

Public Opinion Research. Three surveys developed by Vera with the cooperation of the City Bureau of the Budget, the Housing and Development Administration (HDA), and two opinion research firms have been administered.

One of the research firms, Louis Harris and Associates, conducted interviews in four boroughs concerning landlord-tenant relations and preferences in home renovation. 431 residents of lower middle class areas containing mixed public and private housing were canvassed. Harris interviewers also invited some respondents to air feelings about housing and reactions to the survey at community meetings in Brownsville and Upper Manhattan. A final report, "Transition Neighborhoods in New York City: The People's View of Their Housing Environment," was submitted in December 1969.

The second research firm, Opinion Research Corporation, has completed surveys on police service and narcotics in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, and on health and education in the Tremont section of the Bronx. The report will be submitted this month.

Evaluation of the results of the surveys will be undertaken by Vera, with assistance from the Budget Bureau, HDA, and planners in education, health and criminal justice. Based on the evaluation a report will be submitted this month to the Fund for the City of New York outlining types of data obtainable from opinion surveys and weighing the usefulness of surveys to program planners.

Bronx Plea Negotiation Project. The Plea Negotiation Project began furnishing Legal Aid attorneys with information and social histories for use in plea bargaining sessions. Twelve defendants have been interviewed and dates for plea negotiation conferences have been set.

All Bronx Criminal Court defendants are eligible for the Plea Negotiation Project, except those charged with violent crimes or drug sale, or minor violations. A Legal Aid research associate, hired by the Project but paid by Legal Aid, interviews eligible defendants for their version of case facts and for social history. The researcher verifies this information by telephone or through a field investigator.

The research associate recommends a plea and in some cases suggests a disposition to the Legal Aid attorney who will negotiate the plea. The recommendation is based on guidelines developed by Vera's Bronx Sentencing Project. One disposition which may be recommended is referral to the Bronx Sentencing Project for its community-based services including drug treatment and job development.

At a weekly plea negotiation conference, the Legal Aid lawyer and research associate represent the defendant, and an assistant district attorney represents the government. A Vera lawyer from the project staff attends the conference. He provides the assistant district attorney with a data sheet and furnishes each side with a copy of the defendant's complete criminal record.

The Manhattan Court Employment Project. Since its inception in February 1968, the Project has admitted 968 participants, an average of ten per week.

137 are active participants.

481 have been unfavorably terminated and returned to the court process.

324 have had charges against them dismissed.

The proportion of defendants against whom charges have been dismissed has increased from 25 to 30 percent in the first groups of participants to 40 to 50 percent presently.

To facilitate communication and team work a new working relationship has been established between Human Services and Career Development, two units of the Manhattan Court Employment Project. Previously, a newly admitted participant was met by his Human Services representative ("rep") and referred to Career Development for job services. The units functioned separately and communicated mainly by written narratives. Under a new case-study approach, a participant is met by a team made up of his rep and the career developer responsible for the caseload of that rep-- this approach coordinates counseling service with attention to education and employment problems.

A 23-month report on Project operations will be presented this month to the Office of Manpower Policy Evaluation and Research. Two thousand copies of the report will be printed and distributed.

The Project is studying various approaches to institutionalization and expansion. Screeners are determining how many participants might be admitted, under existing criteria, from night and weekend court. In addition to studying funding sources and possible administrative changes, consideration is being given to making more defendants eligible by altering some admission criteria such as age, sex, charges, or prior record. Such changes would require permission from the Court, defense attorneys and prosecutors.

Addiction Research and Treatment Corporation. This Bedford-Stuyvesant methadone project is serving 161 patients. Since Mayor Lindsay opened the center at 937 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, a second clinic has been added and a staff of 78 has been assembled.

In an effort to service the community and to aid in preventing addiction, the Corporation is preparing a campaign, "An Eye on Prevention." Block workers will canvass neighborhoods and talk with parents about drugs and drug abuse in the Bedford-Stuyvesant and Cumberland areas. Lectures in English and Spanish, the distribution of educational material through community organizations, and displays in churches and clubhouses are planned.

Professor Irving Lukoff of the Columbia University School for Social Work has been named director of the social evaluation of the methadone program. This evaluation will be coordinated with the analysis of the criminal aspects of the program undertaken by the Harvard Center for Advancement of Criminal Justice.

The Manhattan Bowery Project. The detoxification center admitted its 6,205th patient Thursday, January 29, accounting for the treatment of 2,502 individuals since the project opened in November 1967.

One floor of the Salvation Army Memorial Hotel for Men at 225 Bowery Avenue has become a "halfway house" for 35 Bowery outpatients. House meetings for all residents have been held to discuss the living facility and to plan activities. The Project's outpatient department staff visits the hotel twice weekly to supervise swimming, bowling, and other recreation for hotel tenants and sponsored a party at the hotel Friday, February 6. In addition, the Church of All Nations, 9 Second Avenue, has offered clinic outpatients the use of its pool one afternoon a week.

The Bronx Sentencing Project. The Sentencing Project provides brief social history reports and sentence recommendations to judges sitting in adult parts in the Bronx Criminal Court. As of January 16, 1970, 1,041 defendants had been sentenced with a Vera report present. Of these:

586 cases carried non-prison recommendations (unconditional discharge, conditional discharge, fine, probation, or adjournment to a community program).

