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The Detroit Crack Ethnography Project

Summary Report

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Introduction

The Detroit Crack Ethnography Project (DCEP) is funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (contract OJP-88-M-39J). This research study is designed to explore and measure a variety of activities involved in the sale, manufacture, use and distribution of crack cocaine. Crack cocaine is defined as the carbonate base of cocaine hydrochloride, popularly produced by treating "powder" cocaine (the hydrochloride salt) with sodium bicarbonate, producing a precipitate which can be smoked by the consumer.

The Problem of Crack Cocaine

The relevance of this research is primarily established by both the long-standing concern with drug use as generally criminogenic, and by the popular conception that cocaine and especially crack cocaine represent particularly pernicious substances. Substance abuse and criminality have, in fact, a well-documented correlation (Gropper, 1984; Anglin & Speckart, 1988). The use and distribution of these substances are prima facia illegal. As well, their chronic use has been linked to crime by various theories, typically focused on issues of dysfunctionality, dis-inhibition, instrumental criminality, and illicit enterprise activity. In spite of its dominance of current drug issues, little has been written to date about the processes of crack consumption and its associated activities. Our ignorance regarding basic sociological facts hampers the development of effective analysis, evaluation, and consequent societal responses. It also appears that crack cocaine use eventually results in uncontrolled chronic consumption for many consumers. This is quite unlike what we have witnessed with other illicit substances in recent years. If true, this has far-reaching implications for health and criminal justice systems. Law enforcement agencies charged with interdicting crack use and distribution are in critical need of basic data regarding the "crack subculture" now emerging in many American urban areas.

With these concerns in mind the DCEP established the goal of interviewing 100 self-reported crack distributors who were recently active in street sales of crack cocaine. The objective of these interviews was to record a series of specific responses to an interviewer-administered questionnaire. The data from this questionnaire was compiled as SPSS system files for statistical reporting and analysis. Additionally the interviews were audio-tape recorded. These tapes were then transcribed into word processing files and these files analyzed by a computer-aided content analysis software system (The Ethnograph, by Qualis Research Associates).

The DCEP, then, consists of two data bases. One of them is a statistical compilation of quantitative data. The second is a text-analytic data base, accessible for content review and

analysis. It is also illustrative. This material adds interpretative meaning to the quantitative data. The volume of the data is large, and cannot be simply or quickly summarized in its entirety. This report is designed to familiarize the reader with some of the findings of the study. It also offers a discussion of the most basic and "common-sense" questions suggested by the research itself. It is our belief that the data is quite rich. The DCEP has created a data base which other researchers can use as a source for further analysis. This document will report the statistical and empirical findings of the DCEP, and quote illustrative material from the interview transcripts.

Review of the Literature

There is a small but growing body of criminal justice and governmental publications devoted to crack and crack-related research. Some of this information appears as commentary or proceedings derived from hearings on drug use problems (see, for instance, Robert Stutman, Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent, "Testimony before the Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control" U. S. House of Representatives, 1987). Criminal justice "trade-oriented" periodicals have also published commentaries on crack and crack users, sometimes offering a small amount of local data (see, for example, Juvenile Justice Digest, 20:26, 1986 p. 2-4 or Crime Control Digest 21:17, 1987). A specific description of crack use and distribution was given by Barton (1988). He describes the creation by the Kansas City Police Department of a crack "task force" whose aim was to eliminate the more than "100 crack outlets" serving a "Kansas City's hard core addict population". This unenumerated population of users is described as spending \$600 daily to satisfy their crack habit. In June of 1988 the FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin published a similar but more limited article by Chief Lee Brown of Houston regarding police strategies against "crack houses".

This material does not report much systematic quantifiable data on crack distribution, but there is some discussion of the dimensions of the crack trade specific to each author's own locale. For example, Barton (1988:p.30) states that there were, in late 1986, approximately 100 crack houses operating in Kansas City. These outlets were operated by three-man crews of Jamaican workers turning over \$4,000 to \$10,000 per day in gross receipts; i.e. they were selling 800 to 1,000 "dimes" (\$10 crack "rocks") per day. By extrapolation, then, these 100 outlets were presumably turning over \$1,000,000 daily, \$7,000,000 weekly, and \$360,000,000 annually. This figure would suggest that roughly \$271 per capita was spent by the population of Kansas City on "crack". As a result of targeted enforcement, Barton reports that the police were able to produce the following physical evidence to support these figures; 82 search warrants executed by police resulted in the seizure of 30 pounds of crack cocaine (valued by the police at \$1.7 million), and currency and assets valued at \$485,000. An economic analysis of this drug syndicate can be interpreted as follows; 30 lbs. of "crack" are valued by the

police at \$1.7 million, or \$56,667 per pound. This breaks down to \$3,541 per ounce, or approximately \$126 per gram of "crack" cocaine, assuming a 28 gram/ounce yield.

Considering this, it is interesting that the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, as reported in the Juvenile Justice Digest (12/16/85) describes the surveillance and raid of a Harlem "rock factory" producing 2.2 pounds of crack daily and earning a "net daily profit of \$500,000". These figures, when compared with the Kansas data, are somewhat problematic. 2.2 pounds of crack represents 35.2 ounces or 1,337.6 grams of "crack". Barton reports in Kansas that "Jamaican organizations" were selling crack on the street for "\$5 per quarter gram and \$10 per half gram". Thus 2.2 pounds of crack would represent \$27,752.00 if the Kansas City figures are applied. If sales figures from Detroit are used, the following analysis would apply. In Detroit a single gram of "good" cocaine sells at retail for \$100 as cocaine HCl (powder). It can be "blown up" with "benzoyl", "swell up", or "come back" cuts and "rocked up" to double that weight. Thus a \$100 gram can be converted into a \$200 "rock", often called in Detroit an "eightball", "boulder", "track", or "half-track". Based on the approximate derivation of 28 grams to the ounce, and sixteen ounces to the pound, there are 448 grams of powder cocaine available per pound. If we assume a doubling of available grams by "cutting", then there are 896 grams of "rock" available per pound. Using the Kansas City value of \$20 per gram for "rock" on the street we have a value of \$17,920.00 per pound or \$39,424 per kilogram of rock. Thus it may be fair to say that while the Detroit and Kansas City numbers are somewhat reconcilable (\$28,000 to \$39,000 roughly speaking), it is hard to understand the dimensions of the DEA figures. It does not seem likely that 2.2 pounds of crack can yield \$500,000 in "net profit". It does not seem likely that such a quantity will even yield that amount of gross receipts.

In 1986 Juvenile Justice Review, in reporting on a drug-enforcement bill introduced by Senator Lawton Chiles, noted that "one gram of cocaine (powder) can produce 20 to 25 'rocks' of crack". Quite recently Mieczkowski (1988, 1989) has reported on economic and other dimensions of crack distribution in Detroit. The Detroit data is based on derivative findings from the Detroit DUF as well as the data discussed within this project. Chiles' statement comports with the Detroit data if one assumes here that the "rocks" are "dimes"; that is, sold at retail for \$10.00. Thus each gram of powder cocaine can produce around \$250.00 in gross income. This also is reasonably within the parameters established in the Detroit study, but is not reconcilable with the DEA figures cited for New York. In the on-going study in Detroit it appears that a street dealer who pays around \$100 for "good" powder cocaine expects to double or make one and one-half times his money in profit (i.e. a \$100 invested in a gram of powder will yield gross revenues of \$250 when sold as "dimes", yielding a \$100-\$150 net profit). However, Detroiters cut their "'caine" with amplifiers (termed, as noted before "swell up", "blow up", "come back", "benzoyl") which itself is bought clandestinely in

local markets and is quite expensive; roughly \$60 for a 10 or 12 gram bottle (this aspect of "cutting 'caine" will be discussed in more detail in a later section of the report). Thus the gross profit of \$100-\$150 per gram may really be \$80-\$100. In any event, reports of broad, even fantastic fluctuations in value are not unusual in the drugs/crime literature (see, for instance, Singer, 1971, or Reuter, 1984). Also "rocks" of crack cocaine, at least in Detroit, are marketed in a variety of weight and price dimensions. The \$10 "rock" and \$20 "boulder" are the most often mentioned units of sale, but "eightballs", "kibbles and bits", "nickels", "tracks", and other size/weight/price combinations are also common. It is reasonable to argue that given these somewhat broad numbers, the exploration of the actual transaction processes and trade norms for crack cocaine is a worthy research objective. Compounding the variations on reporting parameters of crack use and distribution is the reality that the popular press has paid considerable attention to crack cocaine, especially the news magazines (e.g. Newsday, 8/31/87; New York Bar Retreat, 12/5/87). A particularly interesting article for us was the Village Voice's impressionistic coverage of the Detroit crack scene (Village Voice, "Motor City Breakdown", 12/1/87, pp. 23-30). The local press in Detroit has also given prominent coverage to crack and crack-related crime.

Although the data reported here for Detroit represents a very early exploration into the "crack" trade, there is some extant academic and scholarly work on crack to consider. Many contributions are to be found in the clinical medical literature. This material is concerned with the medical consequences of crack use and the measurement of physiological and physical aspects of crack ingestion (See, for example, Cherukuri, 1987; Issacs, 1987; Snyder, Wood, Graefe, Bowers, & Magar, 1988). Some work is very technical and does not comment at all on criminogenic or sociological consequences, even from a health perspective (Novak, 1984). Health scientists have, however, done substantial work on cocaine, although little has focused specifically on crack itself. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) in their recent Research Monograph 81 (1988), which is technical in its focus, devotes 10 out of 47 clinical papers to cocaine, but none which are crack specific.

Most of the published criminological research on crack use and distribution has been done in New York (Johnson, Hamid, Morales, & Sanabria, 1987; Belenko and Fagan, 1987), Miami (Inciardi, 1987), and Detroit (Mieczkowski, 1988). Smart (1988) has also reported briefly on Canadian crack use. Inciardi reports on 308 Miami drug users and includes data on crack use (Inciardi, 1987). Smart's (1988) research note showed that crack use, while apparently known in Canada, is quite rarely reported. Belenko and Fagan (1987) described a profile of arrested crack users in New York. They found the crack arrestees to be at higher risk for felony arrest, especially possession of controlled substances. They also noted that crack arrests were widely dispersed geographically throughout Manhattan. The typical arrestee in New York was black or hispanic, between 21 and 30 years of age, with

the median age being 25. Interestingly, only about 1/2 of the sample had any significant prior criminal history, and only about 20% had a prior felony conviction. Blanche Frank and associates have published periodic epidemiological papers on drug use trends in New York. These have looked at crack use and provided some descriptions of "street action" in the crack trade (Frank, Hopkins, & Lipton, 1987: 1987a). Frank et al. noted two interesting trends among crack users; their median was dropping (from 27 to 25 years in twelve months), and the percentage of females was increasing (from 1/5th to 1/4th in twelve months). A study of crack users in treatment in New York was produced by Rainone, Frank, Kott, & Miranda (1987). Users in their sample showed a characteristic course. They consumed several illegal drugs before crack, started rather young as substance abusers (15 years). They usually used marijuana first, then developed use of at least one illicit drug daily. Chronic users moved from initial consumption of crack to treatment is usually less than 12 months. Most spent around \$100 a day to finance their use, usually wages or borrowed money. A little less than half committed crimes to finance their use. Klein, Maxson, and Cunningham (1988) have presented preliminary findings on crack distribution and gang involvement in the Los Angeles area but their data, primarily concerned with the involvement or non-involvement of established street gangs in crack distribution, is not yet completed. Bourgois (1988) has recently presented an ethnographic report on aspects of crack dealing among Puerto Rican residents in New York's Spanish Harlem. Bourgois' work is focused on an exploration of the ideological reality generated by the Barrio as a social environment, and the conceptual relationship that crack cocaine dealing has on concepts of self-worth, social standing, and self-esteem.

Johnson and his associates are the only group to present data specifically describing crack distribution at the "street" level (Johnson et al., 1987). They develop a descriptive model of distribution. They propose the existence of two major types of crack distribution systems, a "free-lance" system and a "Vertically Organized Crack Business" (VOCB) model. Johnson and associates argue that much early development work on distribution of an illicit substance is done by "free-lancers" in a loosely organized, ad-hoc system of contacts. As drug use patterns build and a market demand becomes well established competitive struggle becomes a feature which influences the distribution system. The VOCB or Business model is favored in such circumstances and eventually comes to dominate the marketplace. The VOCB is characterized by a formalized, multi-tiered, rational system of supervision and control. It exhibits relative more Weber-like organizational rationality than free-lance systems.

It is the competition of marketing dynamics which largely shape the strategies of the VOCB's. The law enforcement policies and mechanisms of a community are not typically important. These strategic activities or dynamics can be measured as five variables; participation, frequency, duration, severity, and profit. These variables are quantitative indicators of activities

carried out in organizational roles. The roles exist in a feedback system of (1) work related and low-level distribution (LLD) roles, (2) Supervisory roles, and (3) roles devoted to work control. Johnson et al. (1987) argue that research has shown these "low-end" roles are particularly active. Their data suggest a low-level dealer (LLD) may carry out 1,500 drug transactions a year.

The Data

This report will consist of a description of the data, which at times will be illustrated by graphs. It should be born in mind that these data are not readily generalizable. This is a convenience sample. The extent to which it does or does not represent the universe of all crack cocaine street dealers is not known, nor can it be determined. This, however, does not in our estimation render the data valueless. The use of exploratory research is a well-accepted aspect of the over-all process of empirical investigation. It represents a first step, and sheds informational light on an area now hidden largely in darkness. It does appear, as well, that comparing items used in both the DCEP and the Detroit Drug Use Forecast Crack Supplement, the DCEP and DUF data are reasonably close in agreement. Clearly, however, further work needs to be done in order to augment our ability to describe and estimate the activities and actions of the crack subculture.

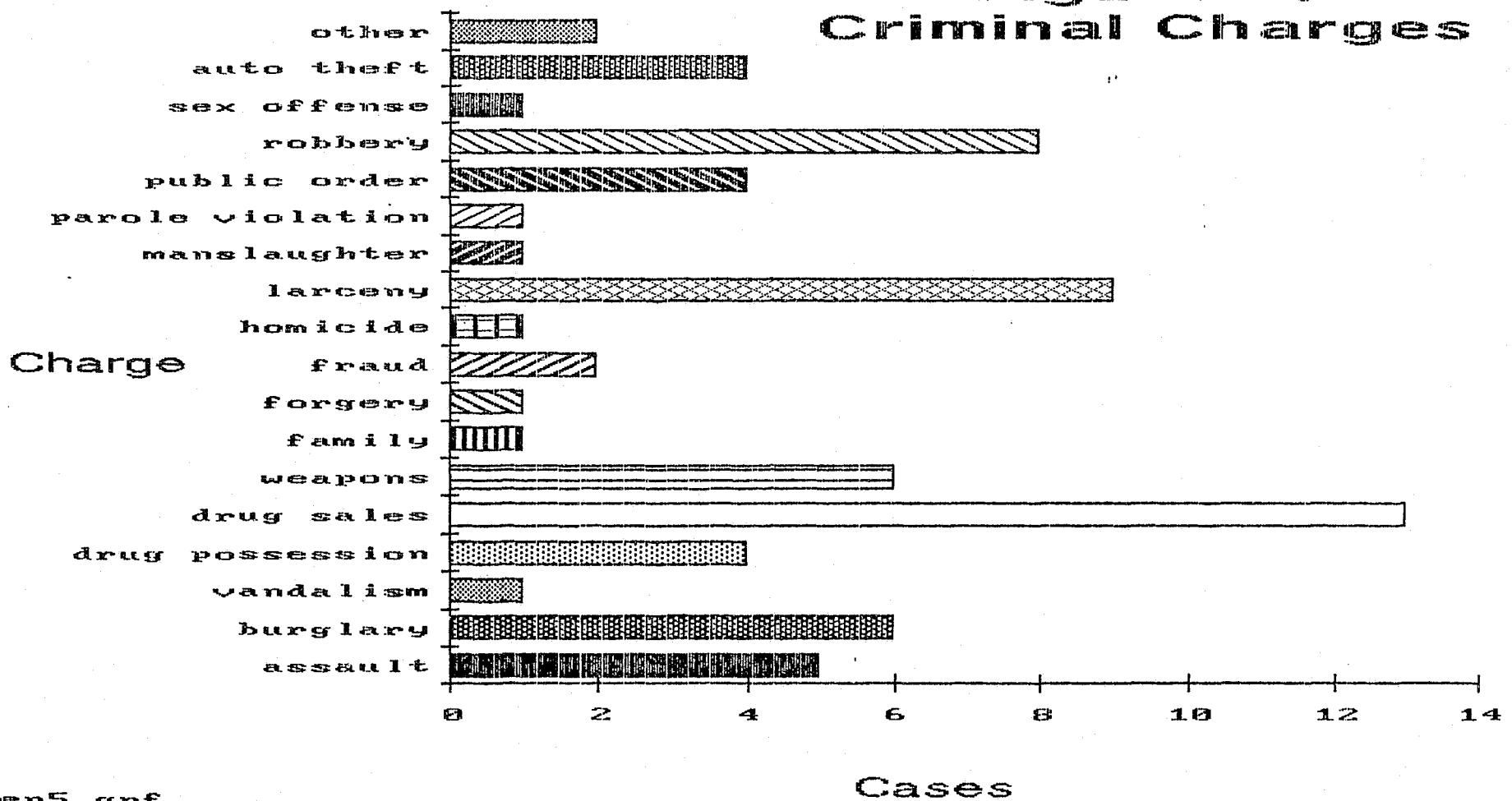
General Characteristics of the Sample

The interview sample for the DCEP consisted of 100 volunteers, 77 male and 23 female, 93 Black and 7 White. These 100 respondents were recruited through a local drug rehabilitation facility. Each respondent was a volunteer who signed an informed consent. Although they were paid a \$25 stipend for the interview, they were not informed of this until after they had already signed up for the project. Their crack use history was verified by reference to a drug use history taken at the program's intake stage. Each volunteer sat for a face-to-face interview employing both a structured questionnaire and open-ended items designed to encourage broad discussion. All interviews were conducted by the same interviewer. All interviews, as noted, were tape-recorded and transcribed. The average age of these respondents was 29.83 years (males 29.76 and females 30.04). In regard to criminal background 70 had been criminally charged at some time in their lives (59 of the males and 11 of the females). 30 of the respondents had no history of criminal charge. Figure 1. details the distribution of criminals charges in the sample.

*****FIGURE 1. ABOUT HERE***** CRIMINAL CHARGES (DCEP5.GRF)

Of those who had received a prison sentence as a result of a criminal conviction, they had served an average of 24.8 months

Figure 1.
Criminal Charges



deep5.grf

(males-26.5 months, females-12.4 months). The sample was reasonably well-educated, having a mean of 13.59 years of education (12.76 for males, 16.35 for females). 69 respondents are single, 12 married, 11 divorced, and 8 represent "other" categories, such as living in a common law relationship, or living with a girlfriend/boyfriend.

