

A follow-up study in The Netherlands

Dutch long-paper
March 2004

Lia van Doorn

1. Follow-up studies in The Netherlands

In the Netherlands, follow-up studies in the field of homelessness are scarce. In 2002 the first, and so far only, study of this kind appeared, called *Time on the streets* (van Doorn 2002). Therefore, this study is central to this paper. In presenting it, we focus on the way the study has been set up and accounted for methodologically.

In a nutshell, this study concerns the processes underlying the episodic nature of homelessness. The problem definition focuses on its origin, continuation and termination. The study was structured longitudinally and conducted in Utrecht, a city in the centre of The Netherlands. It focuses on a specific part of the homeless population, namely those who do not have a guaranteed shelter for the night at their disposal, seek refuge in the public domain, and avail themselves of day and night shelters and other temporary accommodations, improvised or otherwise. In other words: street dwellers. The main source of data gathering consisted of monitoring two cohorts of respondents. The first cohort consisted of 64 persons who were practically all homeless at the outset of this study. They were monitored during 1993 and 2000. The second cohort consisted of 20 former homeless persons who were monitored between 1997 and 2000. The method used was gathering qualitative data.

In the sections below, successively the following themes are discussed. Section 2 sketches the methodological justification of this study. Section 3 deals with the characteristics of the research population. Section 4 presents the quantitative findings from the study. In paragraph 5, the representativity and generalisability of the research outcomes are discussed. To conclude, the discussion follows.

2. Methodological justification

In this section, first of all it is argued why the research was located in the city of Utrecht. Following this, the specific demands of the target group and problem definition, and the implications of this for the research method, are discussed. Also the way the data have been collected and processed is described.

2.1 Selection of the location

Before the study started, a location had to be selected where the research work could be taken up. The eventual choice for situating the study was based on the following five criteria:

- Firstly, the homeless are a population without much of a stable place to stay. In order to increase the chances of tracing them again several times in course of the study, ideally the study would be limited to one or more fixed locations in the country from where contact could be established and maintained.
- Secondly, the questions which are part of the problem definition refer to following not only homeless persons themselves, but also their contacts with the authorities and the changes in these which manifest themselves in course of time. Therefore, an institutional context had to be studied as well, which could the relations between institutions into the picture as well. This was an argument for limiting the study to the institutional context within one municipality.
- Thirdly, the problematics of homelessness are typically urban. In this, a large city is preferred to a middle-sized town. In the last case, the population of former homeless persons might be too small, if the response would be below expectation. Thereby, the middle-sized municipalities disqualified as possible research locations.
- Fourthly, in view of the need to safeguard the representativity, preference was given to a population of homeless persons of which the demographic characteristics had already been mapped to some extent. These data could then function as points of reference, to be able to determine to what extent the research population reflected the local and national populations at large.
- The last criterion was of a practical nature: the research location should be accessible as for the co-operation of key persons within institutions.

Considering these criteria, Utrecht – the fourth major city in the Netherlands – was selected as the research location. The population of homeless persons in this town was documented to some extent, especially with respect to numbers and demographic characteristics. As for the institutional context, the public provisions in the city are average. With respect to the overall developments in care for the homeless, Utrecht is certainly not a fore-runner, but is not too far behind either. At most, there are relatively many volunteers occupied in the sector of services of Utrecht. Characteristic for this town is its central location, that it has public transport junction, and the presence of a large shopping mall. This is one reason why Utrecht has both wandering and home-based homeless persons, and for the first group the town is within easy reach. A practical argument is that I had easy access to the agencies for, and populations of, the homeless at Utrecht. Since 1989 I worked in the services for the homeless in this town, in various capacities. Between 1989 and 1992 I was employed by the local lodge for homeless persons passing through called *Sleep-Inn*, as a volunteer, night guard, and co-ordinator, successively. Between 1994 and 2001, I was connected to *De Tussenvoorziening* ('services in between'). Some of the activities connected to this provision are a housing project for former homeless persons, a mobile walk-in for persons sleeping outside, and a buddy project. These activities greatly facilitated establishing the first contacts with the respondents. For the stable core of the

homeless of Utrecht I was a known person, and this rendered a solid base for the continuation of contacts in the context of this study.

2.2 Selection of the method

Which considerations led to the selection of the research method? After this, it is pointed out which were the methodological requirements as for the population and the problem definition, and why the choice was made for the intensive research method and the life course and life world approach. Successively, a methodological question is discussed which occurs when studying biographies.

Requirements as for the population

Conducting research on populations of homeless persons involves a number of specific methodological requirements. First of all, they constitute a so-called *hidden population*. No sample framework is available to draw from, and by definition they can not be found at home addresses. They may be found in the services for the homeless, but also in parks, coffee shops, and the street. That is where the collection of data will have to take place, under circumstances which are by far not optimal from a research-technical perspective. Moreover, some respondents are able to concentrate to a limited extent only. This necessitates a flexible method. Secondly, the homeless are a privacy-sensitive population. They are not known as accessible persons. There is a fair chance they will refuse to co-operate, or give socially desirable answers to questions on delicate subjects such as addictions or involvement in illegal activities. This necessitates a research method which offers scope for inspiring confidence.

Requirements as for the problem definition

The problem definition central to this study involves specific methodological requirements as well.

- Firstly, the problem definition concerns studying the episodic character of homelessness. This requires a research method apt for mapping dynamic processes, and in which follow-ups can be included.
- Secondly, the problem definition concerns a many-headed phenomenon: the method will have to do justice to the interweavensness of complex and mutually interacting phenomena in the day-to-day reality of the respondents. Therefore, a method with which the respondents are studied in isolation from their (institutional) context will not suffice.
- Thirdly, until now, little is known about homelessness. There has hardly been any theory formation. Therefore, a merely testing research method will not suffice either. Rather, there is a need for a method which describes and explains.

For this, the current method of data collection through door-to-door inquiries does not provide solace. An adequate sample framework on which the investigation could be based is missing. Conducting enquiries in the provisions for the homeless, or out in the street, is hardly workable. Moreover, the risk at non-response is considerable. Therefore the population will have to be composed, traced, and studied, in a different manner.

