.'"

She implied that he was able to "keep things quiet".

FROM POLICE TO SOCIAL WORKERS

In spite of these tendencies toward convergence in behaviors and the development of personal relationships, the basic conflicts still remained as did the very real possibility that these conflicts would be settled through force. The police and guards may have primarily performed a 'babysitting' function, but they were armed and they had the power of the 'bust'. Differences of opinion were not settled through discussion or debate. This situation was forcefully impressed upon us one Saturday night during the winter. The resident police officer was talking to several kids by the corner entrance of McDonald's. Soon he was

surrounded by teens. The manager asked several teens if they intended to buy anything; some teens departed, but more entered through the foyer to take advantage of the situation. A tall black kid came in and began talking to the cop. Soon the conversation began to get louder - the kid mentioned something about the cops letting the dogs on some friend of his who was in somebody's cellar - something like: "He nearly tore his balls off... Why didn't you go down there yourself?" The cop replied that the kid might have had a gun - "You expect us to go down there and get ourselves killed - you're crazy!" The cop all-the-while kept pushing the kid against the circular booth near the entrance. The kids began to gather around the argument. Another cop made the scene, apparently from a cruiser which pulled up and was now parked on the corner. He tried to lecture the kid saying: "Listen here!" The kid suggested that he wasn't going to be lectured to - he turned his head down, then, pressured by the harassment - the pushing, the crowding, and verbal pressure - he left out the corner exit. The cop hesitated for a moment and then yelled out: "Wait a minute!" Both cops ran out. The kid was thrown up against the parked cruiser and roughly frisked. Another boy who came up was also frisked. Many of the kids from McDonald's began to gather outside to watch the activity. Some of the girls warned: "Don't get involved." Another police cruiser then pulled up, lights flashing, followed by a paddy wagon. The two kids were taken away. The resident cop returned to McDonald's and told the remaining kids:

"O.K., let's clear out of here!" Most of them did.

Our impression is that this arrest occurred only because police authority had been challenged, because the boy had "talked back". This impression may be erroneous; something else unknown to us may have transpired earlier or outside of the restaurant which precipitated the incident. However, the other teens seemed to share out interpretation, and took it as a matter of course that if one was foolish enough to argue with a police officer than one will most certainly be busted. We also wonder to what extent the confrontation grew out of the situation itself. The officer's authority was challenged in front of a gathering of teens, the control of whom was the officer's task. He was, of course, partially responsible for their immediate presence during the incident; however, an audience of some sort was unavoidable. The confrontation took place in the lobby area by the corner entrance, and this was exposed to the entire floor area and the street as well as to the teens in the nearby section. It also made it difficult for him to ignore the implicit challenge to his authority had he any inclination to do so.

The potential for rapid escalation of conflict belied the usual tedium of hanging in the town house. The greatest risk was that the overly armed control agent would, himself, lose control. One incident, which we did not witness but

rather heard of through a teen, expressed the dimension of this risk. The confrontation grew out of a fight between a Corner teen and a floor boy. The floor boy had insulted a Corner girl, calling her a whore. Her boy friend immediately jumped the floor boy and a fist fight ensued. A security guard, new on the job, came over and pulled a gun to break up the fight. Fortunately, the confrontation shifted from physical back to verbal abuse and did not lead to further violence, although the guard had clearly escalated the conflict far beyond the original issue. Again the conflict seemed to grow out of the situation. The boy's self concept of machismo had been challenged before an audience of his peers. He had to respond boldly. The guard may have viewed the confrontation as setting one floor boy against twenty or thirty Corner teens and felt that only his pistol could reduce the balance.

Both of these incidents occurred during the early winter of 1971. The most intense confrontation, however, took place during the preceding winter just after McDonald's opened, before we began the study. According to John Ansty, a social worker, over sixty three police incidents occurred at McDonald's during a two month period of that winter; where an incident would involve police being called in to check a disturbance. Both Ansty and Montour recall that many of these incidents were quite violent. The winter was probably largely responsible for the volatility of the

situation at that time. It deprived the teens of the use of the streets and parks and forced them to seek shelter inside McDonald's. It compromised the utility of one of their main defense routines, that of shifting territory, since the only suitable territory for hanging was inside McDonald's.

The situation must have looked very bleak to the management of McDonald's in the latter part of that first winter. They were paying over \$1000 a month for what could rightly be called a baby-sitting service, their store was a battle ground for the teens and the police, and they were losing customers to the tune of \$5000 monthly. They decided to appeal for help. In the early spring of that year, they asked for a closed meeting with the Board of Selectmen of Brookline. It was at this meeting that the decision was made to have social workers regularly "patrol" the Corner. According to Paul Montour, "...it was John's (Ansty) idea that they come in. We sat down with company lawyers, chief of police, his captains, social workers, selectmen, top manager from McDonald's to bring up solutions, because it was a unique situation at the time..." Initially, McDonald's offered to pay the social workers to be there. Ansty felt, however, that the social workers should remain independent and reject the offer. The "solution" agreed upon at that meeting introduced a new set of actors to the Corner scene. McDonald's was indeed quite a hangout. Not only could one

find the teenagers there but one could also expect to see uniformed police, perhaps one or two plain-clothesmen, the staff and management of McDonald's, several social workers, and, of course, a couple of fledgling researchers from MIT.

PUBLIC FUNCTIONARIES IN McDONALD'S - THE SOCIAL WORKERS

What were the social workers expected to accomplish in McDonald's? Montour told us eight months after they arrived on the Corner, that the purpose of the social workers "was to keep the kids out of the store." His interpretation is perplexing in view of the inability of all other control actors to keep the teens out of the restaurant. None of the other functionaries, public or private, had really attempted to do so. Rather, as we have seen, they only attempted to make the teens conform to the McDonald's routine. Had they the power to "keep the kids out of the store" then they no doubt would have employed it.

As most other actors on the Corner, the social workers were there because, in Ansty's words, "that's where the kids are; that's where we belong." Another social worker told us that she came to McDonald's to "contact" the teens. Individual teens are not assigned to her; rather she knows of them or is told of them, and she "hangs at McDonald's - those are her words - in order to make contact with them. She says that she "waits" for the kids to come to her; one cannot intrude upon the teens or "force conversation" upon

them. Their objective is not simply to make contact with teens but also to get to "know" them, to win their trust. Ansty elicits the admiration of the social worker quoted above because "he's so warm and outgoing... so suited for the job... so open and so natural." If making contacts can be viewed as their immediate objective, then what would their more general or long range goals be? The question is perhaps unfair; the social workers do not have the luxury of working with objectives that reach too far into the future. They must respond to the immediate situation, to the often specific and quite concrete demands placed upon them in the field. One such demand no doubt was to reduce the level of confrontation at McDonald's. If the hard, punitive approach of the police would not work, then perhaps the softer line of the social workers would. Although they did not seem to operate in terms of a definite program on the Corner, our observations and conversations with them did suggest a certain consistent orientation to the teens which would guide their actions. This orientation was particularly reflected in their subsequent activities at the Drop In Center. Fundamental to this orientation is the notion that their intention is to help kids "deal with their problems", to bring out the issues and get them to talk about them. They often seemed reluctant to specify these problems, rather they would let the teens identify the issues. Drugs, however, seem to dominate the conversations. "Dope is not a growing thing; the kids just get high, they get nothing

out of it." This sense of waste, of the teens getting "nothing out of it", is often expressed. "Boredom is a big problem... (the teens) have nothing better to do; they are wasting their time." The Corner kids do not "get into things". A social worker once listed the "problems" for our benefit: "skag, promiscuity, and school". In this sense the social workers seem to take issue with much of the teen's behavior. The implication is that they would work to change behaviors, not in terms persuading or coercing teens to conform to the McDonald's routine, but in terms of alleviating these problems, of lessening drug activity or of helping individuals "get into things". We rarely heard them say anything positive about the teens' general behavior. Hanging seemed to be viewed as a waste of time. The potential benefits or the necessity of such terminal activity for the teen were never discussed - with us at least. On occasions, the social workers would speak of these problems in terms of the broader context of conflicts between the teen and his environment or between the teen and another party. School and parental conflicts were often seen as defining the nature of these problems. In this regard, a social worker told us that she would sometimes deal with the parents of individual teens - but only about the teen's problems. Even though an issue may be viewed analytically as a conflict between two parties, the social worker only works with the teens and so will tend to define the issue as the "teen's problem". Invariably, the teen is the misfit - not the parents, not the schools, not

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the Coolidge Corner environment , not even McDonald's. A social worker told us that her aim in helping "kids deal with their problems" is to get them "back into the system", back into "school, off drugs... I know that sounds bad," she said, "but that's all they got. They can't make it on their own."

Although the social workers interest in changing behaviors is somewhat analogous to that of the other control actors in making the teens conform to the dominant routine, the means by which they approach the teens is quite different. To develop contacts with the kids and to get to know them, the social workers approach the teens on their own terms. They interact with the teens in a personal, informal fashion. Other control actors were forced to hang on the floor to observe and constrain teen behavior. The social workers literally hang with the teens, in order to work with them. Their position is ironic - they are active participants in the very activity which they ultimately wish to change.

With the presence of social workers in McDonald's, public policy toward the teens has shifted. The police would control hanging through punitive means, by censoring "disorderly" conduct and by evicting and perhaps even arresting "troublemakers". The social workers would affect the hanging process through non-punitive means, through becoming participants within it and through personal influence upon individual teens. In the sense that they are involved in

the teens' activity, we could say that they support it. In this respect, the town of Brookline, through the social workers, has given a certain public recognition and support to the hanging activity. The teens' activity has become increasingly "public". Initially, the teens were able to adapt McDonald's because of its public nature. Yet, because of this public character, the management was unable to control the teens' activity on the floor, and the police, as public officials had to be stationed there. Now, the social workers as public agents have been sent in to control the teens' activity through participation and support. We have observed that the preceding control agents were inadvertently drawn into behavior that paralleled the teens' activity. The social workers in contrast, purposely accommodate themselves to hanging in order to guide and constrain behavior. In effect, this process of convergence which we have noted has become incorporated into public policy.

The suitability of McDonald's for the social workers lay in the same set of attributes which facilitated its adaptation by the teens and later by the police, those attributes which define the floor area as public space. The openness and the transparency of the space enabled the social workers as well as the other actors to observe activity both on the floor and on the street. Particularly important for the social workers however, were those attributes which facilitated the development of contacts with the teens and

casual interaction with them. The dominant McDonald's routine gave the social workers the right, through purchase, to sit in the section with the teens - to either join those with whom they are acquainted or to sit in an adjacent booth if not familiar with the occupants. Their ability to manipulate booth space would enable them to "get to be known" or to advertise their acceptance by certain teens. While one teen told us that the Corner kids resented the social worker's presence at first - before eventually accepting them - the restaurant did not present the problem of intrusion nearly as much as did other hanging territories. One social worker told us that she felt that they "should not intrude upon the park... it was the one place for the teens to go." A teen thought that her friends would "really resent it" if they did enter the park. Intrusion was less of a problem at McDonald's not only because of the accessibility of the floor area, but also because the teens' activity there contained less overtly illicit behavior than the park and other such areas. This accommodation by the teens enabled the social workers to avoid the awkward predicament of witnessing a joint or a bottle of wine being circulated among several teens - a predicament in which they easily could have found themselves in Devotion.

The social workers soon became familiar figures in McDonald's. Every night, from Tuesday through Friday, with regularity which few Corner kids could equal, they could be

found - several sitting in a section in a section booth by ¹⁶⁸ themselves or perhaps one or two in the middle of a booth full of teens. Since the spring weather permitted hanging outside, they could frequently be seen circulating among a group of teens on the side walk or leaning against a parked car with their charges. Most of the social workers are men in their late twenties and early thirties, tall and rather athletic in appearance. Since the girls frequently outnumber the boys at the restaurant, it was not uncommon to find a male social worker sitting happily in the middle of a booth full of Corner girls. One of the men was particularly gregarious and seemed to spend the greater part of an evening circulating from one cluster of girls to another - an affectionate hug here, a "hi ya, lover" there, two girls under both arms as he talks to a third.

While the social workers interact much more directly and informally with the teens than do the other control agents, they were more conservative as to where they hung. They would rarely spend extended periods of time standing by the corner entrance, either in the lobby or the setback, or even on the sidewalk adjacent to McDonald's on Green Street. Rather, they would hang in the section or outside, across Green. We spent several hours of one fall evening leaning against a new Mercedes Benz parked on the far side of Green with one of the social workers - our conversation cut short by the return of its owner. The areas that they

seem to avoid are those most suitable as terminal, those that give the occupant the most exposure. Those that they use are either less exposed or give them routine access. For example, the far side of Green Street is adjacent to the Pewter Pot which has only one window opening on to Green. At night it is less illuminated than the McDonald's side of Green. Furthermore, the automobiles which serve as street furniture are legally parked here.

In their role of "helping teens deal with their problems" the social workers could be considered to be caretakers for the teens. hanging in McDonald's with the teens, however, they soon began to serve as caretakers in much more direct ways. An aspect of the teen's misfit status is his relative poverty and immobility. Being older and steadily employed, the social worker could be counted upon to have change in his pocket - not to mention extra cigarettes - and to have access to an automobile. They would frequently give the teens rides as they made the rounds from McDonald's to one of the two drop in centers which are located in other sections of Brookline. Almost every night, they would give teens rides home so that they, particularly the girls, would be in on time. This also served to clear McDonald's toward the end of the evening. Giving rides may have given them the opportunity to speak to individuals or small groups of teens privately. Teens have always resorted to the automobile for privacy that

neither their homes nor their hangouts would provide. It seems reasonable that their public guardians would also take advantage of its enclosure. They probably played a major role in increasing the teens' mobility. There were some tasks that the social workers, because of their status could not perform. It is doubtful that they were ever asked, as we frequently were, to buy beer for the underage teens at the local liquor store down the block. During the summer, the social workers performed more programmed caretaker activities. They organized weekly picnics in the evening which were held at a local park. They provided the food secured from local food stores as well as McDonald's (raw hamburger patties) and sports equipment for baseball, badminton, and volleyball. They also provided the rides out to the park using McDonald's as a terminal, naturally, to pick up the teens and drop them off after the picnic. One of the objectives of these picnics was to provide "at least" one night which the teens could spend off the Corner doing something "constructive". In this respect, this program was hardly supportive of the teens' hanging routine.

Compared to the other control agents in McDonald's, the status of the social workers was the most ambiguous. While the other agents may have tended to interact informally with the teens as a result of their efforts to control them, their professional objectives did not require them to do so. These agents were posted in McDonald's for the clear purpose

of policing the teens' activity. Their authority followed from either their position as employees of McDonald's or their status as public officials. The major ambiguity in the status of the manager and the police existed in terms of the polarities of public and private. The position of the social workers was different. On one hand, their right to be in McDonald's reflects their status as public agents and also the express approval of the management which was granted at the meeting with the selectmen. On the other hand, their right to work in McDonald's is conditional upon their acceptance by the teens. The teens, of course, could not prohibit their presence on the floor, but they could refuse their advances and disallow any possibility for contact. This ambiguity in status may be appropriate to a middleman whose role it is to de-escalate the level of conflict. However, it leaves the social workers in an awkward position. One aspect of this ambiguity is that the social workers have only a very limited basis upon which to exercise control. They have no policing authority and, at the same time, have nothing to withhold from the teens as leverage. In McDonald's, their only way to affect behavior is through persuasion or personal example. One advantage of this limited power is that they have little responsibility for the teen's behavior, and consequently have relative freedom of action in dealing with the Corner kids. However, it limits their utility to the management whose only interest is in maintaining the dominant McDonald's routine. Further-

more, the support that the social workers seem to give the teens could easily be interpreted - or misconstrued - as expressing a certain responsibility for the teens' actions.

What effect did the presence of the social workers have upon the situation at McDonald's? According to John Ansty, there were only five police incidents in the seven month period since the social workers entered McDonald's, in contrast to the sixty three during the first two months of that year. Although we were on the Corner only intermittantly during the spring and summer, we never witnessed such confrontation between the teens and the police as we were told had occurred during the preceeding winter. We neither observed or heard of a bust on the Corner until the following winter. The only "deviant" behavior by the teens which we observed in McDonald's during this period were simply violations of the McDonald's routine. We wonder if this lessening in conflict can be attributed simply to the presence of the social workers. They arrived on the Corner at a very fortunate time, the beginning of spring. With the change in season, the teens were no longer confined solely to McDonald's; they could return to the streets. Several teens have told us that Devotion Park was used intensively as a hangout during the summer, not only as a "place to get wrecked" but also as a terminal. One girl told us that she was "up at Devotion every night". With the insularity of Devotion and the security it affords, its occupants,

there is less potential for conflict between the teens' activities and the setting than at McDonald's. Both the teens and the social workers report that the police rarely raid the park. The dispersal of teens to the streets and the increased usage of Devotiin would account for some lessening in conflict at McDonald's and on the Corner in general.

We doubt that these warmer months were such a time of crises or conflict that they required the active intervention of the social workers. However, because the social workers deal with the teens on an individual and personal basis, it is particularly difficult to evaluate the influence that they bring to bear upon the situation. We have some sense of how the "message" of the social workers has been internalized by certain teens. One girl in particular seemed to be undergoing a continual dialectic between her conflicting tendencies concerning drugs during the time we knew her. Her own rather contradictory, often vacillating attitudes toward dope seemed to reflect, in part, the influence of the social workers. She had a clear sense of what the social workers expected and wished of her concerning her use of drugs, and at times expressed these values as her own. Yet, her internal conflict was certainly not "resolved" in these few short months. It is difficult to imagine how the social workers could lessen the conflict on the Corner. The conflict between the teens' activity and the setting as outlined

earlier was very real. Given their tendencies in behavior, all participants acted out of necessity. It would seem that only a change in situation - in the Corner environment itself - could alter the course of the conflict. Such a change was provided by the coming of spring. Another such change will occur with the installation of the new drop in center on the Corner.

SOCIAL WORKERS - EVICTION FROM McDONALD'S

The manager of McDonald's began to question the benefit of having social workers stationed in the restaurant:

"It worked out, you know, pretty good; but it didn't last that long... The idea was to keep the kids out of the store... We wanted to keep them out of the store, give them something to do; but what happened is that - I would come in there at night and there would be three or four groups with a social worker in the middle of them, whatever they call it - rappin or something - I dunno, but that's what they were doing. But somebody walks by and they just keep walking by."

Montour's observation reflects the ambiguity of the status of the social workers. He sees them not as control agents, but rather as participants in the teens' hanging activity - a reasonable interpretation. In his view, the social workers are not keeping the teens out as he intended; rather, they are attracting the teens to McDonald's. It is doubtful that there were more teens in McDonald's during the

summer, but as winter's confrontation receded in memory, Mr. Montour may have begun to think in terms of ultimately being rid of the teens.

The social workers sensed that they had worn out their welcome at the restaurant. They realized that the management felt that they attracted teens to the store. One incident in particular informed them of the change in favor. A Corner kid had just purchased a cola and sat down when a manager approached him and told the youth that he had been there long enough. A social worker protested that the boy had just purchased the drink, only to be then informed by the manager that he too could leave the premises with the Corner boy. The process of convergence could not have come to a more ironic conclusion; a public control agent becomes so identified with the teens that he is asked to leave by the management. In evicting the social workers, the management had placed them in a quandry, and in so doing, may have found a way, however inadvertently, to rid the store of teens. The social workers had made a commitment to work with the Corner kids and had put in several months effort thus far. Yet, they were losing their base for contacting the teens. At the same time, fall was approaching and soon winter would follow, and with it, if the teens were still hanging in McDonald's, would be the prospect of intensive conflict between the kids and police. If the social workers wanted to continue to work with the

Corner kids, then they would have to find another place¹⁷⁶
for them to hang.

In the fall of 1971, the social workers were without a base of operations on the corner. They were no longer welcome at McDonald's, and the increasingly colder weather denied them the use of the streets. At the same time, they faced the ominous prospect of another winter of conflict on the corner if the restaurant remained the primary hangout of the teens. It was this situation that required them to find a place other than McDonald's where at last a considerable number of the corner kids would hang and where the social workers could contact them.

While the disfavor of the management of McDonald's may have precipitated immediate action to secure such a place, the department of Youth Resources had considerable prior involvement in the maintenance of centers where teen and social worker could meet. These "Drop In Centers" were generally small, one room facilities which were provided with some recreational equipment - a ping pong table and board games. These were not the sort of centers that are often designated by that term, where teenage "runaways" can find shelter and support with parental permission for several days. Rather, these were centers where local teens could spend a few hours of their evening during which they could meet with their friends, participate in casual games and speak with social workers. Two such drop in centers existed in Brookline at the time we began our study: the Blue Door

in Brookline Village beneath the offices of Youth Resources, and the High Rise, situated in the basement of a housing project. Both were a fifteen or twenty minute walk from the corner and neither were frequented by the corner teens. Both were considered to be the special province of the local teens who lived in the immediate area of the centers. The Blue Door in particular was regarded as an "immature place" by some of the corner kids. According to one girl:

"There's a drop in center and that's for any age, but the kids that go there are from eight to twelve and it's just a lot of immature hassling around there. And that's about it, and a bunch of social workers. That's pretty stupid."

Another drop in center once existed on the corner for three short months, which served the predecessors of the corner kids. It was located in the basement of a nearby church and was preempted as class room space for a primary school during construction of a new building.