*****FIGURE 2. ABOUT HERE*****
MARITAL STATUS (DCEP18.GRF)

55 respondents reported full-time, conventional employment, 5 were employed in legitimate part-time jobs. 38 reported themselves as unemployed, and 2 described their work activity as "odd jobs". We must note that the percentage of the sample working at full-time occupations is quite high, and that the sample appears to be divided into a bi-modal distribution of either employed full-time or unemployed, with few respondents employed in a part-time capacity. It should also be noted that for the purposes of this variable employment as a drug distributor or other overtly illegal occupations were not counted in determining employment status. not

*****FIGURE 3. ABOUT HERE*****
EMPLOYMENT (DCEP19.GRF)

Substance Use Background

Alcohol

Of the 100 informants, 97 reported using alcohol (75 males and 22 females). Alcohol was the earliest onset substance. The mean age of initial alcohol use for the sample was 14.54 years (14.12 for males, 16.00 for females). 30 of those who drank reported themselves as alcohol dependent at some time in their lives (27 males and 3 females).

Marijuana

The prevalence of marijuana use within the sample was greater than any other substance, including alcohol. 98 informants reported marijuana use (76 males, 22 females). The mean age of initial marijuana use was 15.42 years (15.64 for males, 14.68 for females). 41 marijuana users self-reported marijuana dependency at some time in their lives (29 males and 12 females). Marijuana selling was reported by 70 respondents (61 males, 9 females). Most informants began marijuana selling activity as teen-agers, often reporting rolling joints and taking them to sell in high-school. The mean age for first sales of marijuana was reported as 15.43 years for the whole sample (15.64 for males, 14.68 for females). There are various motives and experiences which appear important in initiating a marijuana selling career. It also is clear from the data that just as marijuana is often used relatively early in life, marijuana selling is often the first substance sold. The methods, motives,

Figure 2.
Marital Status

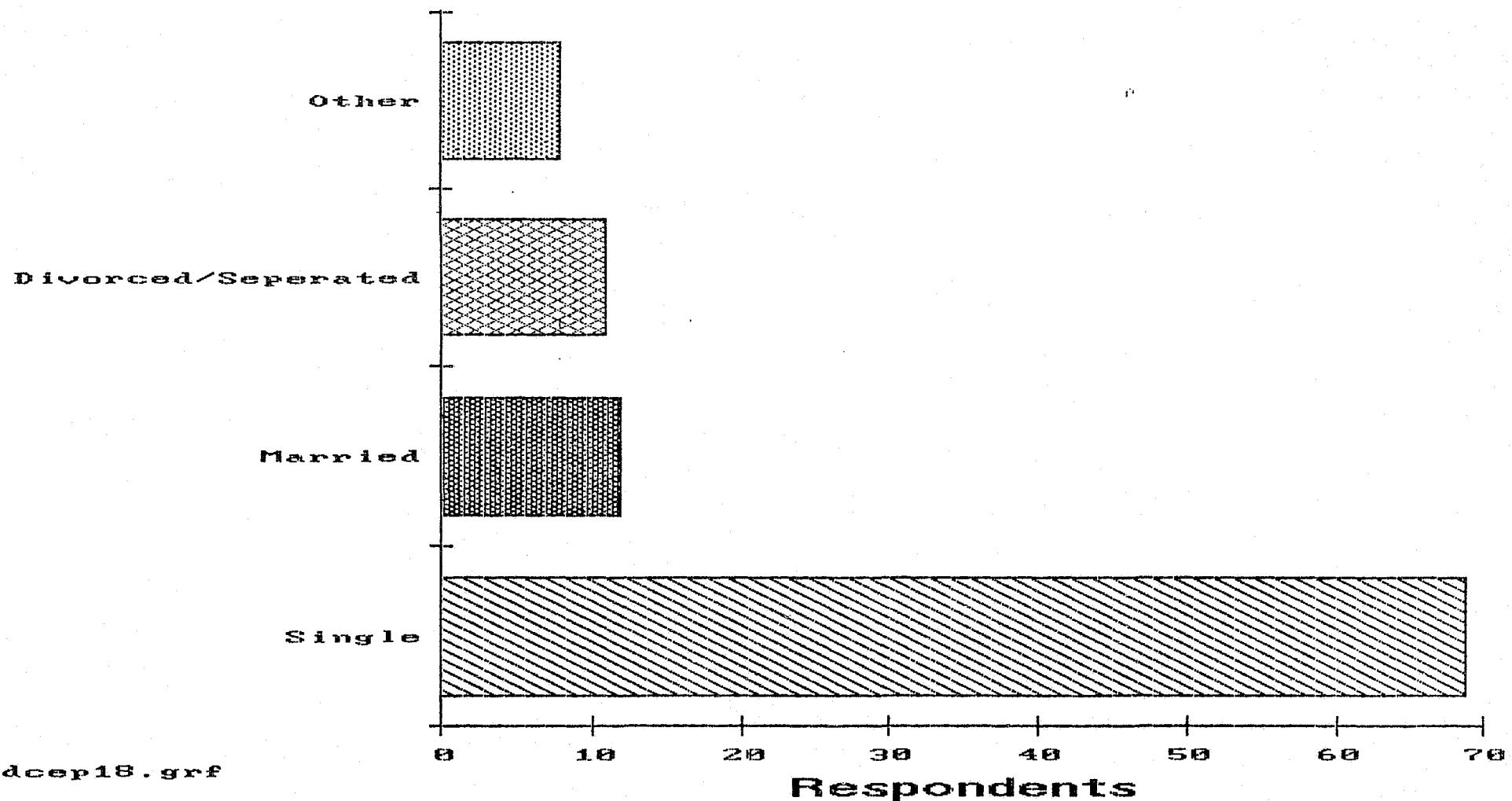
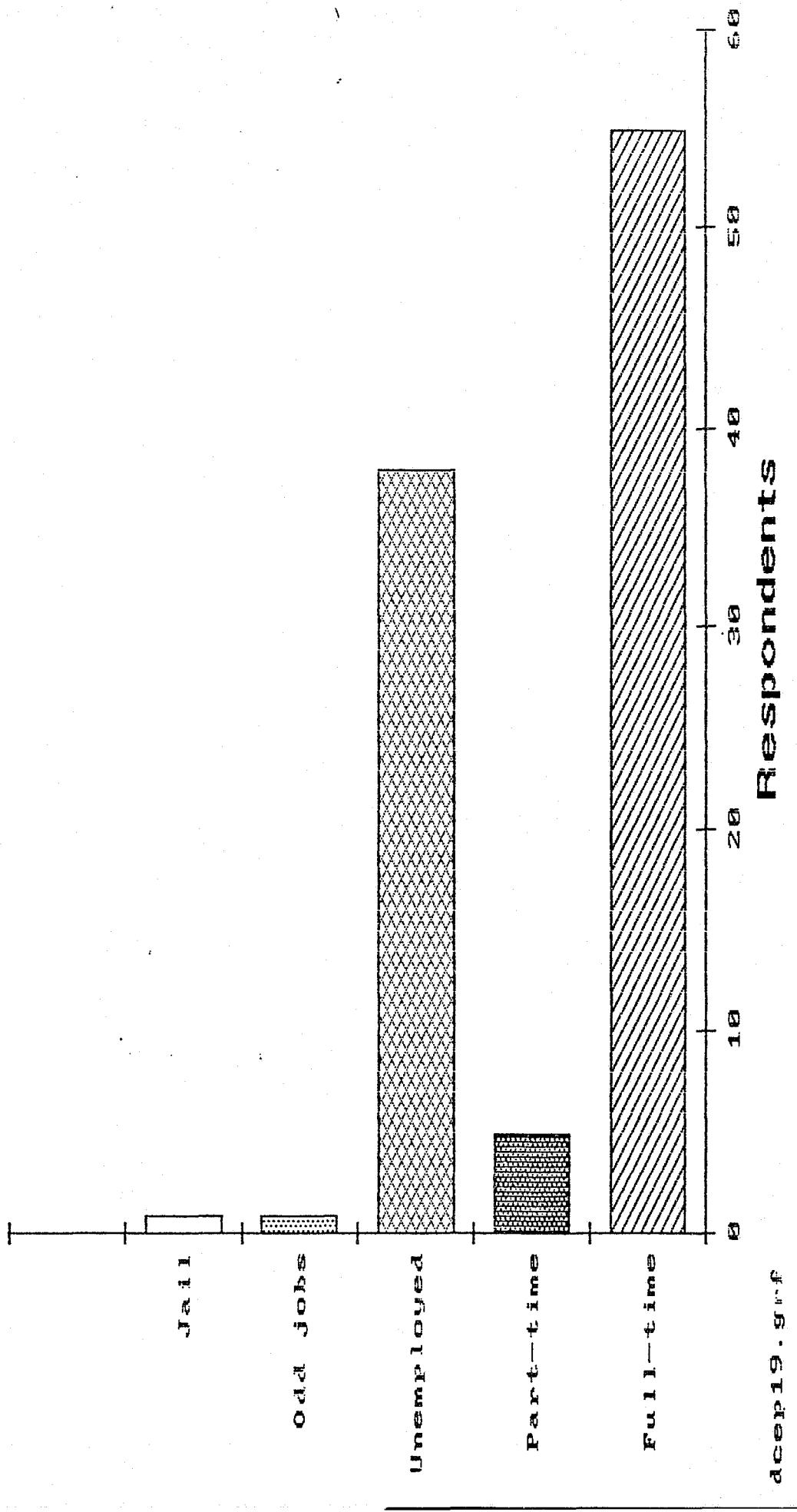


Figure 3.
Employment Status



and experiences of the respondents in creating and living out a marijuana selling career is illustrated in the following excerpts from interview transcripts.

Interview 07, Marijuana sales
(18 years old, Black, Male)

At what age did you start selling marijuana?

Thirteen

Describe how you got involved in sales.

It was like this, uh, you know, me and my friends doing a high and I got tired axin my mother for money. Even though I was thirteen years old still I was gettin high, you know. It was a lotta people at my school that was gettin high, so you know. Really, to me my father kinda influenced me to cause, you know, he was sellin. So I'd roll up maybe 60 or 70 joints and take em to school and sell em.

So you sold individual joints. What'd they cost?

A dollar.

Did you split the money with your dad?

I split it with my dad.

He'd front the marijuana, you'd sell and some money would go to him for paying for it and you'd keep some?

Yeah.

Did you make a profit?

I was makin money for a profit and plus, you know, for me bringing him that kinda clientele he was givin me bags.

Interview 13, Marijuana Sales
(27 years old, Black, Male)

I started at thirteen. Always hung out with older guys in the neighborhood. Started hangin out with them because of their allurement as far as the fast money. They was gettin, you know, illegal money and I wanted to get that kinda money to buy the kinda clothes that I wanted to buy. Mother wouldn't buy the type of clothes my peers were wearin, which were higher priced clothes. So I needed this money to meet up to my peer's standards, to dress like they dressed, and do the things that they do it took money. From there I was introduced to sellin weed by a friend. He was about nineteen and I was fifteen and he

just bought a pound of weed. I was sellin it in school and I was still in junior high school. Sellin bags mostly, you know, joints whatever a person wanted, you know, nickel bags, dime bags. He would already put it together. He would just give me the weed and tell me how much he would be expectin back. This was word of mouth. This was back in '75 and '76 the endin of '74 really. Teachers' didn't know cause I didn't go to school, really man. I would say from bein high off the liquor - I'm drinkin. I didn't drink liquor I drunk wine but I'd get to school about ten o'clock, you know, and I wouldn't go to class or nothin just hang out in school, you know. They'd be on me like the principal told me that if I just attended school, you know, went to class that he'd just pass me but I couldn't even do that.

Interview 15, Marijuana Sales
(35 years old, Black, Male)

How old were you when you started selling marijuana?

About seventeen.

How did you get selling it?

I had a brother that was younger, he was a year younger than I was and we both went to Cass Tech. I don't know if you know about that. We went there and he got real close with some Jewish guys who had two houses, one house was full of marijuana and they needed to sell it within the city so they approached both of us with it. And we started selling it then, you know, it was back in the sixties. We was selling joints and bags you know it started off selling joints and then we felt we could make more money by selling bags. We'd go right in the basement, roll it up, set it up for the next day, go to school, sometimes after school, you know, approach people.

Did your rely on word of mouth for customers?

Yeah. Especially around on the West side and North side. Moneywise, we did good. Yeah, we really did do good.

Interview 24, Marijuana Sales
(34 years old, Black, Male)

I was 17 when I started selling it. I sold in when I was in school, we would buy about a quarter pound and sell it to make money off of it.

Did you buy things?

My first car cost \$500 and then I got into smoking a lot. The first weed I bought was called panama red in 1971. That weed costs \$1500 now.

Did you ever get ripped off?

Yeah, cause I had two lockers and we had police officers in the school and I had a knife but never had to use it. I sold weed for years off and on.

Interview 25, Marijuana Sales
(28 years old, Black, Male)

How old were you when you started selling?

I was about 16 or 17 years old.

Can you tell me something about how you got started in that?

Well, when I was in high school, me and my brother we were smoking a lot and realized how much money you could get because of how many people was smoking marijuana back then, you know. So, we started selling it in school.

How did you make your connection?

My sister's boyfriend, he use to sell it.

He fronted you with the stuff?

He fronted it, we were selling it for him and he would pay us so much money and marijuana.

How did you guys figure the money? A cut, a percent of what you sold?

A flat rate.

What did he give you.

Something like \$40, or \$50. If what we sold was about a \$100 worth he would give us probably about 50% of it.

Were you selling joints or bags?

Nickels and joints.

In School?

Yep.

How did you get your customers?

Well, mostly everybody knew I was smoking weed and on my way to school, I would just be broadcasting it. Nickels, joints, you know.

And so kids were paying cash.

Yeah.

Did you deal right in school too?

Yea, I have.

Did you ever run into any school problems, with them catching you or throw you out or anybody try and stop you?

Nope, I never had any problems like that.

Were the teachers aware of what you were doing?

Well I was questioned by a few of the teachers but they never could really point the finger at me cause there were so many other kids doing it too, you know. So they couldn't exactly point the finger at me, cause by it being so many other kids doing it, and I guess they probably had a list of names of people selling drugs in the school, but they just couldn't put it on one person. By me being just a small time dealer, I guess they were probably looking for someone a little bigger.

Did they ever search your locker?

Yeah, they never found nothing. I kept it outside.

Did you ever have any weapons on you in school?

Yea, I carried a knife before, never no gun or nothin like that.

Did you ever have any violence in terms of selling marijuana? Did anybody try and rip you off?

Well, I wouldn't call it violence. I had a few guys that didn't want to pay. I let them have it on credit, they wouldn't pay, you know but I am the type of person, I was never a violent person in my whole life. So I just let it slide. I took it as a lost.

You never tried to beat on the guys.

No, I never enforced it.

You never had any body try and stick you up in school for your stash or anything like that?

No.

So, in a way it was kind of a pretty low pressure business?

No, it wasn't too much of a hassle.

Did you make good money at it? Making forty, fifty dollars a week, day or what?

That was a day.

So, as a high school student you were making a few hundred dollars a week?

Yeah.

**Interview 37, Marijuana Sales
(35 years old, Black, Male)**

This one guy that was giving us marijuana asked me and a partner of mine if we would set it up at school. After a while it got to a point where we were running into problems in obtaining it, so that was a way of getting it by selling it. He was an older guy from the neighborhood. He gave the stuff to us up front and we took the money back to him. We started off with joints, then nickels, dimes and up. We averaged from \$300 - \$500 a week at high school age. I bought clothes and jewelry with the money.

**Interview 53, Marijuana Sales
(36 years old, White, Male)**

How old were you when you started selling marijuana?

18

How did you get involved in the business?

My older brother I guess I was in high school tenth grade, eleventh grade and he was smokin it. He's ten years older than me so he was maybe 27 at the time and I was inquisitive and he told me about it and said if you wanna try it don't do it on the street, don't do it in your car, come over my house where we can lock the door and nobody'll bother you and you can try it and form your own opinion. And I did and it didn't really do anythin to me and I said what's the big deal. He says a lot of people have to smoke it a couple of times before they realize that it's affectin and they see what the high is. So I tried it again a week later, I came over his house the next weekend and tried it again and I did see what it was like. I went from occasional to regular to regular daily smokin it for breakfast. The time span I'd say from occasional to I'd smoke it maybe on a Friday and he was the only one I knew that had it I didn't buy it on the street or anythin like that. I'd call him up hey can I come over tonight and smoke pot and he'd either say well I got some people comin over and you can't

make it tonight or whatever. So I'd say from a couple times a month weekends to where I was smokin it regular a couple times a week while I was still in school. After six months it was like more and more kids in my school was smokin it and I had different avenues to go to get it. Within nine months to a year I was smokin it regular, I had it all the time. If I wanted it I didn't have to go lookin for it I had a steady supply of it. I started buyin larger quantities and cut the cost for myself to smoke it. I really wasn't lookin at it like I can make a lot of money doin this I was lookin at it like if I buy a bigger chunk of it and this one wants some and that one wants some they all put their money in and I'll get my part of it free. My senior year my brother introduced me to some friends of his and we were gettin pretty big quantities not thousand pound bundles of it but they'd get 10, 20 pounds of it at a time and I could get a pound for myself pretty cheap.

How old were you then?

Twelfth grade 17, 18. It was relatively cheaper than what it is now. You could buy a pound for less than a hundred dollars and an ounce was maybe ten bucks. Within a year and a half I had pretty certain number of people dependin on me callin me wantin it. I smoked for free and supplemented my income.

Didn't your parents notice anything strange?

I think they knew that I was smokin but they didn't know the extent I was involved with it. People didn't come to my house, they'd call me and I'd go meet em.

How'd your business end?

The guys that we got the weed from moved to California and plus the availability increased to the point where I wasn't the only guy in town anymore. A bunch of kids in my class was selling.

Interview 55, Marijuana Sales
(26 years old, Black, Male)

How old were you when you started selling?

About 20

How did you get involved?

When I first started out it was like goin to school and my friend and I and we was close and I'd meet him at his house and after awhile I started meetin him at his house his cousin or somethin I got introduced to him and he use to sell weed and he would give me a bag of weed to

carry to school and I would sell it and make money off of it. It was all rolled up in joints.

How much were joints sold for?

A dollar.

What kind of money did you make with you business?

Well we was goin to school with like a bag of \$75 worth of joints. Well we made \$35 off of it. He would have a bag and I would have a bag.

How much did you turn over? A bag a day?

Just about. I might come home with a little bit and I'd just walk around for a little while and get it off.

Did you have any problems?