Intensive research method

Considering the previous methodological requirements, the intensive or qualitative research method is pre-eminently suitable. This method is characterized by detailed observations of a lot of features with a relatively small number of persons, in which the complexity of the social reality, and the dynamics thereof, are brought to the fore, and stereotyped features and reaction patterns of the respondents are described in the situations studied. Thereby, this method distinguishes itself from the common 'hard evidence' research approach which, on the contrary, is based on the collection of a limited amount of data on large research populations, and in which the complexity of social reality tends to be reduced (Schuyt 1986). The intensive method is suited well for carrying out research on persons who are difficult to approach. It is a flexible method in which allows for taking time to create a bond of confidence with the persons under study. By means of the method a description of the social reality under study is made which is as detailed and realistic as possible, with special attention for the way in which the respondents look at their situations with their own eyes, and reproduce them in their own words (Maso 1987). An 'insiders point of view' can be put on the stage with it (Spradley 1970). That also does justice to the defensibility and resilience of the persons concerned. It shows which strategies they apply to deal with difficult circumstances. The method is particularly suitable for interpretation and explanation in particular.

Life course and life world approach

Besides this, a longitudinal design was chosen. This means that research objects are examined at, at least, two different moments in time. This method is particularly suitable for analysing the dynamics of change processes. By building in follow-ups, more depth is achieved in the interpretation of the outcomes, and a more varied picture of reality emerges. Since the actual situation of the respondents is studied at different moments in time, the material that has been obtained is suitable for looking for explanations as well. Moreover, longitudinal research offers possibilities for checking the validity of the answers by respondents. Each contact is a recording of one moment, and a series of such recordings of moments offers the possibility to look through the 'presentation of self' in order to find out if there is a discrepancy between saying and doing

(Goffman 1959). Besides, this method renders information on both 'perspectives in action', and 'perspectives of action'. The former deals with behaviour which is observed at the very moment in which certain events are taking place. The means looking back with the persons concerned at certain events which have taken place in the past, or out of sight for the researcher. Here, one rather deals with the meaning the persons involved attach to events afterwards. These perspectives are of a different order, but both provide useful information (cf. Snow and Anderson 1993).

Methodological question when studying biographies

In order to obtain insight in the long term development of homelessness, the life stories of the respondents have been recorded. Personal biographies are viewed as narrative story constructs: definitions of themselves which people use because of the need to create a coherent life history, with which they account to themselves and others, and with which they identify themselves (van Halen 1995). This gives rise to the question, to what extent biographies are truthful. The classical methodological problem is that the validity of biographies can not be established empirically. The researcher finds himself in the paradoxical situation of asking about the past, but hearing the actual reconstruction of it. For what the interviewed are narrating about their past, is their present interpretation of events which took place there and then. The objective reality is over, and usually has not been recorded anywhere. When looking back, some events are enlarged in the memory, while others are forgotten or hidden, and rationalisations and romanticisations are taking place. Besides, usually one is inclined to take the present situation as point of departure, and (re-)formulate the story of one's own life in such a manner that a sequence of events emerges with the present situation as its logical outcome. Usually, people have various versions of their personal biography at their disposal. The orientation at listeners makes life stories variable: they differ according to the audience the storyteller is facing. For instance, people tell another version of their life history to a psychotherapist than to an employer during an application interview. Besides this, perspectives tend to shift in the course of time: as soon as people enter a new life phase, their interpretation of the personal history changes as well (Nijhof 2000). Therefore, in this study, the life histories of (former) homeless persons are conceived as representations not so much of the objective truth, but rather of what passes for a plausible, authentic interpretation of it in their eyes. The life stories reflect their experiences and intentions, their actions and the consequences thereof. They constitute a reaction to the representations they handle, and the changes which have occurred in them in due course.

By following, studying, and analysing, the life course of homeless persons over a longer period of time, I am trying to trace social patterns which are at the basis of their episodic character in particular. In doing so, I am interested most of all in *similarities* which delineate themselves in their life courses, without losing the diversity and individual differences out of sight.

2.3 Way of collecting data

The data collection consisted of three parts. Firstly, 64 (former) homeless persons were followed. From here on, they are simply denoted as cohort A. Besides, 20 former homeless persons were followed, denoted in brief as cohort B. Following this cohort had the specific purpose of collecting additional information on the integration process of former homeless persons, since the number of homeless persons in cohort A who terminated their wandering way of life during the longitudinal study was small in size. Thirdly, additional information was gathered. These three parts are now elucidated separately.

2.3.1 Cohort A

Cohort A consisted of 64 persons who were interviewed for the first time in 1993. At that time, 60 of them were homeless, and 4 were ex-homeless. The findings from the first rounds of interviews were reported already in two publications (Van Doorn 1994a; 1994b). Between 1999 and 2000 these persons – insofar as they could be traced – interviewed for the last time. During the six to seven years in between, approximately half of them were interviewed more than twice, and half of those quite regularly: on average five of six times.

Successively, the finding sites for this cohort, the selection and size of the population, the way of establishing contact and response, the first interview round, the interview remuneration and reciprocity, the follow-up, and the tracking are discussed.

Finding sites

The main finding site of the respondents in this cohort consisted of four low-threshold reception facilities for homeless persons at Utrecht: Walk-In Centre *Hoog Catharijne* for hard-drug users, Day Care *Het Catharijnehuis*, stay facility for wandering persons *De Sleep-Inn* and *Release*, an alternative care agency. The choice of these four care facilities by itself already represents a first demarcation of the research population. The four care facilities have a mixed population of visitors. This population consists both of homeless persons who live in Utrecht permanently, and persons who visit the town for a short period and are passing by. Also, there are persons who sleep outdoors permanently but do visit the day care centre, and persons who spend the night in the lodges for wandering persons but do not make use of day care. Homeless persons who never make use of these facilities have not been involved in the research. The first contacts with the respondents took place in these four agencies (insofar as it concerned homeless persons who were not yet known to me).

Selection and size of the population

The first round of interviews in 1993 was conducted within a time span of three months. Respondents were selected at three different moments – both during morning, afternoon, and evening hours, and on week days and during the weekend, at the finding sites mentioned before. While composing the cohort, it was attempted to choose the respondents in such a manner that they would constitute a reflection of the population of homeless persons at large. In this, features such as age, gender, nationality, use of substances, and mental health, as well as the duration of homelessness, were attended to in particular. Within the time span of three months, 64 respondents could be selected who, altogether, formed an acceptable reflection (see section 4). On the one hand, the size of this cohort is large enough to derive general statements from it; on the other hand, this is the maximum number of respondents who could be followed in the time available for this study. Usually, in other longitudinal studies in which an intensive research method is being applied, the size of the research population is considerably smaller.

