SCHOOL, WORK AND UNEMPLOYMENT :
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL REPRODUCTION
ON THE ISLE OF SHEPPEY.

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Abstract

The central argument of the thesis is that the transition from school to work may be conceptualised as part of a broader process of social and cultural reproduction. This incorporates both the reproduction of young people as workers and the reproduction of their gender roles. This is in turn related to their roles within the family and the movement through the life cycle. The thesis in general focusses on the inter-relations between styles of consumption, production and reproduction amongst young people and the ways in which unemployment affects these.

The empirical data were collected during the course of five years of research in a small community in Kent where unemployment had been endemic for some twenty years. They were derived from a longi-tudinal sample survey conducted between 1979 and 1980 amongst young people aged 16 to 18. This was supplemented by participant observation, extended interviews and the use of Careers Office and School Records.

The first part of the thesis critically reviews distinct perspectives in social science research relating to the transition from school to work, unemployment, cultural reproduction and the construction of gender roles. Hypotheses derived from this review are then tested against empirical data described in the second half of the thesis. Three main themes are explored: Firstly, the changing relationship between school and the local community under different social and economic conditions is documented through the use of historical material. Secondly, responses to unemployment are examined, showing that these are related to the construction of gender identities and to relationships within the family. Thirdly, the thesis illustrates the disjunctions

between young people's occupational aspirations or preferences and the realities of the situation which faced them in a declining labour market. These themes are related by an analysis of the processes of cultural reproduction through which identities were both transmitted and creatively constructed, serving to differentiate groups of school leavers. It is argued that the adjustment to working life is problematical and constitutes part of a longer term process of social reproduction of which entry into the labour market is only one stage.

In fine, this thesis contributes both theoretically and empirically to the contemporary understanding of a crucial period of transition.

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Declaration

The thesis as submitted is all my own work. Material
presented in this thesis includes reference to joint
research undertaken on the Isle of Sheppey between 1980
and 1984. Where information derived from this joint
research is used, this is indicated in the text. Some
of the material was collected in the course of compiling
a report for the Department of Employment in 1980 in
conjunction with Professor R.E. Pahl. The thesis draws
only upon the author's contribution to this report.
The Department of Employment report and two other
articles arising from the research are included in
Appendix III.

<u>Table of Contents</u>

List of Tables

Page

CHAPTER I   INTRODUCTION

'The Sociological imagination enables us to grasp history and biography
and the relations between the two within society. This is its task and
its promise.'
(C. Wright Mills 1959, p.12 in 1971 edition)

        School, work and unemployment have become issues of national
importance in recent years. Previously, those concerned with the
transition to working life assumed that there was work to go to.
Attention was directed at how young people came to fill different
occupational roles. However, this assumption is now a thing of the
past. In 1978, when this study was begun, unemployment was already
rising and I posed myself the question: what happens to young people
on leaving school when there are not enough jobs? Since that time,
unemployment has more than doubled and the volume of material written
on the issue has proliferated alongside the expansion of agencies
designed to deal with it. What more can be added? Most work on the
subject has been concerned with specific issues: unemployment,
changes in the labour market, the State's response and so on. In this
thesis I bring together these and other themes by examining them in
relation to the lives of young people in a particular context: The
Isle of Sheppey, in the spirit of the quotation from C. Wright Mills
above.

        The Isle of Sheppey offered a good location in which to conduct
research of this nature, having suffered high unemployment for some
twenty years and exhibiting many of the features of de-industrialisation

which have now become more familiar to Great Britain as a whole.

Thus whilst the context is specific, the problems are general ones.

However, problems of generalisability also operate in reverse:

social changes affect different localities in different ways.

The thesis is divided into two parts. In the first four

chapters I examine the ways in which school, work and unemployment

have been approached by others and some of the State policies which

have emerged. In the second part, I present the empirical data

gathered from the Isle of Sheppey. In order to bridge the two halves,

a list of hypotheses derived from the literature review is systemati-

cally set out in Chapter 6 and these are tested in Chapters 9 and 10.