In high school? No. Cause I'd sell it to the security guards. When they came in the bathroom and give folks a hassle for smokin weed they'd tell me to go ahead on. The process went on and on. After I got out of high school I stopped at the eleventh grade. I started sellin at my job. I was workin at an apartment complex and all my customers was people that lived in the building. It wadn't joints. It was like I had got up some nickels and stuff like that, bags of weed. I changed people so the guy was givin me stuff and I was just sellin it and I'd pay him back later on. It was all on consignment and then from there, cause I had sold weed for a long time. I was sellin weight. The same one I had started buyin single pounds from and he started gettin' big weight.

How much money have you made?

I was makin like over \$700-\$800 easy. I sold off the beeper, I'd go over there, sometime I'd have em come to me, sometimes we'd meet at the gas station, sometimes we'd meet at the corner store, sometimes we'd meet at McDonald's.

Any real hassles?

The house had got raided one time. Me and my friend cause it was another friend of mine's daughter. The house had got raided and when they came in it wasn't nothin but a quarter pound of weed that we had left. They found it but nobody never got charged with it or anything. I mean they actually just threw it out. The manpower they put into it it really didn't pay off.

Ever figure how the cops knew?

Yeah. I had sold to somebody, OK? My friend we each had people comin over and half the friends he had I didn't really know. But I knew all my customers and it was a guy came over and he mispronounced names and he said he met him at the bar and everythin, so I said OK. I was comin up the street actually and there was a car that his friend was in. And when I was comin up the street I said "dang, that looks like the police". But yet and still my hungry mind you know wantin that moneyAnd the next day he called me and said "hey, can we do that again" and I said "what you talkin bout?" He said "man, I got somebody that wants four dimes". I say "come on with it", and me knownin in my head I already thought this guy was the police and still bein hungry and wantin that money I said come on. But by the time he got there it was turned over all we had was a little bit. They came and we was eatin dinner. They beat me up cause they couldn't figure my name out. They got mad at me and they beat me up real bad, but I never got charged with anything. Sooner or later I got out of it.

Heroin

Heroin use was reported by 44% of the sample (35 males, 9 females). Generally heroin use initiation occurred at a later age than marijuana or alcohol use. The mean value of age at first heroin use was 19.86 for the sample (19.49 for males, 21.33 for females). Of the 44 respondents who reported heroin use, 27 reported developing an addiction or habituation to heroin (24 males, 3 females). 36 respondents self-reported heroin selling activity (35 males, 1 female). The mean age at first heroin selling activity was 21.31 years (21.40 for males, 18.00 females).

A significant number of the respondents in this sample, as the data above indicate, have used heroin in some form. Many have just snorted it, some have been consumers only, and others in the sample have been involved in the sale of heroin. However, since the purpose of this report is to concentrate primarily on crack cocaine, we shall not reproduce here any extensive excerpts detailing heroin use and sales activity.

Powder Cocaine

The use of cocaine hydrochloride (what we call "powder cocaine") is primarily as an inhaled or "snorted" powder; less often it is used as an injectable salt dissolved in water. "Powder" use was reported by 87 respondents (67 males, 20 females). Cocaine injection, while reported, was rare. Of 27 self-reports of drug injection 3 respondents reported injecting cocaine only and 19 reported injecting heroin-cocaine ("speedball") combinations. The age of first use was high, reported over-all as 21.89 years (21.97 for males, 21.60 for females). 24 respondents within this group reported developing a

habituation to powder cocaine (19 males, 5 females). 39 respondents self-reported powder cocaine sales (33 males, 6 females). The age of respondents at first cocaine sales activity was also high. For the total sample it is 21.95 years (22.03 for males, 21.5 for females).

Interview 13, Powder Cocaine Sales
(27 years old, Black, Male)

Well I started sellin drugs before rock houses became popular. Rock houses were just beginnin to become popular in '82. So I started like in the beginnin of '82 and the transition was takin place then because I was sellin powder to start out with. We was sellin it outta joint out of a house and usin our people to deliver. If a person spend \$100, \$200 a day you know I guess one time outta that day we could take it to them you know rather than they comin and get it. We started out from scratch, you know, and went from makin \$200-300 a day to makin about \$1500 to \$1,000 a day. You could tell we was pickin by a ounce would last us a week until it got down that a ounce last us a day. We was gettin it on consignment. Back then it was real coke. We was talkin bout spendin like \$1500 to \$1800. We broke it down basically to half a gram and grams. OK so a half a gram 60 bucks, \$50 go towards the ticket money and \$10 would go towards the profit far as us. As far as grams it would be the same, \$120, \$125, \$130. We basically weighed it and everything. That's how I first learned everything that I know about it.

In terms of evaluating the role that powder cocaine plays in the life of the crack user there are several points worth noting. Many users rock up their own crack, consequently they are major purchasers of powder for re-processing. Many of them have also had experience with inhaling powder prior to their experience with crack cocaine. Powder use seems to typically precede crack use, with the early 20's being the typical age for first experience with powder cocaine.

Crack Cocaine

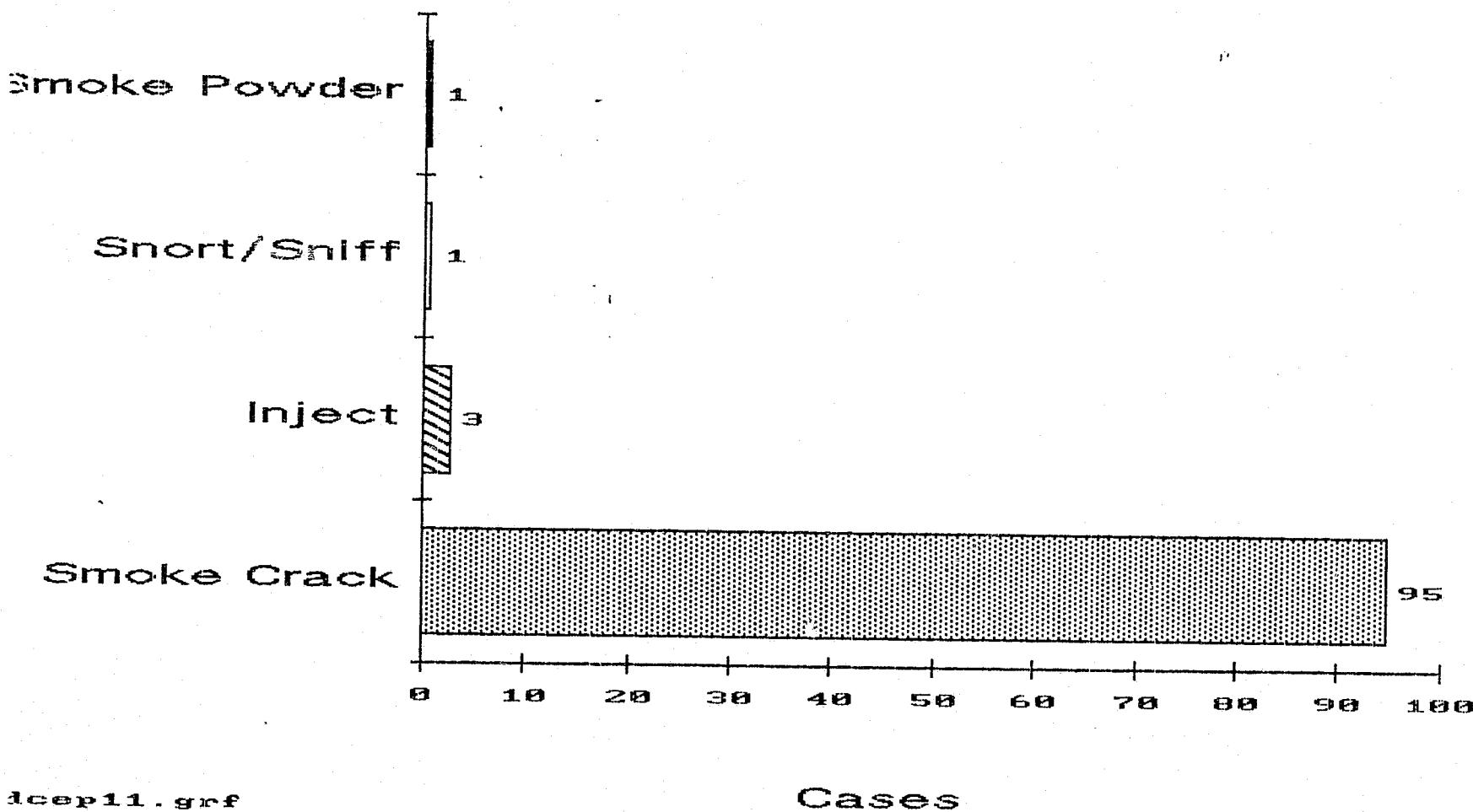
Cocaine use methods in this sample are overwhelmingly dominated by crack as the preferred form of cocaine.

*****FIGURE 4. ABOUT HERE*****
COCAINE USE PREFERENCE (DCEP11.GRF)

Interview 12, Crack Seller
(27 years old, Black, Male)

When that crack come across the table and I seen em pullin that glass and they was smokin theyself. So I figured it was alright for me to smoke it too. I

Figure 4.
Cocaine Preferences



didn't really get nothin out of it til I kept constantly feedin it to me. And then I was beginnin to like the shit, you know. I snuck off by myself with a little rock and smoked it all by myself jist seen how it was really, you know. The shit jist had my mind, man. It had my mind locked.

Every person in the sample (100) used crack cocaine (77 males, 23 females). The age of onset was starkly higher than other substances. The mean age for the whole sample at initial crack consumption was 25.95 years (25.74 for males, 26.65 for females). The distribution of the age is plotted in Figure 5.

*****FIGURE 5. ABOUT HERE*****
AGE OF FIRST CRACK USE(DCEP6.GRF)

It should be noted that the pattern of age distribution is bimodal, clustered at 20 and 27 years. It seems reasonable that if crack persists as a popular drug a smoothing of the age curve will occur. This will happen if (a) crack continues to be a drug of choice for users of cocaine, and (b) it is available to all age segments of the using population. In effect, the high end of the age cluster is likely an artifact of the non-availability of crack prior to the mid-1980's. Older users simply did not have it available to them in their youth.

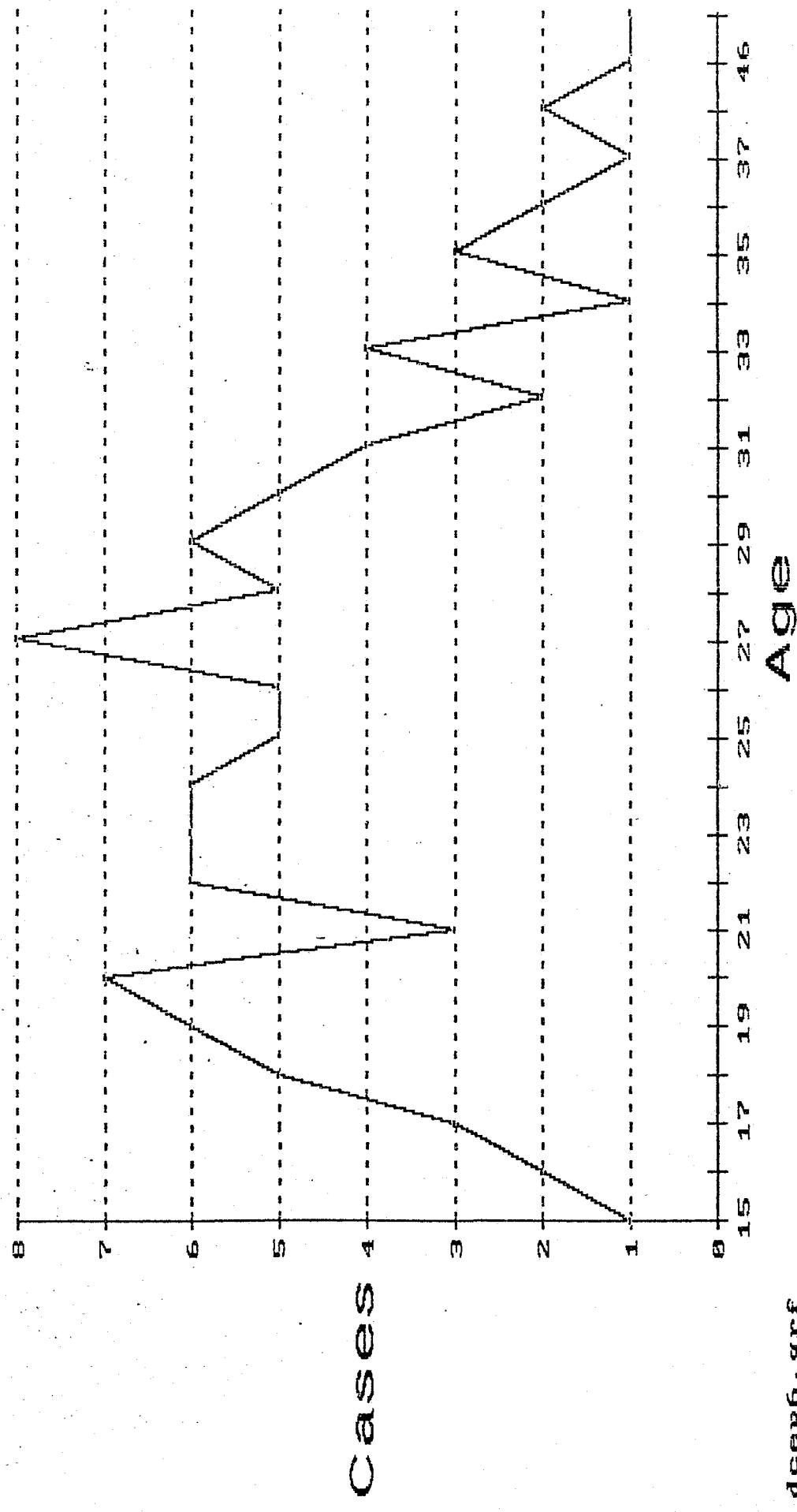
95 persons within the sample reported becoming crack dependent (72 males, 23 females). The amounts of use reported were quite elevated. We have standardized the reporting of amounts to reflect "\$10.00 rocks" or "dimes" which are the most popular unit of sales on the street. It should be borne in mind that there are several popular standards for merchandising crack, the "boulder", "eight-ball", "track" and half-track", etc. Based on a standardization to "dimes" the sample reported a total weekly consumption of 90.78 "dimes" per week or 12.97 per day. In controlling for sex we note that males reported a weekly average of 92.82 "dimes" and females 84.30. In terms of financial expenditure this represents for the whole sample a mean cost of \$941.54 weekly (\$967.84 for males, \$856.96 for females).

*****FIGURE 6. ABOUT HERE*****
WEEKLY CRACK USE (DCEP4.GRF)

Interview 23, Crack User/Hustler
((25 years old, black, Male)

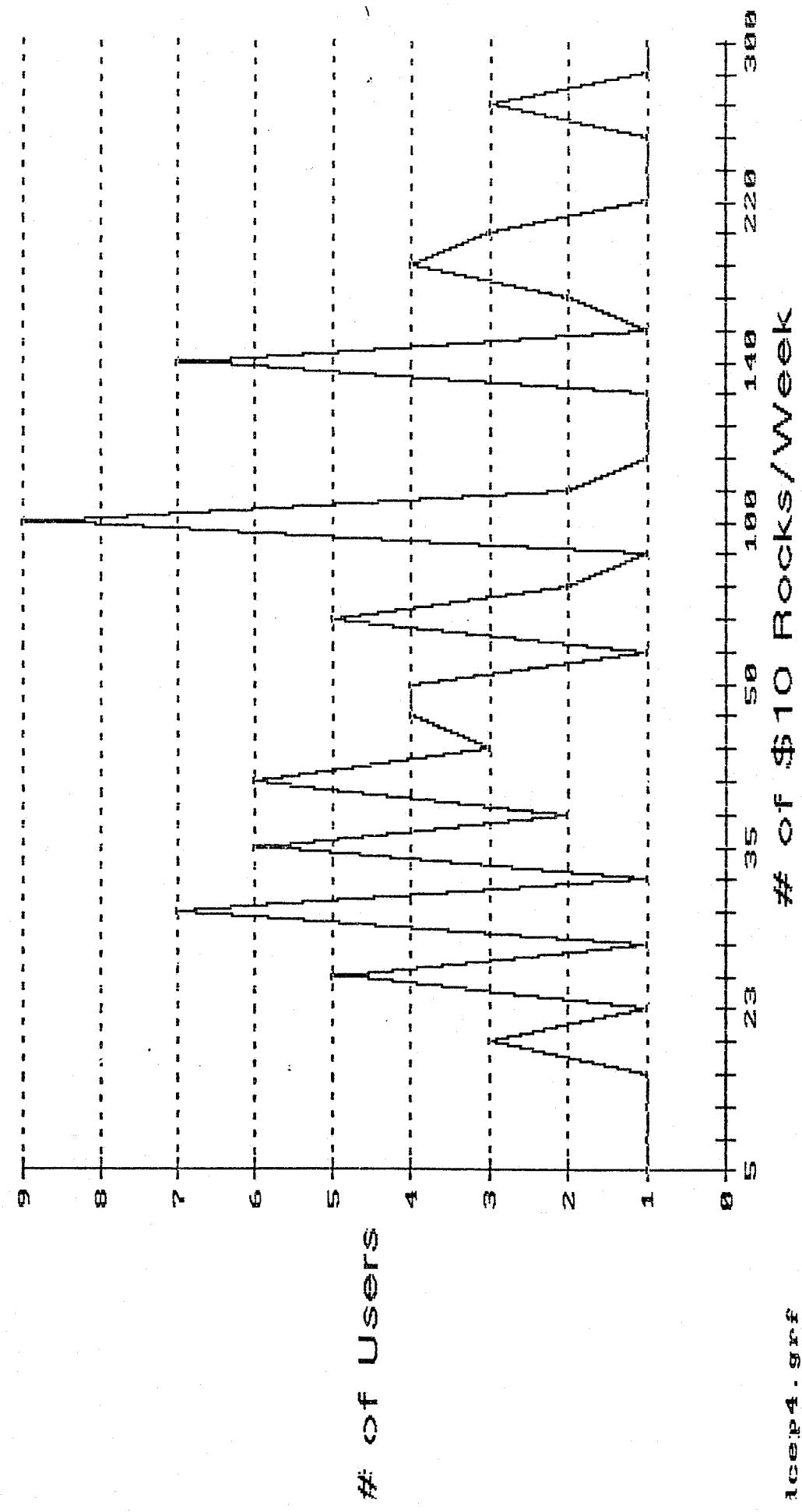
Okay, it was around September of 87. I was living in an apartment building with known drug traffic. I was in a transient stage, more or less, going through technical school and I was staying there and someone had stolen my tv set. I had become depressed and a so-called friend who lived down the hall from me was

Figure 5. Age First Crack Use



deep6.grf

Figure 6. Weekly Crack Use



selling cocaine and I walked in. We were talking about when we use to smoke joints and stuff together and he was smoking a pipe. I said, "what you doing?" He said "you want to try it?" I said "what is it?" He said it is cocaine, it is like you are smoking a joint except it is in a pipe. I said what does it do to you? He said it is a much better high. I said okay I'll try it and from then on I enjoyed it and pursued it regularly. I'd even say that I went so far as to get a part time job because I didn't really have to work because I was getting stipends from school. I went and got a part time job to support it - you know, my new habit.