Establishing contact and response

Out of the homeless persons who were approached for a first interview, four persons refused to co-operate. Their reasons for this included: "I have told my story to service providers so many times already", "It hurts too much to bring up all those by-gones again", "These are not things I can talk about easily", and "I have already appeared on television to tell my story, and I have already appeared twice in a newspaper". Some respondents initially did not want to co-operate, but later on changed their opinion. The others reacted favourably right away. They appreciated the fact that their opinions and ideas were asked for. This gave them a chance to tell their stories in a not-binding manner, without being doubted beforehand or moral judgements. For most of them, having personal conversations is a rare occasion anyway, especially with women (cf. Passaro 1996:5). For me, it was an advantage to be a woman in several ways. Particularly the homeless men loved to grab their chance to engage in a lively conversation with a woman within the sight of others. This gave them a certain status within their group. Besides, when facing a woman, they are inclined more to leave out the bragging and become confidential. On the other hand, issues referring to relationships and sexuality are discussed less easily. Respondents often asked questions about my private situation. By asking if I was single, they sounded if I was 'on the market'. Usually, telling them about the partner who was waiting for me at home sufficed to provide clarity on this matter.

First round of interviews

The first round of conversations took place in the four care facilities mainly, in the living rooms or in a separate room. Altogether, eight of the first interviews were held elsewhere: in the *Hoog Catharijne* shopping mall, a restaurant or catering facility, a park, and a squatted house. The interviews with the four respondents who had the disposal of own living quarters by that time, were conducted in their own homes. All the time, it was strived for to make the interviews take place in a quiet surroundings, out of hearing distance from others.

Overview of the sites where the first interview with the respondents has taken place (n=64)

Site	Number of interviews
The Sleep-Inn	16
Walk-In centre <i>Hoog Catharijne</i>	9
Day care centre <i>Het Catharijnehuis</i>	14
Foundation Release	17
Elsewhere	8
Total	64

It was already pointed out what gave rise to the study and what purpose the data served. Also it was discussed that the intention was to interview this cohort several times in the future, how I could get in touch with them again, and how their anonymity was safeguarded.

The initial questions of the first interviews concerned the daily worries of the respondents mostly: where they slept, and how they got through the day, with or without money. This kind of questions appeal to the skills they have developed out in the street, and most of the time were seized upon to underline these skills. While doing so, they took up the role of initiating me, comparatively a lay-woman, in the ins and outs of street life. More delicate issues, such as questions regarding their past, got a chance in a later stage. Usually they reacted with reluctance to questions regarding their upbringing, and their contacts with parents or relatives. These issues evoked painful memories, and sometimes this was a reason not to dwell upon them for too long. On the other hand, questions regarding their contacts with the police and the law, and addictions and psychiatric syndromes, usually were answered without.

The interviews were semi-structured, that is to say, the topics for discussion were more-or-less fixed, but the course of the interview could vary. Little by little, the life course and the history of the respondents came up for discussion, and as many aspects relevant to the study as possible were brought up. Usually, the conversations had an informal character and varied in duration considerably, from twenty minutes to two-and-a-half hours. The conversations were recorded on tape, if the respondents gave their permission and insofar as the situation allowed for this. Successively, these records were conversed

into verbatim reports. If no taped records could be made, a written report of the conversation was made immediately afterwards.

The timing of the interview turned out to be of crucial importance. On a number of moments during the day, the respondents are busy seeing to elementary needs. Only after having cared for their daily affairs, there is more time and quiet for having a conversation. Late during the evenings, the respondents in the stay facility for wandering persons turned out to be fatigued most of the time, and this blocked an intensive conversation. Respondents with strongly dominant psychiatric problems were either reasonably communicative, or completely out of reach, by turns. Usually, interviews with these respondents could not be made to last longer than twenty minutes each. The communicativeness of alcohol and drug users could vary strongly as well. Therefore, for one thing, the moment of having an interview was dictated by the condition the respondent was in, right then.

Interview remuneration and reciprocity

During the interviews I provided the respondents with coffee or tea, and a snack. Afterwards, they were offered a pack of cigarette tobacco. The very few non-smokers received a consumption card of the day care centre, or a deposit for a free night at the stay facility. Altogether, these remunerations had a value of € 5,- to € 7,-. This modest sign of appreciation was chosen for in view of the argument that respondents who are motivated to have an interview without a financial reward for it, will reply more truthfully. The snacks, shag, and a listening ear, turned out to suffice as incentives for co-operating with the interviews most of the time. Moreover, some considered the researcher a welcome acquisition for their circle of acquaintances, who they might approach in times of need to borrow some change money or shag, or to employ for getting all sorts of things arranged. Because they were prepared to co-operate with an interview, I owed them. I complied with the '*quid pro quo* principle' of the street culture by rendering such return services from time to time. Some respondents wanted to co-operate with the first interview only in exchange for a more substantial monetary remuneration. I entered into negotiations with them. These, it appeared later on, mainly had a ritual meaning. Through the negotiations, a personal bond was created. Moreover, they gave the respondents concerned an opportunity to estimate with whom he had to deal: is the researcher someone who can be fooled, or is she experienced through-and-through in the street circuit? If the latter turned out to be the case, they usually showed their appreciation, and did not bring up a higher monetary reward again. Elaborating on service – return service principle I have continued to by street journals from informants for years; usually several copies of the same edition, from different sellers. Furthermore, I nearly always donated when I met them while begging. This almost assumed the form of toll-gathering: 'From you I am sure to get something.' Besides I regularly invited informants – at occasional meetings in the street – for a visit to a pub or snack bar. This also were good opportunities to be updated on the last developments in their ways of life, the vicissitudes of other homeless persons, and the lock, stock, and barrel in the facilities meant for them. Such unplanned meetings took place with great regularity, even more so because I lived in the centre of town, and nearly always moved by foot to and from work.

Follow-up

The follow-up interviews had a multiple purpose. Firstly, in this way a picture was obtained of the developments which had taken place in course of time. Secondly, issues could be discussed which had remained under-exposed during the previous interview. Thirdly, they offered an opportunity to rephrase questions asked during previous interviews, and thus check the answers for internal consistency.

As said, in course of a three-months period in 1993, the respondents were interviewed for the first time. Insofar as possible, they were traced again, and interviewed for the last time, in 1999 or 2000. During the six to seven years in between, approximately half of these persons were interviewed more than twice, and half of those were interviewed regularly: altogether five or six times on average, with approximately one year in between. In particular this concerned respondents who were amongst the fixed core of homeless persons at Utrecht, as well as those who disposed of a home address for shorter or longer duration in course of the study. These respondents were interviewed most frequent and extensively. Most of the respondents who were interviewed twice at most in course of the study, were persons who can be found in Utrecht sporadically, or who had left the city, and those who – with or without intervals – were difficult to communicate with, because of addictions and psychiatric syndromes.