Before the social workers began to regularly patrol the corner, the department was considering the installation of a new drop in center near McDonald's. John Ansty, then acting director of Youth Resources, told us during an informal interview in early spring just before the social workers entered McDonald's, that they were considering a particular building as the site for the new center. They were interested in the local American Legion Hall, located just a block behind McDonald's at the intersection of John and Pleasant Streets. The attributes of this structure according to Ansty were its large size, its

proximity to McDonald's and Coolidge Corner, and its infrequent use by the Legion who generally held only weekly meetings there. Ansty did not speak of a definite program for the potential center. Rather, it would be a place where teens could get together free of the confrontation of McDonald's, and where they could come if they were having "trouble" - if they were having a bad trip or having difficulties with parents or school. He particularly had hopes for the kitchen facilities of the hall. He envisioned that teens would drop in for food and drink which they would prepare themselves, and that informal conversation would effortlessly follow among the teens and the social workers over these amenities.

The Legion resisted the suggestion that their hall be converted into a part time drop in center for the corner kids. It was not until the arrival of a permanent director of Youth Resources, Joe McCormick, that the Legion was persuaded to turn over part of their hall to the social workers on a part time basis. The town of Brookline makes an annual contribution of "perhaps" \$8000 to the Legion, and, with the support of the Board of Selectmen, Youth Resources was able to employ this sum as leverage to convince the Legion. Joe McCormick described his role as simply one of applying a little "gentle persuasion", although he did recall that he had renewed his membership in the American Legion and attended a few local chapter meetings.

The main purpose of the Drop In Center, according to Joe McCormick, "...was to get the kids off the streets, away from

McDonald's and the cops..." He did not mention the general goals which the other socialworkers had earlier proposed: to contact the kids, to get them to deal with their "problems", and by implication, to alter behaviors involving promiscuity, vandalism, drugs, and school. The immediate objective as he defined it was essentially preventive in nature:

"...as for counselling at the Drop In Center, no - it's not happening now. They are providing some recreation now, certain games and pool, but for the most part, it's just to avoid further confrontation at McDonald's."

Some of the teens knew of the proposed Drop In Center. Those we talked to prior to the opening of the Center, felt that while it would never replace McDonald's as a hangout, it could serve as a place where teens in trouble could go for help, particularly those having a bad experience with drugs. In one girl's opinion:

When they really need a Drop In Center most is Friday night and Saturday night and weekends because the kids have no place to go besides McDonald's, and there hasn't been a drop in center at Coolidge Corner for about a year or two now. A lot of poeple think it's stupid to have a drop in center, but if some kid is tripping his brains out or something or having a bummer and is in need of some kind of help, then it's a cool place to go and get help."

However, as a place to see ones friends, it "...will probably never be as good as McDonald's." Another girl added that "kids from different parts of town aren't going to come up just to go the the Drop In Center." The first girl explained

that "...the Drop In Center, if they do have it at the Legion place, will still be off Coolidge Corner a bit; it's not on the main drag." In contrast, as we now know, McDonald's has the food, it has the seating and everything, and that's where everybody's going to drive by, and it's still in the center of Coolidge Corner."

A FIRST NIGHT AT THE DROP IN CENTER

The Drop In Center has been opened for a week when we first visit it in late October. We arrive on the Corner around 10:00 and walk what had become our corner circuit: past McDonald's, through the parking lot, and down to Devotion Park. All of these locations are virtually empty of teens. Only two corner girls are in McDonald's, along with a smattering of customers, and a rather bored security guard. A short walk takes us to the Drop In Center, one and one half blocks away from the restaurant, on the corner of Pleasant and John Streets. The Legion Hall is located in an area of mixed commercial, residential, and institutional use. Just behind it are the comfortable frame houses and three decker brick apartment buildings that are typical of the Coolidge Corner area. Across Pleasant Street is the new Public Library of Brookline. Next to it is a very large apartment structure, perhaps ten stories high, which once was a very prestigious address in town and now houses primarily the elderly as does much of Brooklines rental space. On the bottom floor, facing Coolidge Corner, is an automobile showroom. Adjacent to the Center on Peasant Street is a new high rise housing project

for the elderly which, from the exterior at least, could be mistaken for luxury housing. Across John Street the Center faces the multi-paneled glass wall of an automobile garage. Immediately on both sides of the Legion hall are parking lots, isolating the Center from the neighboring structures. The Center overlooks the intersection of two minor streets. Although Pleasant Street empties into Coolidge Corner a half block away, it is lightly trafficked. John Street, only two blocks long, connects Pleasant with Babcock and, just a few steps further through a short alley and an opening in the mesh fence, Devotion Park. This setting which would never yield the street activity of the shops and restaurants of Harvard Street, seemed particularly lifeless at night. The library and automobile facilities are closed and the apartment residents remain home behind locked doors. Only a few street lamps, the head lights of occasional passing automobiles, and the security lights beamed at the brick and glass facade of the library illuminate the sidewalk.

The Legion hall, an old, large rambling two story frame house, seems isolated amid the parking lots, apartment buildings, and automobile shops. However, painted dark grey, separated from the street by its dimly lit front yard, yielding little light and even less information concerning activity inside through the heavy, dark green curtains of the tall gothic windows, it mirrors the quiet and inactivity of the street scape. There is little to identify this house as a Legion Hall, save for the flag pole in the front yard and a

small circular barely legible sign above the front door, and even less to identify it as a teen center. There are no signs, not even a sheet of paper clipped to the door. Although we had been told by a corner teen that over eight kids were at the Center on opening night last Wednesday, and we know that the Center was to have been open since seven o'clock this evening, we are not sure of our bearings as we approach the building. We wonder if we have the correct address or if the Center is in fact open this evening. We are relieved then to see two familiar faces among the several teens sitting on the front porch of the Legion Hall. One of the two girls is waiting for her father to pick her up. The other decides to join us on a tour through the new center and invites us in. Opening the solid panel door, we are suddenly confronted with a familiar and yet, given our doubts of just moments ago, a surprising scene: thirty to forty teens, many recognizable as corner kids, milling about with a freedom and animation that the McDonald's routine would never allow. Most are standing, densely packed in small clusters in a foyer which opens directly in front of us. As we push through the crowd into the foyer, we find that several rooms come into view. Some of the foyer crowd is spilling over into the adjoining room where a ping pong game is underway. Just beyond, in a third room, several girls are gathered around a table fingering through scraps of leather as the female social worker attempts to interest them in the intricacies of leather craft. Not all teens are standing. Several sit in the foyer on comfortable looking, over-stuffed easy chairs and a sofa, while others

sit in folding chairs placed around the perimeter of the "ping pong room", watching the back and forth progression of the game or the equally predictable activity illuminated on a small portable TV set in the far corner. There is no indication of the presence of dope or alcohol or even any overt sign that any of the teens are particularly "high" (of course, there are not many such signs), although our guide had informed us that last week on opening night, "everyone was stoned."

The atmosphere of these rooms seems strangely incongruous to the teens's activity. The walls are painted grey, a lighter grey, fortunately, than that of the exterior, and are illuminated by naked light bulbs mounted in wall fixtures. Our eyes have never quite adjusted to their glare. The only ornament of these spaces is provided by Legion artifacts. At the far end of the ping pong room the virtues of "100% Americanism" are extolled by the Preamble to the Legion Constitution, which, though hung from a roller, has been conspicuously left down for our edification. A speakers stand has been pushed to the rear of the room. Evidently the teens now play ping pong in the formal meeting hall of the American Legion. Two bulletin boards adorn the foyer, displaying announcements and newspaper clippings of interest to Legion members. One clipping is entitled "Don't be Deceived" and presents an analysis of the peace symbol as a sign of the "anti Christ": "it appears that the Communists are winning their battle for the mind of our youth."

Our escort asks us to follow her into the kitchen which we enter from the foyer through a long twisted hall way passed the restrooms, which seems to cut off communication with the rest of the Center. The kitchen is commodious and completely equiped with range, refrigerator, sink, and counter space - and with an old brick and cast iron hearth at one end. In the center of the room is a large wooden table at which several teens and two social workers sit. Their conversation is intermittant and restrained in contrast to the din emanating from the adjoining room. A few teens stand at the range preparing snacks. Hot dogs - if one wished to cook them - cokes, and coffee could be purchased for ten cents which is to be dropped into a styrofoam coffee cup on t he table. Our friend tells us that she has "kitchen duty" this evening which she explains consists of informing her peers where the various food items and cooking utensiles are located, doing a little cooking if need be, and cleaning up at closing. We leave her to her tasks and depart through another long crooked hall way into the "craft room" where the audience at the table of leather scraps seems to have dwindled.

The only room open to the teens on the second floor is the Legion's pool room. Up the main staircase from the foyer, to a landing where photos of all of the Legionaires are hung, through a narrow doorway, and we arrive in a dimly lit, smoke filled room dominated by a pool and a billiard t table. Several corner boys and John Ansty circle the tables intently planning their shots and discussing stratagies.

As many boys silently watch. This is strictly a man's world. Conversation is intermittent and businesslike, rarely straying from the game. Poor shots are cursed and derided; while others, more successful, receive congratulatory slaps on the back.

We return to the first floor to find the social workers and a few teens engaged in cleanup operations: cooking utensils washed in the kitchen by the girls, floors swept, ping pong tables folded up and returned to storage. By 11:00, when the Center is to be closed, all signs of the teen's presence will have been erased. Outside a crowd of teens who have gathered on the lawn are asked to leave by a social worker. We oblige and walk up Green Street passed McDonald's. The corner kids have already begun to collect by the setback and in the section.

THE DROP IN CENTER AS A SUBSTITUTE MCDONALD'S

Our friend asked us several times throughout our walk through the house, "how do you like it?" She seemed concerned about the impression that the new Center had made upon us. Our impression, for once was easy to state: it appeared that there was a new hangout on the Corner - at least between 7:00 and 11:00 on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. A pattern had been established that evening which was to be born out by observations over the following months. Whenever the Drop In Center was open, it, more than McDonald's, was the place on the Corner to which the kids came, from all

over Brookline as well as from the immediate area. They came, as they had to McDonald's, to see "everybody", to make connections, and to share their high with their fellows. The Center had taken over the terminal activity of McDonald's. However, when the Drop In Center was closed, the teens could again be found back at the old hangout as if nothing had changed. As Paul Montour said of the Center, "when it was open it was ok; when it wasn't open it was like McDonald's was the Drop In Center for that night."

When the Center was open it did indeed fulfil the objective stated by Joe McCormick of keeping the kids "away from McDonald's and the cops." It seemed that achieved this objective by shifting the hanging scene, in effect, from the restaurant to the Legion Hall one and a half blocks away. It was as if they had set out to create a substitute McDonald's. There is no indication that the social workers or Youth Resources consciously intended to develop an actual hangout for the teens. The orientation of the social workers to the teens was not to support the hanging activity. Rather, they seemed to regard hanging as "a waste of time", and their intent was to help teens "get into things." Yet, as we have discussed, from the time that the social workers entered the Corner, they have utilizes hanging as a means to contact the teens and, ostensibly, to obtain these larger goals. In the sense that they had participated in the teens activity and had performed certain caretaker functions, they supported hanging at McDonald's. With the Drop In Center, they gave even more

support to the teens through the provision and maintenance of a place to hang.

How has the Drop In Center been able to compete so successfully as a hangout with McDonald's? The Legion shares certain attributes with the restaurant which we have considered to fit the hanging process. It shares McDonald's proximity to Coolidge Corner, as we have mentioned. Its spaciousness and openness, particularly of the three front rooms, facilitates visual communication and movement within the space. Unlike the restaurant there is no rigid pattern of furniture to constrain circulation.

A major advantage of the Center for the teens was suggested to us by a corner girl who said that there were "fewer hassles" at the Legion Hall than at the restaurant - referring to the threat of punitive action by police and management at McDonald's. At the earlier hangout, the physical setting was not nearly as constraining upon the teens' activity as the McDonald's routine and the efforts of the control agents to insure conformity to that routine. At the Center, the kids were relieved of these constraints. While they have to accommodate themselves to the prohibition of overt drug use on the premises, as they had at McDonald's, they were otherwise quite free to hang in the Center (at least, during the first few months). All teens had the right of access to the Center as a stated policy of the social workers. They had considerable freedom of movement and communication within its spaces.

Behaviors which were prohibited or restricted in McDonald's were quite permissible in the Center; they could enter or leave at will, without charge, they could freely shift involvements from one group to another, they could stand and talk with friends, they could signal or shout across the room. Limitations upon movement and interaction were set only in terms of avoiding physical damage to the setting and to each other. They also had greater freedom in the range of behaviors which they could exhibit. Although dope had to remain concealed on the premises, teens could share their high in a more open fashion. Couples were freer to show their affection, although few teens took advantage of this option.

The teens were free from hassle in the Legion Hall in another significant respect. The Center was off limits to the police. According to Ansty, the department of Youth Resources had reached an agreement with the police that whatever happened in the Center was "the social worker's business." The only policeman that we observed in the hangout had been invited up to the pool room by Ansty for a cup of coffee. While this restriction did not make the Center a safe place for the kids in the sense that beer and grass could be passed in the open, as at Devotion Park, it did free the teens from the apprehension of punitive action by the police. The social workers did have their own methods for controlling teen activity, as we shall later discuss, but these methods were generally not so coercive. It was no doubt essential for the social worker to maintain a Center

that was beyond the jurisdiction of the police of they were to prevent further confrontation on the Corner and if the teens were to come to them for help with their problems. In so doing, they created a refuge for the teens on the Corner, an open space in the network of authority and control - more "open" in fact than that which the teens had previously adapted as their own.

Not only does the Center seem to be a suitable hangout for the teens, it is difficult to see how it could be anything but a hangout. The openness of most of the space seems to preclude its use for counselling. Those rooms which could afford more privacy due to their insularity are given over to specific activities such as pool or cooking. The games seem to be quite supportive of hanging in providing a diversionary activity in which a teen may serve as a participant or a spectator, and they seem to be quite popular. However they seem to dominate the rooms in which they occur and to constrain interaction between teen and social worker.

Joe McCormick indicates that the size of the Center relative to the activity it supports is a major constraint:

"The American Legion building is not suitable for more than thirty kids and some nights that place is packed. Some of the kids need tutoring - counselling or any tutoring can't happen now in the Legion as it is presently set up.

We suspect that the time structure of the program also discourages any use of the Center by the kids other than for hanging. While the Center is not always open when the teens tend to hang, it is never open when they do not hang. Were the Center in operation during the afternoon when generally fewer teens on the Corner, they might feel freer to approach the social workers for counselling. The following dialogue between two corner teens illustrates the predicament of those teens who wish to speak to a social worker:

"You can't talk to John (Ansty) at the Drop In Center."

"I know, you try to talk to them and you get disrupted every five seconds."

"He's so well known up there, you know, 'Where's John Ansty? - Oh, he's around the corner in a conference - Oh well, how you doing, John'... stand there for a minute."

In the same fashion, it would be difficult for a teen to engage in the sort of "constructive" activity which the social workers wished to promote. The several inattentive girls gathered around that heap of leather pieces represent the maximum involvement that the kids were to give to leather craft in the Drop In Center. Not long after that evening the social workers ceased to set out materials in the "craft" room. Such craft work would be difficult to undertake when the Center is crowded on a Friday evening, and few teens, it seems would have the inclination to spend those precious few hours engaged in any activity which would not allow them to freely interact with their friends.

Another such constraint would be the priority which the American Legion holds upon the structure. The Center is first and foremost a Legion Hall. Neither the teens nor the social workers can make any permanent mark upon the building, or manipulate the setting in such a way that it cannot be returned to its original state at closing time. This situation precludes activities which might deface the building or require a more specialized and immobile facility. Materials could not be stored in the Center nor could work in progress be left over night. Photography would demand too much equipment, and painting or silk screening would make too much of a mess. A teen could hardly repair a bicycle in the craft room or work on a small engine. Even a small library could not be set up. The only activities in which teens could engage are those which require little more than their physical presence - such as hanging.

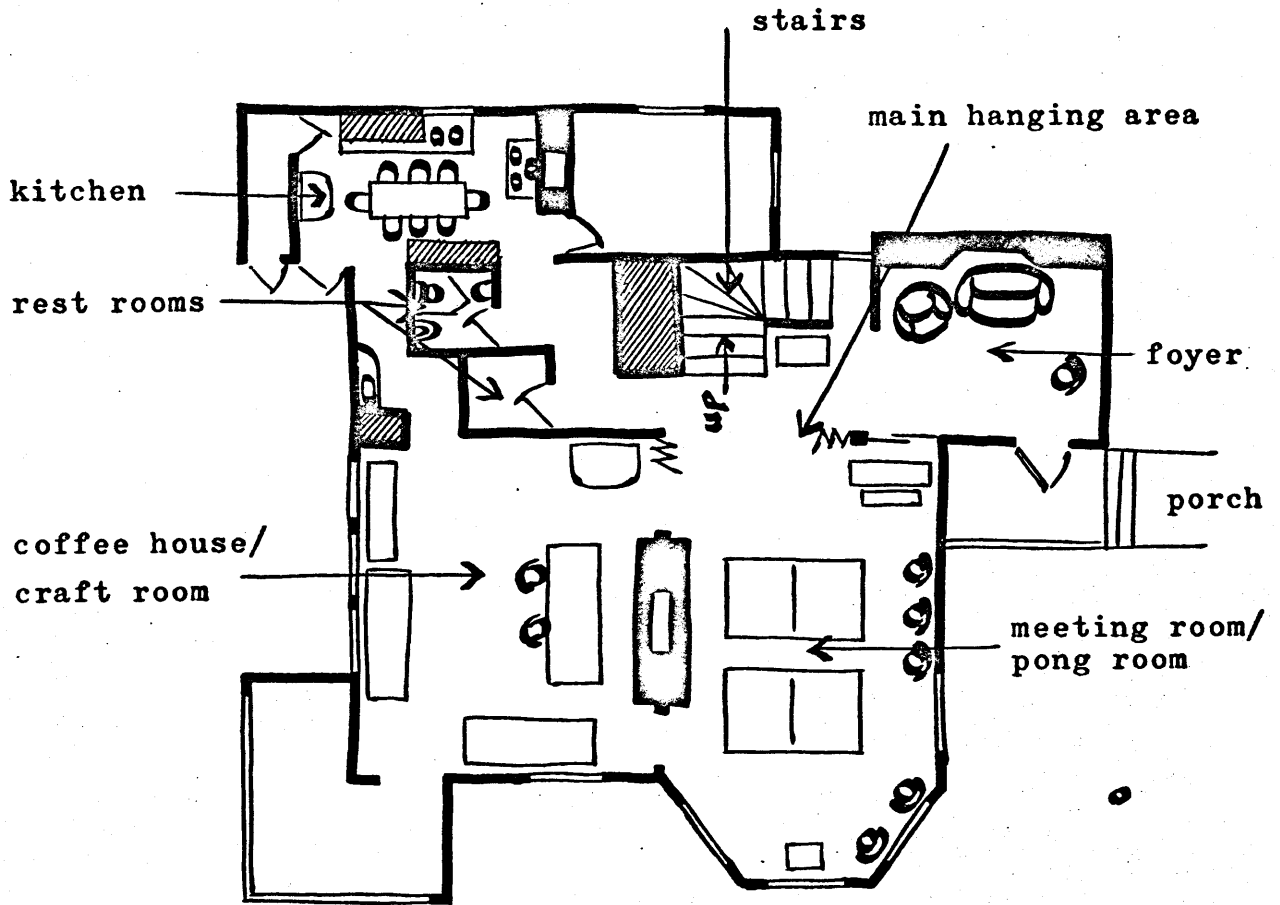
THE DROP IN CENTER AS AN INSULAR PLACE

One important characteristic of the Drop In Center contrast markedly with the nature of McDonald's. The former hangout, in its location and transparency was very extravert in character, open to the frequent passerby. The Drop In Center, in contrast, is a very insular space. It is insulated from the public by a location which manages to maintain proximity to the Corner while being sealed off from the life and activity of Harvard Street. Few people have the occasion to drive or walk down Pleasant Street during the evening. Those that do may have to search for the teens who hang in

the dim light on the front lawn of the Legion Hall. They would have no way of seeing activity within the Center. Even if the dark green shades were not drawn, as the Legion requires, the tall narrow windows would afford little view of the interior. The few teens who may gather outside will give the passerby little indication of just how many kids have assembled at this unlikely site. He never will be faced with the image of squad cars parked in front of the house with lights flashing as uniformed officers move kids off the lawn or push some adolescent against a squad car to be frisked and taken away. The image is far less disturbing and far less visible. Few need be confronted with the sight of thirty or forty long haired, slovenly dressed adolescents hanging on the streets where they live, shop, or work.

Youth Resources has accomplished more than just "get the kids off the streets, away from McDonald's and the cops"; it has removed the teen from public view as well. The hanging phenomenon and the hanging "problem" has been internalized. The situation is paradoxical. The teens now hang in a place that is truly public, an official hangout operated and maintained by the city. Yet their hangout is sealed off from the public at large. This relationship is the converse of that which held for McDonald's, a privately owned and operated space open to the public. The implication of this situation is that the town is dealing with this "problem" of hanging on the Corner by simply hiding it, covering over its most obvious symptoms. If this insularity

is a matter of public policy, then it is a policy of escape. The irony of such a policy would be that it mirrors the efforts of the kids to escape the dominant network of authority. The public avoids confrontation with corner "freak" in their midst, and the teen is free of the "hassles" from the police and store owners to hang in fellowship with his peers. At the same time, communication between the kids on the Corner and the public at large, or the other public agents such as the police, is now restricted to the single channel provided by the social workers. If the residents of Brookline wish to learn more about what McCormick terms "alienated youth", then they either have to take a drive over to Harvard Square in Cambridge or turn to their magazines and TV.