The contents of each chapter may be briefly summarised: in Chapter 2

I discuss approaches to the transition from school to work, in

Chapter 3 ways in which young people's experiences of unemployment

have been conceptualised and in Chapter 4 I consider the broader

processes of social reproduction, this posing the main problematic

of the thesis. In Chapter 5 recent research and perspectives

concerned with female youth are addressed, as these merit separate

attention. Each of these chapters is concerned with different

theoretical perspectives and I indicate ways in which they can

be related. In Chapters 7 and 8 there is a case study of the ways

in which economic and social changes have affected the relationship

between schooling and the local labour market. In Chapter 9 I document

the distribution of work orientations and employment careers amongst

school leavers through analysis of longitudinal survey data. Chapter

10 focusses more specifically upon experiences of unemployment. In

Chapter 11 I formulate an alternative model of transition which situates

this within broader processes of social reproduction.   Additional

ethnographic material is included in Appendix 11.

Perspectives, policies and practices are historically specific:

the intersection of biography and history applies as much to social

scientists as to school leavers.   Hence, the writer's own biography is

also a part of this inquiry for the thesis represents a chapter in my

own life.   Having left a London comprehensive school in 1975, my personal

trajectory has been such that I am now studying the processes of which I

formed a part.   Despite certain similarities between the experiences of

my respondents and my own, it was necessary for me to make an imaginative

leap in order to connect with their social worlds, and I hope that in

doing so I can carry the reader with me.   Most of the information was

gathered whilst I was actually living on the Island for periods of time

between 1979 and 1980.   Consequently, the dreams, dramas and despair

which I shared - albeit for a brief period - became a part of my own

consciousness.

In the remainder of this introduction I set out the sources of data

used in the thesis and the methods by which they were collected and

interpreted.

A)   Sources of Data used in the Research

The first round of fieldwork took place whilst I was a post graduate

student living on the Island between January and October 1979.   The

Island is described more fully in Chapter 7.   At that time, my supervisor

had already begun interviewing there with a view to finding out how

families coped in an economic recession and had published an article about

school leavers in New Society.[1]

I was able to benefit from this pre-established contact with the

school and I began my research as a participant observer there and in the local youth clubs. Indeed it was the welcoming and co-operative interest that I received from teachers at the School and staff at the Careers Centre which made this phase of the research possible. Between March and September, 1979 I interviewed 153 sixteen year olds, the majority of whom left school in that year and I shall refer to this henceforth as the Sheppey School Leavers Survey: SSLS. Ninety per cent of the minimum age school leavers, numbering 103 respondents altogether, were followed up in a further survey in the summer of 1980 and this will be referred to as the Follow-up Survey: FUS.

This research, however, represents only a fraction of the work undertaken on the Island since 1979, for I was involved in various capacities in a number of other studies of aspects of the locality and these are described briefly below.

In February 1980 I undertook a short study of unemployment amongst 17-19 year olds for the Department of Employment with Professor Pahl. Eight young people were interviewed, all contacts I had made during the course of my research, and some of these were in my original survey. I have used a number of quotations from these interviews because extensive transcripts were available. In addition I published two short articles arising from my preliminary investigation in 1979 and 1980. These pieces of work are included in the Appendices (Appendix 111).

From October 1980 until December 1983 I was employed as Research Fellow on an ESRC sponsored project concerned with the more general implications of social and economic change on Sheppey. This research was concerned to analyse changing patterns of employment and the organisation of household work under different circumstances. Altogether a large quantity of information was amassed.[2] In writing the thesis I was able to draw upon this although

I have included only aspects which are relevant to my present theme.
The rest is in the process of being published in books and articles
addressing different issues in the research.[3]

Whilst this body of research and writing is distinct from my work on
young people, many of the concepts trace a descent from ideas generated
during my first periods of field work. Furthermore, the following account
was written some five years after I began the research and inevitably
reflects some of the developments in my thought since that time.[4]

B)   Methods used in the Research

Researchers investigating the experiences of young people have used
a variety of different approaches and methodologies which are discussed
in subsequent chapters. The methods reflect both the different perspec-
tives within social science and the changing nature of the social reality
being studied.[5] Some studies have been based upon research amongst groups
of as few as 12 boys and others upon samples of thousands: the
appropriate methods and samples depend upon the nature of the problem
being studied.[6]

I have used three main methods of data collection : a sample survey,
participant observation and detailed lengthy interviews with individual
respondents. Each of these had different strengths and weaknesses and
produced different orders of information. In the following pages I
discuss each in turn.

i. The Survey

The SSLS survey was intended to cover a representative range of male
and female respondents in order to compare their aspirations and patterns
of entry into employment. I was therefore mainly concerned with minimum

age school leavers and began by interviewing all those who left at

Easter. This was supplemented by a representative cross-section of

16 year olds in the summer. Altogether, 153 16 year olds, represent-

ing approximately one quarter of all those in this age group were inter-

viewed.[7] The questionnaire included a series of open-ended questions so

that responses could be probed in more depth if necessary and recorded

verbatim. This provided a practical limitation to the number of

respondents who could be covered in the time available. The responses

were coded and classified onto cope-chet cards for further analysis

and quotations from these interviews are used as illustration where

necessary.