Altogether, more than half of the traceable respondents in this cohort were interviewed often and extensively enough to allow for speaking of life course pre-constructions. This is to say that altogether, the interviews resulted in a coherent picture of their life histories, whereby – insofar as could be verified – all important life phases and life events had been covered. For the other respondents, this was limited to more overall impressions of their ways of life, in which certain elements of the life story were missing, and could not be traced.

Tracking

Tracking the respondents for follow-up interviews went as follows. It turned out to be as good as impossible to make appointments with respondents in the long run. They were hardly able to predict where they would be in, say, half a year. It is true some homeless respondents could be reached by cell-phone, but usually at times only, and via changing numbers. Therefore, it was essential to stay informed on who was in town when, followed by being on the lookout at the facilities for the homeless, in the shopping mall of *Hoog Catharijne* or a public park. Passing the word to other homeless persons, asking them if they had seen this or that person of recent, resulted in valuable information at times only, and often turned out to be unreliable. For instance, on some respondents rumours were passed – for instance that they were in jail, or had expired –

which turned out to be incorrect after all. I tracked the bulk of my respondents by checking the registration lists of the facilities for homeless persons regularly. From these list it could be learned which respondents were in town at that very moment. Besides, the information of service providers, volunteers, and former homeless persons, has put me on the right track quite a few times. When I was sure that a respondent was in town, and if I did not find him at one of the facilities for homeless persons, I sometimes passed the news to other homeless persons that I was looking for the person in question, and where this person could contact me. In this manner, the contact was then usually established after all. As for the interview remunerations for the tape recordings and reports of the conversations, during the follow-up interviews the same rules of the game were observed as during the round of first interviews.

2.3.2 Cohort B

Next, a cohort of 20 former homeless persons were followed during the period of 1997 to 2000. This cohort concerns persons who had been wandering throughout Utrecht and elsewhere, and had found residences for living *independently* by that time. These persons were interviewed at least twice, as well. The round of first interview with them took place in 1997, and the round of last ones in 2000. In course of the three years in between, 8 out of the 20 respondents were interviewed more than twice. On average, they have been spoken to four times. Below, the way in which the selection of this cohort took place, getting in touch with them, the response, and the interviews, are dwelled upon.

Selection, and getting in touch

In composing this cohort, a complicating factor was that the literature does not contain data on the features of former homeless persons. A frame of reference on their distribution over age groups, sexe, and nationality, is not available. In order to arrive at a reflection of the total population as adequate as possible, the 20 former homeless respondents were traced along two lines. Firstly, associates of various institutions, such as the agencies for social work, mental health care, the police, street corner work, reception facilities, residential homes, de-addiction clinics, probation work, and coaching projects for living independently, were requested to bring forward former homeless persons. In this manner, respondents were selected who were in touch with service providers belonging to a variety of lines of work. The only way in which I have influenced the selection of respondents brought forward by service providers, was by indicating that I was looking for black and immigrant persons especially, departing from the fact that in samples, these categories are underrepresented almost as a rule. If the former homeless persons who were approached did agree, I made an appointment with them for their first interviews as soon as possible,- usually through the intermediary. Secondly, the method of snowball sampling (Goodman 1961) was made use of. The principle of snowball sampling is that a-selectively chosen 'respondents to begin with' are requested to mention names of other former homeless persons. Successively, the persons who have been named (the *nominees*) are asked to mention names of others. This results in a chain, in which successive respondents are traced in the same manner, time and again. In this manner, former homeless persons who were not maintaining contacts with service providers were traced as well. Besides, the snowball method provided insight in the network of in-group contacts between former homeless persons. For composing this cohort too, a period of three months was set forth. At the end of this period, 20 respondents had been selected.

Response

Since in both methods of selection, the first contacts with the (potential) respondents were made through intermediaries, I could not get a clear sight at the extent of non-response and the reasons brought forward for it. One artefact of the selection methods mentioned above is that former homeless persons who hide the fact they have been homeless from the outside world, or do not want to be remembered of their lives as homeless persons, will remain out of the research population. During the first interview, respondents were asked if they were willing to co-operate with follow-up interviews. In all cases, their reactions were affirmative. Most of them appreciated the interest in their whereabouts. Notably when, in the mean time, their lives had taken a more favourable turn, they were eager to tell their success stories. Former homeless persons who were relapsing into their street lives, usually did not want to discuss the circumstances leading to this at that time, or disappeared out of sight for a shorter or longer period of time. Usually, though, after some time the reason for the relapse could (to some extent) be talked about again.

Interviews

Insofar as possible, the interviews were conducted at the homes of the respondent. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, because this provided a quiet setting for having a conversation. Secondly, because having a glance at their living conditions provided useful information on they way they gave shape to living. Usually it was not easy to make an appointment, especially with respondents who had settled down only recently. Most of them could not be reached by telephone, or had

mobile numbers which changed regularly. Often I rang doorbells, or rattled mailboxes, when no-one opened the door, or the respondent was not at home, at the agreed moment. Some turned out to have moved out in the meantime, or had been evicted again. In these cases, I kept in touch by leaving notes left in their mailboxes, requesting them to get in touch again, or met them in one of the facilities for the homeless later on, after which a new appointment was made. The longer respondents had been living independently, the easier it was to make appointments with them. Once inside their homes, the respondents usually took me around their homes with modest pride. As far as possible, the conversations have been recorded on tape, and written out literally. Usually, the remuneration consisted of a pack of cigarette tobacco or cigarettes. Between 1997 and 2000, at least two interviews were held with each respondent in this cohort, and as said, 8 out of the 20 respondents were interviewed more often: three to nine times, and four times on average.

The interviews with these respondents differed from the interviews with cohort A in various ways. Firstly, the average duration was considerably longer: between two and four hours. Besides, the quality of the interviews was higher. The respondents had found the time and peace of mind to look back on their lives. Introspection and recapitulation of the course of life, which is part of the process of recovery, and discussions with service providers, usually had provided them with some insight in the nature and sequence of the events which had driven them out into the street, and to getting settled again. For this reason, the life histories of these respondents were characterized by a larger internal consistency. Meanwhile, of course the question remains to what extent they 'described' their life histories afterwards. Anyhow, now that they are housed again, they have less reasons to cheat themselves and others by telling social lies. Therefore, it may be assumed that the information they provided is relatively reliable. A number of respondents indicated that the mirroring nature of the interview conversation – being invited to look back, placing events in chronological sequence, attempting to trace what is cause and what is effect, as well as structuring and summarizing – contributed to their assimilation process.