So, you were able to cover the cost of it by working?

By working, right.

How much were you using at that time? Can you put kind of a general figure in terms of dollars on it?

Daily usage when I worked, because I worked in a fast food and I would not ring up all sells. I'd sell food without ringing it up - you know by cash register. On the average daily basis, I'd have anywhere from \$60 - \$120.

You used that much?

That much a day.

And were you buying rocks?

Yes.

How much, \$10 or \$20 buck rocks?

Anywhere from \$7.00 to \$10.00 rocks.

. It should be noted that the sample, being drawn from a treatment population, can be reasonably expected to represent the most extreme levels of use. It is likely (and coincident with crack data based on different populations) that these numbers do not reflect the mean values reasonably due to the universe of crack users. Users in this sample typically transited through an accelerating process of use which climaxed in rather high use rates reported here. Use culminated when some combination of other limiting features came into play. They generally involved events such as physical collapse, complete social rejection/failure, intervention of authorities, violent injury, and similar events. For many users crack cocaine leads to serious and relatively rapid physical and psychic deterioration. The comments of Interview 14 are revealing in this regard.

Interview 14, Crack Hustler/Street Robber
(21 years old, black, Male)

OK, I had went to treatment one time in '86. I had went to treatment, my mother and em sent me to incite some values, but I really wasn't on crack as bad as I was this last time. And so I really didn't feel as though I was an addict but I needed treatment. So when I went there I just played around, joked around and just hurried up with my treatment and came on home. Everything happened here. I stayed out there I went out there June of '86 and I got out July '86 so I came home and I started practicing again. From July '86 til June '87 I had hit rock bottom, you know. I had burned my bridges with my mother and em, I was stealin from, I was takin everything they had. I was stayin with a female and she was smokin crack too. So we both was crack addicts and she got evicted so she went and stayed with her sister. So I was stayin on the streets. I was robbin and stealin and doin whatever I could to get crack. Not armed robberies, but strong arm robberies. One day I found myself sleepin in a vacant apartment in the closet, I slept there for about a week and it started kickin in, you know, that I needed some help. So I finally called my mother and I told her that I wanted some help. So we was tryin to find a treatment center and she remembered Shar House. So I came here and I been clean ever since.

Interview 15, Crack Hustler, Thief
(35 years old, Black, Male)

...and for them to get into that, man, this country will go to hell seriously. This country will go to shit because cocaine addiction, man, I mean you just don't give a damn about yourself or anybody else. Like with me I had to get thoroughly broke before I made up my mind that I was tired. But, shit, that was after eight years of that shit. Really seven years. You know I cut seven years out of my life. You know I coulda been way ahead of myself. But I don't regret it, or have a real resentment about it. But, then again, I'm able to deal with it and move on with my life...but still, in all, I had the loss of seven years.

Funding Crack Use

When consumption rates are high, the funding required to maintain use levels is substantial. The solution for most compulsive crack users is to work, to commit property or vice crimes, to commit violent instrumental crimes, or to combine the activities together.

*****FIGURE 7. ABOUT HERE*****
DRUG MONEY ACQUISITION (DCEP2.GRF)

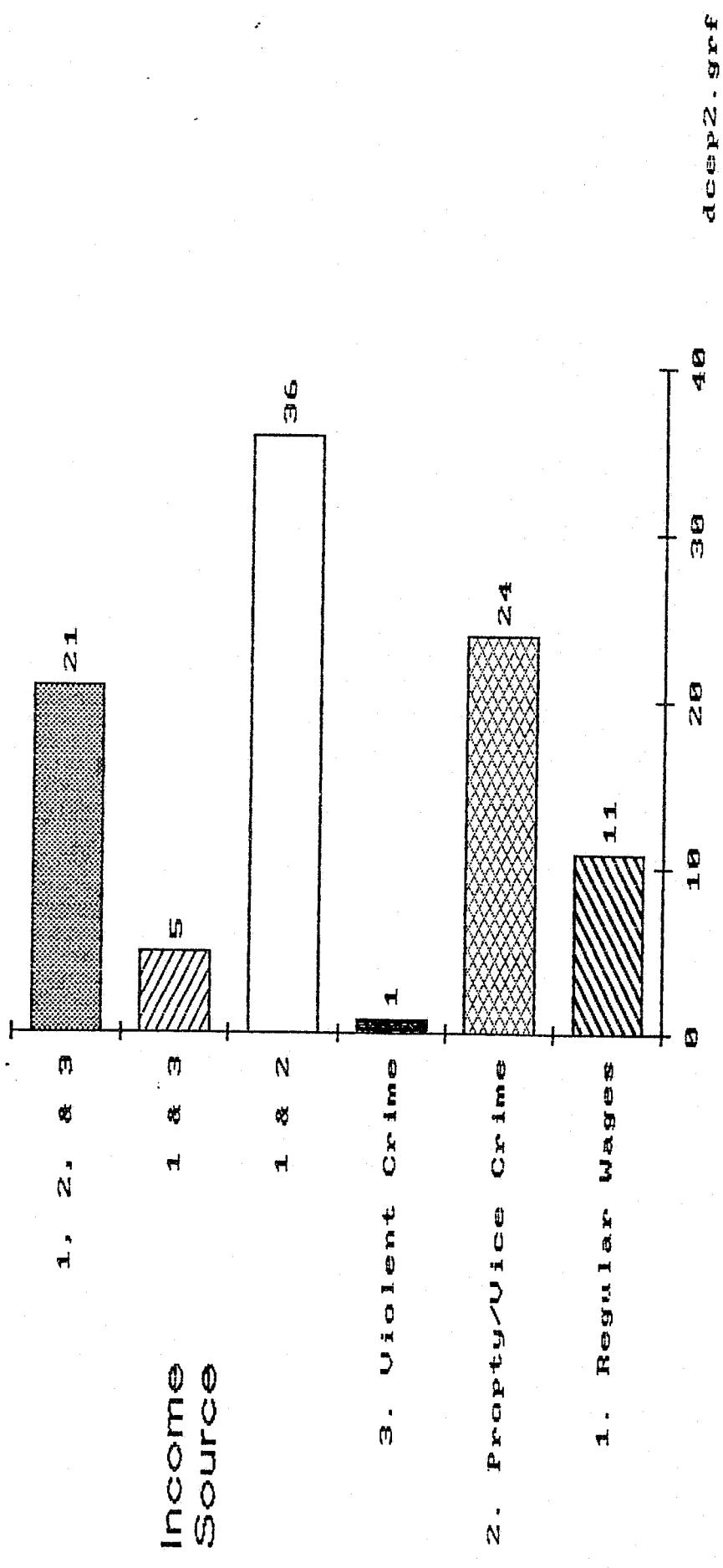
The following series of accounts illustrate the quality of life experience associated with the financial pressure of chronic crack use. Interview 22 reports on a young male user's dialogue with a relatively large-scale crack dealer.

Interview 22, Crack User/Dealer
(33 years old, Black, Male)

Well, man, it got so I'd say "man, throw me eightball." And he said "I ain't givin you nothin else, man, I'm tired of givin". So now I'm dependent. So I say (to myself) "well, I might give him \$200". I know he done give me almost a \$1000 worth, but what he said "well, just give me...well, you get a check, just give me your check one day." And a eightball (back then) was costin \$350 or \$250 somethin like that. So just give me this check and I'll give you a chance long as you give Big Boy some, Big Boy's his brother. Wadn't no question he gotta get somethin outta me cause he's givin us almost a ounce a day that we was messin up. He gave us some just to sell, say bring me \$100 of the two eightballs and two eightballs back then the way he was rockin em up, two eightballs we was sposed to have made off of em we sposed to least brought back a \$1000 of it in that \$500. He said just bring \$100 apiece back and we couldn't do that. Smoked it all up and gave it away. So it's not my game to sell. But I got dependent, right, so now he's makin me pay. So I'mmo smoke it the way I been doin it's just that I gotta pay for it now. So I went to sellin it for real. Say if I makin \$200 off a eightball, put \$250 up front and I'm makin altogether I get \$450, \$250 for \$450. So I figure I'mmo smoke up \$150 and got least \$100 left and that's how I got to sellin like that and I wadn't sellin to get rich, I was sellin for my habit with these women and this stuff. No interest in big money, my mind was on my job and I use it on the weekends, that's when I was doin it, so that's when I would buy the caine.

The combination of wages from legitimate labor combined with property or vice crime constitutes the single largest category of incoming-generating activities. The second alternative most often described was property/vice crimes, and these largely consist of user/dealers whose level of sales is inconsequential. Users who restricted themselves to violent crime like robbery and assault are rare, as are those who used both wages from legitimate combined with violent crime. A significant number of respondents used all three categories, representing mainly instrumental opportunists. This category consists of opportunists who use any

Figure 7. Drug Money Acquisition



workable method to raise income. It appears that about 90% of the sample engaged in systematic crime, but more than 75% of the sample did not commit violent offenses in the pursuit of income.

Interview 43, Crack User/Theif
(17 years old, White, Male)

I lived on the streets for about a month. I quit my job a week after I got kicked out. I was on the street without a job. I was doing about six \$20 rocks a day. I would go to stores and do what they would call refunding. Mainly Meijer stores. I would steal off the shelf and bring it back and refund it. I would come out of the store with about \$30 or \$40 bucks. I went to K-Marts, Sears, Crowley and would drive to Pontiac, Flint, to Rochester, and to Inkster. I could raise about \$120 a day that went back into crack. I would eat at my friend's house. I have gained pounds since I have been here and I am still small. Smoking a rock you don't get hungry. I would drink a lot of fluid. It got to a point where my name was on the refund list. Security got tighter and I would steal things take the price tag off and return it at some odd store. When they asked about the price tag I would say it was a present and the tag was removed. I would steal something at K-Mart and return it at Churches Lumber. It wasn't hard to get the money every day. I was on a mission from the time I woke up until I went to bed.

Many informants in the sample relied on this style on non-violent property crime, sometimes (as in the case above) exhibiting considerable effort and ingenuity in accomplishing their "mission". However, while it does not appear accurate to think of the typical crack user as inhabiting a world of extreme violence, it would be equally inaccurate to think that violence was always extraordinarily rare. Consider, for example, the report culled from case 24.

Interview 24, Crack User/Dealer
(34 years old, Black, Male)

I remember one guy, we had two families, two organizations. And we all had our own people but we were like family and he gave us some shit and he messed up so we fired him, we cut him lose and then he joined up with this other family that was connected with us. He got in there with him and they gave him his own package to work and so the leader of this family gave him a couple thousand dollars worth of caine to sell and he didn't turn in his money and he didn't even want to pay, you know. So we come by there when he was asleep. We had guns, we was on our way to Toronto, as a matter of fact, so we was going to take care of this and go on. He had a .45 and we took his gun from him and we creped up on him, invited him to the bedroom and took him back there and we

were assigned to beat him up. We crack on him and asked where our money is at. He said you all don't want to talk to me like that. So we cracked him in the head with the pistol and had him on the floor. And he was reaching for a gun. He realized it wasn't there because we had it already, so he tried to run. So we beat him up and shit. The leader came in the door with a mop and said "you gettin blood on my carpet, man, I can't get my money back." I said, "man, you worried about your carpet, man, and we are trying to take care of business right now." My people didn't like him anyway. They wanted to break his toes cause he hated this guy all the time and now is his chance to get back at him, so he wanted to break his toes. I said no man we already broke his jaw. Give him a break because he is bleeding all over the floor. So we went through his pockets and he had money and a big bag of coke. I said get his gold, too. So we got his gold rings and everything. He said "man, the money is at the house." I said "why didn't you pay? You know you suppose to pay. You wouldn't have to be going through this and now we got to beat you up." So we tied him up and stuff. His women was there so we sent her back to the house to go get her and a couple of guys went with her to the house to get it. It took about a half hour and she came back with the money. We took him to the bathroom and bandaged him up. He told that they took some money out of my pocket. I had told my boss that we had took the money cause I knew he might tell, so I was like moving ahead of him. Even though, it wouldn't have mattered because we were going to split the money up anyway. I said "I should have let that guy break your toes". So after patching him up we walked him to his car and he drove off to the hospital. We then went on to Toronto for pleasure.

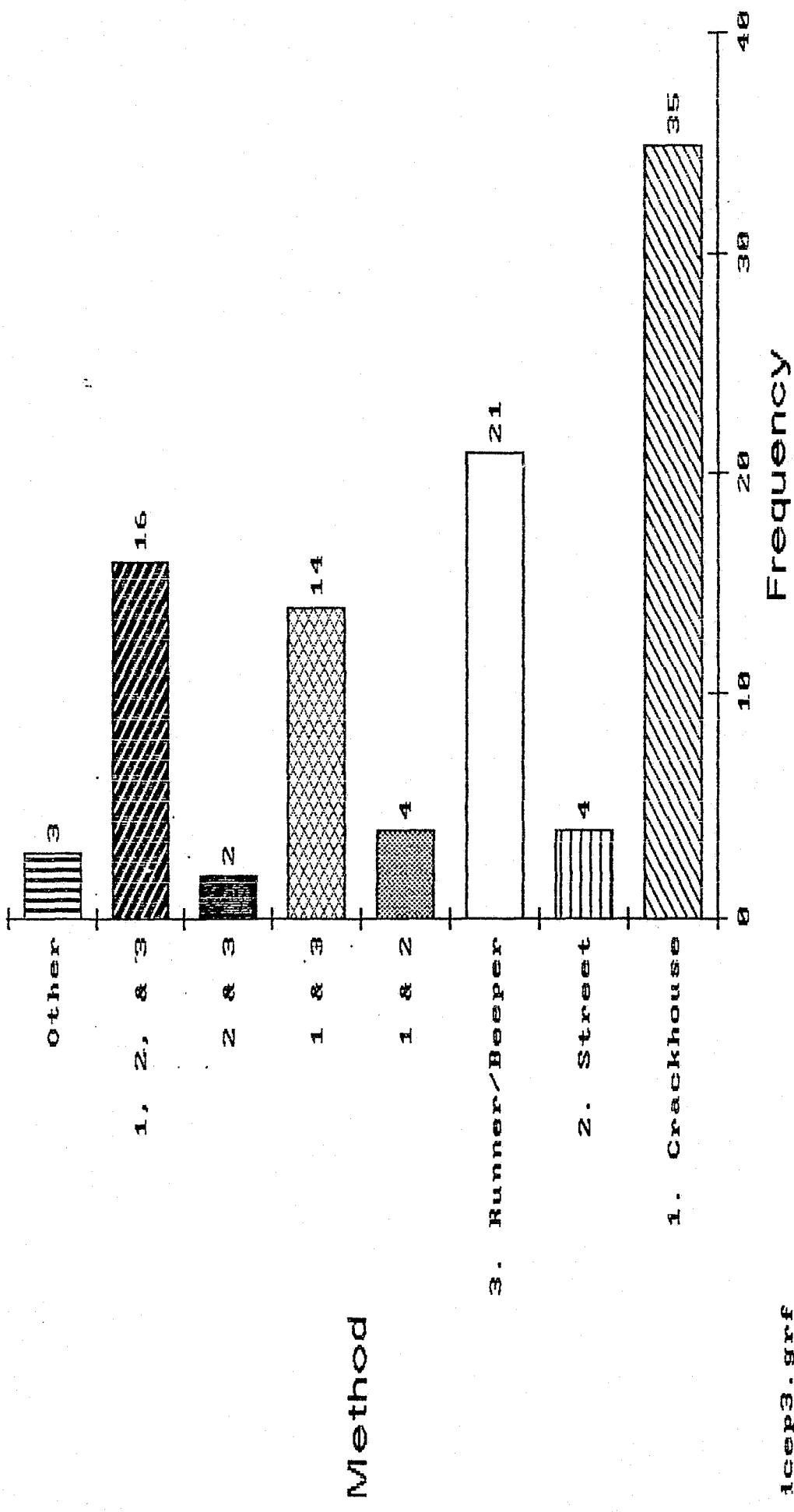
Crack Purchasing and Crack Sales Locales

An examination of Figure 8. makes it clear that the method of purchase choice is primarily the "crack house" or "dope house".

*****FIGURE 8 ABOUT HERE***** CRACK BUYING PATTERNS (DCEP3.GRF)

35 of the respondents named this as the most prevalent purchase site, followed by 21 who relied upon a "touter" or "beeperman" who delivered the contraband to them. This delivery was variably reported as "home service" (i.e. to their residence) or a rendezvous in a commonly agreed public locale. A frequently reported site was the parking lot of a fast-food restaurant. 14 respondents reported using both "crackhouses" and "beepermen". Only 4 respondents identified the street as their exclusive source for crack. Overt street sales of crack do not seem to have achieved the prominence and popularity that street sales of heroin had reached in Detroit a decade ago. Respondents often reported that crack sold on the street was very poor quality and

Figure 8.
Crack Buying Patterns



icep3.grf

that street transactions were the least secure. One was more likely to get "burned" on the street because the vendor, having no fixed locale, could not be held accountable for their merchandise. Also respondents reported that a reliance on street crack was typical of extreme stages of habituation. In effect one was "reduced" to buying from the street as the craving for crack increased since using other sources required some measure of gratification delay and discipline. Thus street transactions were stigmatized.

The database of the DCEP is a rich repository of many different types of roles, methodologies, and techniques by which crack is distributed. It is our purpose to concentrate primarily upon the crackhouse since, as we have noted, it is by a wide margin the method of choice. However, the following three excerpts illustrate that other methods not only are utilized, but have a complexity of their own.

Interview 8, The Beeperman
(22 years old, Black, Male)

What situation did you sell crack in?

As far as the coke, it was like you could sell off the beeper. You know, we was sellin off beepers. Just call on the beeper and we call you back and meet you somewhere or the runner somewhere cause they be comin so fast you know.

How much were you selling? What quantities?

I was sellin five pound.....didn't too many people call me but as far as the small amounts you know I had people workin for me then when I started sellin coke.

How did you control your guys?

Basically I just had about three guys workin with me you know. I would just pick up the money I wouldn't trustand I had a lieutenant and he would just drop it off you know. My lieutenant would take the powder and sell it and report to me and when he's finished sellin his sack he would call me and I'd have the other guy bring him some more and he'd drop the money off. Working outta house and on street corners.

Did you worry about ripoffs?

I didn't have to worry about it. The guys workin for me had to worry about that. If my dope came up missin they had to suffer the consequences. But they would be armed and ready for the situation.

Would you sell to anybody?