John Street

DROP IN CENTER - ACTIVE SPACES

HANGING IN THE DROP IN CENTER

When the Drop In Center was not open, hanging on the Corner followed the familiar patterns. The kids could still be found in McDonald's after school on weekdays and again in the evening except on Wednesday through Friday. Saturday night would reveal a full contingent of teens, overflowing the section onto the lobby area and street - unless, of course, the resident policeman has just cleared the restaurant. The hanging routine of the Drop In Center was, in effect, superimposed upon this pattern. During these first three months, the teens would simply go to the Center when it was open rather than to McDonald's.

THE HANGING ROUTINE

The Drop In Center opens at seven o'clock in the evening. Often the social workers will not have arrived yet, and the custodian of the Legion Hall, who lives in the building, unlocks the door to welcome the first arrivals who, invariably, are the pool enthusiasts. Within a few minutes, a pool game will be underway among six or seven boys, including perhaps the custodian, while the downstairs is still empty. More boys will join as the evening progresses, and the games will not let up until closing time four hours later. During the first half hour, the social workers begin to arrive, as will a few other teens. From six to ten social workers are stationed at the Center, including several who are students receiving training in the field. They begin to set up the equipment perhaps with assistance from some of the kids. The speakers

stand in the front room is pushed aside and the large wooden table of the Legion is moved into the adjoining room. The ping pong tables are brought out of the storage room and set up in the front room. A game is underway in minutes, between two teens or perhaps even a social worker and a teen. Others claim the privilege of playing the winner establishing the sequence of players over the next several games. More teens will arrive over the next hour. However, on a Wednesday or Thursday night, the number of teens present may soon begin to level off and, in fact, may not exceed the number of social workers present. (that Wednesday upon which we first visited the Center was an exceptionally busy night). Friday night, in contrast, will see the number of teens in the Legion Hall gradually increasing throughout the evening. Outside of playing pool and ping pong, the kids - and the social workers - will just hang. Most of the teens will be in the foyer as we observed on our first visit. Several may be watching the ping pong match, sitting on the folding chairs set around the perimeter of the room. Others may be in the kitchen with several of the social workers, who generally hang in this room, sitting around the large wooden table over a cigarette and a soft drink or coffee, engaged in small talk or perhaps a board game such as monopoly.

Towards ten o'clock, particularly on a Friday, the kids will arrive at an increasingly rapid pace, filling the foyer and the front portion of the pong and craft rooms. As many as a hundred teens may crowd these front rooms during

"prime time" on a Friday evening. The Center is a terminal not just for the corner kids at this time, but also for the different groups from various parts of Brookline. According to one of the social workers, "twenty or thirty kids from the Point will come in around 10:30 on Friday... They use it as a meeting place... make the grand appearance, meet their friends and leave." The Beeros from the Village will arrive as well as the kids from South Brookline in their crisp, new store bought denim and leather finery. Occasionally, a group of Blacks from Roxbury will pay the Center a visit. This is the climatic period of the evening: everybody will be at the Center, connections of sorts can be made, and for many, it is their last chance to see their friends before they must leave the Corner for home. Yet to an observer, on the face of it, nothing is happening. The kids stand about, packed into the foyer in small tight clusters, shoulder to shoulder, face to face, talking to and watching each other. The atmosphere may be particularly aromatic with the scent of alcohol; some may seem unusually kinetic, and others a little spacy. But, whether they are up or down, little will seem to happen to an observer who is inclined to activity which will obtain some goal or perform some task. At the very peak of prime time, some fifteen or twenty minutes before closing, cleanup will commence; with brooms and mops usually manned by social workers, the teens are pushed out and the Center returned to its original state as a Legion Hall. The kids will linger for a few moments on the front lawn as we observed that first Wednesday, until the social

workers ask them to leave. Many will make the short walk to corner of Green and Harvard and, in dwindled numbers, will hang there until around twelve midnight if the police and McDonald's management so allow. By 12:30, most of the teens will have left the Corner, not to return again until the following afternoon.

PLACES TO HANG IN THE CENTER

In choosing to hang in certain areas at McDonald's, the teens seemed to often make a tradeoff between the terminal attributes of hanging and security. Generally, those spaces which were most supportive of seeing and being seen, such as the setback and the lobby, were the most exposed and afforded the least security. The situation was different at the Drop In Center. Control, during these first three months, was not of such a strategic issue for the teens as it was at McDonald's. The teens had access to a variety of spaces in the Center at certain set times every week, and they had the relative freedom to interact within them. They did not have to claim, mark, and defend territory in the Center in order to hang there. In effect, the social workers were performing that function for them. At the same time, the social workers were not instructing them as to how they were to hang in the Center, beyond prohibiting certain illicit activities. In view of the dismay which the social workers were later to express over the way they utilized the Legion Hall, which we shall later discuss, we doubt that they had anticipated just how the kids would use the Center. The patterns of interaction

between actor and setting which emerged again reflect an adaptive process by the teens. They made certain accommodations to the social workers in terms of their use of drugs and alcohol and of respect for property. However, they also assimilated the Center into the hanging process, utilizing those spaces which fit in a fashion to which the old house had never been subjected. We shall examine these various places in the Center in terms of how they support the hanging activity of the teens and of how their use compares that placed upon spaces in McDonald's.

The Foyer

The foyer, as we have observed, is the main gathering area in the Drop In Center. It is the primary terminal space here just as the lobby and setback by the corner entrance were in McDonald's. All groups of teens hang here, not just the corner kids. They hang here more than any other space in the Center even though this is the one area where the social workers have provided no special facilities for the teens. There are no games or activities that are regularly staged here. The space has no special furniture; it is the one room that is not dominated by a large table upon which games can be played or around which people can gather. A small sofa and two rather comfortable easy chairs are usually situated in the foyer, which might suggest a minimal program of quiet parlor room conversation;; yet, the kids seem just as inclined to lean against the backs of chairs as sit in them. Hanging was not at all

lessened in this room during the few times that the furniture was moved into the craft room. The absence of a special program for this space may have been one of its attributes; hanging as a "non-activity" needs no special supporting routine and can conflict, as we have seen, with coterminous activities.

However, the foyer supports hanging in a more active fashion. It is the space through which "everybody" will pass. It is the focus of all pathways through the Center. Circulation through the front door, through the hallway to the kitchen, and up the stairway to the second floor, all intersect in the foyer. Both front rooms open off the foyer through large doorways, which give the teens hanging in this terminal space a commanding view of activity in these two rooms. The foyer, only twenty-five by twelve feet, is hardly a gathering space in its own right, but rather more of a clustering of openings to other areas. The teens do not hang in the foyer so much as they hang in these circulation spaces - in the interstitial spaces between the rooms of more programed activity. A heavy Friday night crowd will spill over into the adjoining rooms, into the hallway, and up the stairs, yet still center within the foyer. In its orientation to several other spaces, the foyer is similar to the lobby and the setback in McDonald's. The Drop In Center is of a far more complex spatial organization than the restaurant, the Center's multitude of rooms and corridors contrasting to the single large open space of the restaurant. Whereas the foyer

is literally a terminal where connections with different spaces can be made, the setback and lobby are interface spaces - spaces where the interface between inside and outside is most active, where the membrane is most transmitting, both in terms of circulation and visual contact. The relationship of the foyer to the front porch of the Center parallels that of lobby to setback, and, in that sense, the foyer is also an interface space. However, the very inactive interface of the Center consists of one heavy, solid, opaque wooden door.

The stairway is perhaps the key piece of furniture in the foyer. Located just behind our schematic focus, it tiers up several steps before it turns at the landing to continue to the second floor. Perhaps six feet wide, the bottom tier could comfortably accommodate several teens and offer them a view of activity in the three front rooms. Surprisingly, the stairway was the special province of the corner girls; boys would rarely sit on the stairs - with the exception of the two socio-architectio researchers who did not know any better. We do not understand why the boys would not take advantage of the attributes of the stairway. Segregation of the sexes in the Center, as we shall later discuss, usually worked to the exclusion of the girls, as in the pool games. Sitting on the stairs, however, seems to be just another way to hang, to do "nothing" in particular. It is a place where one can observe activity of more definition without becoming involved, and it is therefore quite suited

to the girls who, it seems, cannot - or are not allowed to - become involved or participate.

If the Drop In Center is dependent upon any one space for its viability as a hangout, it would be dependent upon the foyer. Its critical role was illustrated to us one Friday night when the Legion had pre-empted the two other front rooms to prepare for a party to be held in the hall. The pong room was closed off from the foyer by a sliding partition set across the doorway. Only the foyer and kitchen were open to the teens downstairs while another room was made available upstairs along with the pool room. A ping pong table was set up in this additional room which drew several teens throughout the evening. Most teens, however, remained in the small space of the foyer in a densely packed congregation. We doubt that the attendance in the Center was at all lessened by this rather dramatic change in setting. For all practical purposes, the foyer was the Drop In Center for that Friday evening.

On the few occasions when the foyer was rendered unsuitable for hanging, the Drop In Center was virtually emptied of teens. During prime time one Friday, the social workers chose to show several movies in the pong room. Again the foyer was closed off by the sliding partition. However, during the movies, the kids in the foyer were asked by the social workers to constrain their conversation which was competing with the audio of the movie. With the imposition

of this constraint and their lack of interest in the movies which had been selected by the social workers, the teens left for more reliable haunts. Another Friday evening, the social workers had brought in a local rock band who played competently in the hard style which the kids seem to favor. The band set up in the far end of the pong room while the teens sat on the floor before them. Quite a few teens listened to the band, although none danced. The decible output of the group made conversation in the foyer impossible. The music forced the kids to chose between continued listening and "making the rounds", and as their interest in the rather standardized rock seemed to wane, they left the Center to hang elsewhere. Before long, few teens remained on the floor listening to the band, and none hung in the foyer.

The Ping Pong Room

While the foyer, one of the smallest rooms in the house, was given over to hanging by as many as thirty or forty teens, the largest room, just adjacent to the foyer, was largely devoted to a game involving at most four participants. The game dominated the space and precluded most other activity. At first one ping pong table and then two filled the room leaving barely enough space along the side for the folding chairs. Those sitting in these chairs were invariably drawn into the role of spectator. The players would require a clear area of several feet at either end of the tables, which would often conflict with the circulation through the room and the tendency of the teens to hang in this circulation

space. The game was popular with many of the teens, however, and never suffered for lack of players - almost all of whom were male, whether teen or social worker.

Perhaps the main attribute of this room for ping pong, other than size, is the immediate proximity of the foyer with its large number of potential spectators and its activity with which a player may wish to have contact. The craft room, although sufficiently large for the tables, lacks such visual access to the foyer. The game, however, did not decline in popularity when the tables were moved into the craft room to clear the floor of the front room for the rock band.

A second use of the room, other than to receive spill-over of terminal activity from the foyer, was to hold special events. A special event was a non routine activity, of at the most one evening's duration which was usually carried through on the inspiration and labor of the social workers. Outside of the movies and rock concert mentioned above, such occasions included a Thanksgiving Dinner with turkey and trimmings served by candle light, several meetings of all teens called by the social workers, one such meeting called by a few of the teens, and a lightly attended lecture by two lawyers on the legal rights of the kids. This use of the pong room paralleled the evident use of the space by the Legion. It is their main meeting room as indicated by the array of furniture and paraphernalia

usually distributed about the room when the Center opens at 7:00 on Wednesday: the folding chairs set along the perimeter of the room, the speakers stand centered between the two flags, the large wooden table in the center of the room, and the Preamble to the Legion Constitution conspicuously unfurled overhead. The layout of furniture and apparatus at the special events follows this same general configuration. The rock band's amplifiers have displaced the speakers stand, and the folding chairs as well as the cleared floor serve as the seating area. The use of the room tend to reflect the basic duality of performer and spectator - in contrast to hanging in the foyer where everyone is both performer and spectator. The size of the room, its orientation to the foyer and circulation areas, and its proximity to the entrance probably reinforce this tendency. Only during the general meetings is this type of organization of performer and audience avoided. The social workers will generally sit along the side front wall within the circle of teens, or even sit on the floor in the foyer area with the kids to assert, we assume, their partnership with the teens.

The Kitchen And The Pool Room

We consider these rooms together because they share one common attribute, insularity. Both are separated from the three front rooms by long circulation corridors which cut them off both in terms of distance and visual communication. Both of these spaces, more than other areas, have tended to become used by particular groups. We suspect that the insularity

is supportive of this tendency. We would expect the pool room to become the special province of the pool enthusiasts. The room can support little other activity when the games are underway. The two tables dominate the space and leave just enough room for a few spectators. The room is always filled with serious young men quite intent in their role as player or spectator, and their business-like demeanor effectively informs the new arrival that he should adopt a similar stance and attitude. The game has a particular public identity derived, we suppose, from the popular image of the smoke filled, back room atmosphere of the pool hall which, if not based upon experience can find adequate support from the media. We all have some sense of how we are to behave in a pool room. We doubt that ping pong calls forth such imagery. Because of the insularity of the space, the integrity of the game is never challenged by a coterminous activity, as ping pong is by hanging in the foyer. At the dead end of one of the pathways in the Center, the game will rarely be intruded upon by the passerby. Norton Long has written that the game structures the situation. Here, the process is circular; the situation reinforces the tendency of the game to proscribe roles and define behavior. If this room is not the special province of the pool sharks, it will at least maintain the appearance of being so.

One of the social workers had indicated to us before the Center opened that he thought the kitchen would serve to generate interaction among the teens and between the teens

and the social workers. Joe McCormick spoke of the "attraction" that the kitchen would hold for the kids. The kitchen, however, never did become a main gathering area in the Center. Generally, one could find only a few teens there. They may fry a hot dog, pour themselves a cup of coffee, and then leave. At first, there did seem to be a certain "kitchen crew", a small group of teens who generally hung around the kitchen. Along with the characteristic activity of small talk, they might take turns at kitchen duty or play table games such as monopoly. Personal differences soon divided this group, and with them went the tendency of kids to hang in this room. It was not long, however, that the kitchen crew was replaced by another group of regulars, the social workers. They did not seem to use the kitchen as "office" space where they could discuss the operation of the Center or talk with individual teens. Rather, they simply hung here in a fashion similar to the teens. They would engage in small talk - touching on social work only to the extent of discussing the contingencies of the current job market for recent graduates in their field. They would play games of skill as the teens do, seeming to prefer the verbal orientation of "Scrabble". Games would also fill their conversation: riddles, word games, games of deduction. Such games do not structure activity so much as they fill its void. However, the act of sitting around that table in a small gathering was in itself rather compelling, particularly in a setting that was at once quite insular and at the same time could be intruded upon by anyone. There was a sense of

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forced intimacy about the setting, to us at least, that demanded some sort of direct interaction, and yet, perhaps because of the absence of real privacy, precluded the type of intimacy where a teen might be willing to discuss his troubles with a social worker. One could not easily enter the room without becoming somehow involved with its occupants or, as an alternative, intruding upon them. The space does have a routine of food preparation which could be used to justify access, but the employment of such a device does not lend itself to simply passing through or "checking things out." The kitchen probably did serve a useful function for the social workers. The Center did not provide a unique space for them, and they, no doubt, needed an area to which they could retreat. The insularity of the room allowed them to claim it as their own "hangout", yet its accessibility limited its utility as a place where the business of social work could be conducted.

The Craft Room

This room never developed a clear identity or consistent use by the teens or the social workers. The interest in crafts could not be sustained beyond a few short weeks. It became spill over space, into which the Friday night crowd could flow as the foyer became crowded. It was also the room into which activities were displaced by special events. The ping pong table would be moved into this room to be used just as intensively as it was in its regular location. The large wooden table that the Legion seemed to use in their meetings

generally ended up in this space, to occasionally be used for card games and table games. In this sense, it was free space which could be more easily manipulated than the rooms which had taken on regular activities. One minor, although interesting change in the space was the introduction of a cola machine which had been located in the kitchen. The soft drinks seemed to be the one amenity that drew the kids into the kitchen. It was a routine that demanded little commitment and allowed one to check out the room and perhaps enter into the activity there. In the craft room, such a cover routine was not necessary; the openness of the space made any activity there immediately legible from the pong room or the foyer, and precluded any sense of intrusion.

It seemed that the teens would often use this room as a refuge, a place where one could be out of it, alone or with a friend or two, and not be involved. We occasionally would observe just two teens in the room engaged in conversation that seemed somehow to be more personal and intimate than usually occurs in the Center. We generally observed the kids interacting in a group context as they do in the foyer, in which they would maintain involvements with several others simultaneously or would frequently shift involvements between clusters. This context does not seem to be one in which a teen could maintain extended, personal, face to face conversations with another. In effect, the craft room served as free space, unassigned and unclaimed, where the kids could temporarily drop out of the hanging routine. This particular

use was extended by a most interesting experiment of the social workers, the coffee house.

The Coffee House

We did not suspect the transformation that the craft room had undergone as we approached the Center that first Friday in January. The change was immediately apparent as soon as we entered the foyer. The lights had been turned off in the craft room. Contrasting to the harsh light of the other front rooms, only a single candle illuminated the craft room. Hard rock blared from the dimly lit space. As we entered the room and our eyes become accustomed to the dim light, we could distinguish six or seven round tables with several folding chairs about each. Upon each table was a candle and a mimeographed note welcoming all to the "coffee house" and another note listing the minimal prices for food and drink which could as usual be purchased in the kitchen. A couple sat toward the back of the coffee house, heads close together, talking quietly. In the middle of the room, the female social worker sat with a girl who seemed to be on "downs". We had seen her previously walking slowly about the Center, seemingly oblivious to those about her. She and the social worker seemed to exchange few words. Much of the time, the girl sat with her head resting in her arms upon the table. One of the social workers had told us when we entered the Center that "someone is passing out downs tonight... People have been crashing in here all evening."

At the one table with the lit candle, near the doorway to the pong room, sat the Coolidge Corner Veteran, a boy in his late teens, whom we had interviewed just days before. He was bent over the table, his head between the two stereophonic speakers which filled the room with sound. He seemed very intent upon some task inspite of - or because of - the decible output of the phonograph. John approached him and was surprised to discover that he was writing a poem. John sat down at the table as the boy continued to write. At a point when the Veteran paused, having perhaps finished, John asked if he wrote on a particular theme, such as his experiences on the Corner. "No, not about the Corner. I guess I should though. I just write about things I'm thinking about." He told John that he had written some forty pieces in the last ten years and wanted to put them in a book so "people could see how the writing has developed." John mentioned that he would be interested in exchanging writings with him. Bob then hoined them at the table and the Veteran began to doodle images of fire and black crosses on a sheet of scratch paper. He allowed us to read the poem which he had evidently finished, or at least, would not return to until we had left. The poem was entitled, The End and concerned the vindication of Satan upon our profane world; the demon destroys it, possesses it, and recreates it in his own likeness. The conversation ceased and the Veteran continued to doodle. We sensed that we had intruded upon our friend and had interrupted his writing. (We were therefore surprised the following Friday when he brought John a booklet containing all of his poetry

including The End which was unchanged from the previous week.) In spite of our misgivings, we felt relaxed in the coffee house. Enveloped in darkness and music, we were removed from the crowd of teens busily hanging just a few feet away in the foyer and pong room. We could be non-participant observers, which we usually were, without that nagging sense of provoking those questions in our "subjects" which they so rarely ask of us: who are you...what are you doing here? We could observe two teens rough housing in the next room without any sense of intrusion upon their boistrrious activity or of violation of our own private space. We suspected that our friend employed this cover of candle light and rock to a similar effect, to provide a sense of privacy that would allow him to write his poem.

Two girls who we knew quite well came over to our table and sat down, both placing their heads in their arms and nodding off. We had seen them minutes before sitting at the kitchen table in a similar position while a social worker prepared them both coffee. The girl sitting next to us looked up and said that they "really feel good." She told us that they were on morphine, which the kids also called downs. "It feels so nice... you have no worries - you forget your cares... Things look so good." She held up her hand before her and laughed, telling us that she was seeing double. They talked about taking another tab later that evening and again the following day.

A social worker-trainee sat behind our table talking to a corner girl. A boy entered the room, jumped up on the table behind us, walked across it and sat down next to the social worker, slapping him on the back in an overly friendly greeting. After a few moments of conversation, he asked each of us if we had a joint and then, receiving no affirmative reply, asked for cigarette papers. The Veteran handed him some. The newcomer then began to rib our friend, becoming increasingly aggressive. He loudly challenged the poet to "come outside and settle it." The Veteran attempted to laugh off the threat. Finally the social worker, quiet up to now, intervened, trying to cool the argument and succeeding in drawing the attention of the aggressive boy. After a few more jibes at the poet, the boy came over to one the girls, bent down, whispered in her ear, kissed her and then immediately introduced himself to us, giving us the hippy hand-shake of brotherhood. Suddenly, we were blinded by an intense, glaring light. We protested but the social worker explained apologetically that it was time to clean up the Center. We felt little inclination to remain in the craft room with its bright, stark grey walls and left.

The coffee house was not reopened until three weeks later. They simply "didn't get it together" the following week according to one social worker, and the week after that, the Legion pre-empted the front rooms to prepare for their party. The third Friday found the coffee house open again for the final time. That evening was comparatively quiet,

and dope was much less in evidence in the Center. Only seven or eight teens were to be seen in the darkened room throughout the evening. In couples or small clusters, they would sit close together, often leaning on the tables, talking quietly for longer than we cared to observe. We did not notice anyone writing poetry.