Nearly all respondents in that cohort have been interviewed so intensively, that one may speak of life course reconstructions.

2.3.3 Supplementary data collection

Next to all this, between 1993 and 2000 supplementary data material has been collected. This consisted of three parts. In the first place, during various periods participatory observation has been carried out at various sites within Utrecht: both in the reception facilities, and in the shopping mall of *Hoog Catharijne*, parks, coffee shops, and out in the street. When doing so, throughout the years conversations without any follow-up have been held with more than 50 homeless and former homeless persons. This resulted in three cahiers with notes of the observations, and reports of encounters with homeless persons.

In the second place, more than 30 persons were interviewed who were part of the personal and institutional networks of the (former) homeless respondents, such as relatives, new or former neighbours of (former) homeless persons, service providers, constables, landlords, social welfare councillors, and so on. Besides, in course of the years, many dozens of professionals were interviewed who are occupation in care facilities for homeless persons and adjoining sectors, both at Utrecht, elsewhere in the Netherlands, and in other countries.

Lastly, several dozens of ego documents and interviews were studied. For this purpose, a collection of autobiographies, novels, poems, and other published and unpublished texts written by (former) homeless persons from the Netherlands and elsewhere, was made.¹ These documents made it possible to find out to what extent the real-life stories and experiences of the respondents are corresponding with other populations of (former) homeless persons. They proved to be remarkably alike, while the differences mainly concerned aspects which are specific for the situation at Utrecht. Besides, the publications gave some new, or supplementary, insights, which I then brought forward during the interviews with the respondents, in order to find out if they were applicable to them too. It goes without saying that notions from the social-scientific literature have been applied as well.

2.4 Processing of the data

The three types of data collection have resulted in a range of empirical material, varying from piles of verbatim interview reports, to cahiers filled with reports of observations and other notes. On the basis of these data, a *mental map* was constructed: a categorization of stereo-typical features, and reaction patterns, of respondents in the situation under study. This way, various patterns of thought and action by (former) homeless persons were mapped systematically. The method of work in this was as follows. After each interview round, the data material was screened on the issues at which the study had been focused by the study at its very beginning: reasons of loss of housing, social networks of the homeless, contacts with institutions, strategies for gathering income, and so on. All interview fragments and notes referring to these issues were selected, and assembled in the category concerned. New data material was analysed and categorised in the same manner. When organising digitalised texts, the comforts of the computer were made use of, by attaching keywords to the issues in the

¹ See for instance Van Zelst (1999), Sleutelberg (1998), Stringer (1999), Funciello (1993), Healy (1988), Healy (1990), *We are home now* (1998) en Eighner (1993).

texts, which corresponded to the categories concerned, and by assembling all text files with the same keywords via search commands. The hand-written data material was categorised following a similar principle, by means of manual copying, cutting, and pasting. In course of the research work, new categories were added, covering issues which were suspected to be important as well, for answering questions which were part of the problem definition. These issues referred to the arguments used by (former) homeless persons, the meanings they attach to their circumstances, and notions regarding developments in the course of time, mainly.

By-and-by, in a cyclic process of analysing and categorising, refinements were introduced by splitting up categories, and inserting subdivisions, and connections across the different categories became visible. Written reports were made of the in-between analyses of this categorised data material (cf. Emerson and others 1995). In turn, these in-between analyses by themselves gave rise to asking direct questions regarding certain issues on which little information was available so far, during successive interview rounds. They also brought to the fore what specific information was as yet to be collected, to be able to confirm, or reject, certain relationships which were presumed to exist. Besides, they gave rise to literature explorations directed at the established of relationships with theory.

3. Features of the populations

In this section, firstly, some general features of the population of homeless persons are described. Next, the population at Utrecht is described, and finally, the demographic features of the research population are presented. This constitutes the upbeat for discussing the representativity and generalisability of the research outcomes, in section 4.

3.1. General features of populations of homeless persons

What are the general features of populations of homeless persons, and which social categories may be distinguished? 'Hard data' are not at hand, but some indications may be given. During the past decennia, significant changes have taken place with the population of the homeless. In the past they could be qualified as mainly consisting of senior and relatively rare men of Dutch origin, usually with alcohol problems. They may be called the traditional homeless. Around the 'eighties, they were joined by newcomers with different features, such as wandering youths, women, hard-drug addicts, and non-recognised, refused, refugees. On the whole, the multi-culturality of the population of the homeless increased. The traditional homeless – elderly Dutch men with alcohol addictions – now are a minority, out on the street. The present population of the homeless shows a great diversity in age, ethnicity, level of education, and socio-economic background. Their capabilities are widely different as well. Some succeed in (re-)entering a situation of independent housing after a short period out on the street, and on their own strength. For others, the situation of homelessness has a chronic nature: they depend on long-term or even permanent care. And while the one is able to keep his ground well and continues to look after himself, the other is completely out of joint and grows filthy.

The present population of homeless persons may be heterogeneous, but is a relatively homogeneous category when compared to the population at large. Although the level of education of the homeless varies greatly between themselves (some are illiterate, others have a university degree), the level is below the national average. Homeless persons are single more often than the average Dutchman. Men are greatly over-represented. About 15 percent are women, and it is suspected that this percentage is on the increase little by little. The age composition ranges from minors to retired persons, but the category of 25 to 45 years is dominant. Furthermore, they have to deal with addictions more often than the average Dutchman. Psychopathology occurs two to three times more often than with the total Dutch population. On estimate 25 to 50 percent of the homeless is struggling with lighter psychic problems, and 15 to 30 percent suffers from serious psychiatric disorders. A portion of these persons have a past of admissions in psychiatric hospitals. Another portion has never been in touch with mental health care (Wennink en Van Weeghel 1993). Approximately 25 to 30 percent of the homeless is coping with both psychic disorders, and addictions. The average income of the homeless is way beyond average, and often even below the social minimum. They are in touch with the police and the law comparatively often, and have been sentenced or detained more often than the average citizen. They have more debts, and their health condition is relatively bad (Wolf and others 2000).

Rarely, the lack of housing is the only problem of homeless persons. The majority is characterised by *multiple* problems which covers various spheres of life, such as addiction, a psychiatric diagnosis, debts, problems with the law, relationship problems, financial and material problems, cognitive weakness, and/or the lack of a stay permit. In the Netherlands, persons with *singular* problems – such as, just lacking a house, or financial problems only – are rarely found amongst the homeless. Also, wandering children and complete families are rarely found out on the street in our country. This is contrary to the situation on countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States, where average citizens land out on the street as well, who have had to give up their homes only because of a loss of income, for example due to unemployment (Daly 1996). Apparently, upto now, the social security system and the high quality of other provisions in our country are preventing persons with singular problems, including women with children, from becoming homeless in large numbers.