No I'd definitely have to know you. I screened my customers. If I don't know you they can't sell you none.....

So you wouldn't sell anybody, say, an ounce just cause they call you up on the phone and say they want it?

Right. It would already be packed up when they get it. The lieutenant packed it up for them. I didn't have to touch the dope at all, you know. My lieutenant would cop the dope, get the dope, you know, and hook it up.

How much money were you making? Say, weekly?

Five grand. Me I was makin like, uh, off the powder if I sold, uh, it depends on how much I had. I could get a ounce I used to get a ounce for \$500 but these days an ounce would cost me \$700-800. I would step on the caine little bit I would cut it....right.

What kind of cut did you use?

Benzocaine, hicaine, get it right in the store buy it right out the store. Cost about \$60, \$75.

What kind of store?

Party stores you know.

What kind of profit did you expect to make on an ounce?

I would want at least a grand.

And your lieutenant breaks the ounce down into eightballs?

Yeah, and whatever he makes off his that his long as he brings what I want. Now if he brings me a ki' (kilo) and wants to sell a gram ok and he break it down and uh give it to the rollers and then pay them far as he work that out how he gonna pay them that was his business. He might make more money than me depends on what type of money they workin for but that was his business.

Could you front, say, two pounds?

I wadn't that far ahead you know. I could like get a half a key or somethin like that.....

How were your connections made?

Cause I had knew a lotta big time dope men by bein round my father you know but he didn't know that I had kept in contact with em you know. Go talk to em and get what I

want.

Interview 12, The Street Seller
(27 years old, black, Male)

I come against this, uh, this gang related called Pony Crew, you know. And, uh, I had came back and they needed me around the neighborhood anyway, cause I always liked to fight. I always liked to go in a disco and start a fight or end up with a fight and come out on top.

So you had a tough reputation on the street?

Yes. So next thing I know I was with em. I raised up with um, so we went to gettin together. First they wouldn't show me no lotta dope, you know. It was like they was bringin me packs.

And you sold for these guys?

Yes.

On the street?

Yes.

To cars driving by?

Naw, not like that. It was like, uh, I'd let people or either I go down on the corner from my mother and sell it or outta an old man's house that used, you know, cause I used to jist feed it to him. I be in his basement and they'd jist come to his back door and knock and he....they'd knock on the door and he'd let em in and they'd come down.

You were selling heroin too?

I was sellin that mix, you know, mix jivesellin this hairon mixed in with the rest of the stuff. So I had both the powders you know and they came down and used to get it and leave right out. Because when I was gettin high, you know, the guy was givin to me. They was so big that me and the old man used to jist cut em in half and give em half for the money that they come in with. And me and him would smoke the other half. Didn't cost us nothin and the money was right.

How did the organization pay you?

They was tryin to pay me, uh, like tops, you knowso it got to a point that I was tellin em that I wanted to get paid more so I kept what I wanted...

What kind of money could you make in a day?

Fifty dollars. That wadn't nothin.

Nobody tried messing with you? The organization let you hold back money?

I wadn't worried about, you know, like I come up ten or fifteen dollars short, you know. Then I ain't got to worry bout em jumpin on me, you know, cause they knew where I was and what state of mind I was then, you know. Wadn't worried about nothin, you know, was somebody jumped on me they knew where I'd get back with em. Either they know if they jumped on me they'd had to kill me, so my reputation was alright far as bein in there. So I end up, you know, backed up.

Interview 13, The Street Seller
(27 years old, Black, Male)

We had a thing where we didn't like guys gettin into our little organization, findin out everythin bout where we go get out stuff at, you know. Just knowin everythin about us and then gettin out, you know. And me and the guy had talked about this we was like the ground floor of the organization. And as we went up, you know, we still were at the top. I was ready to go. It was personality conflicts, you know. One night I'm up on Woodward in Highland Park doin my business, you know. They still doin they business, you know, they watch me pick up money and stuff. I was sellin off a beeper then and, uh, they decide welp I got enough money for em to rob tonight, you know. Which I didn't have but a couple hundred dollars, you know. I had met a young lady also that was whorin out on the street, sellin her body, so I was doin that too. I was also watchin her. And, uh, you know it was like we was all into all of that, you know. This is before women was sellin they bodies for crack, you know. It was strictly for the money. He had his women up there too. And it was like I had took my car and when I broke away from em I also cut em short on transportation too, cause we was rentin cars. But I had a car also and that car that I had was for our other activities besides doin drugs. And so they felt in a lotta ways I left em hangin. But they had asked me for a ride back over to the joint, but before we got there the guy that I was in prison with asked me to drop him off somewhere, right. So I stopped and let him out the car but his friend is still in the front seat. And when he get out the other guy pulled a pistol on me, you know, sayin "you know what time it is, right?" But all along he had been tellin me, and I wasn't goin for it. I looked at him and I said "man, I want to talk to you. You know this is the guy....." and I go to get out my car and he shot me in the back up under my shoulder blade with a .25. It punctured my lung,

ricocheted off my rib cage and it's in front of my spine. It surprises me cause, personally, I have killed and I know I'm not tryin to brag or nothin like that but I am a killer. If I shoot you I'mma kill you, you know. I figured he just didn't want to kill me cause from what he was tellin me was just don't come back to Highland Park. It was just a warnin to run me out of Highland Park cause my legs was outside of the car, he put me back in the car, took my money, he coulda killed me, he coulda killed me but he didn't. I'm thankful for that.

The Crackhouse

The social situations in which crackhouses operate and the techniques used to establish them were also documented by the interviews and discussions in this study. Crack houses vary in the practices and activities which occur within them. They also differ in the methods by which a seller establishes and manages them. Examining these reports reveals some aspects about these variances and some common attributes experienced by people who either purchased, worked in, managed, or operated crack houses.

Crackhouse operational styles can be considered along a polarity. At one end are crackhouses characterized as "austere" in their basic managerial methods. By this term we mean that the interaction process between customer and seller or staff of sellers (which is the common case) is purely instrumental and minimal. The major characteristic of such an operation is its fortification approach in securing its locale, including at times complete isolation of the vendor from customer. Complete isolation is realized by a pass-through sales technique. No face-to-face encounters occur. Such locales rely on "hardening" the sales site by using barred windows and doors, overbricking of windows, or boarding up with plywood all security-risk access to the structure. Interaction for selling purposes is done through a literal slot or hole, with money being passed in and crack being passed out. It would be fair to say that these type of operations exhibit a severe economy of social interaction.

Interview 49, Crack House (25 years old, Black, Female)

What was the scene like where you bought?

He had took me to a couple of places over by my mom's house. Some of em was like houses, some of em was like vacant buildings that you didn't think nobody stayed there and this one place he introduced me to it was like somethin like a joint but you had to go around the alley and come in through the back. And it was real dark back there, and there'd be a lotta guys hanging out around there in case they short or somethin and they catch a woman comin back there they figure she's easy prey, you know. You just take her money from her cause that happened to me one night. I went back there with this

guy and we didn't see the guy at first so we stuck our money up to the window. Then he put somethin up to my forehead and told him if he didn't give him his money that he would kill both of us tonight. And I was so scared I had dropped everythin cause he had us to strip. And I told him I didn't have no money nowhere else besides what I had in my hand. It was only \$10 and I dropped it on the ground and he picked it up and he left and I just left and went home. And I didn't never go back to that spot anymore. A couple of places that sold, guys that I had grew up with and I knew em, you know, a little better than just goin to one and they just opened it up and you don't know em. Lotta people just sittin around gettin high. And then they see you comin in and be done bought somethin and they hurry up and try to smoke theirs up figurin they can come over there and beg you outta yours. Sometime they got a situation where they felt like they would just come and take it and then you be murdered.

Threats, and the ensuing fear associated with the possible violent victimizations, did not come exclusively from strangers or other customers loitering in or about the crack house. The operators of the crackhouses themselves could not necessarily be trusted. This is especially true if the house is staffed by "hired hands" who receive only a small and limited share of the operation's profit. The following excerpt illustrates this very well.

Interview 70, Crack House
(32 years old, Black, Male)

It went pretty smooth for about a month. I was working in the house, and when he left me that's when I started getting slick and taking the bags, opening them up, and cutting little pieces off of to making them a little smaller so you couldn't tell, and make my own bunch for my use and sales. The house had iron armor guard doors with only one door because he was on the third floor and usually I would peep out the peep hole with a double barrel shot gun and that was basically it. And you were served through the iron door. No one came in. Money in, crack out, and close the door. I never had any problems because if I didn't know the person, I would say "nothings happening. I don't know what you are talking about."

Did you have any guys on the street steering people to you?

There were a couple guys living in the apartment building. And if they had friends or someone that they wanted to get for, I would let them come up and get it.

But they better not bring anyone else up there. For them bringing in the extra money, we would cut them a piece or give them something extra too. I was high while I work. When I first started out, I was getting \$2.00 off of every \$12.00 pack, which we called "tops", which were \$10.00 rocks. On a good day for 3 hours, maybe about \$700. The sack that I was left with was worth about \$200. I would call him to replenish the stock, sometimes before the hour was up. He never left a bigger stash than that because I did actually run away with a bag at one time towards the end.

This problem, of employees stealing not only from the customers but also the "boss" of the operation, has been reported for heroin sellers (Mieczkowski, 1986). In all street drug dealing operations security concerns regarding customers, rip-off artists, employees, and others always comprises an important consideration. Occasionally, operators resort to rather extreme measures, including literal imprisonment of staff. Consider the case illustrated in Interview 72.

**Interview 72, Crackhouse
(32 years old, Black, Male)**

When we first moved over there in Highland Park we were just smoking. I got into dealing one day when I was at the store, and I met this man that knew I was trying to cop. I asked him for 3 dimes cause I had \$30. I had been seeing him at the store, so I knew I could talk to him. I found out about this joint that had closed up because the squeeze had been put on them. I decided that I was going to open it up. I asked this guy if I got some dope would "you work in the joint for me?" I told him that I would put up \$200 worth of drugs for it. I got this joint, and put a big old pad lock on the door where you could stick the key in from the inside and get out. So the guy was locked in with the dope and I was the only one that could get in cause I had a key too. I gave the guy a hammer to protect himself. At that time I was trying to figure out a way to get some money. He had \$1,000 worth of rocks (500 rocks). I got the idea from a guy in the joint that I was with. The rule was no smoking in the house. Just come up to the door, throw your money in, you get your rock and you take off. The only way he could get out in a hurry was through a window. He was nailed into the kitchen and working out of the back door and couldn't get into the rest of the place. We made good money. We pulled maybe a thousand and a half rocks in maybe 24 hours.

One popular locale for selling crack is in older apartment buildings with large foyers, entrances, or commons. Such public spaces provide an arena for sales transactions which, while being sheltered from open public view, allow indoor transactions without the requirement of admitting customers into a dwelling

unit itself. Interview 85 describes such a strategic arrangement.

Interview 85, Crackhouse
(27 years old, Black, Male)

I started selling it with my sister. I moved in with her. She had the clientele built up. She stop selling, so I moved in and picked up her clientele. I rocked up the crack myself and got a buddy to work for me to rock it up, cause I didn't know how to do it that good. He eventually moved in and watched my back. By that time I learned how to rock myself so I really didn't need him cause I was doing everything myself.

You ever have any problems?

Noa, I never did. My friends that I grew up with could come in and smoke and otherwise it was business, they come, get it and gone. I had guns to protect myself and my buddy would stand at the top of the stairs to watch my back. My transactions would happen in the building, not in the apartment. Plus I would come down with the pistol in my hand.

What about the other people in the apartment building?

There were a lot of young people in the building and the lady across the hall started complaining, cause of the doors opening and closing all night. I think we were being watched, too. Business was doing good, tradin dope for goods. I got a beeper too but I never got a chance to turn it on but I played the role whereas I would walk down the stairs with one on showing the that I was progressing and moving up. My baby sister was still staying there and I got a beeper for her from somebody off the street. It wasn't turnt on but we would push the button where it would start beepin. I was making big money but I was using big too.

Crack houses are not always operated by profit oriented users. User dealers also use the technique'

Interview 94, Crackhouse
(21 years old, Black, Female)

I sold crack for a guy and sold it in a dope house. There would be a person at the front door, a person at the window with a gun and you come to the side door or window. And I would be there and sell the crack. The customer stayed outside. You pass threw the window. The money comes in first and then the crack goes out. I was paid \$10 off of every \$50. I would make about \$80 - \$100 a day. I took it in cash and spent it on rock, so eventually we took it in rock. We really didn't make no money. I was

just working to get high. Some crack houses I worked in paid \$75.00 a day and some gave you a \$1.00 off of every ten.

One respondent described an operation using the second story of a flat which passed a basket down from a balcony. A customer placed money into the basket which was then retrieved by hauling up the container. The crack was subsequently placed into the basket, and it was lowered to the ground for the customer to retrieve their merchandise.

**Interview 90, Crackhouse
(26 years old, Black, Male)**

When I got my check, I'd cash it. And instead of going home I would make a stop at the crack house and never made it back home until I was busted. The scene in the crack houses was a place that stolen tvs were brought to get crack. People would come in and sometimes be a \$1.00 short and maybe the dealer would let him go. There would be about three or four that hung there all the time walking around with guns on, busted toilets, and so forth. Women would come in there and go in separate rooms and give Johns \$4. or \$5. worth. I have been in there when some have pulled guns on guys, but I have never been involved in anything.

How did you get involved in selling?

I was looking at the profit that people were making. I did it for a couple of months and something told me that I didn't want to get involved in that. I decided that that is not for me and slowly backed out of it. The first time me and another guy talked about getting our own thing going and stuff was cause he knew a female that had a house. I did it and he ran the show because I was working at night. My partner made the connection and he ran the show. I gave him \$100 and he bought a eightball and he rocked it up. In running the crack house, you just sit there and wait to somebody knock on the door in the house. The owner was there with us. A couple more guys that worked for us was there too. We sat up there with guns. We got word out through her cause she was smokin herself. We would give her so much and something to smoke and she would put the word out. We sold \$10. rocks. When I left out of it, they were still selling. We never had any violence from selling it. Those that came to buy I knew or he knew. We wouldn't them - the buyers - in. We had a little hook up in the back where you lower down a string with a basket on it and they put the money in it and we would pull it up and put some crack back in there and lower it to them. We only let those we knew smoke in the house.

Another interesting variation on this technique is contained in

Interview 52.

Interview 52, The Crackhouse
(25 years old, Black, Male)

Sometimes they would smoke and sometime they wouldn't because, you know, I didn't trust a lot of people, you know. Cause they might try to rob me, and so I wouldn't let them in. I'd just go to the balcony and throw a shoe down. They put the money in the shoe and throw it back up, and I'd put the stuff in.

Many informants reported operating out of occupied dwellings, using only a portion of the structure to sell. Often such vendors operated out of basements, paying a "fee" or rent to the occupiers. Often vendors were able to establish these arrangements with occupants who were crack users. They would gladly accept crack as "rent" for the use of their habitat. It also represented to some a real convenience to have the drug vendor on the immediate premises.

Interview 51, Crackhouse
(37 years old, Black, Male)

A partner and I we used to always go to this one place to cop from. And we got to talking one day you know like we're spending on the average like say from the time we get up til the end of the day we might spend a \$100. And like we were buying a \$1 capsule where you could get twice as much for \$60 as we could get between the two of us for a \$100 cap. Matter of fact it was a half a quart \$60. So we bought a half quart and capped it up and we tooted what we wanted and sold the rest.

Where? On the street?

No. This girl I was going with she had a house and we was selling it from her house. At that time selling it out in the streets wasn't the in thing, it was real dangerous at that time to do it that way. And then we were off into peer pressure with the guns and what not to habit a dope house, you know. Running it was like, you know, you set up a business.

How did you set it up?

Well the girl had the house so it was up to me to talk her into allowing us to do it, which was easy. All I had to do was give her some. I told her that we was going to start selling from her house she said it was OK.

Interview 74, Crackhouse
(30 years old, Black, Male)

Now I done got into a house. What you do is find a person that is on crack that will let you sell crack out of their house in order to get more crack. All you need say is that you are looking to rent out somebody house to sell crack and nine times out of ten someone will come to you.

So, having set up in somebody house now I'm working under his system now selling his from house. I did this cause I didn't have the back up that I needed, no protection. I could have went on and recruited but I was the type of dude that I never really could take the front lead. Then I started dealing with the police and I said let somebody else take the heat and I will work for anybody that is making money. We are selling from powder. He gave me \$1000 a week to work for him. Why not? I was responsible for the house but had my own guys. I would come by, drop off stuff and pick up the money. I would check the neighborhood out while there as well. Eventually we had a lot of houses in Saginaw, Flint, Battle Creek, Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo.

It was all going pretty good and I got shot. I was making a drop and I parked the car down the street and walked through the same door that the customers walk through, delivered the stuff on the slow day selling under a \$1,000. And when I walked back down the street. There was a stick up. I looked at him first and said "man, do you know who you are messin with?" And for I knew it he shot me in the upper part of my body. When I fell he came up on me again and I thought he was going to kill me and went in my pocket and took about \$100. They came out of the house with the guns after they heard the shot, one of them took me back in the house, took me down the street, called police and EMS. That made me slack up on drugs.

Interview 78, Crackhouse
(27 years old, Black, Male)

My friend said he knew somebody that sells eight balls for \$125. So we go and buy an eight ball and constantly smokin and all. We had a friend cook it up and busted the jar from putting it on an open heat and it wasn't heat treated and ruin the whole eight ball. We ended up having to take \$75. to start all over again. We went and bought a half of eight ball for \$50. and ended up making like \$200 off of there.

So you recouped your loss?

Right. We just continued smoking, selling and it

ended up to selling ounces for \$1200.

Of powder?

Yea, rocking it up myself. By that time there were about seven or eight guys working with me in the same house. This lady that let us use her house is a crack head so all we had to do is give her some and you can do anything. Over there they were getting ready to tear down most of them houses anyway, so we gave her something like \$20 cash and a \$20 rock a day.

This exploiting of crack using home owners or renters also at times resulted in serious, unanticipated consequence for the occupant. Informants reported that after achieving a "foothold" in a section of a house, crack gangs or crews would continuously encroach upon the property. This was done until they came to dominate it entirely, periodically running off the original occupant altogether. In one case an informant, who stayed on after such encroachment (he was restricted to one bedroom in the back of his house) awoke one morning to find the house abandoned except for the dead body of one teen-age vendor. He was not only taken into custody by the police and threatened with a homicide charge, but was eventually severely beaten and left for dead by associates of the murdered seller. The crack syndicate believed he had been responsible for "setting up" the house for a robbery by rivals.