Two different evenings which exhibit such a wide range of behavior are hardly sufficient to suggest clear patterns. Yet, on both nights, we witnessed behaviors which we had not really observed in the Center before. Certainly, never had such a variety of behavior occurred in any one setting over such a short period of time: intimate face to face conversation, poetry composition, exhibitive and aggressive behavior, counselation by the social workers, intoxication on "downs". The personal dimension of hanging seemed to be emphasized in the coffee house, to the point that some activity was so personal in nature that it simply would not occure in the usual context of hanging. Interaction in the small cluster of two or three was reinforced by the cover of dim light and loud music, while the darkness and dense distribution of tables would never support the usual terminal activity. Even when interaction did occure in a larger group context as with the confrontation between the Veteran and the corner boy, it is intensely personal in nature. As spectators, we were much more drawn into that confrontation than we would have been had it occurred in the foyer before forty or more people. At the same time, only the few of us

sitting around that table were aware of it. In one respect, the coffee house was a very insular space, as is the kitchen or the pool room. However, the insularity of the latter two occurs at the level of the group space - at the scale of rooms which can support activity among fifteen or more people. Such insularity tends to structure behavior, particularly when coupled to a team game such as in the pool room. The insularity of the coffee house occurs at the level of personal space - at the scale of the few people who can interact around a small table in candle light or of an individual huddled over a work of poetry. When the dim light and a dense pattern of small tables creates a mesh of such insular spaces, even in a single room, then a variety of behaviors can occur within that network, simultaneously, without one impinging upon another. While the confrontation between the two boys was in progress, the couple at the back remained in each others arms and the social worker maintained her vigil over her stuporous friend. The single free space of the craft room had been subdivided into a multitude of such spaces in the coffee house. The individual gains in freedom to manipulate this insularity. The Veteran not only took advantage of the dim light as cover, but erected a barrier of sound as well by the placement of the two speakers.

The Interface And The Streets

Since our observations of the Center were made during the winter, we cannot really assess hanging on the front lawn and in the immediate environs, the potential of

which would only be realized during the spring and summer. However, early winter did provide a few warm Friday evenings, and they may well have foreshadowed things to come. The teens did indeed hang in the interface. At times, on these warm winter nights, as many as twenty may have hung on the lawn, usually gathering in front of the small porch. They had no visual contact with the activity inside as at McDonald's, but they did have freedom of movement inside and out which enabled them to maintain communication between exterior and interior. The cruising routine was much less in evidence at the Center than it had been at the restaurant, perhaps hanging on the front lawn occurred on such an intermittent basis during the winter. Of course, the insularity of the Legion Hall prevented the cruiser from "checking out" activity inside. Since cruising did not develop, one might expect the relatively low level of interaction between pedestrian and the automobile.

The lawn afforded the teens certain amenities which were unavailable at McDonald's with its bright lights and concrete sidewalks. They could sit in clusters on the cool grass or stretch out and watch the stars which were quite bright with the absence of conflicting illumination from street lamps or store fronts. One girl, sitting on the porch on an overcast evening recalled how beautiful the sky was one night when she was high, "... not dull as tonight, but clear and very black with stars crisp and bright and the clouds moving in the foreground past the moon."

Because of the low level of lighting and of activity and of the insularity of the Legion Hall, the immediate environs of the Center were far more secure for illicit activity than those around McDonald's. Dope was easily passed on the sidewalk in front and along the side of the structure. Bushes to the side of the house and trees around back afford more shelter. Even safer are the nearby residential streets: the lighting is dim, the passersby few; trees and parked cars obstruct the view from passing autos. Another safe territory, the area just behind the public library, was shown to us by a corner girl. It is a delightful maze of alleys and tight spaces between apartment buildings, interspaced with trees and shrubbery, which provide a variety of spots to smoke and deal in concealment. The girl told us that she and her friends would often smoke in the large parking bays in the back of the library. Cut at least ten feet deep into the building and sheltered overhead, the bays offered visual isolation to the teen from the banks of apartment windows which encircle the building. However, a driveway which services the bays wraps completely around the library and thus would allow police to approach rapidly from either or both directions.

The front lawn of the Center, more than its interior spaces, presents the familiar problem of control. During these first three months, the teens were certainly not misfits within the Legion Hall. However, their activity

on the lawn and in the immediate area conflicted with the setting in several respects. Much of their activity was illicit as we have noted. The neighbors, particularly the apartments across the street, complained of noise and of drinking. The Legion still resented the presents of the teens. While they could not inhibit hanging within the hall, they did attempt to minimize the teens' presence outside, and they were somewhat effective. According to one of the social workers, the windows shades were always kept closed at the Legion's bidding, evidently to hide the activity of the teens inside from the public. One warm Friday evening in early winter, the Legion posted several of its members at the Center to observe activity on the lawn. As the latest "floor control agents" on the Corner, they would hang around on the sidewalk, hands in coat pockets - in trench coats, no less - and intently observed the kids who hung in the interface. One Legionnaire went so far as to tell teens to come inside the building, off the front porch. Only a few teens complied.

The social workers were more tolerant of the kids' behavior on the lawn, yet were still ambivilant. They would not prohibit hanging on the lawn as the Legion would like, but they would try to contain the noise and to constrain any overt display of illicit activity. One social worker spent several minutes on that night when the Legionnaires were on patrol picking up beer can empties from the front lawn. During the several meetings with the teens in the

Center, the social workers protested the teens' tendency to leave such revealing garbage on the lawn for public consumption. The "right" to hang on the front lawn terminated with closing every night. The social workers would perform the now familiar control task of asking the kids to "move along". True to form, the teens would shift to less controversial territory, the McDonald's town house.

THE DYNAMICS OF CONTROL - THE DROP IN CENTER

To reiterate upon a previous chapter under the title of The Dynamics of Control - McDonald's, the social workers had hung at McDonald's because "that's where the kids are. That's where we belong." It is interesting that they should make their initial entry into the Corner through McDonald's rather than one of the other hanging locations on the Corner where "kids" definitely "are" and can be found quite regularly. The fact is, McDonald's was the only Corner interstice in which these public agents could acceptably slip-in. Their presence in any of the remaining hangouts would not only have been interpreted by the teens as an intrusion, but the illicit activities occurring there would also have threatened the social worker's very image and philosophy. In one sense, then, the social worker was even more restricted than the teen - he had only one legitimate territorial base from which to work, namely McDonald's. An important aspect of doing social work at McDonald's was that the worker was forced to approach the teens on an equal, if not inferior, territorial basis. This setting in which they, rather mandatorially, found themselves had considerable influence on the approach they took in making the necessary contacts with the teens. Just as McDonald's presented considerable constraints on teen behavior, it presented rather severe restrictions on the type of social work that could occur on the premises. The only control leverage available to the worker sitting within

McDonald's was that of persuasion or personal example carried through by persistent social contact, the sharing of one's time, possessions, experiences, and understanding. For awhile it did appear that the workers were able to achieve some level of success even with their limited control. Joe McCormick, the director of Brookline Youth Resources, stated: "The detached workers appeared effective when compared to the number of police calls before and after their involvement with McDonald's." He added: "But then, after awhile, the workers attracted the kids to McDonald's." implying that this had conflicted with the interests of the McDonald management.* But even before this "conflict of interest" there had been rumors of the possibility of an alternative to McDonald's. Although McDonald's ouster of the social workers toward the end of summer was most likely an important factor in the acquisition of the new center, the workers themselves are reluctant to give McDonald's the greater part of that responsibility.

* We were there ourselves during this period, and have some question about the validity of the worker's "attraction" of teens. In our eyes they hardly appeared to be an attraction, (during this period we frequently saw the workers sitting alone within McDonald's waiting for teens who often never showed up) in fact sometimes their presence there seemed to repel the teens - their territory having been violated by the presence of adult social workers. We had once thought, rather jokingly, that if McDonald's was ever serious about teens hanging in their store they could hire old people, at a minimal cost, to sit in the teen section. It seems more likely to us that the so-called "conflict of interest" existed solely in the eyes of the management, especially when they saw that the workers, although perhaps not truly attracting teens, were certainly not keeping them from hanging in McDonald's - the objective set by the management.

As mentioned previously, the opening of the Legion was made possible through the efforts of McCormick who, with his gentle political persuasion, pushed the idea through to reality. With McCormick then directing the activities of Youth Resources it is likely that the very image of the McDonald hangout may have had considerable influence over the decision to acquire the Center; for when asked about the underlying philosophy of Youth Resources, McCormick stated:

"There's a tendency within our society to segregate the kids - here's the good, the bad, the straight, the not so straight. I wonder if we are doing what we have done in the schools where we have comparative values - this is an A,B,C student... This is reflected in people's attitude to Youth Resources: If you go up to anybody on the street and ask them - 'Do you know who Youth Resources is?' They'll most likely say: 'Oh yeah. You take care of the alienated youth.' We are concerned with all youth. It only hurts our image and the image of those we are helping to refer to us as an organization that helps only the drop-outs, the misfits, the alienated youth."

McCormick plainly stated that "Youth Resources couldn't dedicate its life to McDonald's so a center was considered."

It was clear that for the social workers to remain in McDonald's would definitely (at least in McCormick's view) exhibit partiality to the group that hung there - namely the McDonald Freaks.

It is hard to say with any certainty just what would have happened if the social workers, having been ousted from McDonald's, could not have turned to their option of a center. When McDonald's shut them off it also severed the worker's major contact artery with the Corner teens. They may have dropped their efforts on the Corner entirely or they might have decided to go "underground" - coming more into convergence with the teens themselves, perhaps even associating with a portion of their "deviancy". As it was, their image was renewed and their power restored through what we would like to call the "Superman Syndrome". In Superman, if you recall, Clark Kent - the mild mannered reporter for the Daily Planet - suddenly faced with some humanly unsolvable predicament, rushes into the nearest empty phone booth to emerge as the magnificent, omnipotent, Superman - his option to an unbelievably pressing situation. The social workers, like Clark Kent, were simply holding their hidden powers in reserve until the ultimate move seemed inevitable. In some ways it was probably rather nice to be Clark Kent for awhile, experiencing part of the real environment of the teen, coming into conflict with the McDonald management, feeling the boredom, the repression, and sometimes the excitement of the Corner and especially never feeling terribly responsible for the activity occurring there.

But with the advent of the Drop In Center, suddenly the social workers found that they had considerable power

and control over the teens - they now held the leverage that before only McDonald's and the police had held. They now had responsibility over territory which they claimed, somewhat second handedly, from American Legion Post #7. Such leverage could be obtained by assimilating the Drop In Center into a "home" environment - convincing the teens that the place was now "their responsibility". In many ways the workers themselves paralleled the image of the cop or manager - they could be seen in the Center, standing amidst the teens, arms folded, eyes moving, scanning the scene, with deliberate intent on "preserving" the environment and squelching deviants as quickly as they appeared. Of course they could not employ the "repressive" controls known to the McDonald's management or city police, but the workers could employ psychological techniques of persuasion easily drawn from their newly acquired territorial base. This was revealed one evening during a group meeting at the Center when a social worker pleaded:

"Every night we have to clean this place up, but come 10:45 and everyone starts heading for the door. Listen, stick around and help out; we can't run this place by ourselves, it takes teamwork."

Al, the 73 year old custodian/resident, and member of the American Legion Post, made the behaviorist principal of the place much clearer (to the embarrassment of the social workers) when he added:

"Some people in the apartments over here have been complaining about the noise - when you leave, leave quietly. You know me, I've been with you all the way: I've seen some things in here and haven't said anything about it - you know the Commander - I haven't said a word to him about any of those things. Just don't destroy anything. We took the shades off the lights because some of the kids were taking them off. I realize you need the light to play ping pong, but... And that broken window... Well I hope that's all cleared up now. Just don't destroy anything."

It is quite apparent that such attitudes were not a part of the McDonald environment except in the eyes of the management and the police. The social workers never had the compulsion or the power to call a meeting of teens in McDonald's and lecture them about their responsibility to the preservation of their corner hamburger joint (although the responsibility was most likely as real there, in a dynamic scale, as it was at the Drop In Center, but perhaps not as obvious or revealing - customer volumes, for example, are rarely known outside of the management.).

In the Drop In Center teens would not only be attracted into the environment, but once there they could be grouped almost as the workers desired. All teens could be called to a mass meeting if necessary or other, somewhat subtle controls could be initiated through the arrangement of furniture - take the couch and chairs out of the foyer, create

a coffee-house in a side room, set up ping-pong tables; they could serve lasagna or show a movie, post messages and notices.

For the first few months, however, the workers seemed content to let the teens use the Center as they willed. In one way this reflected the general pattern of the workers -- they can rarely make long-term plans within such a rapidly changing, unpredictable environment (within the short period of two years it was apparent, through our interviews, that the activity and character of the Corner teens had changed immensely). As almost a matter of necessity and respect for the teens, the workers would have to work closely with the present situations, and presently their goal was simply to get the kids out of McDonald's, off the Corner, (regardless of the benefits of such an environment) and away from their confrontation with the McDonald's management and police.*

The social workers were very careful in making the transition from McDonald's to the Drop In Center -- the "Substitute McDonald's" was more apparent during these first

* In contrast, the teens rarely talked about the need for a drop in center in such context -- the arrests and hassels were an expected part of the Corner activity, many times providing some interesting excitement to their otherwise rather dull existence. What concerned them most was the closing down of their environments while the need for more alternatives to McDonald's within and around the Corner still existed.

few months than later specifically because of this transition period. For the first few weeks, in almost a parallel to the McDonald's routine, McDonald-donated hamburgers were found on the Center's grill; there was a refrigerator full of soda and a short menu of quick-serve foods. In fact, many of the teens were very much involved in this substitution process - there was even a rotating volunteer kitchen crew composed entirely of teens. The social work was still being carried out on the individual level, much as it had in McDonald's, and since the Center was also being used as a training ground for rookie workers, there were plenty of them to go around (we counted as many as ten at one time). What became increasingly apparent to the workers, however, was that the Center had attracted entirely too many teens and while it was working rather well in accommodating the hanging process, it could not work well for counselling nor was it suitable as a crash pad for some unfortunate teen. When counselling did occur it was telling a kid to stop beating the coke machine, and one Friday evening, when a girl crashed in the foyer, the kids walked around her while the worker, looking very annoyed, pumped in the coffee hoping to revive her before the 11:00 closing. During this transition period the social workers assumed a considerably large role as caretakers for the teens. They found a rock band that would "practice" in the Center every other Friday night; they showed movies, served spaghetti, lasagna, and on Thanksgiving week had a big turkey dinner; games were

provided, rap sessions attempted, kids were allowed to hang without unwarranted hassels; but as time went on the scene began to change as did the workers' attitudes. There seemed to be a growing concern among the workers for the preservation of the material setting - they became disturbed when a window was accidentally broken and when a burglar alarm was deliberately ripped from the door. The image of the teen became an important concern, sometimes going beyond the boundaries of the Legion - beer bottles were carefully removed from the front lawn; one night a worker in the pool room yelled from an open window for one of his comrades outside to "patrol the area". There was a growing sense of disillusionment with the way the Center was working and the teens behaving. Jim presents a very good example of this disillusionment:

Jim has been a social worker around the Corner for two years now. He came in enthusiastic, just like a lot of the young workers here. But now he's become disillusioned like many of the other older social workers he has known. He says "some heavies, some pretty important people" who too became disillusioned, just "faded away"; one friend took off to live in a commune and "what do you hear about them now?". He says he's "seen it happen". It worries him that things are getting worse here; the vandalism continues, the thermostat was just ripped off the wall, he points to it - it hangs limply from its mounts (the thermostat is right by the foyer where kids often gather). "There's beer cans in the waste baskets," he says. A middle-aged woman, well dressed in slacks, probably of South Brookline origin, has

just come in looking for her daughter. The social workers are very helpful, they speak to her and then ask among the kids about the girl. The kids say she isn't here. Instead of leaving the woman remains for several minutes next to the damaged thermostat near the foyer - just standing there amid the crowd of kids. Jim wonders what she must be thinking about. He is obviously concerned about the image of the teens, although as usual they really aren't doing much of anything - standing around, talking, high or drunk perhaps, but not rowdy or disturbing.

Jim mentioned that an important problem with the Center was that as time went on it appeared that all the kids were becoming the same. He described two possible explanations for this phenomenon. First he thought the kids came here and "just reinforced each other's behaviors. From this he developed an analogy:

"If you hang around bright people you get brighter. If you hang around the not so bright - well..." He said he had known people who worked among the retarded - "After awhile they begin to act like the retarded."

It was obvious that he was concerned not only about the teens' seduction by the activity, but also about the possibility that if he continued to be around the teens he would eventually become as they - similar to the "you are what you eat" philosophy or "they became what they beheld".

His second explanation was that the kids from a neighborhood near the Corner, referred to as Whiskey Point, had something to do with the changing character of the Center. He commented:

"The real problem is when twenty or thirty kids from the Point come in around 10:30 Friday nights and disturb the place, maybe start a fight, then go out."

He further explained that the Point kids had driven all the "good" kids out leaving only themselves and kids their type. When asked why he thought they came here he mentioned that "They use it as sort of a meeting place (a terminal). Make their grand appearance"; referring to the Point kids doing a "pattern" or routine. He did not know why they all had to be here together.

Both of Jim's explanations for the convergence among the teens are probably true to a point, but there are other, even simpler explanations which can be accepted; one is the problem of insularity. Once the teens had been sufficiently "canned" within the confines of the Legion Hall, enticed by its novelty, safety, parental sanction, and warmth and shelter during the cold winter months, it was easy to view them as a single group, especially since the Center was reserved for them and them alone. It was in fact one of the reasons why we were there as researchers for this is where we were certain to observe teenage behavior. On an active Friday night nearly 100 teens would make a pass through the

Legion. Within such a crowd the Legion property was an easy victim of the active teen. One evening I stood beside a teen only to see him stumble drunkenly into one of the windows. He quickly vanished among the crowd, leaving the broken glass and eventual repair in the custody of the social workers. This was one of the first of a series of similar "accidents" and each time the American Legion was up in arms against the presence of the teens as a collective body, pointing out their tendency to damage and destroy. One teen explained the problem quite simply:

"Like there's a few choice kids in every crowd that causes trouble and wherever there's a large gathering of any kind of people there's always a couple of kids that start trouble."

The incidents appeared to us to be a rather natural part of adolescent activity - in fact, we might like to have done a few of the things ourselves such as borrow the Legion Commander's cane for an evening. Some of the workers, much like the Legionnaires themselves, would enumerate the incidents - add them up, and present, within a timeless context, what may have occurred over a four to six month period. To a few of the workers it appeared that the number of incidents was truly escalating and this escalation disturbed them considerably. Jim described things this way:

"It's been getting worse. The first few months, the novelty, newness of the place kept things in

line. Kids were checking things out, sizing it up, to see how much they can get away with. Then, when they became bored with the place, after several months, things began to happen like the thermostat; that was just ripped off the wall. The waste can in the restroom is full of beer bottles. Kids don't try to break things so much as things just happen - they come in here drunk and fall through the window." Some kids are hanging in the foyer, rough-housing, pushing each other around in the typical machismo fashion of teenage boys. "Just look at that," Jim mentions, to emphasize his point, "those kids rough-housing. It might just be playing around, but they might knock over a lamp or run an elbow through a window." He mentions that they have so much energy that they can't put to constructive use.

Some of the workers had had previous experience on the Corner before the advent of McDonald's or the Drop In Center. Several years ago a center was developed within a neighboring church called St. Marks. According to one of the social workers the so-called St. Marks kids had actually developed their own drop in center, first by raising the issue and then by going out into the community and searching for possibilities. The worker mentioned that "the kids then were more articulate, freakier. They had more of a sense of what they were doing and why." Drugs were popular then and there seemed to be an abstinence of liquor. They were older, seventeen or eighteen.

There was less of a sexual thing going with them.

They took drugs as a means to an end - although they were using them continuously, they took them in search of an alternative or to look into themselves. Where kids today will buy used clothes to look freaky, these kids would buy them new and wear them out. They did things - crafts, there was a table hockey game there that they used to play and ping pong. A case was mentioned in which three of the girls decided to get an apartment of their own. They found a house which they shared with the elderly owners. After awhile problems occurred - they couldn't find work, no "bread", and finally they decided to go back home. When the kids returned, their parents were more respectful of them since they had at least attempted an alternative and had tried it on their own.

After only three months the St. Marks Center was taken over as classroom space during the construction of the new Pierce School and the St. Marks group dissolved as a result. This teen image, however, was still fresh in the minds of several of the social workers.. They were perplexed by how "apathetic" and "unproductive" the present teens, in comparison to the St. Marks kids, appeared to be as a whole. As an example of this, one worker described how she had brought a bag of leather material into the Legion Drop In Center. For several weeks it just sat there on one of the tables in the "craft room". When the worker approached the teens about using it for something they replied: "That's

cool. Do your thing," and the bag remained unattended. Seeing that the kids would not take the initiative on their own, the workers began to control their behavior through alterations in the Center. One of the first attempts was the arrangement of the "coffee house" within the old craft room. The introductory note resting on each of the tables was an obvious statement of intent:

WE HOPE TO CREATE A "COFFEE HOUSE" ATMOSPHERE IN THIS ROOM ON FRIDAY NIGHTS. WE WILL PROVIDE FOOD AND BEVERAGES. (AT A MINIMAL COST TO YOU)

WE HOPE YOU WILL DONATE YOUR TALENTS TO PROVIDE MUSIC AND OTHER ENTERTAINMENT. (RECORDS WILL BE AVAILABLE ALSO.)

ANY IDEAS OR SUGGESTIONS ARE ALWAYS WELCOMED.

The positive We-You mode was indicative of the one-sided approach the workers found they had to initiate. No suggestions or ideas were ever provided by the teens. One kid, referred to by the Corner freaks as Nickey Super-Straight, brought records to play for awhile, but no one provided the "talent" that was hoped for. After several weeks the room returned to its former condition.