Although homeless persons are from all over the country, they - once homeless - mainly stay in the larger cities. In 1998, Reinking and Kroon have documented the homeless population of Utrecht rather extensively as for their size and demographic features. Utrecht has approximately 800 adult homeless persons. 93% of this population are men aged 38 on average. The migrants amongst them are mainly of Moroccan, Surinamese, or Antillian descent. Illegal immigrants were hardly found. Nearly all of them are single, the level of education is low, and they do not have regular employment. Two-thirds have an allowance, while three-quarters are below the poverty line of € 550,- per month, and 80% had not even worked – legally or illegally - for a single day during the preceding month. Selling street journals provided 14% with some income. On average, the homeless population of Utrecht has been homeless for two-and-a-half years at a stretch, and for approximately five years during their whole lives. The number of persons sleeping outside is relatively high at Utrecht. During the preceding month, more than half of them had spent at least one night outside; this mainly concerned hard-drug users. Mobility amongst the homeless of Utrecht is relatively high; 40% have spent the preceding month elsewhere, out of town, against 15% van de population at Amsterdam. Yet, the homeless at Utrecht at large are rather home-bound. On average, during the preceding month they have spent three-quarters of the nights in town. They are well-known persons for the police and the law; more than 80% have been convicted for delinquency, and 63% have spent at least two weeks in jail. Generally it is estimated that 13% of the population is cognitively limited. During the preceding month, 53% had been misusing or dependent of drugs 53%, and for 22% this was the case with alcohol. Psychic problems are rampant, notably heavy diagnoses such as depressions (32%), and schizophrenia and related disorders (15%). One-quarter is struggling with with psychiatric disorders and addictions, according to the findings of Reinking en Kroon (1998).

3.2 Features of the respondents in the follow-up study

This section concerns the demographic features of the two cohorts of respondents. These have to do with the data on the respondents as collected *during the first round of interviews*. This means they only represent the situation at the start of the follow-up study. Quantitative data on developments which delineated themselves amongst the respondents in course of the study – regarding, for instance, the question how many homeless persons got settled in course of time, and what percentage of them has relapsed into street life – are presented in the next sections. In the following table, data on respondents of both cohorts are given in percentages. The absolute numbers have been placed within brackets. As for the distribution over the highest level of education it should be mentioned that this concerns both completed and unfinished education.

Overzicht van kenmerken van de respondenten²

	Cohort A (n=64)		Cohort B (n=20)	
Gender				
female	11%	(7)	20%	(4)
male	89%	(57)	80%	(16)
Total	100%	(64)	100%	(20)
Age				
≤ 19 years	3%	(2)		
20 - 24 years	16%	(10)	5%	(1)
25 - 34 years	16%	(10)	20%	(4)
35 - 44 years	45%	(30)	45%	(9)
45 - 54 years	13%	(8)	10%	(2)
55 - 64 years	5%	(3)	20%	(4)
65 ≥ years	2%	(1)		
Total	100%	(64)	100%	(20)
Ethnicity				
Netherlands	80%	(51)	85%	(17)
Surinam and the Antilles	6%	(4)	5%	(1)
Morocco	6%	(4)	5%	(1)
elsewhere	8%	(5)	5%	(1)
Total	100%	(64)	100%	(20)

Highest education followed

² This overview represents the situation at the time of the first interviews with the respondents. For cohort A the data refer to the situation in 1993, and for cohort B to de situation in 1997.

Primary school	21%	(12)	15%	(3)
lower professional training	26%	(15)	30%	(6)
middle professional training	29%	(17)	40%	(8)
higher professional training	19%	(11)	10%	(2)
university	5%	(3)	5%	(1)
Total	100%	(58)	100%	(20)

Duration of homelessness

Less than 3 months	7%	(4)		
3 to 6 months	8%	(5)	5%	(1)
6 to 12 months	18%	(11)	5%	(1)
1 to 2 years	7%	(4)	15%	(3)
2 to 3 years	12%	(7)	15%	(3)
3 to 5 years	18%	(11)	5%	(1)
5 to 10 years	15%	(9)	30%	(6)
10 to 15 years	10%	(6)	15%	(3)
15 to 20 years	5%	(3)	5%	(1)
more than 20 years			5%	(1)
Total	100%	(60)	100 %	(20)

Duration of being settled following homelessness

Less than 3 months	25%	(1)	10%	(2)
3 to 6 months			15%	(3)
6 to 12 months	50%	(2)	15%	(3)
1 to 2 years	25%	(1)	25%	(5)
2 to 3 years			20%	(4)
3 to 5 years			15%	(3)
Total	100%	(4)	100%	(20)

Cohort A

As for the highest education followed, generally speaking we have to do with unfinished courses, in the case of cohort A. Three respondents from this cohort indicated they have difficulty reading or writing. Probably, the number of functional illiterates is much higher.

As for the upbringing of the respondents, somewhat less than half have spent their youth in single-parent families, foster families, or residential homes for children, partially or fully.

40% of the respondents rate their own physical health as not-too-well or bad. Feet complaints are mentioned often. As for their mental health, 39% report having experienced one or more admissions in mental health institutions. Nearly half appear confused to such an extent that, to my opinion, they are facing mental problems. Especially the female respondents in this cohort were, nearly all of them, struggling with strongly dominant mental problems. The interviews with them were less useful. Therefore, fragments from the interviews with the women from this cohort are relatively less frequent, further on in this study.

From the data the respondents gave regarding their use of substances it appeared that 33% are moderate alcohol users, and 15% are drinking frequently. They mainly drink beer. Soft drugs are used moderately by 28%, and frequently by 31%. Hard drugs are used moderately, in their own words, by 19%, and frequently by 12%. Mostly we have to do with combined use. In this, preference is given to one kind of drugs – usually heroin or cocaine -, but besides one also uses xtc or other pills and powders which are available.

Remarkably, in course of the years of addiction, a number of the frequent users have changed their addiction to the one substance for addiction to another substance. Some of the present alcoholics were hard-drug addicts in the past, and vice-versa. Apart from a few exceptions, all respondents are smokers. They smoke a lot, nearly exclusively light-heavy or heavy cigarette tobacco. One respondent gambles daily.

Cohort B

In this cohort of former homeless persons there are two respondents who, as they say, are unable to read or write. More than half of them states having difficulty reading and filling up official forms.