The second FUS survey proved more difficult to field and to analyse.

School leavers had pursued a range of careers: some were employed, some

unemployed, some returned to school, some left school and some became

pregnant or were married and these had not been employed at all. For

the FUS I therefore used a semi-structured interview schedule. Due to

the difficulties of tracing respondents and to the fact that these

interviews consumed more time, only 103 of the full 153 could be

contacted. However, since these represent one fifth of the total age

cohort, they are still broadly representative. The questionnaires are

included in Appendix 1.

Whilst the survey allowed information to be collected from a range

of respondents, it was inevitably one dimensional: I asked the questions,

they provided the answers.[8] This did not give me a sufficient indication

of the ways in which respondents behaved in practice, or expressed

themselves when not being formally interviewed. Consequently, I also

pursued the alternative research strategy of participant observation.

ii. Participant Observation

Part of my initial training was in social anthropology and I

initially entered the field armed with a tape recorder and note book

recording my observations in a detailed field diary.[9] My entree into

the community was facilitated by the fact that I lived in two different

households on the Island, most of my time being spent with a young

family who were unemployed and who introduced me to their friends and

family. My participation therefore extended to fill my domestic and

social life so that I was absorbed into a web of reciprocities which

imposed roles upon me.[10] The household was also a rendezvous point for

the local youth who frequently used it as a place to stay for the

night. This provided an introduction into areas of Sheppey life which

would otherwise have been closed to an outsider, but it also imposed

limitations. Gaining the trust of respondents in such situations and

fulfilling social obligations towards them takes time and energy so that

I was only able to become familiar with a small number of people.

Furthermore, identification with some groups inevitably leads to exclusion

from others. Whilst this method produced rich, qualitative detail it was

limited in range and scope and hence it was also necessary to conduct

the sample survey.

The participant observer needs to construct a role which is accept-

able to respondents but also enables information to be gathered for

purposes of research.[11] As I was clearly an 'outsider', and it would

have been difficult to have maintained any alternative identity whilst

living full time in the community, I simply explained that I was a

student conducting a survey of school leavers.[12] This enabled me to ask

questions openly and to move between different groups of people.

The participant observer is often portrayed as a rational strategist

who chooses to present herself in a particular way for purposes of

'scientific' investigation.[13] However, the researcher's role, like those

of others, is a negotiated one which has to accommodate the expectations

of others and prove flexible enough to be re-negotiated under different circumstances. Ethical and social dilemmas need to be resolved pragmatically, often under difficult conditions.[14] Consequently, I played different roles with different sets of people and these were constructed in the context of the situation itself.[15]

The qualitative information gathered in this way through participant observation and extended interviews poses two particular kinds of problem for the researcher: problems of interpretation and problems of presentation of research findings. The former has been characterised as the problem of 'verstehen' in sociology.[16] Verstehen implies a creative tension between empathetic understanding of a social situation and the struggle to interpret it objectively.[17] The researcher needs to be close enough to the situation to interpret the nuances of meaning embodied in it but distanced enough to maintain a critical understanding. This can be achieved both through the scrupulous recording of information for analysis later and the adoption of the appropriate mental stance.[18]

Over a period of five years a substantial body of empirical material gathered through the use of a range of methodologies had been collected. Limitations of length and logic mean that only a selected fraction can be presented here. For this reason I have included detailed descriptions of five interviews in Appendix 11 and these are referred to explicitly in the main text.

iii. <u>Extended Interviews</u>

Extended interviews allow themes to be explored more fully than in a briefer questionnaire survey. They also permit issues to be raised which would not be appropriate in more 'public' arenas, such as those in which the researcher is a participant observer,[19] for in public situations there are rules of conduct which encourage some forms of behaviour and suppress others.

