

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Foreword	1
SECTION I	
T-Shirt Insignia	4
Different Concept	5
Paper Super-Market	6
The 'Rock' Brigade	7
Citizens' Arrest (Again)	8
'Hare-Brained' Stunts	9
The Magnificent 13	10
Number 4 - IRT	11
East Brooklyn	11
Three Is Not Enough	12
Called 'Vigilantes'	13
Shut Down Your Life	14
Augmented Police Patrols	15
Paramilitary?	16
"We've Got 'Rock'"	17
Body Language	18
Laying It On The Line	19
Helping People	19
Risking The Colors	21
Training	22
The Best Patrols	23
'The Knowledge'	24
Symbolic Codes	25
Silence + Speed = Effectiveness	26
Voluntary Membership	27
"We're Not The Army"	27
Auxiliary Police	28
SECTION II	
Different Standards	29
A Woman's Role	31
No Real Progress	32
More Than Opposition	33
We Can Help	34
All We Did	35
Direct Contact	35
Widespread Support	36
Caring	37
Psychological Deterrent	38
The Guardian Angel 'Space'	39
Forgotten Concept	40
Keep Moving	41
'Miaows'	42
SECTION III	
An Additional Problem	43
Guardian Angels: Blessing or Curse?	43
Communitas	44
Postscript for Aspiring Anthropologists of Human Movement	46
Explanatory Notes	47
Appendix (Subway Map)	52

Editorial Note

The idea for this Journal came from Dr. Drid Williams, who introduced us to the Journal for the Anthropological Society of Oxford (JASO). We felt that there was an urgent need for serious critical discussion and writing in our new field of interest: the anthropology of human movement (with particular emphasis on the dance). To meet these needs, we have established an on-going series of Friday seminars on the subject for which this Journal would be a partial record. We want to promote wider circulation of the best of the papers presented at the seminars, plus other written work of merit that comes from papers presented towards the completion of higher degrees in the subject. The purpose, then, of the Journal for the Anthropological Study of Human Movement at New York University (JASHM) is to promote serious theoretical and methodological insights and debate.

We would like to thank Student Activities of New York University and the Society for the Anthropological Study of Human Movement for their generosity in sponsoring the publication of this Journal.

Format

We shall produce one issue per term (two per year: Autumn and Spring). From time to time there will be special issues. Articles are welcome from students in all branches of social anthropology who have a specific interest in human movement in some form or another. Papers from people in other disciplines who are interested in social anthropology and human movement will also be welcome. Papers that emphasize analytical, theoretical or methodological discussion will receive preference over those consisting of description or ethnography. Papers should be brief and to the point. On the whole, contributions should not exceed 6000 words. For future issues, papers should be submitted following the conventions for bibliographies, notes and references used in this issue. Reviews and comments will receive consideration. Communications should be addressed to the Editors, JASHM, c/o Dept. of Dance and Dance Education, 675 Education Bldg., New York University, 35 W. 4th St., NY, NY 10003, USA.

Editors: R. Puri
D. Williams (Faculty Advisor)

Subscription Rates:

4 copies @ \$2.00 a copy	\$ 8.00
+ Mailing (Domestic Third Class, Foreign Surface) @ \$1.00 a copy	\$ 4.00
	Total <u>\$12.00</u>

Current Subscriptions are not affected.

Typing: Lynn Martin

FOREWORD

By now, the Guardian Angels are a widely publicized group of young people whose activities, when they started out in February, 1979, were familiar to relatively few New Yorkers. At this writing, chapters of the Angels' organization exist in thirty cities. Their membership totals approximately 1800-2000 members and patrols actually take place in twenty cities across the United States, including Boston, Atlanta, Miami, Kansas City and San Francisco, Chicago and Albuquerque. A lot has been written about them. They are 'news' to the extent that they are often hounded by reporters, so that it is difficult, if not impossible, to gain a clear idea of what their organization and their ideology consists of solely from newspaper accounts.