As time continued it was apparent to us, as well as to some of the kids, that even though the Center was so insular and containing, the divergence between the teens and social workers was becoming even greater. Part of this divergence lay in the ambiguity of the social workers. Our

notes describe one girl's observation:

She mentioned how the social workers are ambiguous in their attitudes towards the use of the Drop In Center. On one hand they say not to come in wrecked, to contain your behavior, and on the other hand to come in for help if you're tripping. She said that the social workers had called a quick meeting last Friday. They had all the kids sit down and then laid the same ambiguous message on them, saying that the kids shouldn't come in so stoned and act up - there had been a fight or two and a window had been broken. One girl had asked if they should then stay on the street when they are wrecked and maybe get hit by a car. The director said - "No. No." They wanted them to come in. They should "come in for help". "So he just confused people," she said. She added that the social workers don't like the kids doing nothing - "they want the kids to do 'constructive' things like macrame - she laughed - The kids don't want to do that. But they have nothing better to do because either they're too 'lazy' or don't have the money to go to a movie or go somewhere." (she was not very specific about what something better would be).

There was a period of time during the first few months of the Center when some of the teens seemed to be mirroring the same ambiguity as the social workers. One Wednesday evening a meeting was called by the teens themselves. From what we could gather it had been spawned by a previous meeting of teens and workers with a neighborhood mother who had received wind of a rumor that the city was

going to close the Center by January 1. The Wednesday night meeting was an especially emotional one. The teens who had called it discussed the possibility of a greater sense of unity among themselves. They suggested that the kids somehow police themselves - ask your friends not to come into the Center "all fucked up on dope," and generally control the scene (in a manner undoubtedly appropriate to the social workers and the observing public). The daughter of the neighborhood mother, who incidentally came to the Center on very few occasions, described the Center in a most one-sided and severe way - "kids coming in all fucked up," getting rowdy, passing drugs, etc. They suggested that maybe they could have a car wash or something so they could earn some money for the Center to create new programs. At that point one listening teen, right on top of the issue, challenged that the Town Fathers should give the kids the money for it was worth it for them to stay off the Corner away from McDonald's. When the meeting broke up several teens grouped around with the social workers to discuss the contents of the message.

The social workers were not impressed by the meeting of the teens even though it was not only the first attempt by the teens since the initiation of the Drop In Center to organize themselves; the ideas expressed in the meeting also seemed to parallel some of the workers' own thoughts on control methods. The "outside" inspiration or instigation

by the neighborhood mother, however, seemed to crucially weaken the credibility of the meeting in the worker's opinion. One worker, while talking privately with us, described the mother as a 40 year old political activist and radical. He typed the kids involved in the meeting in several hard sentences:

"Those Leftists are all the same - Fascists at heart. Always wanting to control, to keep the meeting in line. They have no feeling for the situation."

One of the teens who had spoken out during the meeting just happened to be one of our best informants and as she talked with us that evening it was obvious that she was feeling the ambiguity of the message she had given:

"After all," she began, "it's theirs; it's for them (the teens), it works for them so they should work for it. Not that kids should patrol themselves or each other, but that people should get together and help each other out. When you see someone acting up you could ask them to cool it." She felt very self-conscious telling kids to cool it coming in high for she often comes in wrecked herself. During the meeting one teen offered this very evidence in contradiction to her statements.

It was not long after that evening that she was pleading with the director of the Center not to tell her parents she was using dope. Later we noticed that almost every time we saw her she was stoned. Several of her friends had not only stopped hanging with her, but also had stopped coming to the

Corner regularly. Some weeks after the meeting we discovered the impact such contradiction had had upon one of the workers when he said:

"Kids call their own meetings. Talk about stopping the drugs - 'We gotta stop the use of drugs in this place - gotta take some responsibility for this place.' Those same people a week later come in stoned."

The social worker is a living paradox. He assumes the role of middle-man between the adult world and the teenager, but is always subject to the ultimate control of adult authorities. He must strive to be acceptable in both the eyes of the teen and the adult, yet in reality he cannot, for his only true acceptance is unilateral - to become either one or the other - never a combination or compromise of both. (It was the attempt by a social worker to assume a middle role in McDonald's that resulted in his ouster - when he decided to take sides with the teens' behavior as well as the management's). To the teen the social worker may stand for parent, idol, listener, guide, counselor, adviser, friend; but never could he be a lover nor could he be involved in a friendly smoke of dope nor could he purchase drugs or liquors for the teens. He will always fall outside of the teen's social environment and he will thus always fall short of representing the teenager and his real interests. This is an especially critical point to the teen - it is the worker's attitude, behavior, and philosophy that ultimately size-up

the teen's view of the social worker. And the character that the worker assumes can drastically affect the image of the place in which he works. One teen describes the fall of a nearby drop in center this way:

"One of the reasons it went down was because of the two people working there. Like they were trying to act like real hip people, you know, and they were just turning the kids off. Trying to act like they knew everything... and they knew it all. Everything someone said, you know - 'Oh that's hip. Slap me five," stuff like that. The kids got really turned off. What a bunch of phonies, you know man. Like when kids had a problem and they wanted to talk it over with somebody... (the worker) would come over with a big smile, you know - 'Oh how you doing. What's happening?' - just turn off, you know. Just walk out man."

He then proceeds to make a similar connection to the present director of the Coolidge Corner Center:

Yeah, like when I met John Ansty about five years ago, like he was trying to do the same thing. Like he'd say things like 'Oh hip man,' stuff like that. So then John asked me one day... 'Some kid gave a disgusting remark when I said, 'Oh you look hip,' You know...'Dig it.' and John says, 'Do you think I'm a real turn off..? I'm only trying my best to get in with the kids.' And I says, 'Well John, I hate to say this but it does make you sound like a phoney and kids who just meet you for the first time hear you talking like that, you know... it just turns them off.'"

To make the importance of this point even clearer, one girl added:

"Even now, you know, that's just the way he talks now. If you meet sometimes you might think he's a real phoney. That's what I thought when I first met him. Sometimes I still do think he's a bit of a phoney... You know it's hard to get to know... It's hard to get to know a lot of them. Some of them are really dedicated, really loyal to their work, and some of them are just there for their own kicks.

The mask invariably worn by the adult worker attempting to conceal his true attitudes on adolescent behavior (whether dedicated or not) ultimately reveals a "phoney" image to the sensitive teen who will often make a mockery of such action. As the two previous teens explain:

G: "If you're stoned they'll joke around with you about dope. If you're ripping off shit they'll joke about ripping off stuff. You know, they have their ways about getting in good with the kids. Some of it I don't agree with. It's their own way."

B: "Like if (one of the social workers) finds out what they've been doing. The kids will play into it and say: 'Oh yeah, yeah. I stole this. I stole that.' Just trying to sound like they're really big to the workers. And sometimes to get attention; more attention. Like (this one worker), you can usually tell what he's thinking, 'cause the minute you come walking in the door he says hi to you and if you say hi to him and if he doesn't like the way your

voice sounds, he'll just stand there and stare at you."

G: "'Just a minute. Come over here John.' He's so funny when he knows somebody's really wrecked."

B: "Or else he'll try to think of some discussion to bring up with you so he can get you to talk to him: and while you're talking to him... he'll be analyzing your voice."

G: "It's so funny... he could be standing there... He'd say, 'Remember the ping pong game you played with so and so the other week?' And I'll be standing there - 'Huh? What?' 'cause you know what they're doing. You can't get away. It's really wierd."

It is interesting that the teens will play the same game with the worker as he is playing on them - deception, concealment, masking their true feelings as a means of avoiding further interrogation. The following is such an example:

One evening, just before leaving the Drop In Center, we observed a social worker approach one of the teens who was standing near the foyer with a small group of friends. He turns to a fellow worker and speaking loud enough for us to hear as well, queries: "What did I tell you about Dicky last night?" The other worker looks somewhat puzzled and says nothing. "That he's a pretty smart fella," or some such reply. Dicky turns his head and mutters: "Well, I hope so," and returns to his friends. "It's the cerebrum - it's always saturated," the worker continues. Dicky, somewhat confused, staggering a bit: "What?" He looks even more confused. The

worker: "With beer and wine." Dickey, with a smile on his face, replies: "I don't drink wine."

According to the social workers the St. Marks kids had been more successful in organizing themselves and initiating projects. When questioned about how the St. Marks kids managed to initiate those projects while the present teens can't seem to, one worker who had been involved with St. Marks mentioned:

"... the present group (of teens) is not as likely to organize as the old group. There are several groups of kids here actually and only one at St. Marks. Furthermore, there is no leader, in part because of the multi-group situation, and also because these kids aren't the type to have leaders (because the kids lack leadership qualities or because their mode of communality denies leaders)."

It occurred to us then that this may indeed be the case. With the initiation of the Drop In Center we had seen the small group of twenty or thirty teens that once hung around McDonald's grow to a strikingly large number nearing 100 on a good Friday night. Through our interviewing we discovered that "leader" was a rather ambiguous term when applied to the Coolidge Corner teen. There seemed to be a few teens who we would qualify as "leader" or "socially superior" among small cliques of three or four teens, but there never appeared to be anyone with the charisma or encompassing social strength to lead the large gathering of teens and

variety of cliques found at the Center. And, as our previous discussion on their hanging routines might indicate, they came to the Corner primarily for purposes other than to become project oriented or to be kept productively or constructively busy. They came primarily because of the social communication that could be found at the Center. As one teen told us:

The main thing in doing something is the social aspect - to be able to see and talk at length with your friends. The Drop In Center is good for that."

The Legion Hall became especially important as a social center Friday evenings. For many of the teens this was a time to be informally with one's friends after a tortuous week of school. Some of the teens simply made their "grand appearance", passing through the crowd, hoping to meet their friends and then go elsewhere. There was something important about the gathering of teens that made it all worthwhile to come there. Many teens hung around Harvard Street and McDonald's waiting for the peak hour to arrive when they could casually saunter down to the Drop In Center and see their friends in great numbers.

As time went by, however, the social workers became increasingly uncomfortable about the hanging routine especially when it involved the use of drugs. Although some of the workers were willing to put up with the drug activity themselves, reasoning - "I'd rather see them

smoking pot than shooting scag," it was the outside pressure from the American Legion and community that posed a real threat to the existence of the Center. "There is nothing that's wrong with what they're doing," said one worker, "but I hate to watch them lose this place because of their actions. In six months they may be gone." He turns to another worker who has just come in - "I'm telling them I think the Drop In Center will be closed in six months." The worker replies: "They only come here to get stoned. I'm glad I'm leaving. When they're high you can't talk to them. They agree with you then later it's - 'What did I say?' (in imitation of a stoned kid)." They summed it all up when the one worker flatly stated:

"The kids aren't changing. We've tried everything, for their own good. But when they're high, you just can't reason with them."

Youth Resources had worked hard to acquire this drop in center. It was a significant political as well as social maneuver. The eyes of the city were on them and they knew that they would have to strive toward an acceptable image - as one worker commented: "We will have to show that this place works well before they open up any others within Brookline." To us this meant that it was more than a simple experiment - some of the workers involved here were dedicated to its preservation which meant, to them, that the present behaviors of the teens within the Center would have to change.

In their attempts to control teen behavior the workers often only succeeded in exposing their divergence with them. In a sense their ambiguity was decreasing, they were revealing and imposing their philosophies upon the teens and the teens were responding to this revelation. One cold February evening we witnessed an excellent example of such dynamics:

It's around 9:15 when we enter the Center. The coffee house is no longer present - the lights are back on and only one table is set up where three social workers sit, apparently involved in business. The chairs and sofa from the foyer are now in the coffee house room. In the foyer the only existing furniture are several folding chairs. Most of the kids are standing here, hanging around, talking, but generally quiet. Joan is serving lasagna from five large pans in the kitchen - the usual kitchen crew is gone and three or four strange kids are helping out. Kids are standing around, slightly crouched, paper plates with lasagna held close to their mouths, scooping it down with a fork. Jim approaches us and briefly tells us about the kids throwing the lasagna around. The Legion Commander came in and saw it sticking to the walls and ceiling.

While the kids are standing around talking and cramming lasagna into their open faces, Ron is setting up a movie projector in the main meeting room. Many of the kids are waiting around the periphery where folding metal chairs have been arranged. The pong tables are still set up and Pat is playing with a friend. The waiting kids ask what the movie is about - "The Magician" - Ron

replies. No one has seen it. Ron is in charge.²⁴⁷
He will do the standard mechanical duties of thread-
ing and running the projector while kids sit by.
Ron tells Pat that it is time for the movie - that
he'll have to stop the pong game. Pat protests.
He comes over to Jim - "What's the movie?" Jim
replies: "Carnal knowledge, Summer of 42, a skin
flick." Pat: "Right-on." He then slaps Jim in the
stomach - "Hey, you're putting me on." Around
10:00 the slicing partitions to the foyer and craft
room are partly closed and the lights are left on
when the movie begins.* Perhaps twenty teens sit
quietly in a well-lit room watching the Magician.
Pat moves over by the piano. Jim yells half in jest -
"Quiet in the balcony." Pat, as if to mock Jim's
imagry, jumps up on the upright piano. Jim shows
no reaction.

The film is one that Ron picked up from
school. It's a surreal, anti-military, slow-paced
film involving the seduction of young boys by a
military officer/magician on a beach by a carnival
booth. Pat jumps off the piano, landing first on
the base keys - everyone looks. By the end of the
movie everyone but one guy and a handful of social
workers have left.

After the movie, Jim turns to us: "Well, what
do you think? What can we do?" "What about? Kids

* We could not help thinking that if this were being shown to
a group of adults the lights would have been turned off.
We felt that some of the teens, especially the couples,
might have stayed precisely in anticipation of the privacy
of darkness. Not one teen even mentioned extinguishing
the lights, however. Perhaps reflective of the "that's
cool. Do your thing" philosophy.

leaving the movie?" I deliberately narrowed the topic. Jim answers: "No, about the Center." After a long uncomfortable pause Bob fills in - "Why did the kids leave the movie?" and unfortunately he answers the question as well - "Too heavy? Whatever that means." Jim says: "Yeah." He then turns to Ron and asks if he thought it was too heavy. Ron in turn asks the kid who was left sitting alone amid the condescending conversation: "Was it too heavy?" he asks. The kid, long-haired, fingering a pong paddle: "Yeah, I kinda liked it." Jim continues in this vein: "Perhaps if a different movie were shown like a slap stick or something?"

Meanwhile, several kids are back playing pong again. Ron rewinds the film and puts on a new movie - 27-87, another underground, 1950 surreal film ; a collage of images. More social workers have entered the room where only one kid remains - to show, perhaps, that the movie is not "too heavy" for him. Two couples wrestle on the couch in the craft room. In the foyer kids are bouncing a basketball. Jim goes out to stop the noise. The movie is over.

The movies have nearly emptied the Center of all kids now, quite a contrast to the usual active Friday nights. Ron, seemingly unconcerned about the absence of kids puts on a final reel. "This is one of my favorites. It's the greatest," he exclaims. It's another student film on a ballet routine. For the next twenty minutes the social workers sit alone in the meeting room entertained by the film.

The evening episode was nearly as surrealistic as the movies themselves. The workers, having succeeded in removing all the teens from the Center, sat alone, consumed in what could properly be called their own entertainment; imaging the activity of their "ideal" teen - quiet, sedate, sober, intellectually involved - having made the ultimate compromise with the environment. The teens, on the other hand, had responded by leaving - most likely going back to McDonald's where they could hang and meet their friends on an active Friday evening. This is a very clear statement of divergence.

We seriously doubt that the workers were aware of, or positively concerned about, the importance of the hanging routine to teen activity. In some ways their opinion of the hanging activity was much the same as the McDonald management's for they were constantly concerned about how they could provide the teens with "something better to do". The movies were a manifestation of this concern as was the serving of lasagna - neither of them coming close to the social generation of the "natural" hanging process. As the projector was being set up it is unlikely that the workers had any feeling for the effect it was having upon that territory - setting up in the main meeting room where kids were gathering, playing pong, talking, making plans for the rest of the evening, was declarative that "tonight will be movie night at the Center; all other activity must cease." Had the

movies occurred in a peripheral location such as the craft room (which since the coffee house experiment was taking the form of an all-purpose area anyway) the statement of intent would not have conflicted with the hanging activity around and in the foyer. As it was, the movie dominated all other activity - the foyer's capacity for hanging was literally amputated by the folding doors in the meeting room and extinguished by the demand for silence during the showing of the film. Ping pong, one of the last surviving activities of the Center, was halted so as not to interfere with the audiovisual projection.

The workers could not have done a better job of removing the kids if they had done it intentionally. When all the workers' actions are taken together - showing movies on a prime-time Friday evening, the strategic placement of the projector, the halting of all other activity, leaving the lights on while showing the movie, and exhibiting little sensitivity beyond the quality of the film in explaining the teens' behavior - it appears that, at least on a subconscious level, there was a strong desire for the removal of the teens. The teens' physical removal, however, was not the workers' intention, for their presence was entirely necessary to the preservation of the Center; it was clearly their behavior and not their presence that was under attack. Unfortunately, for these social workers, the teens' physicality and behavior are one and the same.

As time went on and as the workers' sense of disillusionment grew, it appeared to us that their actual contact with the teens was decreasing. As exhibited by the movie episode, an evening's activities would often leave the social workers sitting alone. On many nights they could be seen grouped together in a corner or in the craft room while the teens were gathered elsewhere - grouped in the foyer or sitting on the stairs. It seemed that the kitchen had become an effective retreat from the teens - the old clique that once hung there had suddenly dissolved, leaving the workers to control and inhabit it themselves. Snacks were rarely served there now, and the new coke machine in the craft room had removed an important excuse for teen intrusion. As we discussed sometime earlier, the kitchen was already physically separated from the rest of the Center by two long, bending halls. We had once felt rather comfortable making our routine rounds of the premises when the mix of people and activity of the kitchen was sufficient to prohibit intrusion; now, however, we could feel the intrusion as we entered a room full of workers, an odd sight to behold within a center meant for kids.

One evening we directed a question to one of the workers: "If the place was their own (the teens'), would that make any difference?" The frustrated worker answered:

"I don't think it would make that much difference. They'd just tear the place apart until they couldn't

stand it any longer, and then leave." Later he revealed: "It doesn't really make any difference whether or not it's their own - the kids don't own anything anyway. It makes no difference. If it's not the Legion then it's someone else. If Youth Resources owns it, then they have to answer to the Selectmen."

What he has said here is very significant. Ownership is a very real issue and is constantly a control factor over the teens. The teen, not recognized as an adult, has no legal control through the ownership of a dwelling - "The kids don't own anything anyway" - no matter where he is at, the teen must always answer to an adult control actor. Since he cannot own, the teen must make compromise with the environment and take over or adapt it to his own needs instead of owning it. Those who own the territory which the teens have claimed, and someone ultimately owns it, are thus the recipients of adaptation, for the teenager has no other alternative.* It is not surprising to find the teens hanging in places where the power of ownership is at its weakest point - outside of buildings rather than in them; in parks and playgrounds; and if inside, in public places such as YMCAs, school gyms, or McDonald's restaurants. Youth Resources

* When speaking of ownership we are referring to something very earth-bound. The auto is something that can be owned and inhabited by the teen, but such ownership is not earth-bound and so the teen must always answer to whoever owns the earth on which his magnificent vehicle rests.

cannot give the teen ownership, it can only attempt to weaken the control by those who do own the dwellings in which the teens hang and thus foster the activity of adaptation. It was this process that Youth Resources had used with the American Legion. When Al, the Legion custodian, posed his threat to tell the Commander of any deviant activity, one of the workers told us that the Legion actually had little to say about the teens using their building; that it was the Board of Selectmen who held the ultimate control over the use of the Legion as a public place.

The Legion still believed, however, that they had the right to control the property that they owned. No one saw teens surveying a Legion meeting or standing on the corner making sure that the Legionnaires were behaving properly, asking them to stay inside so that the public eye would not identify them with the place. Of course not, the teens did not own the place they inhabited.

The American Legion could hardly be considered youth advocates, especially advocates of the Coolidge Corner freak. During the first week that the Center was open we discovered that someone had posted this message on the Legion's bulletin board:

DON'T BE DECEIVED!**PEACE SYMBOL?
ARE YOU SURE?**

This is the symbol worn by many of today's young people and is known as the "Peace Symbol." We wonder how many, or you for that matter, know the real meaning of this symbol.

The "Peace Symbol" is not something that is the product of today's restless youth. It was well known back in the Middle Ages and was known either as the "Crow's Foot" or the "Witch's Foot." Now are you ready for the real shock? This was the sign of those who were opposed to Christianity! It was (and is) the Anti-Christ Symbol. Look at it closely. What do you see? It is a Broken Cross turned upside down. Now do you see why it is a subtle sign of those who are opposed to Christianity?

It is used today as a central part of the national symbolism of

Communist Russia. It appears the Communists are winning their battle for the minds of our youth. They are making special efforts to capture the attention of today's youth in America. Many young people are familiar with the Peace Symbol and wear it as jewelry and even paint it on their cars.

There are those in the garment industry who have the Broken Cross embroidered on their jackets and many other garments. It is manufactured as a metal trinket and worn on a chain and many young people wear it as a "fad" gadget, not realizing they are supporting the emblem of the Anti-Christ, or the Broken Cross.

Be sure of this — every person who knowingly or thoughtlessly wears this emblem is bringing joy to the hearts of those dedicated to the destruction of everything we hold dear. The Communists are gleeful when they see this symbol worn by Americans. It is the mark of atheism.