However, interviews also have their own rules of conduct. For example, they force the respondent to present in narrative form events which might otherwise have appeared fragmented and contingent. In other words, respondents are made to tell a story. Inevitably, respondents offer their own interpretations of the facts, since even the task of arranging and selecting information imposes some meaning upon it. Some stories were clearly rehearsed: respondents had already reconstructed them in their minds or narrated them under other circumstances; some were unrehearsed; some were clearly embellishments and exaggerations. The social life of teenagers on the Isle of Sheppey consisted to a great extent of exchanging and telling stories and I collected a number of these in the course of my fieldwork.

Fortunately, my contact with a range of people enabled me to cross-check the inconsistencies in these stories.[20] However, some form of 'truth' is also embodied in the stories themselves. There are always reasons for reconstructing the world in particular ways and the patterns which emerge permit them to be interpreted sociologically.

Moreover, the problems of narrative reconstruction are not confined to the interview: they are also relevant to the interpretation and presentation of data.[21] A thesis, like a story, imposes a particular logic upon ideas and incidents by situating them in a meaningful sequence. It thus imposes a shape and form upon an otherwise complex social reality. The aim of the sociologist is to illuminate the nature of that reality, but even sociologists' stories are widely questioned by others.[22] However self-conscious the sociologist may be about his or her methodology the representation of social life is inevitably flawed and partial in character. However, the very struggle to relate different elements of the social world within a conceptual framework differentiates sociology from casual observations or inspired journalism. This thesis is a contribution towards a more critical and objective appraisal of contemporary society.

PART I

Perspectives on School Work and Unemployment

CHAPTER 2 - FROM SCHOOL TO WORK : PROBLEMS, POLICIES AND PERSPECTIVES.

> Who when looking over
> Faces in the subway
> Each with its uniqueness,
> Would not, did he dare,
> Ask what forms exactly
> Suited to their weakness
> Love and Desperation
> Take to govern there.
>
> Would not like to know what
> Influence occupation
> Has on human vision
> Of the human fate:
> Do clerks for instance
> Pigeon-hole creation,
> Brokers see the Ding-an-Sich
>   as Real Estate?

From 'Heavy Date'   W.H. Auden 1939.

The transition from school to work has attracted as much attention from policy makers, politicians and other professionals as from social scientists.[1] The questions posed and the research undertaken need to be seen in the context of changing climates of opinion which can be related in turn to changes in social and economic conditions since the Second World War. The different accounts can therefore be read either in terms of how the circumstances surrounding the transition from school to work have changed or in terms of how this has been defined as a 'problem' in different ways at different periods.

The material which is the subject of this chapter can be approached in three different ways. Firstly, much of the research has been prompted by a desire to understand the ways in which young people fit, or fail to fit, the

perceived needs of the economy at different periods. Secondly, a number of different competing perspectives have been used in approaching the transition from school to work. These have reflected - often critically - the climates of opinion at different periods. Thirdly, the conditions under which young people leave school have themselves changed with the expansion and decline of the British economy over the Post War period. Consequently, I have considered accounts of the transition from school to work in terms of these historical developments.

The first part of the chapter concentrates upon explanations of the transition to employment in terms of 'occupational choice' and processes of anticipatory socialisation. These are related to economic conditions and ideologies which prevailed up until the mid-1970's. The second half of the chapter describes alternative models which emerged after the mid-1970's and the climate of opinion within which they were developed.

A)   Theories of Occupational Choice

The concept of 'occupational choice' used by developmental psychologists in America was applied in Britain during the 1950's and 1960's. [2]   It emphasises the role of individual choice in determining labour market destinations. Although it was heavily criticised during the 1960's, the concept of 'occupational choice' is worth examination for it is frequently resurrected by contemporary writers as a 'straw man' against which to situate more sociological arguments or as an example of a common-sense fallacy.[3] Furthermore, it is still influential in careers training and in some branches of social science.[4]

The original exponents of the concept were Ginzburg and Super, writing in 1951 and 1953 respectively. Ginzburg suggested that 'occupational choice' consisted of a developmental process which emerged over a period of years. During this time individuals moved from un-

realistic towards realistic job choices by gradually adjusting their 'self-concept'. Eventually the individual achieved a state of 'self-actualisation' in which his or her inner motives corresponded with external circumstances. Super's contribution was to show how this was achieved through 'role-playing'. This is summarised by Super in 1963 as follows:

> 'In expressing a vocational preference, a person puts into occupational terminology his idea of the kind of person he is;......in entering an occupation he needs to implement his concept of himself;.......in getting established in an occupation he achieves self-actualisation. The occupation thus makes possible the playing of a role appropriate to the self-concept'