**Interview 69, Crackhouse
(33 years old, Black, Male)**

I was 30 when I first tried crack. When I moved them into the house, they were trying to get me on to the crack to keep the money in their pocket. But what happened was, I was big on it, but the women was pursuing the crack and then by them saying that they wanted to do sexual favors or whatever. I ended up using the crack with them. First time I smoked a rock was with the fellows in the house. I didn't get high the first time, it took me about two months before I started feeling the high. The women cuddled me and eventually I started experiencing the high like it was supposed to.

Eventually, the guys with the crack moved the heroin guys out due to demand. By me adapting to crack, I started leaning toward the cracks guys and that is all they needed to push the other guys out. I got everything I thought I wanted then, more money (\$200) per week, but I was my own best customer. I used the girls to drown my sorrows with my wife. It started off good and then the guys wanted to take my house over and I didn't have any say so the more I got addicted to the drugs. I got in contact with the guys first by them walking up on my porch and approaching me. That went on for about 30 days

and then it started to get wild. The young guys would have their crowd of people come by. The police got involved because my house was a hang out. There wasn't much that I could do about it because I was caught up in my addiction.

One night me and this girl planned to get together. She told me to pick up something, so I took about \$100 worth off of my pay. Went down there and was suppose to spend the night with her. I stayed until about 2:00 in the morning with her and decided to go back home. I was basically up for 24 hours and went home and went to bed. The next morning I woke up to where somebody had come into the house while I was sleeping and killed this young guy. They left me in the house alive, they missed me. They beat this kid with a baseball bat and robbed him. I woke up and found him dead and called the police. And they took me downtown and kept me over night and had me under investigation for murder. They discovered that the guy was killed during the time that I wasn't there. The guys that he was affiliated with thought I did it. I tried to contact them when I got out to find out what happened. I got attacked, they thinking I'm the one that had killed him and they leave me for dead. I woke up three days later in the hospital. I had been on the street for two or three days. Homicide knew I knew more than I did, which I did. After I got the shit beat out of me the cops come back to me to tell them what I knew. I came up with some distorted story. I didn't know which way to go. I called the police back and told them that I would give them the names of the guys if they gave me protection. They said only if we get a conviction. I knew I was a dead man and disappeared to the East Side.

Higher level syndicate operatives who control more than one locale also develop management techniques to control the operating staff of specific crackhouse operations. These are variously built on a combination of long-standing friendship, loyalty, and ties of kinship. They are also based on various economic incentives, ranging from rather formally defined "franchise" type arrangements to familial generalized "sharing". People who work as staff in a crackhouse may be paid a salary, receive a straight percentage of the sales receipts, be entitled to bonuses, be entitled to operate "side hustles" like providing pipes, torches and the like for a fee (which they keep), or any permutation of these and other reward arrangements. Some simply are allowed to live there and smoke all the crack they want. Some are prohibited from any drug use on the job, but are free "off-duty" to smoke all they want (if they can pay for it). Some are fired if their boss even hears rumors that they are using crack.

On the opposite end of the spectrum are crackhouses which run as a "blind pig" style of operation, relying on a social

scene which can be characterized as "open" or "enhanced". It stands in distinct contrast to the austere style we have discussed initially. These crackhouses represent a type of "tavern culture", a social scene where one goes not simply to acquire crack, but to smoke it with others, share it with others, and accomplish other social goals as well. Socialization is valued to some degree for its own rewards. People drawn to these type of operations are often neighborhood associates, and such operations are often parochial. These crackhouses generally are not "wide open". Entry is selective, based on prior relationship or accompaniment by a "regular". In these type of crackhouses customers "linger", and thus the operators often provide other goods and services for which they charge a fee.

Interview 75, Crackhouse
(31 years old, Black, Male)

To initiate my contact, I moved in with a friend of mine from the neighborhood. People would drop by and we would smoke a lot of weed and it came a place where everybody dropped by to smoke crack. We started to sell crack from his own. These people contacted us to sell it cause they could see traffic comin in and out. We also tried to do certain things on the job. We didn't sell for notorious people. The side things we might be able to sell our own sack in addition for selling for them.

How were you organized?

I didn't like the scene of always caring a gun. Sometimes we wouldn't have to wear guns, we didn't have too many people come to the house that we didn't know. People had to be referred before we would sell to them. These guys came in the house and they sometimes smoked in the house. They sit in the house hanging around and sometimes had crowds. I couldn't control my urge but my partner could control his urge. We had a couple of bad scenes where one time this neighbor from down the street and it was a few brothers and some more guys getting high and ... money came up and he was pistol whipped and hospitalized. We really didn't make any money because we spent our money on smoke and supplying our habits. We only wanted to have enough for us.

This style of operation may vend crack pipes (or rent them), provide baking soda, liquor, torches, and other substances like marijuana. These are provided for a fee. These operations are also locales where it is often possible for customers to exchange as barter a variety of items for crack. Thus these operations function as "fences" for stolen material. This next series of excerpts illustrate a variety of activities regarding the crack house, its methods of operation, and the general quality of social experience associated with crack house operations.

Interview 03, Crack House
(27 years old, White, Male)

What was the dope house scene like?

Filled up with a bunch a people smokin it.

Did you just buy and take off?

Sometimes I'd smoke at houses.

Were people friendly to each other? Did they just ignore each other?

They're gonna be friendly because like, this is a kitchen table, and they're all sittin around it. And they gotta be nice, cause they want a piece of yours if they're out, you know.

So guys hang out there with no money?

Yeah. After they spent all theirs and wanted some more, you know.

They (the operators) didn't throw these guys out?

Not all the time. Normally, the guy of the house would buy things, like t.v.'s and shit, so the guys in the house would go steal.

So the place also had merchandise. Could you buy it if you wanted?

I could, but I never tried though, you know.

Did you see that happen? Was the guy running house also fencing?

You can bet he was. But he smoked too.

Ever see any guns?

Oh yeah. Shoot definitely. This one guy I know he'd have to go three blocks to cop more. When he ran out to get more, he'd walk down the street with his gun, you know, to get more. Dangerous. It really is.

Ever see any violence?

Not ever.

They try to keep it under control?

Yeah. When the house is full they walk around with a shotgun and stuff. It's crazy.

What about getting out of there?

Sometimes there's problems, you know. They got wires on the doors and windows and you gotta wait till they're ready to open. They're always paranoid lookin for cops.....

Ever worry about getting ripped off when people watched you come out of house?

Oh yeah.

Did you carry a gun yourself?

No I never did.

You just took your chances and moved quick?

For a white boy, yeah.

Crackhouse, Interview 04
(39 years old, Black, Male)

Tell me about you experiences in the crack houses.

You have people sitting around smoking. You have people sitting around hustling. Trying to rent out their pipes, trying to get you to let them get the pipes.

Why should you?

Cause someday you might be short and you'll need to get theirs. All they want is a good customer with money..... and they want you to spend it all right now.....

But these people don't have any more money, right?

Eventually, they gonna come on back. Where if a person ain't never got nothing, you know, they eventually gonna get booted out.

Would it be inappropriate to say that some people like the society, like the company, that in addition to the fact that we know they're there for the drug they're consuming, but part of it was some people say something like a ritual?

Yeah. Also a place to get together with somebody to go do something, to get some more. I know we can do so and so. A place where a lot of things get conjured up.

What about the fear factor?

They usually have a doorman that carries a gun. But even so it's not really necessary cause you very seldom see too much trouble. It's like this is where you come to get on, this is where you come to get high. And if you gonna be a trouble maker or if you gonna get into these things, it's gonna be away someplace else. That's just like a code, you know.

Is there, as a last resort, a guy whose job it is to keep things in line?

Yeah. In case of a stickup, you know, cause they do have stickups.

Do they frisk you for a gun?

I have been frisked at times but normally the place you go they don't frisk you for guns.

Were these guys worried about cops?

More scared about a user.

So that would rank higher in terms of concern than the fact that the police could come in and bust?

Yeah. But the reality is there that the police could come. You have more rip offs and stickups than you have busts.

**Interview 13, Crackhouse
(27 years old, Black, Male)**

Can you describe the scene in the crack house?

Man, that's a wild scene in a crack house. It be dependin on what type of house you got. I would let people come in there, pay to smoke, supply em with pipe, charge em to use it, charge em for the rum and they could just spend they money and shit and smoke. But I wouldn't do that now.

**Interview 39, Crackhouse
(34 years old, Black, Male)**

I got to selling it because he had too many people comin around, so he had to start spreading it out.....While selling it I wasn't worried about security at all. I did get robbed and it tripped me out. It was a customer. We were working the street and I was so comfortable to the fact that people would say to me that I had too much business. I had whores and they were my biggest clientele.

I had 20 or 30, and they was buying anywhere from \$50 or \$60 worth a dope. I had about \$400 of their business. To me that was superb, I was content. People was bringing me stuff that was stolen, I was buying shit. I would get certain items if I needed something. I knew a girl that was a booster, she would come to me and ask what clothes and size clothes you need, would boost it and bring it back the next day. And I would supply with her habit.

How did you get robbed?

I normally don't let nobody in my house, but this guy I knew was with this other guy and I let them both in. I peeped it and couldn't close the door knowing I had another guy in the house with me. He had the gun and at this time he went to the store. They tied me up and put me in the closet and shit and tagged me on my head with the gun. Some other guys that I work with they just happen to come and check on me and busted in the apartment and started chasing the guys and caught them about two or three days later. They didn't get their money back but gave them a real ass kicking.

Informants report that crack house customers will meet, smoke, exhaust their funds, conspire, leave, commit a property crime, return with the merchandise, exchange it for crack, and then begin the whole process over again. Men and women who frequent crackhouses have often reported exchanging sex for crack (these women are sometimes called "bust out girls"). In these exchanges, it is the female who "provides" the sex for a male. Male prostitution for crack, either to other males or females, is not reported within this group. These reported exchange are between the female customer and other male customers in the crack house. If they go to another room to "freak" (to have sex), the crackhouse operator typically charges a room use fee.

Interview 35, Crack House
(27 years old, Black, Female)

Can you tell me about the scene in the dope house?

It is crazy. People are paranoid. It effects people in all kind of different ways. Some can handle it and are cool and calm with it but they scheme like you do on the next person in order to get their next high from crack. Others are so paranoid, running in and out of closets and moving around the house, can't talk when they get high. Some you are scared of you when you are getting high, as you don't know what they are going to do next or what they are thinking about. Males you are really scared of as they might pull out a gun and I don't put nothing pass any of them. My worst experience watching this particular guy go through hallucinations because he was speed bombing. But he was injecting cocaine and was

injecting heroin and smoking crack cocaine. He was hallucinating about people being in the house, in the closet and shit. I should have been dead a long time ago, cause I went through that shit personally, walking around the house with knives, cutting lights on and off which makes other people scared. This will happen to everybody eventually, but it takes some people longer than others. I wasn't scared when I started, but after being with him he has made me scared and getting scared by myself since I am smoking by myself. But it started with him and affects everybody. I couldn't stay in the dope house too long. I kept myself supplied from my wages and through my boyfriend. I was not involved in any kind of crime myself.

Interview 55, Crack House
(26 years old, Black, Male)

Yeah. I shifted from powder to rock and my life.....it was like night and day. It was totally new people that I was meetin, not good people. I mean it was folks out there people I was meetin thugs, I was meetin just all kind of people, real drug addicts, people that would rob you, people that would take all your money. Me and another guy had gotten together and we was sellin coke in this apartment building. We sold coke in this apartment building for a whole year. Now this apartment building had four floors up in it, OK? We went from the first floor, to second floor, to the third floor, to the fourth floor and we always was movin to different units just movin around like flies sellin rock. And then all of a sudden they was gettin hip onto the inside of this building so we found out they was gonna make a raid on the whole building. The thing was that we was always runnin from the police all the time.

How did you operate out of this building?

OK. we had... OK, you go to Radio Shack and you buy these head sets with the mike and everything. We got two guys down on each corner and we got a guy up in the window on the fourth floor lookin out watchin out for the police. And the guys who got the sack on em in the hallway or in the apartment got one at his ears. So everybody could stay in communication, no matter what. If the police pulls in front of the building, we let em know. If they pull in the alley, we let em know. If they riding past we let em know, if they ride past and stop, we let em know. When they in the building, that when everythin shift down. You don't answer the door or nothin. The guy in the window came up out the window. The guy on the outside stayed and kept you in touch on what was goin on.

Could customers smoke in the joint?

No. None of that. I didn't allow that. A female that wanted to get off somebody rent her, so we'd give it to her. But she couldn't smoke. She had to do what she had to do and go.

Females that didn't have money would exchange sex for drugs? These ladies could have sex in the crack house, but no smoking?

Yeah.

Interview 27, Crackhouse
(33 years old, Black, Male)

Can you tell me something about the crack house scene?

If I didn't know them (the dealers) someone would turn me on or I would go with somebody. If it was someone I knew, I would sit around and mingle, look at the ball game and I'm spending my money and they throwing me something, saying "hey man, put that with yours". Some of them would be women. I'd get with the females and I'd get a little crack for a little sex or whatever. That would keep me there. It all depends on the environment and the people. I still had insight on that. I knew where I was comfortable at.

Interview 95, Crackhouse
(33 years old, Black, Female)

Tell me about the crack house.

I needed about \$300 a day, but smoked about 20 a day. When I bought on my own I bought and smoked in a dope house. The scene is very bad. It is nasty. They didn't have any running water, no beds to sleep on. Just dirty filthy with rats and roaches. But when you get like that all you want to do is hang out around the cain. So I would hang out for about a week at a time. I didn't eat during this time and barely drunk water. I turned tricks in the dope house for the rocks. I have never been in a dope house when it was raided, but was once coming from a dope house to my boyfriend's house and his house was being raided.

"Rocking Up" Crack Cocaine

Another topic worthy of analysis is the "rocking up" procedure by which powder cocaine is converted to the carbonate base. Rocking up powder has several different significant dimensions. In one sense it appears to enjoy the stature of a ritual, akin to the ritualistic elements reported for other drug consuming processes, such as "shooting up". Rocking up cocaine

hydrochloride also has important pragmatic economic significance as well. The process, although simple in a chemistry sense, is quite complex from a sociological/psychological perspective.

Technical Aspects of "Rocking Up"

We have gathered a significant volume of information on the recipes and formulae used in processing cocaine hydrochloride into cocaine base. The essential process involves measuring out and combining cocaine HCl and NaCO₃ (Sodium Bicarbonate) in a 3:1 or 4:1 ratio. This powder mixture is placed into a glass container and covered with sufficient water to form a cloudy suspension. It is then heated over an open flame or put in a microwave oven until the water approaches the boiling point and the material appears to have gone into solution. The mixture is then removed from the heat source and continuously swirled to accelerate cooling. As the mixture cools, it is monitored for "rocking up", that is, observed for the formation of the base precipitate that forms first as a plasticine-type or putty-like substance. It is commonly reported that the heating/cooling process is repeated several times until the "rocking up" is proceeding satisfactorily. Also, various "adjustments" are made during the rocking up procedure. More cocaine may be added, or more soda, or ice chips to accelerate cooling. Once the "rock" of base has attained a satisfactory configuration the mixture is filtered through some cloth or screen device. Once that is done the water is discarded and the "rock", along with any smaller precipitate particles trapped by the filter, are removed. The rock is then often dried out under heat to harden it before it is either cut up into smaller quantities for distribution or simply stored by the user who plans to "chip" away at it over some time period.

Interview 07, Rocking Up (18 years old, Black, Male)

• What was your formula to rock up?

I used a mayonnaise jar and I put like two ounces in there.

Two ounces powder cocaine?

Yeah. And a nice little lump sum of bakin soda.

How much?

It depends on what kinda scoop I'm using. Like if I tore a piece a cardboard I'll fold it and put two little nice scoops in it.

You didn't need a lot?

Half of the coke. Then I add a little water to it but just enough to come over the coke.....and then put it in the microwave for like two minutes on high then once it got through.

What happens when it got hot?

Oil came on top and I drop some cold water on top of it. Drop it on, not poured it. And the whole rock just came down to the bottom. It'll drop to the bottom and then I like put it in the sink and run cold water on it....No I don't save the water.

The rock is pretty big?

Yeah. I start choppin it up.

How much each rock weigh?

Uh, quarter a ounce, just like somethin like that. I'd make around bout six quarters and pack in plastic bags.

Your guys in crack house broke it down further?

Yeah. But some of my runners they'd like deal it up like eights by they self. I'd rock it up like two ounces and a half a ounce at the same time and put it in one big bag and give it to him and let him do it.

Are there other ways to rock instead of using baking soda?

Yeah ammonia.

Do you know how to do that system?

No, but I was told and I didn't wanna do it that way. You don't add bakin soda just ammonia and put the powder and put some heat on to it and they say it'll come back and be pure coke, all pure. Put the ammonia in there first, then drop the coke in there, and then heat it up, and then drop the water. I never tried it. Never saw it done.

Interview 09, Rocking Up
(29 years old, Black, Male)

How did your friend rock up?

He'd get a little small bottle, call it a cook bottle, with a top and put cocaine mix half cocaine half baking soda in there and heat it up. And when it starts to boil, you like don't want it to get too hot, you don't want the bottle to break, and when it starts to boil you kinda shake it up til it's mixed up real good. OK, when you got it cooked up enough then you kinda let it

cool. You may get you a glass of ice water or something and shake it up so it can cool and start to rock up and get hard. Do that a couple of times and make sure you cook all the baking soda outta that the thing. You want to cook that baking soda out and if the cocaine is good you can. You do it two or three times -depends on what kinda fire you usedip the flame torch, dip it in alcohol or rum andmake sure that that baking soda outta there and to rock it up you stick it in some water or let it air cool or something and you see the rock form. So you pour all the water off of it, take the rock off and usually a little soft it stays hard for a few minutes.

Interview 15, Rocking Up
(35 years old, Black, Male)

As far as cookin it up and the whole shabang? Whatever amount of cocaine that you have it's gonna take about a quarter of say, like if you got a ounce, it's gonna take you a quarter ounce of baking soda I would say to take powder cocaine and turn it into a rock. Then you use a pipe, a glass pipe.

Describe the method?

OK. half ounce, you take a quarter....a eighth of an ounce of baking soda and take, uh, I say you had to have enough water I don't how you could put it in measurements but it would have to be.....the water really doesn't matter really. You don't want to fill up the whole bottle. So I would say just over the top of the powder and then it takes heat. OK, and along with what happens with the heat it makes the baking soda and the cocaine draws together like a magnet. Alright, then it takes cool water to cool it off to really make it gel and harden. It doesn't really get clear it gets cloudy first and the more heat you put to it the clearer it gets. You know, it's like it draws it like a magnet it draws it together the purity part.