Veterans News, March 1971

What image this message holds for youth hardly needs to be described. It was apparent to us that Youth Resources had not selected the most accommodating location for a Youth Center. The workers' presence at the Legion Hall was beginning to mirror the McDonald's episode. When Jim gave us the details of the Friday night lasagna throwing he mentioned that the Commander, upon seeing the mess, asked him: "Don't you supervise here? Whenever I come in you're either over in a corner talking to a kid or playing ping pong." Jim added that the Commander's idea of supervising is to "have

me tell a kid to leave or 'go over there and sit down, shut up, or clean up!'" He said that you can't just tell people here to have a cup of coffee and then leave. The Commander, referring to the Center as well as the lasagna, told him that it all made him sick and that he would have to leave. The lasagna was wiped clean from the walls with a damp cloth, but the implications of that evening would stick around for a long time. You could almost hear Paul Montour that evening in a reflection of the Commander's denunciation:

"We wanted to try to keep them out of the store, give them something to do, but what happened is that - I would come in there at night and there would be three or four groups with a social worker in the middle of them. Whatever they call it - rappin or something - I dunno, but that's what they were doing."

It was not long after this that a fight broke out between some local and outside teens during a "rock concert" at the Center. Upon hearing about this latest incident, the Legion called a meeting and voted unanimously to close their doors to any further teen activity. According to one of the workers, Joe McCormick promptly told the Legion to simply go to Hell. They had been thinking about closing down for awhile anyway just to clean up and re-think their program. The Legion approved of this move. Rather than continue conflict with the Legion and possibly lose their center, the workers made a compromise - they would tighten

their program, offer specific activities at scheduled periods, and close the Center during all other times. Upon hearing this we decided to attend one of their first scheduled programs - on Wednesday, the 19 or April, they were to have two lawyers to speak to teens on their legal rights. As we approached the Legion that night we met two of the workers walking toward McDonald's. "We have two lawyers in the Center, but no kids," they said. They were going over to McDonald's to "recruit" a few teens for their meeting. They did manage to gather up perhaps ten or fifteen teens, all of whom had previously been hanging around McDonald's. The Center was quiet and inactive, the pong tables were no longer there, the pool room upstairs was closed, and the lights were on only in the foyer and meeting room. At the front of the meeting room sat two lawyers, neatly dressed in suits and ties; the one introduced the other as the informer for that evening - he could answer almost any of our questions and was presently involved in the detection of organized crime. There were nearly as many social workers as there were teens. The workers immediately began asking questions about organized crime and the numbers racket; the teens squirmed in their seats, some of them left as the ten or fifteen minute conversation between the lawyers and social workers continued. We were almost ready to leave ourselves when one of the lawyers suggested that they get down to the local level; and the teens began to ask some questions of their own - "Can a cop search your home without a warrant?"

"When a cop stops you on the street.- do you have to answer his questions?" One of the workers asked about the legalities of loitering (a question we were hoping one of the kids might ask); to our surprise the lawyer couldn't answer. One of the teens described how he was picked up one evening when he was drunk out of his mind and lying in the "gutter"; he was acquitted. Shortly after that they picked him up again when he was sober and charged him with intoxication. All the kids laughed about how it all balanced out in the end anyway. Behind all the kids' statements there was the underlying philosophy that "we really have no legal rights. The cops can do anything they very well please with us. If they don't have an excuse then they'll simply make one up later on - if they have to." Many of the teens left early; they probably knew more about their legal "rights" than the lawyers. They would probably spend the rest of the evening hanging around McDonald's.

POSTSCRIPT, THE CHANGING CORNER SCENE

TWO HANGOUTS ON THE CORNER

During the first weeks of January, just as we were beginning to terminate the research phase of the study, we detected an interesting change in the patterns of hanging on the Corner. The kids were returning to McDonald's - not just the teens from the Village or other areas who were unsure of their status at the Drop In Center, but the corner kids. No longer was the restaurant necessarily devoid of the kids when the Center was open. Their reappearance was hardly dramatic, and it did not by any means signal an abandonment of the Center; the teens still hung at the Legion Hall in considerable numbers. However, whereas there were rarely any corner kids in the restaurant during November and December, one could expect to find at least a few of the regulars in McDonald's during the first weeks of the new year, and their numbers seemed to increase as the month progressed. We observed seven or eight core girls sitting in the section around 9:00 o'clock on January 14. Two weeks later, at the same time, there were over twice as many corner kids in the section - again, mostly girls.

The hanging routine in McDonald's was the familiar one of the kids sitting in the section and clustering in the lobby area. On warm nights they would hang outside in the setback and on Green Street. The hired police were still stationed on the floor and were occasionally joined

by the manager in effort to constrain the teens' activity.²⁵⁹
The one major change in the routine was that "prime time" at McDonald's was set back an hour to allow the kids to first gather at the Center before it would close at the traditional peak hour of eleven o'clock.

We are not certain why the kids began to once again hang in McDonald's on those evenings when the Center was open. We did not find the opportunity to question the kids during the final weeks of research, and we were unable to perceive any change in the situation at the Drop In Center which would account for this development. The fact that it was the corner girls who first returned to McDonald's may give us a clue. We had noted a certain dissatisfaction among several of the girls with the Center. They seemed to feel, as one girl expressed, that the Center was "just for the boys", that they could not participate in most of the more programmed activities, such as ping pong or pool, which the boys seem to dominate. If the restaurant would not give them "something to do", then it could at least provide them a release from the frustration of sitting on the sidelines. Their presence in the store could have in turn attracted more teens to the old hangout, creating something of a snow-balling effect.

The Center may have fallen prey to the "nothing better to do" syndrome. In the opinion of one social worker, it had novelty for the kids when it first opened.

He felt that after several months, the teens had become "bored with the place" and, in his view, began to abuse their privilege of hanging in the Center, through their rowdy behavior and increasingly frequent acts of vandalism. It was at this time that the kids began to return to McDonald's. Compared to the restaurant during these first months, the Legion Hall may have been "something better to do" as well as place where the teens would not be "hassled". One corner girl explained that something better to do would involve simply some sort of variation in the hanging routine. She gave the example of a party at a kid's house, although "... a party is just a place with free dope where you can get wrecked and you can see your friends and then maybe leave...", which is essentially what one does on the Corner. Something better to do seems to be the same thing that one always does in a slightly different context - in a different place or involving a different mediating activity. A hangout, however, must of necessity always be that same old place, the place to which one always goes to see "everybody" or to see what is happening - the place where one waits for that something to happen, for something better to do. Almost by definition then, it is the place to which one goes when there is "nothing better to do." The Drop In Center may well have become such a place. The teens may have begun to once again "check out" McDonald's. It seemed that the two hangouts came to be used as alternatives to one another. If nothing was happening at the one hangout, as generally was the case,

then their was always the other place, only a block and a half away, a short walk even at the peak of Boston's winter. Even if nothing was happening at either location, the anticipation, the questioning of ones friends - "what's happening at?... do you want to go down to...?",-the decision, the walk itself, the change of scenery, all may have served to make something happen.

The efforts of the social workers to replace the hanging routine with more "constructive" activities may also have been a factor in the return to McDonald's. In a relatively short period of time, the kids experienced the coffee house, the rock concert, and the movies, all of which were to get the Friday night crowd to either "sit Down", or "do something." We have noted the tendancy of these efforts (with the exception of the coffee house) to conflict with the terminal activity in the foyer. They forced the kids to turn to the restaurant as a hangout, at least, for the duration of the evening. The teens may also sensed that the Center was no longer so "hassle" free, and, therefore, it had lost its primary advantage over McDonald's.

The response of the management of McDonald's to the renewed presence of the teens was, if anything, more restrained than it had been during the fall to their previous occupation of the restaurant. There were times when the kids virtually had the floor to themselves and a few other customers, without the company of the hired policeman and

with little interference from the management. When the control agents were on the floor, they provided essentially the same "baby sitting" service noted earlier. There was little indication of the sort of confrontation which was supposed to have characterized the previous winter. During this second winter, of course, the kids were not confined to McDonald's. If they were challenged by the management or police, they could easily shift territories, not to the sidewalk or to Devotion as in the summer, but to the Drop In Center, only minutes away. Because of the availability of two places to hang, there were probably fewer kids at McDonald's this winter than the preceeding one. It is also possible that the management may have felt less inclined than before to confront the teens. They may have been extending the kids a final grace period before they played their trump card.

"PARDON US WHILE WE CHANGE INTO SOMETHING MORE COMFORTABLE"

The young man, perhaps in his late twenties, stood at the service counter to place his order. He indicated the drastically/constricted floor area with a sweep of his hand as he questioned the counter boy, "... so this is half of McDonald's, eh? This is going to solve the hanging problem?" The counter boy silently filled the order.

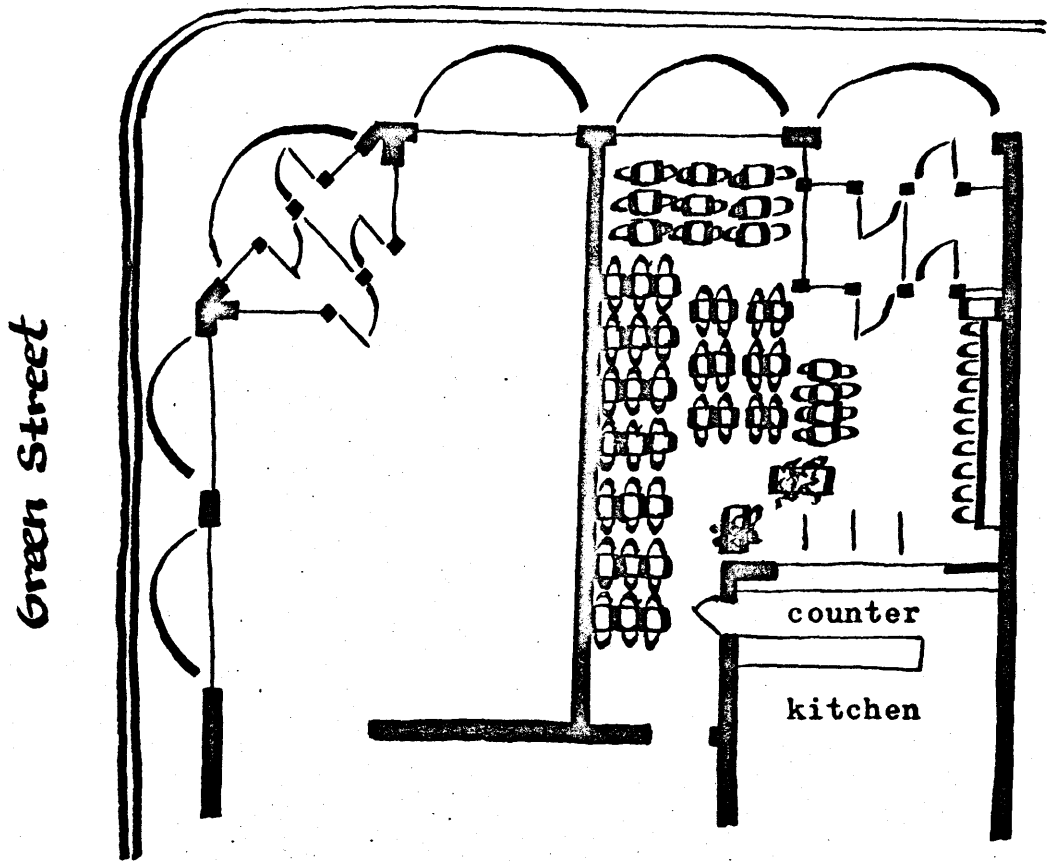
Montour had forewarned us of this "final solution" to the hanging problem:

"That whole section on the corner's going to be cut in half. You know, where you go down stairs. That whole section's going to be cut in half. McDonald's top management has such an ill feeling on these kids down there that they're going to cut the building right in half - rent out half of it. It's in the plans. It will be going in the first of the year. Definitely. \$50,000 they're going to spend to cut the building right in half. They even have the lease all set up - who's going to rent it next door. Cut it all out, take all the cushioned seats out, put fiberglass seats that are that ' ' big, sets or twos, no fours."

By replacing the cushioned booths with the hard plastic contoured seating the management hoped to make the restaurant vandal-proof and also too "uncomfortable" to hang in.

"(They are going to) give them the minimum amount of seating, very uncomfortable; you gotta squeeze in to get in there, that type of thing, whereby your facilities are there for the person who is just out for one particular thing - to have his lunch at reasonable prices... People will be forced to take their food out. You know, stand-up facilities, small seats... very uncomfortable, fiberglass. You sit on it and it's like sitting on the floor, so there's no such thing as - they slouch down in the and put their feet up on the table. Imagine that? They cut the seats. Twenty-eight bucks to replace them... All fiberglass now. All McDonald's are all fiberglass now."

Harvard Street



THE NEW
MUSIC SHOP

THE NEW
McDONALD'S

The construction went slowly. Begun in late January, the alterations were not complete until almost two months later. The management continued to utilize the section as did the kids while construction was underway. The only notice that McDonald's gave to its consuming public of the impending change was through a neatly hand lettered commercial sign which said in the imperative form, "Pardon us while we change into something more comfortable."

McDonald's had undergone a striking metamorphosis. The section, completely walled off from the remainder of the old restaurant, was now a discount record store specializing in rock music. Opening on to Harvard Street through only two bays, McDonald's had lost at least half of its floor area. Whereas the service counter once occupied just one corner of the store, it now ran nearly the entire length of the rear wall and seemed to dominate the interior. The seating, which now could accommodate 102 customers, was pushed to one side of the foyer to occupy an area of less than one third the size of the previous seating area. The basic seating unit, as Montour anticipated, was a "single", consisting of two countoured low back swivel chairs facing each other across table. However, many of these singles have been grouped in combinations which seat four or six customers.

It appeared that McDonald's had indeed changed into "something more comfortable." Many of the attributes which

had defined the old restaurant as a suitable place to hang are no longer present in the new store or are present in diminished aspect. The size of the potential grouping area, its openness to the street, and its transparency have been greatly reduced. The critical corner orientation has been sacrificed. The restaurant now opens only upon Harvard Street with its intense movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Green Street, as an area "setback" from this traffic, is now down the block and no longer immediately accessible from the store. To hang in the interface or to cruise by the restaurant would involve considerable risk of disrupting the flow of traffic on Harvard. While the seating is no longer as exposed to the street, it is more subject to surveillance from the service counter, being directly in front of it and only several feet away. The only seating which is shielded from the counter is toward the rear of the store distant from the windows and sidewalk. The new restaurant lacks the public restrooms, which in the old store served as a safe territory where drugs and alcohol could be ingested and passed. In view of these changes, one cannot help but wonder how the kids could continue to use McDonald's as a hangout.

These radical alterations also suggest another question; can the teens be driven out without turning away many other patrons as well? Perhaps as a hedge against such a risk, McDonald's has crammed as many seats as possible into the reduced floor area. Montour told us that the

original corner McDonald's was not suited to the local market. Its wide aisles and spacious, comfortable booths were appropriate for a market where family trade predominates but ill suited to one composed primarily of "singles". He felt that although the restaurant might sacrifice its family market in order to be rid of the kids, it would still be able to attract the single trade - the individual shopper, the office worker, the college student - who would be less concerned about the relative comfort in accommodations. He also anticipated considerable income through the rental of the dismembered section. In Montour's words:

"(At Coolidge Corner, there was)... too much single business. The business wasn't family business on weekends... Primarily, it's a college area and college market. The lunch market is all single business. It's the only way to go. You either have to lose a little bit of the family business because of the size of the booths - they got to drop some of it. But where they got to pick up is in the rent because it's such a big place to own or rent. So in the long run the real estate's got to pay for itself. In ten years it will be worth two times what it's worth now."

Our first visit to the new McDonald's was during the lunch hour on a weekday. It was before two o'clock, and the kids had not yet arrived on the Corner. The restaurant was filled with the usual lunch crowd although the lines at the counter seemed longer than ever before. The seating was densely - and to us, uncomfortably - packed with customers.

Several customers stood with just purchased food items waiting for seats to be cleared, a phenomenon which we had never witnessed in the original corner McDonald's. A few patrons took food out, as proscribed in Montour's scenario, although it seemed that no more did so than had generally done so previously. In terms of the size and composition of the crowd, it was business as usual. However, the delay and inconvenience were new to the McDonald's routine and seemed rather incongruous in a store which had made such a selling point out of efficiency.

We made a second visit on a Friday night around 9:30. Walking down Harvard Street from Coolidge Corner, we could read the crudely lettered sign hung temporarily over the now obsolete "McDonald's on the corner facade, which informed the public that "Discount Records" was open and ready for business. Through the arched windows we could observe customers, mostly of college age, fingering through the record stacks. There was no sign of the teens. McDonald's, from this acute angle, was practically invisible. It was not until we were almost in front of the restaurant that we could look in. Somehow it was a shock to see so many familiar young faces in this new setting. At least twenty corner kids were on the floor sitting adjacent to the window and lobby area of the new restaurant. Their presence seemed to fill the store's diminished volume. We purchased drinks and joined the few other customers who sat toward the back of the floor area. It was difficult in such cramped quarters

not to feel that one intruded upon the teens, even though ones purchase granted him access to any of the empty booths.

Surprisingly, a security guard was on duty, the management having evidently reverted back to the old, once discredited policy. He patrolled the floor in the usual fashion and once actually asked several teens at one booth to leave.

However, the kids seemed to move about freely in the reduced floor area, several shifting from one booth to another in the course of a few minutes. In the twenty minutes we devoted to our coffee and hot chocolate, the number of teens present rose to over thirty-five. Just before we left, six or seven kids had gathered outside on the sidewalk directly in front of the store. A corner boy spoke with a kid in an old pick-up truck which was double-parked on Harvard Street.

We returned to McDonald's almost two weeks later on a Wednesday night. The kids had the week off from school for spring vacation. There may have been forty teens at the restaurant, and only a handful of other customers. Fifteen to twenty kids had gathered on the sidewalk in front of the store, strung out in small clusters along the entire facade - the warm spring weather finally allowing such street activity. Two older patrons had to push through the crowd to leave the restaurant. The pick-up truck once again made the grand appearance, although it was able to secure a legitimate parking space this time. Its driver must have been a new corner regular.

The new McDonald's may not have been as suitable a place to hang as the original, but, for those two evenings at least, it was certainly a hangout and, ironically, little more than a hangout. No longer were the teens confined to one small section of the restaurant; they now, perhaps inadvertently, claimed almost the entire floor area, leaving a few booths toward the rear for the other customers. It was as if in their efforts to be rid of the teens, the management had given over the entire restaurant to the kids. They had amputated the section, but in the confusion of the operation seemed to have discarded everything but that particular diseased member.

McDonald's seems to have analysed the situation much as we did when we first entered the Corner: the teens hung at the restaurant because the setting was so supportive of their activity. Hence, if the environment is made sufficiently less supportive by reducing the floor area and installing less comfortable seating, then the kids will be forced to leave. Implicit in this approach is the assumption that in repelling the teen, McDonald's can successfully compete with a corner environment that is generally unaccommodating to the adolescent. One would not expect a restaurant with such low prices and a seating capacity of over one hundred to fair to well in such a competition. Nor would one assume that the teens would place such value upon amenities which supposedly held such attraction for the family trade to whom the corner kid is anathema.

The management had been making the situation uncomfortable for the teens for over a year, and yet the kids continued to hang in the restaurant. Had the management considered how the kids were able to persist in the face of such unremitting hostility, they might have adopted a different approach. They failed to consider the implications of the McDonald's routine, which lacks any systematic means of maintaining order on the floor. The restaurant was a void in the network of authority and control on the Corner which the teens could easily occupy. They could claim its space through their bodily presence and their persistence. They could further adapt it as a hangout through their option to deviate from the routine. The management did not alter the routine in the conversion to the new McDonald's. They still had no systematic way to control the floor area and so, once again, had to resort to the services of a "baby sitter."

Their solution to the "hanging problem" was to self destruct. The new restaurant is so abbreviated in size and seating capacity that it is no longer able to accommodate the considerable lunch trade it had always served. At the same time, its interior seems to be completely given over to the teens during those periods when they tend to hang. The floor area is just large enough to accommodate the corner kids and their friends. The other customers who used to frequent the old restaurant in the afternoon and early evening must now sit in the midst of the teens if they wish to continue their patronage, and so far few seem willing to do so.

The community also derives little benefit from the new McDonald's. The teens no longer hang on the lightly trafficked Green Street. They now hang on Harvard Street, a major traffic artery. They cannot help but hinder the flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic as they crowd the sidewalk or double-park their cars in front of the restaurant. We doubt that the new McDonald's is as amenable to the many customers who we often observed in quiet conversation or just watching passers-by on the street. The dense assemblage of seats, which would be quite suitable for the teens, is hardly conducive to the intimate, personal interaction in which some of these patrons seemed to engage. More important, the community has lost its one forum where teen and the general public could interact. While we observed little direct conversation between the kids and the other customers, they could easily observe each other. Some elderly patrons, in particular, would often sit toward the back of the restaurant near the section and, it seemed, would watch the teens. The kids were quite well aware of these elderly, and would often recount the exploits of the more colorful and eccentric among them. We often heard about "Dirty Phil" who would sing plaintive and rather suggestive songs to the corner girls on the floor. Now the people of Brookline can only catch a fleeting glimpse of their controversial youth as they hurry by on the sidewalk or drive by on Harvard. We cannot estimate the value of this small measure of contact, and we do not know if any of the participants attached any value to it. We do know, however, that the potential for

communication between the teen and the general public has been severely compromised.