<div align="center">(quoted by Sofer 1974.p.29)</div>

The main criticisms which have been levelled at the idea of occupational choice can be summarised as follows: Firstly, occupational choice is presented as the fruition of an internal process within the individual rather than in response to external conditions. Secondly, the 'individual' in this model would appear to be the classic WASP: a white, anglo-saxon protestant. This model could be applied less easily to other, less fortunate, social groups. Thirdly, it is assumed that in order for individuals to have a choice, the occupational structure must be open in nature, whereas in fact most people's options are circumscribed by locality, gender, class, education and ethnic origins. Finally, it has been demonstrated in subsequent research that it is the occupational structure itself which shapes individual ambitions rather than vice versa.[5]

This theory underwent several modifications in an attempt to make it more sensitive to external constraints. Later exponents attempting to re-cast it in a more sociological form, were concerned to balance internal motivations with sources of external conditioning.[6] Hence,

they recommended that researchers should examine a range of possible influences upon individual decision making, including the home environment, the school, peer groups, the Youth Employment Service and the general situation of young people in the Labour Market. However, although a number of possible sources of socialisation were suggested, there was no attempt to link them systematically into an integrated theory nor to show which might be the most salient or determining factors. (Allen 1968) In short, these amounted to a veritable 'shopping list' of variables which could be indefinitely extended.

Others have argued that the idea of 'occupational choice' operates as an ideology to reconcile young people to their positions in the occupational hierarchy. In believing that they have made a free and independent choice, they are forced to present themselves as contented (Roberts 1968)

B)   Theories of Socialisation

Research into processes of socialisation has accounted for the transition from school to work in terms of social conditioning rather than individual choice. This has emphasised the importance of the family, the education system and the peer group in preparing young people for work although the relative weight attached to one or other of these factors varies. In general however, socialisation theories have demonstrated how social class origins determine occupational destinations through the reproduction of values and idologies within the education system. These accounts should therefore be situated in the context of developments in the sociology of education.[7]

Those concerned with the transition from school to work have
stressed the essential continuity between home background, experiences
at school and destinations on leaving school. Whilst the first studies
in the Post War period emphasised the role of the home background in
the process, later ones focussed more specifically upon the role of
schooling and the peer group in reproducing class relations. Here I
examine the models presented by Carter (1966), Ashton and Field (1976),
Willis (1977), Corrigan (1979) and Jenkins (1983) as examples of each
approach.[8] Each of these accounts has identified a number of levels
within the process of transition in the form of 'ideal types'.

Carter's work is illustrative of the first approach to the transi-
tion from school to work prevalent during the 1960's. He identifies
three 'ideal types'.[9] Firstly there were home-centred aspiring working-
class families, of which there were two kinds: the 'newly affluent'
families demanding a better living standard and better opportunities
for their children, and the 'traditionally respectable' working-class
families of skilled or clerical workers who wanted their children to
have similar jobs.

Secondly, the 'solid working-class' families from semi-skilled
occupations who were more concerned with not slipping down the status
hierarchy than with trying to climb it.

Thirdly, there were those from 'rough' working-class homes who
were more deprived on material, cultural and emotional dimensions. With
parents from unstable and unskilled jobs themselves, these children
were destined to suffer the worst jobs and the worst conditions. Carter
reserves his strongest and most disapproving vocabulary for this group:

> '......the rough, deprived and underprivileged type of home and
> family background where there is little regard for the official
> norms and values of society. Parents live for the present,
> spending money as soon as they get it; repudiate the values of
> school and have as little to do with them as possible. Do not
> encourage their offspring to join 'official' youth organisations,
> which in their view are full of snobs. Where, they ask, does

honesty come in - is not dishonesty rife everywhere? Life is a
matter of luck - but you don't get much luck if you are not ready
to take a chance when it comes along. From these homes come
many'deprived' youngsters who are ill-equipped but ready to make
for 'dead-end' jobs and anti-social in their behaviour.'

(Carter 1966, p.40)

Carter indicates the ways in which vocational aspirations were
limited to class horizons. Different kinds of working-class family
encouraged different degrees of educational commitment from their
children and these were in turn related to the different kinds of
occupational goal which they expected their children to achieve.[10] The
educational failure of working-class children and their low levels of
aspiration were attributed to cultural deficiencies within the working-
class home. The author described working-class attitudes to employ-
ment as 'dull and muted' and interpreted this as a contribution to the
problem rather than an adaptation to inevitable circumstances.
Carter's observations were implicitly based upon a liberal humanitarian
concern and he adopted the tone of a middle-class commentator with
strong criticisms and even a certain distaste for aspects of working-
class life. From this vantage point, working-class school leavers
appeared to be condemned by their own culture and he criticised the
education system for not rescuing them by raising their aspirations.
Similar conclusions were reached by others writing at this period,
(Maizels 1970, Jephcott 1967).