548 cases, or 93.5 percent, resulted in non-prison sentences or in adjournments to community programs.

Raul Rodriguez, the Project narcotics coordinator, has been appointed a consultant to the Narcotics Addiction Control Commission. Mr. Rodriguez, a member of the Bronx Community for Narcotics Programs, was chosen with three other members to advise the Commission as to attitudes and interests of ex-addicts and community residents.

Youth Diversion Project. Vera and Fordham University are attempting to initiate a community-based alternative to the juvenile justice system in the East Tremont section of the Bronx. The project would combine aspects of the youth bureau concept and the Neighborhood Youth Forum proposal, an extra-judicial forum for dealing with the problems of juveniles. The project would use a new method of delinquency analysis. It would train community people to act as advocates for troubled juveniles. It would both use existing resources and develop services within the project.

The Manhattan Summons Project. The Summons Project substitutes the issuance of a summons in qualified misdemeanor cases for the formal procedures of arrest and detention. In the first six months of the third year (July-December 1969), 13,940 summonses were issued, an increase of 23 percent over the corresponding period in 1968, representing a savings to the city of \$1,254,600.

Traffic Court Alert. Under this system, the majority of officers scheduled for Traffic Court remains on patrol rather than automatically appearing in court; the officers are on alert and are summoned to come to court only if needed. In the first three months of the third year (November 1969-January 1970) 5,378 officers were placed on alert. 3,433 or 64 percent, were not required to appear. Cost effectiveness for the period was \$247,176.

Teacher Corps-VISTA Project. At the request of Teacher Corps and VISTA, Vera Institute evaluated a Teacher Corps-VISTA project begun in September 1968. Teacher Corps interns operated a school for inmates of the New York City Reformatory at Rikers Island and VISTA volunteers worked with those inmates to ease problems of re-entry into the community upon their release.

In the final report on the project, submitted in December 1969, Vera urged re-funding of the joint Teacher Corps-VISTA program. In the evaluation, Vera suggested modifications in preservice training, personnel policies and administrative procedures.

Appearance Control Project. This Project opened January 20, 1970, in Part 1B1 of Manhattan Criminal Court. Its aim is to reduce court delay and eliminate unnecessary appearances of the prosecution's witnesses (the arresting officer and the civilian complainant).

A Vera study of 1B1, a misdemeanor hearing and motion and all-purpose part for non-jail defendants, showed that approximately 65 percent of all cases were adjourned and in 15 percent of cases warrants were issued. After waiting through two or more calendar calls on a given date, witnesses would be told that the case had been adjourned for another day.

Two procedures are planned by the project for Part 1B1. In its first phase, the project excuses the police officer and witnesses from any appearance at the first adjourned date and, instead, limits that first date to pleadings and statements of intentions. In its second phase, the project will establish an alert system so that police officers and witnesses will be placed on alert status and will not go to court unless notified to appear.

Between January 20 and January 30, 1970, the project handled 535 cases. 209 of these cases were scheduled for initial appearance. The new procedure saved 151 appearances of witnesses---15 civilians and 136 law enforcement officials.

During the first week of project operations, 18 percent of the total caseload was disposed of through dismissals or guilty pleas, and 35 percent was adjourned to trial parts. The remaining 47 percent of cases resulted in bench warrants or in adjournments back to Part 1B1. During the second week, 18 percent was disposed of through dismissals or guilty pleas, and 45 percent was adjourned to trial parts.

The Appearance Control Project was developed by the Office of the District Attorney of New York County, the New York City Police Department and Vera Institute, with the cooperation of the New York Criminal Court.

New Staff

Manhattan Court Employment Project:

Anne Carroll, Secretary to Henry M. Aronson  
Penny Florence, screener  
Peter Paden, screener  
Sharon Sallit, screener from Antioch College  
Madine Lesko, screener from Antioch College

Manhattan Bowery Project:

Jim Spinelli, outpatient aide  
Patrolman Ernest Talbot

Bronx Plea Negotiation Project:

Liz Schneider, Legal Aid research associate  
Lisa Schwartzman, part-time office administrator

Addiction Research and Treatment Corporation:

Counselors: William Edgecomb  
Marland Jeffries, head counselor Clinic Two  
Charles Martin  
William Neale, head counselor, Clinic One  
Henry Nealy  
Leroy Smith  
Claudia Tarver

Medical

Staff: Louise Martin, nurse  
Maria Rodriguez, medical technician

Administrative:

Terence Kennedy, assistant director of  
prevention and community relations

Appearance

Control

Project:

Martha Coleman  
Pamela Loeb  
Sybil Kleinrock, administrative secretary  
Renee Tillman, file control clerk assigned  
to the project by the Office  
of the District Attorney.  
Patrolman John Anderson

Bronx  
Sentencing  
Project:

Barnet Lenner, administrative assistant,  
in-court operations.

James Nettles, a field verifier for  
Volunteer Opportunities,  
Inc., is shared half-time  
by the Sentencing and Plea  
Negotiation Projects.

Lance Liebman, an attorney, is investigating the uses  
of new technology in solving urban problems.