SPRING

It now appeared that the Corner environment was beginning to close down upon the teens once again; the Drop In Center was enforcing a "tighter program", and McDonald's had cut itself in half. The impact of these developments could have been critical if they had occurred several months earlier during the winter. We might have witnessed a repetition of the preceeding winter when, with McDonald's the only available hangout, conflicts with the police and management were an abundant and frequent part of the teen hanging activity. However, spring was now coming into bloom; the environment ould soon be teeming with openness. Dope would be a prevalent part of the Corner scene, and Devotion Park would once again be an active night scene as would the parking lots and streets of the Corner. With school coming to an end the traditionsl time restrictions would dissolve and hanging could occur at more frequent and less predictable intervals.

Last summer, when we had just begun our study, had little knowledge of the Corner scene, and had spoken to very few teens, we came to McDonald's expecting to see it filled with active teenagers but rather found it inactive and dull, with less than half a dozen teen kids. We did not know where Devotion was at the time, although some of the kids had

mentioned it, so we simply assumed that our study had come to an end. When contacts were made with the teens the following fall we discovered how wrong we had been. The kids had simply been hidden from view within the interstices of the Corner which the spring and summer had opened up for them.

METHODS

It is difficult to separate method out of the general process of the study. Process and product, means and end were essentially the same. Our object was to develop a coherent image of the Corner, to portray in a systematic way the interrelation of actor, activity, and setting. We would project a model, in prose, of the corner scene. However, our final portrayal of the Corner was preceded by an array of similar such projections. The earlier they appear in the course of the study, the less coherent, the more tentative and fragmented they might seem, yet, just as our final picture, they purport to project theme and pattern onto corner phenomenon. The process of the study prepresents a continual interaction between model and field experience; images and themes are developed out of our experiences on the Corner inly to be extended, revised, or rejected through comparison with other such constructs or to previous or subsequent corner experience. The process is the same whether the context of our research activity is a booth in McDonald's, a set of data cards, or an initial draft of the paper.

Our study can be contrasted to one that begins with a definite concept of the nature of certain phenomenon and then sets out to test the validity of that concept through some field experience. Such a study will incorporate a program of methods to define the course of the test. In contrast, we developed our concepts through the field experience. While a set of "methods" may define the context

of this experience and of data processing, they can hardly program the essential activity of the study which is the generation of these concepts.

Although the process remained essentially the same throughout the study, we can distinguish three phases in its course prior to the final write-up: definition of the study, field research, and processing of data.

DEFINITION OF STUDY

The study developed initially out of a particular field experience. It began not with a concept or even a hunch but with an observation. We were sitting over coffee in a small donut shop on Beacon Street pondering how we were to carry out a two week study of "activity" in Coolidge Corner for a studio class that was engaged in a mock "renewal" of the area. We noticed that around each of several small tables sat two or three elderly people who seemed to converse in a casual, friendly, personal manner. We had not noticed such activity in other places on Coolidge Corner - we had not yet looked very hard - and wondered what it was about this small shop that attracted these people and supported their informal interaction. We realized that the most direct approach to this question would have been to talk with them, but we shied away from this course out of fear of intrusion. Instead we continued to observe them and made note of the attributes of the shop which seem to facilitate their activity. We were intrigued by the overlay -

and evident fit - of their private, unstructured activity and the public, programmed activity of the donut shop. We decided to look for other places on Coolidge Corner where such an overlay could be found. We made further observations at different restaurants and snack shops where we had ease of access. We suspected that other facilities such as beauty parlors and local bars were also the scene of regular, informal social interaction but doubted our ability to gain entry into these settings.

This initial step was our study in miniscule. It involved not just the act of observation but also the recording of data, the questioning, and the projection of tentative models. We left the donut shop with an image - a rather tenuous one - of who these elderly customers were, of what they were doing at the shop, and of how the setting related to their activity. Had we only talked with them, we would have employed all of the "methods" that we were to use in the study. Never would we do anything markedly different from what we did that first day in the donut shop.

We realized that since we were looking at a wide range of activities in a variety of different settings we would have to somehow limit our approach to the study. At first we decided to do so by limiting the way in which we observed phenomenon, by dealing with a single question: how these settings facilitated informal, face to face social interaction. Such an approach led to a consideration

of the settings in terms of attributes similar to those discussed in the chapters on fit at McDonald's: transparency, setback, location, and grouping area. However, we soon felt constrained by this approach. The question we posed assumed a concept of interaction that was far too general and abstract to allow even the coarsest distinction in the phenomenon we observed on the Corner. Rather than allow the field experience to generate our concepts, we were imposing an arbitrary classification of behavior upon activity in the restaurants. We decided to limit the study in a different way. Two instances of activity on the Corner stood out in our view as having a certain singularity; they seemed to involve a certain group of actors who interacted in a relatively consistent manner over time within a definite and limited setting. We had not been looking for such cases; we simply encountered these two in the course of our observations and perceived them as having this uniqueness and coherency. We recognized the activity in each case as similar to what we had always called "hanging" - hanging out or hanging around. One involved a group of elderly people who seemed to hang at a local cafeteria. The other case dealt with the kids at McDonald's. We were faced with a clear choice. Both cases greatly intrigued us. We sensed that hanging held a special significance for both groups, that it constituted an important aspect of the social existence of both the elderly and the young people - as indicated by the time both devoted to the activity and the regularity and consistency of their performance. We were struck by the intensity of their use of the settings,

as if their claim to these spaces were equal to that of the "legitiment" owners and operators. McDonald's was particularly interesting in this respect because of the hostility and active resistance of the management to the presence of the teens. The continued occupation of McDonald's by the teens in the face of the management's reaction lent an entirely new dimension to the overlay of informal social interaction and programed public setting. Facinated with the implications of such conflict, though not certain what to make of it, and feeling that the teens would be easier for us to contact than the elderly, we chose McDonald's.

In choosing one of these two cases, we felt that we could then open ourselves to the situation which we studied and, in terms of perception at least, move freely within it, taking in all significant phenomenon. We could study the interrelation of actor, activity, and setting in its many aspects. In short, we could deal with the subject in a holistic fashion. With this limitation of the study to a single case the process of interaction between model and field experience would not be further subjected to external constraints - save that of time restrictions set first by the studio class and later by the thesis.

At this stage, some of the vasic themes of the study began to be defined. Fron the beginning, of course, we perceived phenomenon in terms of actor, activity, and setting - as invariable do all who are trained in architecture. Our

interest in the overlay of informal social interaction and programmed activity of the setting was established with our first observation in the donut shop. With McDonald's, we began to consider the notion of conflict between actors. This led us to a consideration of control and, following from that concept, of territoriality and adaptation. During the initial stage of the study, we had little sense of the dynamic of interaction that underlay the Corner scene and of the potential for - and fact of change. The Corner presented a deceptively constant image during this period which was mirrored in our tentative projections of systematic relationships between actor and setting. It was not until the social workers introduced a new hangout into the Corner that we realized that these themes and patterns would have to acknowledge and somehow express this dynamic if they were to be relevant to corner reality.

During this period and through much of the research phase we conducted a loosely structured literature survey. The works ranged widely in subject and theme, from design and research methodology to adolescent behavior. Their basic function, unrealized at the time, was to define the limits of the study, not in terms of what the study would be, but rather of what it would not be. We read them, of course, in view of how they would relate to our work. However, it turned out that they involved either a level of generalization we could never reach or a related subject area that we could

not substantially tie to the study. We would often develop themes and concepts drawn from these readings only to discard them as they failed to show relevance to the field experience. However, the process was valuable because it provided a context against which to view concepts generated out of field experience, and gave us a sense of the limits of these concepts. Moreover, while the readings could rarely be applied directly to the Corner scene, they often did suggest or reinforce a general orientation to corner phenomenon. For example, we were interested in the teens as a "misfit group", not only as an expression of their conflict with McDonald's which could be documented in the field, but also as an expression of the social conditions of the adolescent as reflected in their status in the work force, their legal status, and their role as students. Our effort to extend this concept grew in part out of our reading of Goodman and Friedenberg. However, for all of the support and direction that they gave us, we were unable to interpret corner phenomenon in terms of this generalization of misfit. This failing follows from the limitation of the study to a single case. School and work simply are not constituent elements of the Corner. Ultimately, it is difficult, when ones observation is confined within the case, to draw systematic relationships across its boundaries. The projection of such relationships is peripheral to the main task which is to construct a model out of ones field experience. In defining the boundaries of the case, however, these tenuous relationships may serve to articulate the

implications of that model, and to this end the literature could be most valuable.

FIELD RESEARCH

Having limited the scope of the study to McDonald's our immediate task was to gain entry into the Corner. We wanted to be able to observe the teens' activity, to talk with them about it, and, if possible, to somehow participate in it with them. We had little problem with gaining entry in order to observe the kids. McDonald's granted us ease of access as it had to all other actors who were interested in teen behavior. If anything, it gave us too much access. We were among the few customers of the restaurant to take advantage of our right as patrons to occupy an empty booth in the section, and, consequently, we often sensed that we were the object, in return, of rather self conscious and questioning glances.

We found it more difficult to establish personal contact with the teens. Perhaps out of shyness as much as a concern that the kids with whom we first speak are not subjected to an audience of their peers (a situation which could create considerable embarrassment for them), we felt that we should approach them on an individual basis. McDonald's was clearly not the place to do so. Because of the openness of the setting and the tendency of the kids to cluster together, such an audience was unavoidable. We were also aware that we were an unknown entity on the Corner

and that we could easily be confused with many other observers of the Corner scene - the police, the plain-clothes men, and the "narcs." We decided to try a more oblique approach. We felt that there might be individuals known and trusted by the kids among the professionals who typically work with them who could help us to bridge the gap and perhaps legitimize our presence. In trying to contact guidance counsellors at the high school we learned of the social workers who were shortly to enter the Corner. They were to be most helpful. Not only did they talk with us about the kids and their own developing role on the Corner, but they allowed us to be seen with them at McDonald's, sitting with them in the restaurant among the teens or conversing with them on the street. They also invited us to participate in the weekly picnics which they sponsored. There we could play baseball and consume charcoal-broiled McDonald's hamburgers with some corner kids for several consecutive Thursday evenings.

Our first real contact occurred during prime time one Friday evening in McDonald's when a social worker, knowing that we were interested in talking to teens about the Corner, introduced us to two girls as a "couple of architects from MIT" who wanted to interview them. The girls sat down at our table, and before we could think twice about all of our previous apprehension in making contacts, an interview was underway. One of the girls was particularly sensitive and articulate. She was to become perhaps the key Corner personality of our study. Not only were we able

to draw upon her considerable insight but, through her, gain new access to the Corner scene. We could hang with her at the restaurant, see certain events through her eyes, and meet and talk to her friends. However, she was not the Doc of White's Street Corner Society (but neither were we William White), because as most corner kids, she hung with a rather limited circle of close friends although she seemed to know most of the regulars. The kids who used McDonald's and later the Drop In Center as a terminal interacted within a loosely structured matrix of friends and acquaintances, and we doubt that any one teen could have moved through this matrix with the facility and the self assurance of a Doc. Toward the middle of the study personal differences began to divide the group in which the girl hung, and our contact with the kids became more infrequent. Although we met and talked informally with other teens, we were unable to again develop the rather close relationship we had with several of the kids in that first group.

One measure of our entry into the Corner and of the evident trust placed in us by several of the kids was their frank and open discussion of drug activity with us and the rather casual handling of drugs that we often witnessed.

Observation On The Corner

As the various control agents who were also intent upon observing the kids, we adopted the familiar hanging

routine. We became as the corner regular, making the not so grand appearance, hoping to sight a familiar face and make some sort of connection. If we saw an acquaintance in the section, we could then either join them if they seemed accessible or we were asked, or we could sit in an adjoining booth. Otherwise, we tended to hang on the periphery, just outside the section, out of our perhaps exaggerated sense of intrusion. On the periphery we were simply observers. We engaged in an activity similar to that of the teens, but we were not participants in their activity. Save for this rather unilateral form of visual communication, there was little interaction between us. Only through our acquaintances among the teens could we in any sense participate and then our participation was of a limited nature. In our conversations with them, the teens often would implicitly assume the role of interviewees, in which they would inform us of events on the corner. Such information was useful, but our interaction with them was such that we could rarely gain a sense of the teen's experience through personal involvement. Such roles, of course, conditioned our relationships with them, so it is understandable that we would also be bounded by them. Because we knew relatively few teens, those teens who would converse with us would limit their capacity to interact with other teens and, in that sense, tend to cut themselves off from the group. Therefore, we did not participate with them so much as they participated with us as outsiders. Significantly, it seemed that we were able to interact most freely with our few friends there, be-

yond the roles of researcher and subject, when we were away from the corner, taking a walk down quiet residential streets or even meeting the teens off the corner for an interview.

We would record few observations while on the corner. We felt that note-taking in the presense of teens would only reinforce our image as outsiders and would look particularly suspicious to those who were not familiar with our project. Ideally, we would have gone to another location on the corner to record observations made at either of the hangouts; however during the winter, at least, no such place was available. The cost of access to the shelter of the other restaurants was prohibitive. During that period when the Drop In Center was the sole hangout on those nights it was opened, we could record observations at McDonalds which had been make at the Center. Generally, we would record our observations only after having returned from the corner. There was a certain disadvantage of having to trust one's observation to memory for two or three hours before committing them to writing - the ability to record dialogue particularly suffered. However, we generally seemed to have more than enough to record, both in terms of our immediate expenditure of time and energy and our capacity later to process and utilize these observations.

These records consisted essentially of a chronology of the evening which freely mixed interpretations of events and/situations with the general storyline of what happened.

The sort of information that we recorded is indicated best by some of the experiences previously recounted in the paper. Our observations and notes reflect the "who, what, when, where and how" syndrome. Generally, we noted how people and activity were distributed in the settings and through time, if settings undergo any change and how they are manipulated, and how people interact within settings. We would often attempt to note the atmosphere of a place or the "feeling" about an activity or event - all very elusive but fun (one has to sustain oneself). A survey of artifacts was occasionally instructive. The beer cans in the restrooms were the only direct evidence of the activity which allegedly took place there. However, they were among the few traces that the teens tend to leave behind. (A search for such traces leads to the notion that hanging requires the support of few artifacts and that it can survive quite well in a relatively impoverished environment.) The prose of the observations was often supplemented by quick sketches, particularly to show the spacial distribution of people, place, or artifact, or the spacial progression of some event. We make limited use of photography. The camera would have been most useful to record activity in the field and particularly to convey the nature of hanging and of the settings. However, the management of McDonald's prohibited the use of cameras inside the restaurant and the nocturnal bias of hanging discouraged its use outside.

By far, the bulk of our field research consisted

of such "participant observation." Beginning regular observation in the fall of 1971, we generally visited the Corner at least twice a week during the next four months. Between September and February, we made over forty such visits, ranging from an hour on a dull evening or afternoon to several hours on a busy Friday night. Neither of us lived near the Corner, and a major constraint in making observations was the half an hour driving time that each visit involved. Had we lived nearer the Corner, we could have made more frequent checks and developed an image of the progression of events there in finer grain. The semi-weekly visit was inadequate at times to delineate the dramatic change that could occur within a matter of days at the Corner.

Interviews

We held several more formal interviews in addition to casual conversations which would develop with the teens and social workers in the field. The major difference between the formal interview and the informal discussion is that the former were scheduled and occurred outside of the field context, while the latter would occur spontaneously in the field. The formal interview was actually quite unstructured and open ended in format. We would approach the interview with several topic areas in mind but would allow the discussion to pace itself and to generate its own subject matter if that should occur. In spite of the open format, the interview was a rather formal event in the sense that the roles of interviewer and interviewee were quite explicit in the process. It was

anything but a conversation. The subjects seemed to sense that their job was to talk about their relationship to the Corner scene and talk they did, effusively. If we spoke with only one person at a time - as in all the interviews with non-teens - then the interview tended to be a monologue. If their were two or more subjects - as in most of those with teens - then it was a conversation or at times a debate among the subjects. We just listened, if we had the luxury of a tape recorder, asked questions during an occasional pause perhaps introducing a new subject area, and tried to keep up with the speaker, making mental notes of points to which we might later return. Without a tape recorder we either made a desparate effort to take notes in addition to the other tasks mentioned above, or, sensing that our note taking might inhibit the speaker, we would reluctantly place our faith in memory. Needless to say, a tape recording of such an interview would be more helpful.

The interviews dealt with how the subjects perceived themselves in relationship to the Corner scene in two general aspects: their role within the Corner and their involvement within it and its impact upon them. The former would give us a sense of the imperitives behind their actions: the need (or tendancy) of the teen to see and be seen, the goals or general orientation of the social workers, the values and expectations of the manager. It would suggest identification with a role as expressed by Montour's statement, "I am a businessman..." A notion of how they, as a corner kid or

as a businessman, should interact within the Corner would be conveyed; a social worker would tell us that she comes to "make contacts." Perhaps the setting would be viewed as an extension of their role; as Montour is a businessman, so McDonald's on the Corner is a business. In discussing the latter aspect, their involvement with the Corner, they would convey how they had implemented their role within the social contingencies of the Corner scene, and how the Corner has received them, whether it has supported or frustrated them. Hence, Montour would tell us how he, as a businessman, has confronted the harsh realities of hanging in McDonald's. Other actors, the setting, certain situations and events would be evaluated in terms of their sense of imperative. Options would be considered and strategies divulged: "They're going to cut the building right in half."

The interviews also allowed the subject to serve as an informant by relating "factual" information about past and present events and situations. The perceptions which were conveyed are less personal and more disinterested than those pertaining to role.

On Being A Participant Observer

In hanging on the Corner and observing the teens and their associates for almost six months, we have probably earned the right to be called "participant observers." However, we feel that we were rarely both participants and observers simultaneously. We tended to be either one or the

other at any given time, but not both. We found that the distinction between the two could be expressed in terms of when and how one processes data from the field. It seemed to us that generally when we participated in some sort of activity with a teen, be it talking in the foyer of the Center or taking a walk around the block, that little processing of data would occur during its progress. We would certainly be aware of what was transpiring during its course, but we would tend to defer any meaningful analysis of these events until after the termination of the activity. Only then would we tend to process the data in terms of comparing it to previous observation and the general themes then current and probing it for meaning and pattern. With observation such processing was not deferred. The actual recording of the observation would probably occur later off the field, but the mental processing would occur on the spot as the phenomena were perceived. The observer would interpret his experiences in the light of previous images and models. In such observation, however, we would not attempt to control the input of data by manipulation of corner phenomenon. Yet a measure of such control was available through the process of interview in which the subject was asked or directed to reveal certain information. We were able to employ the directed question during casual conversation in the field as easily as we could during the more formal interview.

In the process of doing field research, we often felt drawn in two conflicting directions. On one hand, we felt

a commitment to record the Corner as it was, uncontaminated by our intrusion or intervention. Our tendency, then, was either to be the invisible observer with minimum presence on the Corner, yet somehow open to all phenomenon without preconception, or to be the unreflecting participant, completely immersed with the ebb and flow of corner activity. On the other hand, we felt a commitment to develop current themes and concepts about the Corner scene. Our tendency was either to limit our observations so that we perceived only a limited range of phenomenon pertinent to certain ideas, or to surface such data through questioning of the actors - or even to experiment with the situation to test out concepts through manipulation of the setting or the actors.

We felt a conflict between the tendency to passively accept the field situation and actively intervene within it. Neither of these tendencies could have been fulfilled in reality, yet they were manifest in the decisions which continually had to be made in the field. A typical choice we faced was whether to allow a casual relationship with a corner acquaintance to freely develop or to attempt to secure an interview with the teen. On one hand, the interview would provide a unique opportunity to understand the Corner from the teens' perspective. On the other, the teen may feel uncomfortable in the role interviewee and cut short a developing relationship. Such a choice can be regarded as a technical issue, but it is an issue that can

only be dealt with in terms of intangibles. It turns upon the researcher's empathy and sensitivity and his capacity and willingness to commit himself to the social relationship - for the "subject" will demand and deserve some degree of engagement.

While each such situation may demand such a choice, the study as a total process will not require nor tolerate a commitment to one tendency or the other, for this conflict defines the interaction between model and field experience with its opposing demands to both interpret phenomenon within the dimensions of existing concepts and to allow the field experience to generate new concepts and invalidate the old.

PROCESSING DATA

During the early stages of research we were able to maintain this dialogue between model and field experience. Our data cards were relatively few and rather spare. They were complemented by two other equally brief sets of cards, one consisting of quotations and ideas from the literature and the other of our current collection of themes and concepts. We could easily scan these three sets of cards and look for patterns and connections among them. Through them, we could compare and contrast field experience with the developing themes. As more data cards accumulated and the write-ups of observations became more detailed, this process of scanning, comparison, and patterning became increasingly difficult.

More time was being devoted to just the process of writing up field research - interviews as well as observations - and consequently there was less time to spend filing through the cards. Furthermore, we were continually confronting a changing Corner scene, and we soon found ourselves recording these developments without being able to adequately gauge their implications for the study. Many of our original assumptions, adopted when the image of the Corner was more constant, now seemed to be floundering in the wake of change. We sensed that we had to understand the Corner in terms of this dynamic of change, yet doubted that it could be easily detected in the multitude of separate storylines which constituted our data bank. In general, we felt that we had lost touch with the study, that we were no longer able to sustain a dialogue between the field experience and the model. We decided reluctantly to cut back on interviewing and observation and to initiate a thorough assessment of the study in terms of the information gathered, the ideas and images developed, and the implications of the recent changes in the Corner scene.