Informants report that a large number of "cuts" or adulterants are added to crack in the "rocking up" process. Sometimes these cuts are characterized in a negative manner. That is, most cuts do not increase the potency, smokability, or other consumption-enhancing aspects of the base. Rather they are simply added as expanders in order to increase both volume and weight for the purposes of augmenting the profits associated with distribution. The chemistry of adulteration of crack is likewise complex. A series of adulterants with a wide variety of names (e.g. "comeback", "swell up", "blow up", "benzoyl", "rush", etc.) are used. The basic requirement is that the adulterant react like cocaine with the soda, so that the adulterant is incorporated into the rock of crack. Although a few respondents reported that adulterants are added to enhance or vary the psychotropic effects

of the compound, most see adulteration as negative. That is, the "cuts" ruin the cocaine or at least reduce its potency. This aspect of adulteration is one of the primary reasons that users report preferring to rock up their own cocaine, since it is the only way they feel confidant about the quality of the crack they smoke.

Interview 02, Rocking Up
(31 years old, Black, Male)

Yeah. But then if you put some re-rock on it or somthin.

What's re-rock?

It's somethin that they use to, uh, which I've never used, it cause if I was gonna sell somethin I would want em to have what I was smokin. If I'm gonna sell somethin I'mma sell somethin that it wouldn't really hurt me but it would, uh, it would satisfy my needs. I wouldn't want to sell nothin I wouldn't smoke. But a lot of em they got these, sometime they call it yeast, where they'll put some yeast, certain things I heard, that'll make it look bigger. The bigger they is the faster they'll sell and, see, if they use this they call it a re-rock. And some, uh, novocaine and that would make the rock bigger. And that means if they paid 900 hundred for it and they put the re-rock or somethin on it they could almost make like 35 hundred dollars off one ounce. And some of em did. Sometime you would go and you would but the caine wouldn't be it, wouldn't be it; wouldn't be nothin. They would give a rush most time it be like a rush it be somethin when they re-rock the stuff. It don't be, you know, a real high, it be like a rush. You be speedin', you know, it makes you speed. Paranoid it make you paranoid.

Interview 08, Rocking Up
(22 years old, Black, Male)

I would step on the caine little bit I would cut it....right.

What did you use to cut it?

Benzocaine or Hicaine.

Where did you get the cut?

Right in the store, buy it right out the store. Cost about \$60, \$75.

What kind of store?

Corner stores, party stores, you know.

Interview 80, Rocking Up
(23 years old, Black, Male)

Did you ever rock it yourself?

Uh-huh.

Anything else you put in it beside baking soda?

People can put other stuff in it, you know, to make it bigger, but I didn't do that. You can buy something at the store, and you think it is a rock.

You mean at local stores? You use to cut the cain with?

You get it at local stores all day long, they selling it up under the counter though.

Under the counter? You got to know what to ask for?

Right.

What do you ask for?

Names? I don't even know.

You mean this stuff will make it look like cain when you rock it up and so you can sell it on the street?

Uh-huh.

You can burn somebody for it?

Right.

Is this stuff expensive in the stores?

Yeah, \$60.00 or \$70.00 a bottle.

In examining the use of adulterants several interesting aspects of "cutting" crack have been uncovered. The exact chemical nature of the "cut" is generally unknown to the users. Compounds used as "cuts" are primarily purchased "under the counter" from retail establishment, such as liquor stores, corners markets, or similar outlets. It is reported that these places (which generally sell crack paraphenalia such as glass pipes, "chore boy", inordinate stocks of baking soda, and "shake jars") are typical sources for "cut". The price for cut is expensive, around \$40 to \$60 for a "small bottle", containing perhaps 5 to 8 grams. Based on these descriptions it appears that these cuts are rough cocaine analogues like procaine. This represents an interesting finding. From where do these merchants obtain the substances? If these are regulated pharmaceuticals (e.g. like Lidocaine) they are available only to licensed handlers. It may be possible to "track" high volume crack sites,

for example, by monitoring the flow of these cuts into the retail merchant's possession. The possession of these substances may themselves be *prima facia* illegal, or they may be considered illegal under various paraphenalia laws if the merchant has no ostensible legal medical use for the compounds. It is an important research objective, as well, for health practitioners to determine the contents and clinical significance of consuming "cut". Respondents continuously complain that the crack available on the street is laden with "cut". It is reasonable to suspect that substantial quantities of "cut" are being consumed by users. As well we have been told that to alter its psychotropic properties crack cocaine is being rocked up with heroin and with amphetamine. Although this augmentation has not been widely reported, it does give us reason to examine the smoking of prepared polysubstances like "space-base" (a crack-PCP combination) or "crank" (an amphetamine-crack combination). With AIDS potentially creating a strong deterrent to needle use, smoking of multiple substances may become a considerably more prevalent consumption method over time.

Interview 30, Rocking Up
(27 years old, White, Male)

Around that time I quit for a little while and wasn't doing it as often. I got turned on to smoking cola.

Tell me the difference between crack and cola?

Cola is when you put the baking soda in with it and that's all you do. Crack is the same thing except they add B12 to it or some kind of speed. That is what they call crack because it has junk in with it. It made you want more which was from the B12 or speed that they put in it.

A final aspect of the "rocking up" process also deserves to be noted. Rocking up has a symbolic dimension quite distinct from the group ritual aspects noted earlier. Rocking up one's own crack is considered a skill, valued for its ability to guarantee some level of quality control over the product, and useful as a profit-enhancing device in dealing. It has, therefore, a role in self-evaluation of the crack user and their self-concept. Many users said that a sign of their increasingly problematic addiction to crack was their failure to buy powder and rock it up. When they became truly compulsive they did not want to invest the time or effort to rock up their own. By purchasing rocks on the street or in a dopehouse (as opposed to purchasing powder) they could consume it immediately. As some informants put it they reached the stage of "fiending" or saw themselves as "real dope fiends" once they no longer had the patience, tolerance, or concern to rock up their own.

Interview 27, Rocking Up
(33 years old, Black, Male)

Why did you stop buying powder?

When I first started I had people that I knew the shit was good and I knew what I was getting. But when I started dealing with these people in the strange dope houses I never knew nothing about, or these people on the street, (I) would ride by and say walk around corner and so and so approach me with the rocks. I would buy these dimes, then I started really fucken up, cause I got use to that shit and couldn't wait.

There were also a subset of users who never learned how to rock up. Some lived in situations that did not require them to do so (e.g., an associate knew the method and handled the responsibility all the time). Some never asked about how to carry out the process, or they lacked self-confidence to do it themselves.

Interview 19, Rocking Up
(24 years old, Black, Female)

Never rocked?

I tried one time and it wadn't actin right. Somethin I wadn't doin right and I had too much powder and just messed it up. So I just left it in the bottle cause it looked like it was rocked up then when I did somethin it would separate so I say next thing I know the bottle gonna be done broke cause I seen em break the bottle. And I said "well, I can't waste it", so I called somebody and they came and did it for me.

It does represent serious risk to the user if the rocking procedure fails. Failures do happen, and have been reported as "technical" error (too much water, for example, added to the mix will inhibit precipitation of the base), or accident. Several informants report breaking glass jars full of solution, either by overheating them, when working with a gas stove, or using a non-microwave safe container in a microwave oven. Periodically handling the compound, concentration, or clumsiness are risk factors, especially after several sleepless days of a crack "binge". Several informants reported dropping the contents, fracturing the jar, and losing the entire mixture. Several informants described licking or sucking the crack fluid up off the floor or rug when such processing calamities occurred.

Crack Sales

There are many dimensions to the process of "selling crack cocaine". This study records the responses and activities of people who can generally be called "street sellers". This does not mean that some informants didn't make significant personal incomes from their sales businesses. The largest scale sellers in

this study talked of their business volume in "keys" or "kilograms" of cocaine. Vendors who make kilogram-level cocaine "deals" reported periods of substantial income by current standards. These incomes are also, of course, untaxed so they represent even larger gross incomes if the standard of comparison is licit occupations. It must be also considered, of course, that these incomes do not represent for respondents in this study a steady and long-established source of wealth. Most crack dealers in this study come from a poor and tough background, and all in this study share the common failure of becoming, as many put it literally, "their own best customers". Only one respondent in this study alluded to having salvaged a significant sum of money from his selling operations.

The smallest scale vendors were so small that they talked of their volume in a few "dimes" or \$10 rocks of cocaine. These small scale vendors are a mix of types that can be separated by levels of income, volume of sales, levels of consumption, and other descriptive categories. Those who were active and counted their inventory in an ounce, or a few grams, or a few "boulders" (\$20 rocks) account for most cases in this study. How they view and describe their status as "street" or "low-level" dealers ("LLD's" as Bruce Johnson identifies them) are quite varied. One primary reason for the persistence of low-level dealers in this study is that these respondents all had become serious, chronic users. Their energies, either early or late, were ultimately concentrated on the "high" of crack. Chronic crack consumers often become so crack-oriented in their lives that they simply cannot manage to do more than "hustle" for crack. Most of these people first encountered crack by consuming it. Their use patterns eventually led them to sell crack, and for some to engage in other criminal activity in purely instrumental ways. Others, on the contrary, first encountered crack as sellers. This is often reported by the financially successful crack seller in this study. By not initially using they enjoy a period of time when they can handle substantial amounts of crack as a business commodity. Abstainers avoid the frequent personality and discipline collapse that chronic compulsive users overwhelmingly report. Crack abstainers are also attractive to higher-level vendors because they are deemed trustworthy.

Interview 24, Crackhouse
(34 years old, Black, Male)

I sold out of my house. I would recruit some guys that didn't use because they took care business more. Users would use it all up. The product will be there if you don't use. You can take a stone killer and once he start using it he might chip on it a little bit and can't stop and before you know it he would smoke up the whole package. You come back and he don't have no package and no money. He would say "man, I just couldn't handle it". And then you don't want to kill them...Because I had some problem with big level of dope dealers and they give some mix jive to some guys and they fucked up the package. My man said he came back and

asked where the package is at. They said "they came back and stuck us up for the package". So he said "if they came and stuck you up why didn't they get the tv, tape player and all of this? If they are going to stick you up, they are going to stick up everything". He had his wrecking company beat him up with a baseball bat and all this shit. He said "now, dig this, you doing this that is what happens and now I am going to give you another package and you fuck that up they are going to kill you. You are going to take care business now right?" They did every since then. None of them users take care of business. As long as you pay when you are suppose to it will be okay. You take care of me I will take care of you.

As a result consignors "invest" cocaine with them, and feel more confidant that they will handle the "product" and not "mess it up" (i.e. consume substantial portions of it). However, dealers in this study eventually succumbed to crack use, and for almost all it overwhelmed them and eroded their financial successes, and often their personal lives, severely. This "dealer first, user second" category also constitutes an interesting segment of the sample. They are, in effect, people on the way down from an initially successful and sometimes lucrative drug career, derailed by crack use. Periodically the cause was something else, like an arrest and conviction on a serious charge, or being shot.

85 of the respondents in this study sold some illegal drug (69 males and 16 females). 77 respondents sold crack cocaine on a continuing basis. It is noteworthy that 19% of the women were sellers of crack, and several of them were successful dealers who "descended" in their career pattern. In examining the whole sample the mean length of time spent as a dealer is 41.56 months (45.48 for males, 24.27 for females). Of the 85 who admitted sales, 54 characterized themselves as "user/dealers", selling primarily to finance an active, compulsive use pattern. However, only 2 reported themselves as "touters" or "copmen", people who predominantly hustled for drugs, and received at least half of his/her drugs as "in-kind" payment for goods or services. 28 of the 85 respondent-dealers identified themselves as people who had "cycled through" a career of selling which started out with selling crack, but not using it or using quite modestly, and climaxed in collapse from chronic use and as a result a life "on the streets" and "out of the suites". Only one respondent identified himself as a "profit dealer" for his entire crack-dealing career.

*****FIGURE 9. ABOUT HERE*****

(DCEP13.GRF)

(+DCEP9.GRF COMBINED)

In response to "what was the drug you last sold?" 74 of the 85 answered crack, 5 responded powder cocaine, 3 said heroin, and 2 identified marijuana.

*****FIGURE 10. ABOUT HERE*****

Figure 9. Sales Activity

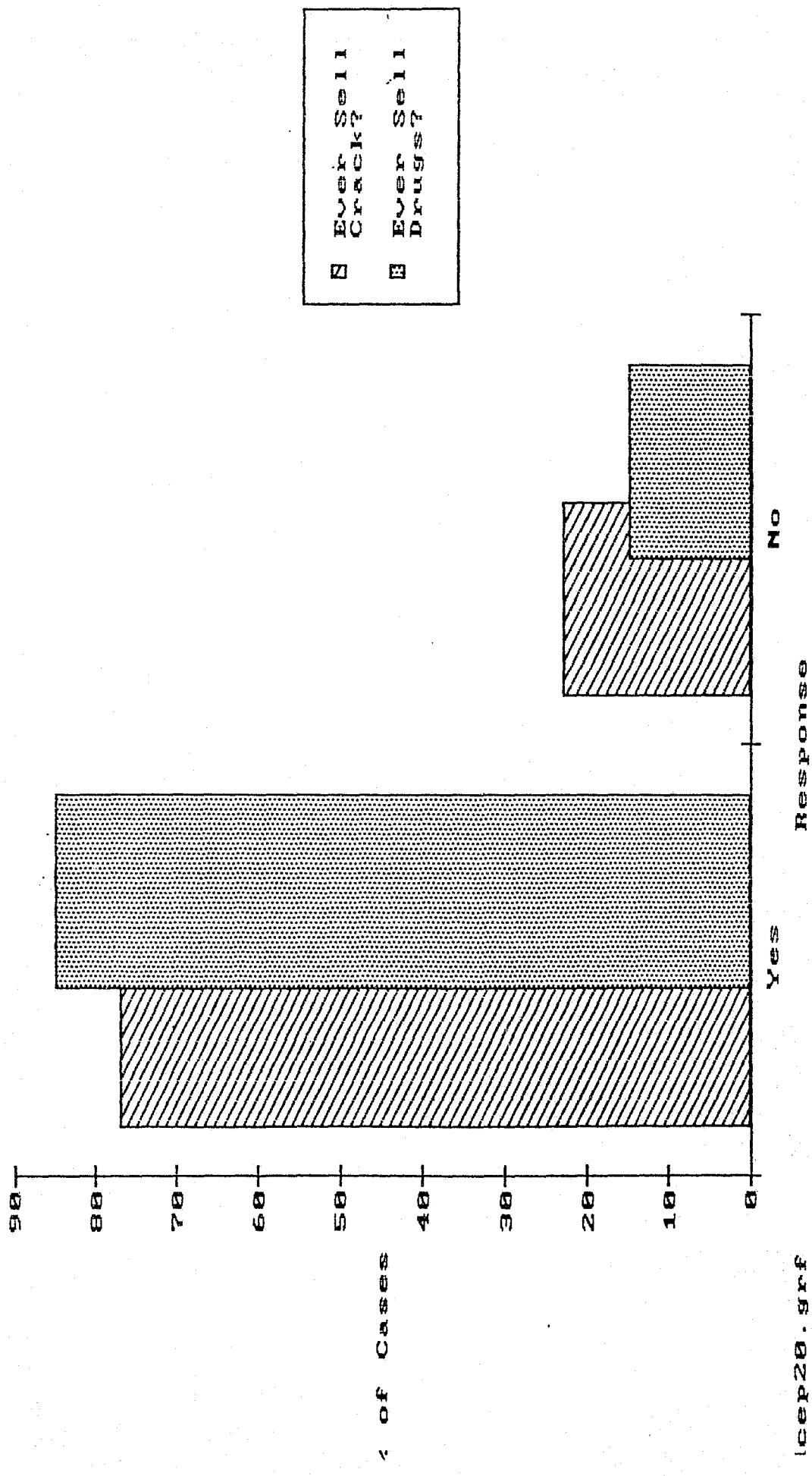
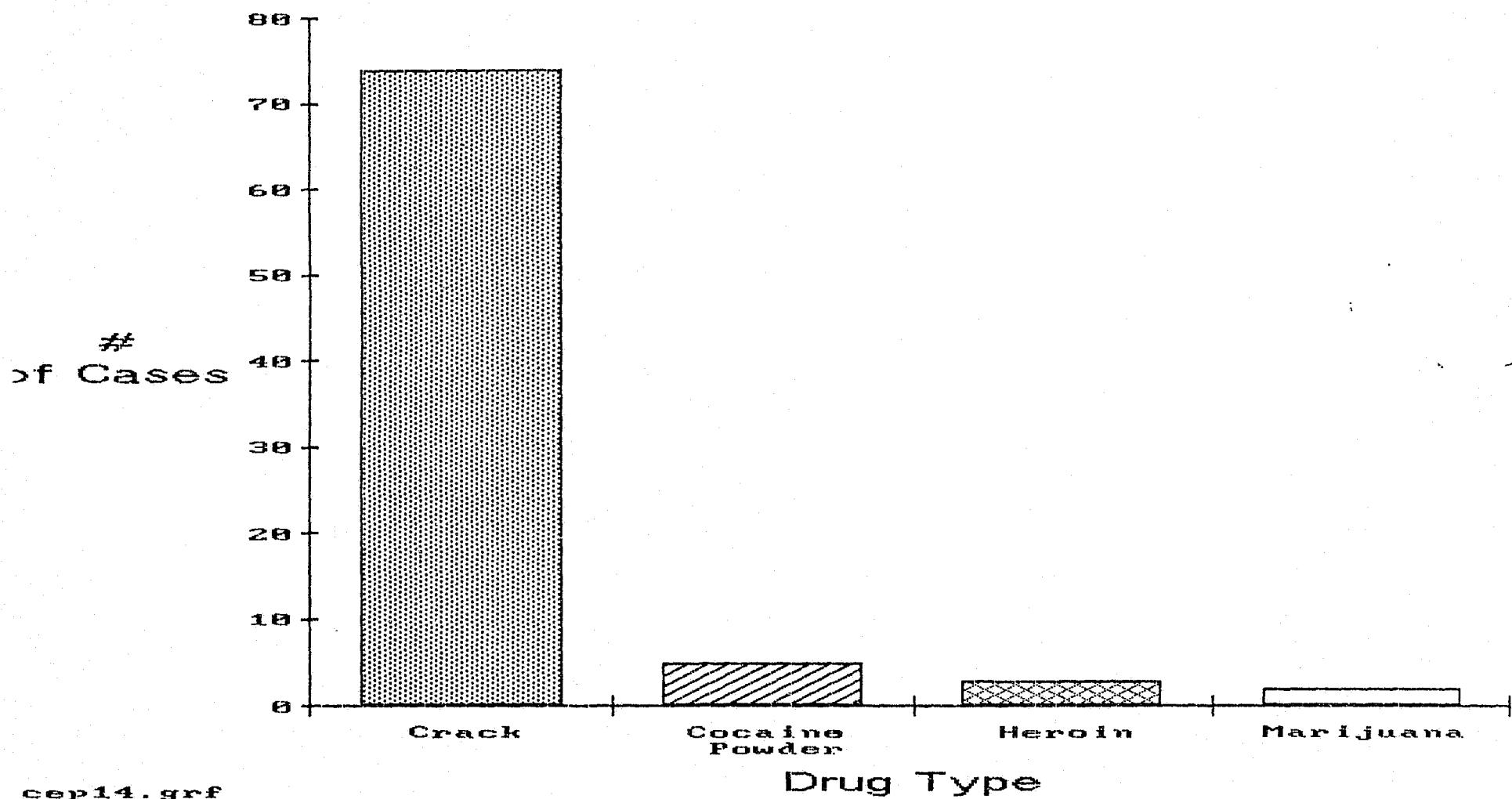


Figure 10.
Recent Sales



(DCEP14.GRF)

The average age at which the first crack sales are made is almost 26 years old. Figure 11 provides an age distribution for this variable in the sample.