Later writers analysing the transition from school to work adopted
a different tone. Ashton and Field (1976) for example, are illustrative
of a different approach. They produced a more comprehensive model of
different processes of socialisation which included middle-class
careers as well as working-class ones.[11] They too related home
backgrounds to educational experiences at school and what they
termed 'career orientation' by demonstrating how 'subjective'

orientations corresponded with 'objective' conditions in the labour market to socialise young people into their different occupational roles. Experiences at home were confirmed or disconfirmed at school leading the young person to adjust their expectations accordingly. However, rather than attributing this to cultural deficiency, they demonstrated that there was a functional fit between class backgrounds, educational careers and occupational destinations.

Ashton and Field distinguished three 'ideal types' of career orientation. First, there were those with 'extended careers' from middle-class families, second those with 'short term careers' from upper working-class and lower middle-class families, and third, those who were 'career-less' from working-class families.[12] Thus, they concluded that there were no problems of adjustment when young people entered work because they had already been socialised to accept the occupational roles which they assumed:

> '....it appears that the previous experience of young people in the home, school and peer groups prepare them to fit in or adjust to the demands imposed on starting work'.

> (Ashton and Field 1976, p.12)

The only problems of adjustment which arose were due to individual downward mobility but this was only likely to happen to the first two categories of school leavers: the career-less, by definition, had no aspirations to lose.

Ashton and Field's work differs from that of Carter insofar as they illustrated how 'dead-end', career-less jobs were sought by preference rather than accepted with resignation. However, Carter identified three types of working-class family based upon ideologies of status but Ashton and Field identified only two and these are based more directly upon the nature of the employment of the household head. Thus,

Carter emphasised the _cultural_ determinants of social reproduction,
Ashton and Field emphasised the _occupational_ determinants.[13]

Furthermore, Ashton and Field portrayed the behaviour of working-
class youth in terms of adaptive responses rather than in terms of
cultural deficiency. They thus condemned the nature of working-class
jobs rather than working-class attitudes.

The third wave of studies concerned with socialisation processes
in the transition from school to work emphasised the importance of
working-class perceptions of schooling and of the occupational hierarchy
in reproducing class relations (Willis 1977, Corrigan 1979, Jenkins 1983).
These studies, based upon qualitative fieldwork and participant observa-
tion amongst working-class youth, illustrated how the peer group
transmits class ideologies through the "counter-school-culture".[14] In
doing so, they reconceptualised working-class culture in order to show
how this provided the basis for creative and adaptive responses to other-
wise punishing conditions. Whilst Willis and Corrigan identify just two
class cultures - the middle-class and the working-class - Jenkins
describes three working-class life styles based upon 'rough' and 'respect-
able' orientations. All three researchers indicate that working-class
youth evaluate employment from the basis of their own distintive values
which make it inappropriate to judge them by middle-class concepts,
such as that of 'occupational choice' :

> 'One thing is clear from this set of answers: there is no
> clear hard and fast REASONED CHOICE for these boys. As I
> got to know them it became very clear that the whole concept
> of a career had a minimal relevance to the way in which
> these boys lived their lives'.

(Corrigan 1979, p.76)

Whilst like Carter, they are concerned with the role of cultural
reproduction in determining different occupational destinations they did

not locate this within the family and they adopted a positive evaluation of this culture rather than a negative one.[15]

These different models of socialisation all demonstrate that the transition from school to work takes place in the context of the reproduction of class relations. Class origin, as determined by the occupations of parents is reinforced at school and reflected in class destinations through the occupational entry of people leaving school. I have termed this self perpetuating process the 'equilibrium model' for it assumes a functional fit between processes of socialisation and the structure of opportunities in the labour market. It can be represented diagrammatically as follows:

Fig.1.

THE EQUILIBRIUM MODEL: The functional fit between socialisation at home, at school and occupational entry.