The situation in which these persons have been brought up is more-or-less similar to cohort A. About half of the of the former homeless have spent their youth in a single parent family, a foster family, or a residential home, fully or partially.

Half of the respondents rate their physical health as good to very good. In this, some express their own amazement over the fact that the physical consequences of their unhealthy life style have remain so limited. The other half rates their health situation as not so rood to bad. Amongst other things they are struggling with arthritis, rheumatism, back aches, and epilepsy. One respondent is physically handicapped. They attribute these complaints to ruining their own health in the

preceding years. Besides, the health problems of some respondents now appear to become more visible, since they have achieved more control over their alcohol and drug addictions, and are less numb while experiencing life. One-third of these respondents have passed through one or more admissions to psychiatric institutions. One quarter is under treatment at the Regional Agency for Out-door Mental Health Care (RIAGG), receives other psychiatric care, and/or used psycho-farmaca. About half of them is struggling with mental problems. Sombrenness, restlessness, and sleeping disturbances, are mentioned often. To compensate for this, they are using tranquillizers, sleeping pills, and anti-depressiva, along with (soft) drugs and alcohol. Some respondents, who were using alcohol or drugs frequently in the past, are still fighting the seduction of these means daily. Even if they have used little for a long time, or have sworn off the denounced substance for good, they still consider themselves addicted. Some, who used drugs frequently in the past, have now shifted to using alcohol, and vice-versa. As in cohort A, these respondents too are heavy smokers almost without exception. A number of them have changes cigarette tobacco for cigarettes, and a single person now smokes cigars. Approximately one-third is gambling modestly, by taking part in the lotteries and buying scratch tickets.

4. Representativity and generalisability of the research outcomes

By approximation, the composition of the research population fits the known data on the populations of homeless persons at Utrecht and the Netherlands visiting the agencies providing day care and night care in full. However, they are not an exact reflection of these populations. What does this mean for the usefulness of data from this study?

Regarding the quantitative on the respondents it means that these data rather indicate tendencies than precise distributions. In this study the emphasis is on the intensive research method. Thereby, the question of the representativity of a research population is of less importance. The main concern is with the detailed observation of many features and reaction patterns of a relatively small number of persons. While doing so, particularly stereo-typical features and reaction modes of persons in the situations under study are being described. The next concern is with explaining the same from the perspective of an understandable motivation of the behaviour concerned (Schuyt 1986:113). The problems faced by homeless persons in daily life are identical for many of them. A detailed description of the situation, and of their way of attempting to cope with it, may be considered representative for homeless persons at large. The observed similarities between the life histories of the respondents on the one hand, and the interviews with, and ego documents of, (former) homeless persons in the Netherlands on the other hand, confirm this point. Moreover, the representativity is less at stake in this study, since the research population, as compared to the common practice in follow-up studies with an intensive research method, is rather large, and because the respondents have been interviewed relatively often.

When following such a method of work, based on the intensive method, the reliability of the information is of crucial importance. What someone tells about what he or she is doing, may differ from what he or she really does. In part, this has been corrected by asking direct questions on activities, and by returning to statements, plans, and their realisation, in follow-up interviews. By means of observations, the tension between the 'wanting' and the 'acting' of respondents could, to some extent, be appreciated as well. Under certain circumstances, homeless persons will be inclined to give socially desirable answers, out of shame over their situation. Sometimes they will give answers which seem to offer them the best perspective at a given moment. The majority of the respondents, however, by themselves felt the need to tell their stories. Usually, insofar as this could be judged, there was no reason to doubt statements by respondent. Whenever there were reason for doing so, this usually had to do with the arguments they used to account for their situation of homelessness to themselves and others. These arguments yielded crucial information on how they experience their conditions, and which meaning they attach to it.

5. Quantitative conclusions after seven years

The monitor study results in the following quantitative findings. Of the first cohort of 64 respondents that were monitored from 1993 on, 11 could not be traced in 2001. Of the other 53 five had died in the meantime, and one had been deported. Of the remaining 47 persons 17 were homeless still. The other 30 have settled in various ways: 18 live independently and 12 have settled –temporarily or otherwise- by moving in with relatives, friends or acquaintances, they live in caravans or have a place in sublease or found shelter in an institution. Of these 30 persons approximately 10 extricated themselves from street life to a considerable extent. It appears they settled in for good. The other 20 still have one foot in the homeless circuit and some seem to be on the brink of loosing their accommodation once more.

Of the second cohort of 20 former homeless persons living independently and monitored since 1997, 6 had gone back to the streets by mid 2000. Therefore the relapse percentage of this relatively favourable category of former homeless persons is approximately 30% after 4 years.

6. Discussion

Above, the methodological approach of a longitudinal study conducted in the Netherlands has been discussed. We conclude this paper with a more general discussion of what such a longitudinal study may actually results in. For it is a labour-

intensive, and thereby relatively expensive, method. This evokes the question what surplus value it has as compared to 'point in time' studies. After this, some possibilities and limitations of follow-up studies are listed, and illustrated by means of the experiences from the study described before.

- Longitudinal research stands or falls with the number of respondents who actually can be followed in the study from beginning to end. The longer the study lasts, the larger the odds that respondents will drop out, can not be traced, or expire, in the process. In the study described above, this was the foremost risk factor. However, of the 84 respondent in all, the majority could still be traced after seven years. In this respect the output thus turned out to be rather big.
- The longitudinal research method covers a longer period of time. The method is suitable for gaining insight in developments which are taking place in *slow motion*, in particular. In the study described before, this provided specific insight in the long-term development of homelessness, and in the dynamic processes unfolding themselves in the life courses of the respondents. Besides, it provided insight in the institutional mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion delineating themselves in the various phases of homelessness. On the basis of this, precise policy recommendations could be made, in which the proposition was made that the institutional offer should match the various phases of homelessness better. For in each phase, (former) homeless persons are in different circumstances, and need other types of help. From an institutional perspective, in each phase of homelessness a number of critical moments' delineate themselves, which are, so far, not being used sufficiently by (care) agencies. This kind of policy information, and the resulting policy recommendations, are less easily detected through 'point in time' studies.
- A disadvantage of the relatively long time path of longitudinal studies is the fact that the results have to be waited for a long time. It also implies the risk that part of the research outcomes are no longer up to date. In the study described above, some findings (notably with respect to changing context factors) which had been collected in the initial phase of the study, were dated by the end of the field research already. The facts collected earlier had been overtaken by new developments.
- The longitudinal research method does provide a deep insight in the population that has been followed over the years, but does not provide insight in the changes that took place in the population of the homeless as a whole, during the long time span in which the study has been implemented. By way of illustration: in the period in which the follow-up study was implemented, from 1993 to 2000, the population of homeless persons at Utrecht changed profoundly. Due to a sharpening of the admission procedure for refugees seeking asylum, more non-recognized refugees and illegal immigrants landed out in the street. Besides, there was an influx of persons looking for jobs from the former Eastern-European countries, who mixed with the population of homeless persons. In the longitudinal study they stayed out of the picture, since these relative newcomers in the circuit of homeless persons were not part of the research population that was followed. The longitudinal method is too slow, and too static, for making such rapid changes in the composition of the target group as a whole visible. A 'point in time' study, directed at the establishment of more superficial features of a population by means of a larger sample, does offer the possibility to bring such changes into the picture rapidly.