*****FIGURE 11. ABOUT HERE*****
(DCEP10.GRF)

It appears that the respondents in this study had a substantial range of experience dealing in drugs. There is noticeable clustering in the 10 month to 30 month range. The 1 to 10 month and the 30 to 84 month ranges are roughly comparable. The 84 months + range also has a noticeable cluster. The distribution of career lengths is displayed in Figure 12.

*****FIGURE 12. ABOUT HERE*****
LENGTH OF SALES CAREER (DCEP15.GRF)

The respondents were asked to rate the type of seller they would consider themselves considering one of three categories; a profit dealer who used little or none and sold for the clear purpose of amassing money; a user/dealer who sold for money but whose money was wholly converted into drugs for their own consumption; and a "touter/beepermen" or "runner" who worked for a large syndicate, used some drugs, but was a small scale operative within a larger organization; or some other category or combination of existing categories. Their relative responses are shown in figure 13, titled "Type of Seller".

*****FIGURE 13. ABOUT HERE*****
(DCEP17.GRF)

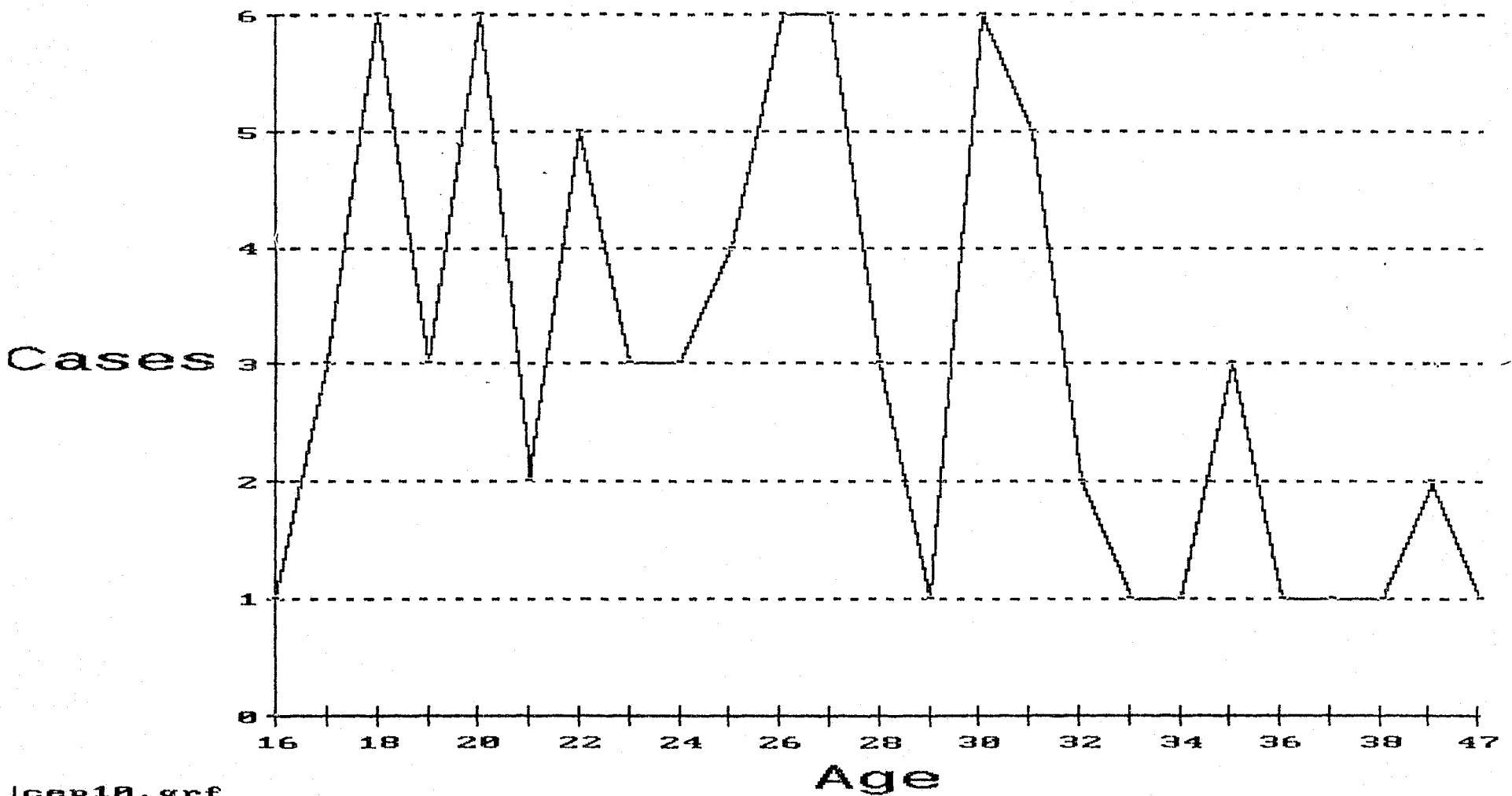
In considering the nature of the sales activity as an organizational entity, it seems quite clear that a "mega-organizational view" such as a mafia syndicate model is inappropriate. While there is a range of organizational sizes described within the data, and those organizations include some substantive ones in terms of numbers and longevity, there is no centralized and tightly controlled organization, or even several organizations, which are responsible for crack distribution in the city. Consider the following statement by an informant who was attached to a substantive sales group:

Interview 05, Crack Sales
(25 years old, Black, Male)

Is any crack being sold the way the heroin crews used to be selling on street corner, cruising by in cars... anybody doing that with rock now?

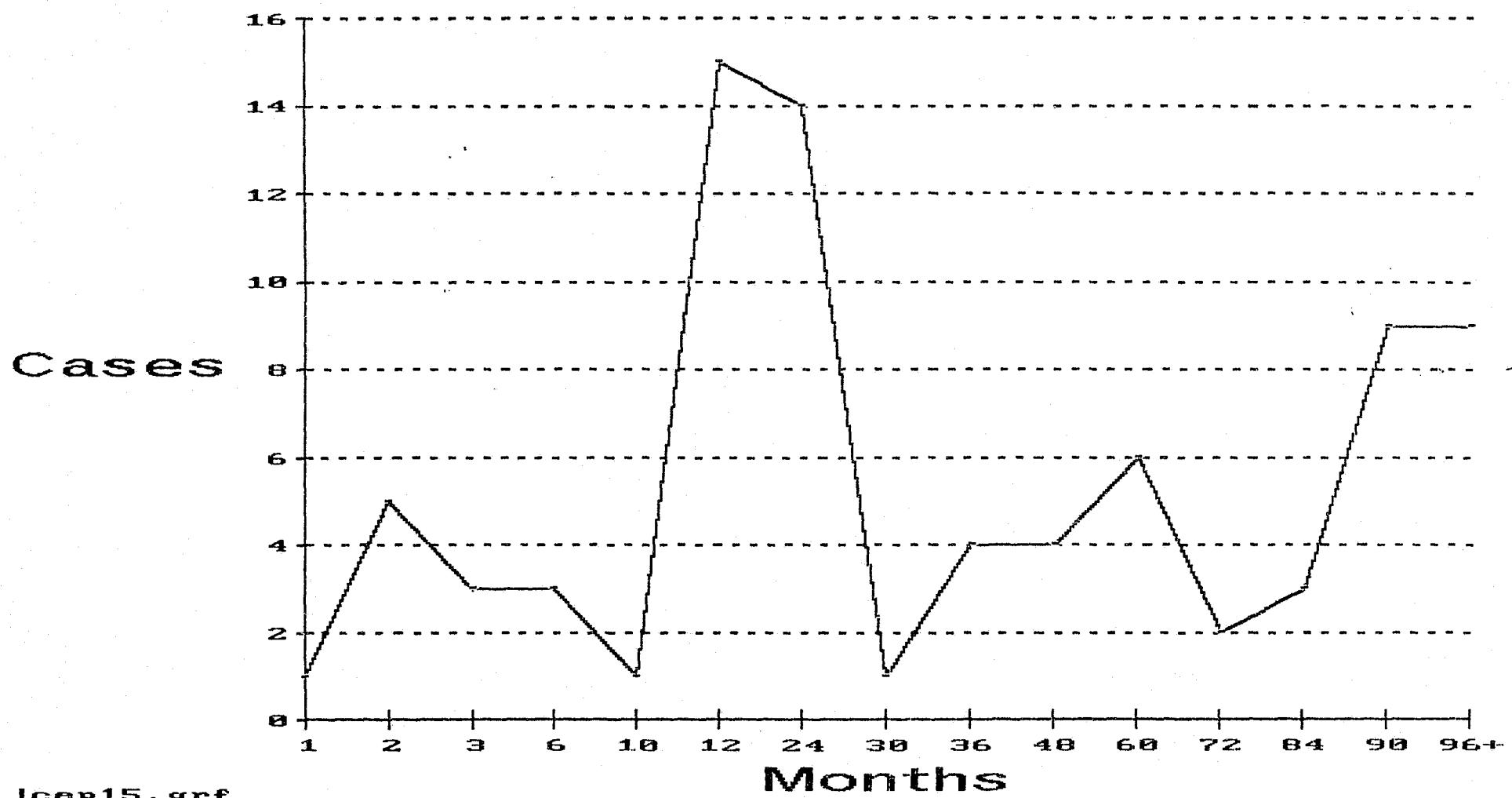
They ain't usin that same system far as that, like cause they really ain't got no ain't nobody really out there right now like that. What they had in t.v. bout these

Figure 11.
Age at First Crack Sales



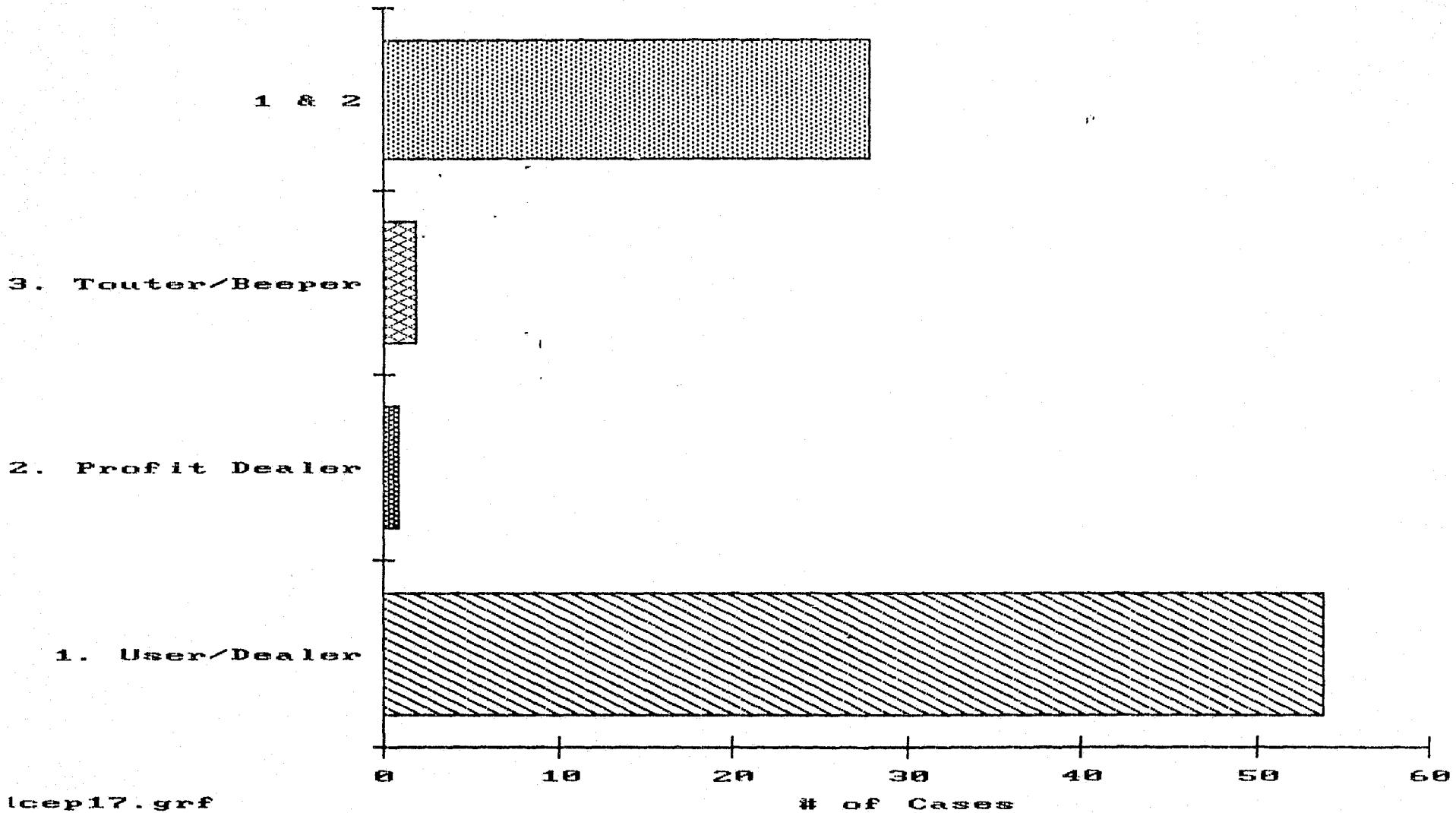
lcep10.grf

Figure 12.
Length of Sales Career



lcep15.grf

Figure 13. Type of Seller



Chambers boys drugs and, uh, White Boy Rick. Now I knew him, and I knew them. Far as the way they put they organization on the news like that, it is really not the way they put it. They ain't all like that, all that big and this and that, because they was just people that just got in the gang and was disorderly with it. They tried to use gangs to they advantage, but they wadn't, you know. Money is every man's, you know, bag. But they went about they didn't go bout the thing right cause money wadn't anything that they really wanted because they head like far as their security. They had to get good because maybe they wadn't gettin no attention, so they had to go maybe shoot a few people, you know, get cars and what not because maybe they couldn't get this woman or this woman. So now they can get this woman now cause they feel like they had to do this to make themself feel real up in the world. It ain't like, you know, it ain't no organization out there that's got it ,you know, like how it was when we had enterprise on the dope. You know, people just out there. You may see a person on the corner sellin some crack, he by hisself. He just an independent person.

That system now is more the way it is all over the city?

They ain't got no control the way they said they had control over half the damn crack houses in the city of Detroit. Ain't no way. I know personally ain't no way in the world they had no half of no supply house no crack houses in city of Detroit. Only part they probably supply half over there is by the Fuller Bar where they was from, over there on East side. That neighborhood is long as that section cause they couldn't come on no West side talkin bout puttin nothin in no area. It's a lotta guys that's mad bout the way they be puttin it on t.v. and all that. A lotta people may say it's more drugs on the East side than it is on the West side but people fail to realize that more drugs is really on the West side. That's basically where all really the drug suppliers and the ones who really got everything out here real tight.. That's really mainly on the West side. You got a few people a lot of people from the East side really come from down South or somewhere, a lot of out of towners. You know a lotta people that's from the West side, you know, was born in the city of Detroit. And you got people on the East side that's born in the city of Detroit. But, you know, you gotta lotta people on the East side that's really from like Alabama, Chicago or somewhere like that. And they just that's why you see hearin so many gangs that be on the East side like Earl Flynn's. Somethin like that, you know, like to fight. They want that kinda structure but they got a little money together and figure to sell some drugs because now drugs is the thing now. All of it reflects back to gangs. Earl Flynn's, B.K.'s, and anybody, it all reflects back to

gangs. It's all everybody, it's still a gang thing just people just sellin drugs now.

Nomenclature

In the course of our interviews and activities with street dealers, users, arrestees, and volunteer respondents we have accumulated a sizable lexicon of 150 crack terms. This array is displayed alphabetically in Table 14.

Table 14. A List of Crack Street Terms

Apple Jacks	Death	Piece
Baby "T"	Dime Special	Piles
Bad	Dimes	Player
Bags	Eastside Player	Pony
Ball	Eightball	Primo
Balls	Ether-based	Pyramid
Bazooka	Eye Opener	Quarters
Beam	Famous Dimes	Raw
Beemers	Fat Bags	Reds
Benzoyl	Flavor	Regular "P"
Bings	Freebase	Reports
Bits	Ghost	Rest in Peace
Bill Blass	Girl	Rock
Blowout	Gold	Rosebud
Blue Gold	Golf Ball	Rox
Bob	Gram	Roxanne
Bobo	Groceries	Roz
Bomb	Haitain	Schoolcraft
Bone	Sensation	Scottie
Bonecrusher	Hamburger	Scuples
Bones	Helper	Sharpshooter
Bonk	Hometown	Sherms
Botray	Hit	Single
Bottles	Hotcakes	Snow
Boubou	How Do You	Special
Boulder	Like Me Now?	Speed
Brick	I Am Back	Square Time Bob
Bubble Gum	Issues	Stone
Bulldog	Kibbles & Bits	Swell Up
Bullion	Knot	Synthetic
Bump	Kokomo	Task Force
Bumpers	Lace	Time Bomb
Bust Wipe	Lacer	Track
Butter	Lady	Troop
Caine	Lightning	Ultimate
Caspar	Maryjane	Uzi
Caviar	Mind Blower	Voltron II
Chemical	Mixed Jive	Whip
Chewies	Monkey Brain	White Ball
China White	Mr. X	White Lady

Chip	New Edition	Wipe Out
Chisel	Nickels	Wreck
Climax	Nicks	Wrecking Crew
Cloud	Nine	Yale
Cloud Nine	Nuggets	Yayoo
Club	Oil-based	Yimyom
Coke	Ounce	
Comeback	Paste	
Crack	Peace	
Crank	Peas	
Crew	Pebbles	
Cribs	Peru	

Besides these various terms there is also some use of numbers to identify crack cocaine. Respondents reported the use of the term "38" or ".38", presumably referring to the caliber of the standard police pistol, and a sidearm that is quite popular on the streets. Also the terms "51", "151", or "501" were also reported as references to crack-laced marijuana cigarettes ("joints"). Smoking such an entity is also called "lacing" and a "51" is also referred to as a "lacer". As well abbreviated terms from sales units were also widely reported. The use of such terms as "1/8th's", "1/2's", and the like are frequent.

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