The Society for the Anthropological Study of Human Movement (SASHM) is a graduate student society at New York University whose chief interest lies in research, writing and debate concerning human movement and the complex relations that exist between the general notion of 'human action' and body language. SASHM's interest in the Guardian Angels is many-fold, but three aspects of their organization provide ample justification for publishing an ethnographical report on them: (i) they are (as they operate on patrols) primarily a movement-based group. That is to say that their internal means of communication to each other whilst on duty and their external modes of expression to the public are primarily non-vocal forms of symbolic exchange; (ii) they started out as a group of men, but their 'second-in-command' and National Coordinator is now a woman, and (iii) they reflect a type of practical idealism that has often developed at a 'grass-roots' level in areas of the United States whenever social conditions of one kind or another seem to propel a helpless fraction of the populace into the endurance of yet another form of excess. They are seen by anthropologists of human movement as structural opposites in American society to groups like 'Hell's Angels'.

Amongst the current excesses that New Yorkers suffer from daily are varieties of felonies and misdemeanors committed in public parks, in the streets and on subways, including rape, muggings, and thefts. The subway trains themselves (and many of the stations) have been turned into filthy, unaesthetic sites of nearly unimaginable noise and ugliness, unparalleled, perhaps, in the history of sites of graffiti. Illiterate scrawls now obliterate subway maps, render train windows opaque and turn the entire underground environment -- especially the trains themselves -- into monstrosities of dirt, hostility and non-literate defacement of public property that is, laughably, looked upon by a few as 'art'.

Into this sordid, uninviting² atmosphere in February, 1979, thirteen young men from the Bronx² appeared under the direction of the then twenty-three year old Curtis ('Rock') Sliwa. The group he founded was called 'The Magnificent 13'.³ Their aim? To protect themselves, their families and society as they knew it from some of

its more obvious, visible human predators. 'The Rock' is married now -- to Lisa Evers, about whom more is said later. The new year thus began with rejoicing over a significant wedding that took place during the Christmas holidays of 1981, but the beginning of the year 1982 was, for the Angels, also marked by tragedy: the first death of one of their numbers, a New Jersey Angel, Frank Melvin, to whom this account is dedicated, as a memorial tribute.

In ways that are extensively described below, an attempt is made to provide readers with an account of the Angels' ideology as they express it; with an examination of a specific conception of human action, the semantics of which are considered worthy of laying down one's life for. Frank Melvin gave his life whilst serving the ideas outlined in this text and it is to be hoped that his mates continue in their dedication to social service that the philosophy of the Guardian Angels represents, for in the meaningful spaces they occupy in contemporary American society lie powerful affirmations of caritas; one of the 'four loves' that form the roots of western civilization.

The New York chapter of the Guardian Angels is a controversial band of young people that, at this writing, is roughly seven hundred and fifty strong. They include young men and women of all races, creeds and colors, from both sexes and all economic classes, with the possible exception of the 'golden ghetto'.⁴ They started as a group of thirteen, but they still wear the red berets and white T-shirts of the original group, the only difference being that the symbol on their shirts has changed.

SASHM's members wanted to meet the source of the controversy⁵ 'first hand', with a view towards discovering more about the symbolic and expressive content of the Angels' organization. To this end, Curtis Sliwa was interviewed by Drid Williams on December 19, 1980. Lisa Evers was our guest on October 19, 1981. We look forward to future meetings with other Angels with great anticipation. The following text consists either of direct transcriptions of tapes⁶ or is taken directly from the tapes and personal communications to me from Sliwa and Evers. In anthropological parlance, the text represents part of the 'folk model' of the organization. It is not an 'ethnography', but more is said about that in the last section.

The text constitutes an ethnographical report that provides support of semasiological theory regarding the nature and usage of symbols and body language and it is an accurate account of the Guardian Angels by the two leading Guardian Angels. It is meant to be a source of on-going discussion in subsequent issues of the Journal, and therefore appears in a special issue of its own.

20 January, 1982
New York University

Drid Williams

NB: All rights are reserved on all of this text or any part of it. No copying or quotes may be made without the Editors' written permission. The tapes and the text are the property of SASHM, Williams, Sliwa and Evers.

Permission to copy the Guardian Angels insignia from one of their shirts to fit our page size was given by Mr. Sliwa and appears on page 3.