Finally, there is an organisational aspect which is worth noting. The time span over which the follow-up study was stretched - seven years - is relatively long. For longitudinal research in the Netherlands, a study extending itself over so many years is rather unique. Rarely, follow-up studies are that long. This is also related to limitations implied by the current structure for the financing of research work. The common practice in the Netherlands is that (PhD) studies are financed for four years at the most, from a fund (NWO) created by the national authorities. Carrying out longitudinal research in which one wants the field work to last for more than four years is not possible in this financing structure. In this respect, the study discussed here is an exception to the rule. It concerned a PhD study, paid for via a different financing structure, so that we were not bound to a maximum duration of four years.

Bibliography

- Agar, M.
Ethnography in the streets and in the joint. A comparison. Weppner, R.S. (ed.), *Street ethnography. Selected studies of crime and drug use in natural settings*. London: Sage, p. 149-150, 1977
- Doorn, L. van
Een tijd op straat (Time on the streets). Een volgstudie naar (ex-)daklozen in utrecht (1993-2000). Utrecht: NIZW, 2002.
- Doorn, L. van
From begging to dealing. The stock of income strategies of the homeless. *Focaal. Tijdschrift voor antropologie*, jrg. 2000, nr. 36, p. 31-49, 2000
- Doorn, L. van
Een zwervend bestaan. Een stadsetnografische studie naar dak- en thuislozen in Utrecht. Utrecht: Universiteit Utrecht, 1994a
- Doorn, L. van
Wegwijs. Een etnografische studie naar dak- en thuislozen. Utrecht: NIZW, 1994b
- Emerson, R.M., R.I. Fretz en L.L. Shaw
Writing ethnographic fieldnotes. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1995
- Eighner, L.
Reizen met Lizbeth. Amsterdam/Antwerpen: Atlas, 1993
- Elias, N. en J.L. Scotson
Gevestigden en buitenstaanders. Een studie van de spanningen en machtsverhoudingen tussen twee arbeidersbuurten. Den Haag: Ruward, 1985
- Glaser, B.G. en K. Strauss
The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research. Chicago: Aldine, 1976
- Glasser, I.
More than bread. Ethnographie of a soupkitchen. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988
- Goffman, E.
Asylums, essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates. Petersborough: Anchor Books, 1968
- Goffman, E.
Stigma. Aantekeningen over het omgaan met geschonden identiteiten. Utrecht: Bijleveld, 1963
- Goffman, E.
The presentation of self in everyday life. New York: Anchor Books, 1959
- Halen, C. van
De mens wikt, het zelf beschikt. Het onpersoonlijk karakter van een consistent zelfbeeld. *Psychologie & Maatschappij*, p. 12-41, 1995
- Healy, J.
Streets above us. London: MacMillan, 1990
- Healy, J.
The grass aren. An autobiography. London: Farber & Farber, 1988
- Luckenbill, D.F. & J. Best
Careers in deviance and respectability: the analogy's limitations. *Social problems*, vol. 29, nr. 2, p. 197-206, 1981
- Maso, I.
Kwalitatief onderzoek. Amsterdam/Meppel: Boom, 1987
- Passaro, J.
The unequal homeless. Men on the street, woman in their place. New York/London: Routledge, 1996
- Piliavin, I., B. Entner Wright e.a.
Exits from and returns to homelessness. *Social service review*, march, p. 33-57, 1996
- Piliavin, I., M. Sosin e.a.
The duration of homeless careers. An exploratory study. *Social service review*, 67, nr. 4, p. 576-598, 1993
- Reinking, D. en H. Kroon

Opgevangen in Utrecht. Dakloosheid en zelfverwaarlozing in de regio Midden-Westelijk Utrecht. Utrecht: Trimbos Instituut, 1998

Sleutelberg, J.

De deftige zwerver. Amsterdam: Podium, 1998

Snow, D.A. and L. Anderson

Down on their luck. A study of homeless streetpeople. Berkeley, Los Angeles-Oxford: University of California Press, 1993

Schuyt, C.J.M.

Filosofie van de sociale wetenschappen. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1986

Spradley, J.P.

The ethnographic interview. New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1979

Spradley, J.P.

You owe yourself a drunk. An ethnography of urban nomads. Boston: Little & Brown, 1970

Stebbins, R.A.

Career. The subjective approach. *The sociological quarterly*, 11, p. 32-50, 1970

Stringer, L.

Aan de grond. Verhalen van de straat. Utrecht: Het Spectrum, 1999

Tonkens, E. en L. van van Doorn

Turning rough sleepers into responsible citizens. Third Way policies on homelessness in England and the Netherlands.

Renewal. *The journal of labour politics*, vol. 8, nr. 2/3, p. 142-151, 2001

Toth, J.

Mole People. Life in the tunnels beneath New York City. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1993

We are home now. A collection of original writing chronicling the transition from homelessness to supportive housing. San Francisco: Miller Freeman, 1998

Weber, R.

Lebensbedingungen und Alltag der Stadtstreicher in der Bundesrepublik. Dissertation. Tübingen: Eberhard-Karls Universität, 1983

Weppner, R.S. (ed.)

Street ethnography. Selected studies of crime and drug use in natural settings. London/Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977

Wennink, J. en J. van Weeghel

Thuisloosheid en psychische stoornissen. Achtergrondstudie bij het gelijknamige advies van de Nationale Raad voor de Volksgezondheid. Utrecht: NRV/NcGv, 1993

Wolf, J., A. Elling en I. de Graaf

Monitor Maatschappelijke Opvang. Deelmonitoren Vraag, Aanbod en Gemeentelijk beleid. Utrecht: Trimbos Instituut, 2000

Zelst, C. van

100.000 fietsventielen. Amsterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 1999