The immediate task was to ascertain the nature of the data which had already been collected. The data was situated in the chronology of individual interview and field write-ups, with each write-up touching on a variety of different themes. We decided to break this information down into single items of data, each of which would be a single piece

of information about the Corner. The items could then be refashioned into any order. In identifying them, we did not want to be constrained by a rigid model of the Corner that was fragmented, dated, and perhaps irrelevant. Rather, we wanted to allow the data to generate the items. Therefore, we did not wish to employ a checklist of themes or ideas in order to select the items. We did not expect nor intend to encounter the information free of preconception. Not only would it be impossible to achieve that state of mind, it would be undesirable; those months of preconception were quite necessary to the task. We simply wanted to freely encounter that field of information, much as we would observe phenomena in the field. It was not important at this time to connect theme and data. The item had to be only a single - or manageable - significant piece of information about the Corner. The item was to be only a few words, or at most, a few lines. A heading would attempt to summarize in two or three words the significant aspect of the data. The text should contain sufficient information to convey the idea or suggest the situation without necessitating a return to the data source. The process of itemization was slow and extremely tedious, so slow, in fact, that we were unable to itemize the literature material as we had planned. The result was over eighty notebook pages of items similar to the following:

DEVOTION PARK AND TERRITORY

CONFLICT	7 side 1, nov.29
Gang Fight at Devotion Park Forces Curfew On Playground Area. Incident and Background Described.	8 side 1, nov.29
POLICE/DEVOTION PARK	30 side 2, nov.29
Devotion Park and Escape Cutting Hole In Fence. Paving The Sidewalk For Police Intrusion. Incident Described Where Police Chased Kid Down Hill by Car.	31 side 2, nov.29
COPS AND DEVOTION PARK	aug 11 intv 4
Cops Rarely Raid Park All Show, Just Come In With Lights/ Sirens.	

This document gave us an array of singular statements of perception and occasional facts which were grounded in immediate field experience. In sum, it was a rather precise statement of whatever it was that comprised our study. In totality, it was sheer chaos. Our next step was to generate some sense of theme and pattern out of this lumping of items. Again, our object was to move freely through this listing, without checklist, allowing the information to suggest the patterns. The process was in the classic tradition of "cut and paste." Items would be cut from xeroxed copies and then taped onto sheets of notebook paper under the appropriate heading. As manipulatable and plastic as the itemizations were, the process in which we were engaged was not yet modeling so much as it was categorization. We proceeded one item at a time, interacting only with the particular

item and the headings, searching for the proper category - beginning a new one if necessary. The categories reflected the general themes which we had worked with throughout the study. However, the configuration of the categories grew out of the process of assigning items. As a category accumulated items, it would tend to be divided into more specific sub-groupings.

The categories provided a very useful resource. They could be easily scanned to provide an immediate sense of the type and amounts of data that had been collected. They showed which themes had been well documented in the field and which lacked support. They could function as a catalogue to locate information at the data sources. A quick scanning of over one hundred headings, most of which clustered in one of several thematic blocks, gave one a more general image of the study.

In its inductive nature, this process of itemization and categorization reflected our initial field experience. As in the donut shop, theme and pattern was generated out of field experience. In both cases, one suspends prior judgement and trusts in his perception to derive meaning from that experience. Essentially, the approach was to stand out of the way, to experience the study and to allow its process to show direction and reveal its content and its structure.

IMPLICATIONS

There were many implications expressed directly within the body of the study itself. It is here, however, that we wish to discuss a few of the major implications as we review the study as a whole.

BIG MAC

McDonald's is, of course, the manifestation of Big Mac. As we viewed McDonald's we were struck by its resemblance to America, an image somewhat propagated by the very public nature of the place itself. It was there that we could find persons from all dimensions of life - the wealthy, the poor; the young, the old; the intellect, the non-intellectual; the businessman, the young mother with children, and the teenager. And then there was the new technology - the nonsense system, the quick, cheap, sterile, unbreakable, disposable, packaged environment known, admired, and utilized by almost everyone across the nation. McDonald's is "Progress", it is the General Motors of the hamburger industry; it is an empire whose ultimate aim is to become part of everyone's neighborhood, and it won't stop until it does. This was the America that we saw here. This was Big Mac.

Within the Coolidge Corner McDonald's a thriving social scene had emerged at the public level. An important part of this scene was the hanging routine of the teens.

Although, in a dynamic sense, the hanging routine was probably as much a product of the McDonald's system as was the selling of burgers, fries, and soft drinks; to the management it interrupted traditional business, turned away potential customers, and posed a threat to the McDonald image. It was through this hanging process that the teens revealed to us an important weakness of the McDonald empire - with the Corporation taking a firm stand on the preservation of the stereotypical McDonald image and system of operations, McDonald's found itself unable to make social compromise with the teens and still stay within the constructs of tradition. Instead of searching for ways in which it could alter its system to accommodate the teen, McDonald's was forced to take various strategies in a futile attempt to remove this select portion of its clientele. They hasselled the kids, they instituted minimum purchases, they hired city police, they hired private security guards, they made arrests, took kids to court for trespassing, then in the hope that they could find other things for kids to do to take them away from the store, they allowed social workers to hang with the kids. It seems, however, that the system had many loopholes through which the teens could enter. When all their attempts to remove the teens failed, McDonald's took a most drastic but significant step - recognizing the territorial characteristics of the teens within the space, they literally amputated that portion of themselves which held the so-called "problem"; an ultimate endeavor to defend their own territory.

Physical environments are often indicative of the characteristics of the people who own, use, and control them. If one recognizes this as an important psychological property, it can also be used to mask over true intentions of the owner or operator of the space. We wonder if McDonald's might have been abusing this property when it provided a very comfortable, sociable environment, but was not willing to accept the social activity that it fostered. It may also have been rather embarrassing when McDonald's discovered that to enforce its goals it would have to display its intentions publicly. Building physical barriers is a much easier, much less obvious, and more permanent method of controlling unwanted behaviors. With the dividing of its restaurant, McDonald's begins to physically manifest its true intentions.

It is rather clear what McDonald's "learned" from this experiment - that in order to maintain the strict productivity demanded by the Corporation, they would have to sacrifice customer convenience and comfort, and restrain the social amenities of their urban businesses by demanding accordance to the McDonald's routine. In essence, they really haven't learned at all; they have simply responded in the only way their system would allow them to respond. We feel that this is rather critical especially since we know that McDonald's is not only an incredibly large and influential empire, but also because we know that this corporation has the power, both influentially and fiscally,

to show concern and understanding for the preservation of community, but does not do so. The Coolidge Corner McDonald's was a pioneer of the McDonald's in-town market - it was an important urban experiment which, according to Paul Montour, set the trend for the rest of the McDonald's restaurants entering the Boston market. McDonald's has always been a trend setter and this time we are concerned that it may be indicative of tomorrow's urban environment.

THE NEED FOR AN OPEN ENVIRONMENT

As we have discussed and implied throughout the study, urban man is finding more and more that he must sacrifice many of his social activities and relations to his fellow man in order to make compromise with the man-made environment growing up around him. We feel that a great number of these sacrifices are absolutely unnecessary today, but if they continue to grow and prosper they ultimately become the building blocks of our future cities. McDonald's is somewhat exemplary of this very trend where the dream for a productive fast-food market becomes even more important than the need for community. It should be growing increasingly apparent that our urban environments are becoming more and more constrictive in their options for accommodating human activity. It is this increasingly programmed environment that concerns us as planners and designers for we are one of the actors who are directly responsible for it. We recognize the need for more flexible, more open environments where we as social

animals can begin to grow within. Paul Goodman, in Growing Up Absurd, puts it so well that we have included some of his statements:

It is hard for a social animal to grow when there is not an open margin to grow in: some open space, some open economy, some open mores, some activity free from regulation and cartes d'identite'. I am referring not to a war between the "individual" and society, or to a wild animal that has to be acculturated - for there is no such individual or animal - but to a deepening sociological flaw in the modern system itself. A society cannot have decided all possibilities beforehand and have structured them. If society becomes too tightly integrated and preempts all the available space, materials, and methods, then it is failing to provide for just the margin of formlessness, real risk, novelty, spontaneity, that makes growth possible. This almost formal cause importantly drives young people out of the organized system altogether and makes creative adults loath to co-operate with it. When time, clothes, opinions, and goals become so regulated that people feel they cannot be "themselves" or create something new, they bolt and look for fringes and margins, loopholes, holes in the wall, or they just run.

Our society pre-empts literally too much of the space. For instance, it is impossible in the Eastern United States to pitch a tent and camp for the night without registering with the National Parks and its list of regulations. You cannot go off somewhere for a sexual bout without paying rent. Almost any stone that a kid picks up and any target that he throws it at, is property. People hygieni-

cally adopt a permissive attitude toward the boisterousness and hyperkinesis of children, and meantime we design efficient minimum housing. Under modern urban conditions, it is impossible for an old woman to be a harmless lunatic, as was commonplace in country places; she would hurt herself, get lost among strangers, disrupt traffic, stop the subway. She must be institutionalized. If you roam the street late at night doing nothing, and looking for something to do, the cop who is protecting you and everybody else doesn't want you to be going nowhere and to have nothing to do; and you ask him, does he have any suggestions?

In our study we described a few of the interstices or openings in the urban environment where people can slip past the organized systems that Paul Goodman is talking about. We found that the teens were especially good at finding valuable loopholes in this society and creating their own forms of open-environments. The creation and effectiveness of the McDonald's interstices appeared to be based on a number of properties - the relationship of the service system to the public spaces, orientation of physical place to certain social amenities, distance from control agents, ability to claim and defend space - many of these properties being a mixture of social, psychological, and physical elements; the total scene we could only describe as dynamic. This dynamic process may be a slight twist to what Goodman was talking about, but should certainly be an important part of a general philosophy of open-environment.

The teenager may be an important actor to observe in this respect, for much of his environment, out of necessity or compromise more than choice, is composed of public spaces which are frequently subject to closure sometimes by deliberate steps taken by the control agents, such as cutting McDonald's in half; and sometimes simply by natural elements like seasonal changes - Devotion Park closes down for the winter. The teen's ability to adjust and adapt to these changes could hold important planning implications for future over-crowded and over-planned cities.

THE TEEN

Within the study we narrowed our focus upon the adolescent primarily because he is so nicely revealed as a victim of, or victor from, the goals we have built our lives, our society, and our urban environment upon. The teen is one person who is still fighting the battle of compromise with the environment. Perhaps his inherent energy is part of his ability to do so. Although he certainly does "bolt and look for fringes and margins, loopholes," and "holes in the wall," he does not give in entirely as many of us are inclined to do; he bucks it, he conflicts with it, he destroys it if necessary, but his determination not to be put down by it is rather important. We were encouraged to see the teens back at McDonald's even after the amputation - to us it seemed a real-life protest even if the teens were doing it only out of some very nature

simply to hang. We have seen teens adapt the most useless of settings (at least in the adults view) to serve some relevant purpose for themselves. We see their so-called deviancy as often reflective of the society from which they came - teens have had very little legitimate control over the situations in which they find themselves. They are forced into useless public institutions which pretend to liberalize their policies through token student bodies which are only reflections of the institution itself. They are literally enslaved by the adult society until the promise is met to become part of it. Their deviancy, therefore, becomes especially significant, for it is one way in which they can achieve power and control, born out in our observations it can force the opening of new environments such as the Drop In Center, and it can close others down such as McDonald's. But it is a very precarious power, for it can open up new opportunities or it can become self-constricting, destroying what few opportunities there had been before. It may be some time before the adult society wakes up to the fact that the adolescent is a real human being, capable of making decisions about his life far beyond the competency of many who call themselves adults. Edgar Z. Friedenberg once wrote that "Adolescent conflict is the instrument by which an individual learns the complex, subtle, and precious difference between himself and his environment. We would like to suggest that it is also through the adolescent that any individual - young or old, can learn this complex,

subtle, and precious difference.

It encourages us to see the environment changing in response to the actions of adolescents themselves even if it is McDonald's fiberglas seats and cramped, uncomfortable quarters. The adolescent has made an incredibly strong statement. It is not the end for the teen, in fact it is quite the contrary. McDonald's, in an attempt to remove the teens has sacrificed the family business it once had and has now narrowed its physical structure to accommodate primarily the singles market (a part of which is, of course, the teen). Those hard, fiberglas, swivel seats might be small, indestructible, crowded, and uncomfortable, but the teen is quite used to such settings; his youthful body is best adept at adapting the new McDonald's to his own needs and those crowded swivel seats allow him to quickly scan the scene even better than before. The reduction in space has only intensified the hangout image of McDonald's as well as the possibility of conflict between user groups. There is no longer room for separate territories - if one enters McDonald's on a prime Friday evening he is walking into the territory of the teen. On one visit to the new McDonald's we sat down in a clearing (that is the only description one could possibly have for it), only to be surrounded by teens shortly thereafter. This had never happened to us in the old McDonald's. The significance of the booth and territory became very real to us that evening. On busy Harvard

Street teens could be seen double parking, tying up traffic as they had never done before, and attracting police who were busy writing tickets. Perhaps someday the importance of such real-life protests will eventually be recognized and someone will come to the conclusion that perhaps our urban objectives are not really as suited to the environment as we had once thought.

THE DROP IN CENTER - A COMMUNITY RESPONSE

It was through the teens that we were able to perceive just how a community deals with a critical behavioral problem that is very much a product of the urban environment. The community responded to the teens' behavior in much the same way as McDonald's - some may have realized that much of the teens' deviancy was only symptomatic, but they had no way of dealing with the problem at large - namely that of restructuring society's attitude to the adolescent (in a sense, just as McDonald's, they had no way of altering the system without changing their objectives). Instead, they could only deal with the teen as society deals with him. Our first hint of this was the community's voice in attempting to prohibit McDonald's from the Corner; fearing that it would create another hangout. (even though some of those who made such declaration had probably hung on the Corner when they were teens themselves). With the advent of the Drop In Center we could see rather clearly that this was meant as a deliberate attempt to remove the teen from the Corner;

and to many (social workers and teens alike), this was seen as a most practical and honorable strategy. Why is it that when a problem emerges within our society it is always the responsibility of the other person to understand it and deal with it appropriately? Why is it that a community cannot strive to make legitimate compromise with its youth instead of placing them in the hands of public authorities such as Youth Resources who, in accordance to aggressive community response, must isolate the teen, attempting to remove them from their conflict with the environment?

Drop in centers such as at Coolidge Corner are drop out centers in the most literal sense. Isolation is certainly not the answer toward making an active, thriving community. If we want to overcome the polarization and isolation within our own communities we must have mix and involvement between all inhabitants. We cannot believe that isolation reflects the attitude that the teenager is a viable part of society. We felt that McDonald's was a much better example of community. An important social aspect of McDonald's was that it could accommodate everyone - the young, old, male, female, businessman, mother, or student. It was here that we often saw the social worker helping a derelict off the street as well as consulting a kid. On many nights a teen might crash here and be helped through the evening by several friends. But the stage that McDonald's presented was nothing short of incredible; it was here that the kids could try out the role of their friends,

of the elder, the manager, the cop, the social worker, or even the bum, even if it be only through observation. The parent could drive by and observe the activity, and it occurred to us that even to see several kids sitting silently in a booth, stoned out of their minds is somehow better than seeing nothing at all. Most of the teens that we had interviewed had at least talked about the Corner with their parents; some teens even had to defend their position:

"You try to get through to your parents that everybody has a place to hang out, and maybe just in their day, or maybe ten or twenty years ago the idea of a hangout was the local malt shop and all you did was sip soda and dance to the juke box. I mean that's cool, that's what they wanted to do and that's fine; but we've found something else to do; we've found a different place to hang out and we just get hasselled for it."

ADVICE TO THE WORKER

"Those Leftists are all the same - Fascists at heart. Always wanting to control, to keep the meeting in line. They have no feeling for the situation."

Social worker commenting
on teens' meeting

Not to imply that the workers are necessarily Fascist at heart, but the above comment on control and sensitivity is, we feel, applicable to the worker as well.

In observing the teen we noticed that an important

part of their hanging routine involved the use of other neighboring (and sometimes not so neighboring) places in conjunction with McDonald's. This is somewhat of a symbiosis - the living together of two or more rather dissimilar things which seem to complement each other by their presence. The teens' behavior was beginning to bring the Center into a symbiotic relationship with the rest of their environment - thus it would serve as a safe retreat from outside conflicts, a place to congregate with friends before moving somewhere else, a crash pad, a place to identify with and pass through, a place for warmth and shelter during the winter season - in some ways reflecting their previous activities within and around McDonald's. An important fallacy of the Drop In Center was that the workers did not recognize themselves as part of this symbiotic process, but treated the Center as an insular environment even in this respect; attempting to create their own activities independent, and sometimes disrespectful of the hanging routine. The rock bands, the suppers, the coffee house experiment, the showing of films were all exemplary of the worker's insensitivity to the hanging routine occurring around them. Many times we saw the worker abusing his authority - serving his own needs or imposing his adult objectives rather than attempting to understand the teen. As we mentioned in the body of the study, we felt that this was an important contribution to the divergence between worker and teen that was so apparent in the last few months of the study. Included in this was

the deception, the creation of phony images, and a lack of honesty between them which we felt was primarily the result of coercion on the part of the worker. There was one comment by a worker that concerned us very much - "The kids aren't changing." At that moment he may have meant that things just were not going too smoothly at the Center, but the way he said it is something crucial to their relationships to the teens. Why should the kids change? We felt that part of the worker's frustration was due to the isolation of the Center itself - Jim mentioned that he could no longer be objective about the kids here - it was something like being objective with your own children, he said. He could not step outside of the picture and take a long, hard look at the scene. In desperation he turned to us for help, unfortunately we had not been able to step out ourselves; at that moment we had the data, but little time to evaluate it and give suggestions. We also knew that the suggestions we would have would probably be too unorthodox to be accepted by the workers anyway. This was, however, one indication to us that a period of rest is probably essential for the development of objective understanding and sensitivity to the problems occurring around you. Just being part of the scene is definitely not enough. At times, such as during the showing of the films, we actually felt (and later our data confirmed) that the workers did not recognize the implications of their maneuvers. One cannot say that this is entirely the fault of the worker for it is

also very much tied to the setting in which he finds himself and the system in which he is working. It was not until the closing of the Center and the development of the new program during a period of moratorium that Jim mentioned to us over a beer that in making the change to the new program the workers might just be shutting out the very kids who need their help the most. We could not have agreed with him more.

We observed the worker's failure to consult teens personally within the Drop In Center - it simply did not accommodate personal contacts primarily because there were no private areas made available as part of the space. We even began to see that the public nature of the space was fostering a philosophy among the workers which concerned their necessity to "control" the teens as one body or large group (as exhibited by the film episode) when in reality they are all individuals. The large number of workers made more personal involvement entirely possible, but within such a public setting this only seemed to aggravate the situation until it was observed that the workers were grouping themselves, thus not only avoiding personal contacts with the teens, but also increasing the mood of intrusion if a teen did desire consultation of advice.

The insularity of the Center became very real to us one evening when we asked one of the workers if he knew that McDonald's was being cut in half. He said he hadn't

been around McDonald's since the Center opened and that he wanted to stay clear of that place (it is only some two small blocks away from the Center). We felt that there was a definite need for the worker to be involved in the real-life world of the teen. McDonald's had been one place where teens and workers could gather in a relatively equal, honest, and personal way, partly due to its neutral character. As expressed within the study, we felt that the territorial equality at McDonald's was significant to the relations between teens and workers. At McDonald's the worker was more involved in the real world of the teen where he could react to and interact with the actual conflicts as they occurred; and not necessarily as a control agent, for (as discussed in the study) his powers were few.

A FINAL NOTE TO THE WORKER:

We are aware that much of the information that the teens disclosed to us as researchers would rarely be heard by parent or acting social worker. Part of this was probably due to the ability to be good listeners and to assume a rather neutral position with the teens, if not a position of advocacy. Part of it was also due to our interests in the teen himself - we tried not to interrogate, we never gave advice and we were never asked for advice, it was not in our interest to control the teen, it was only our interest to understand them better - we found that most of the teens were more than willing to discuss themselves freely with us.

We hope this holds some implications to those who's job it is to work closely with teens and their behavior.

ON TOP

Ironical as it may seem, it appeared to us that the teens may be far ahead of their control actors when we view the entire dynamic scene. The teen, forced to utilize his abilities of adaptation floats from one environmental conflict to another while the control actors go through an agonizing period of futile attempts at "solving" the "problem" of teen behavior. The teens show little concern about the image or behavior of the control actors or the setting; they often accept things as fact (such as the meeting with the lawyers might indicate), seemingly satisfied if they can find the interstices where they can fit in and utilize the environment to their own needs as the opportunity arises. Their adaptive instruments take many forms - we found that the drug scene, for example, is often meant to deliberately manipulate environments; transforming rather dull, depressing places into interesting, often humorous settings, or else making them nothing at all while the control actor is confused and frustrated with such mystical tactics. This is not to say: "O.K., so the teens can take care of themselves; then we don't need to provide anything for them." The fact is, their behavior is in many ways a product of their deprivations. (We would probably behave in the same manner if the teens' license were applied to us as adults.) Hopefully the study

has shown that often the so-called "provisions" are merely tokens from the adult society. What we would hope is that someday the adolescent may be accepted as he is and allowed to be a vital element of society - an exercise in basic human rights. This may mean providing little more than one's understanding.

The teen is one representation of the Son of Big Mac. He is affected by and responds to a dynamic system of inter-related freedoms, controls, and licenses. He is man with severe social restrictions, he owns very little, and he is seldom allowed to be the person that he is. If Big Mac is setting the trends that we see, we may all eventually be his sons and daughters. In many ways the course is set, the clock is wound, and we have only to wait for the unavoidable time to come. But if such a time occurs will we be prepared to face it? Will we have learned the lessons of adaptation? Can we learn? The adolescent may be one person who will give us such answers.

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