Longitudinal Process of Socialisation

1. Home Background	2. Educational Career	3. Level of occupational entry
Middle-Class ⟶	Higher Qualifications	⟶ Managerial and Professional jobs (extended careers)
Lower-Middle/ Upper Working- Class ⟶	Some Qualifications or further Education	⟶ Skilled Manual and White Collar jobs (short term careers)
Working-Class ⟶	Few or no Qualifications, leave school at minimum age	Respectable ⟶ Unskilled Jobs / Rough ⟶ (career-less)

The vertical axis represents the different social groups within the class structure and the educational system whilst the horizontal axis represents the process of transition from home through school and into work in three stages. Those from middle-class homes acquire the greatest number of educational qualifications due to their pre-disposition towards educational goals, and enter middle-class jobs. Those at the second level coming from upper working-class and lower middle-class backgrounds are instrumentally oriented towards school and enter white collar and skilled manual jobs. Those from traditionally working-class backgrounds leave school at the minimum age with few qualifications and enter working-class jobs. I should emphasise however, that this is intended only as a schematic illustration of a more general process. Studies of social mobility have indicated that there has been considerable movement between categories during the post war period but it nevertheless remains the case that in general working-class children are more likely to do working-class jobs and middle-class children are more likely to do middle-class ones.[16]

However, these 'equilibrium' models has a number of limitations. Firstly, it does not take into account regional variations in class culture and in the structure of opportunities.It is arguable that these are very different in areas where a high proportion of white collar jobs and skilled training opportunities exist compared to other areas where such opportunities are very limited,as Ashton's later work testifies (see Ashton and McGuire 1983). Similarly the kind of aggressive working-class machismo described by Willis and Corrigan is perhaps more likely to exist in areas where employment had traditionally been based upon heavy manual labour.

Secondly, these studies are either implicitly or explicitly

orientated towards male experiences. There is no explanation of how girls' socialisation leads them to reject or to accept different kinds of work or of their differential experience within the family. Ashton, Field and Carter mention girls but they are not prominent in their accounts, whilst Willis and Corrigan make the excuse that as male researchers, they were unable to understand the experiences of girls.

A further limitation of these studies is that they are mostly based upon the assumption of a static or expanding labour market and it is to this problem that I now turn.[17]

c)   Ideological Assumptions Surrounding
                               the Transition from School to Work.

The early studies, written during the 1950's and 1960's, contained two main underlying assumptions. The first was that of the 'cultural deficiency' of working-class families and the second was the assumption that expanding education through state investment would later yield dividends for society by encouraging economic and technological growth. These two themes are related for it was argued that increased educational investment would overcome the cultural deficiencies of working-class children. This has been termed 'human capital' theory and fitted liberal conceptions of the Welfare State.

Therefore, Carter and others writing at that time were concerned about the 'wastage of talent' amongst working-class children.[18] They criticised the education system for failing to elevate the expectations of these children, arguing that more judicious State investment could compensate for this inadequacy. This was accompanied at the time by advertising exhorting young people not to drift into 'dead end' jobs.

This ideology emerged at a period when industrial growth appeared limitless and Britain seemed poised on the brink of a new golden era of

affluence, accelerated tachnological change and leisure. The old
working-class cultures and life-styles which evolved out of responses
to deprivation in the 1930's were regarded as regressive and inappropriate -
a br�� upon technological and social progress.

Whilst a number of sources could be cited to substantiate these
points, the Newsom Report (1963) based upon a study of schools at that
time and making a number of policy recommendations, furnishes a good
example. First of all it argued that the education system was failing
to maximise the human potential which passed through it:

> 'Despite some splendid achievement in the schools, there is
> much unrealised talent, especially amongst boys and girls
> whose potential is marked by inadequate powers of speech
> and the limitations of home background. Unsuitable programmes
> and teaching methods may aggravate their difficulties, and
> frustration expresses itself in apathy or rebelliousness. The
> country cannot afford this wastage humanly, or economically
> speaking'.
>
> (HMSO 1963, p.1.)

Secondly, it recommended that increased state investment could
overcome these difficulties and that failure to do so would lead to
Britain falling behind in the race for international competitiveness:

> 'We therefore think it essential to state at the outset the
> economic argument for investment in our pupils. Briefly, it
> is that the future pattern of employment in this country will
> require a much larger pool of talent than is at present
> available; and that at least a substantial proportion of the
> 'average' and 'below average' pupils are sufficiently educated
> to supply that additional talent. The need is not only for
> more skilled workers to fill existing jobs, but also for a
> generally better educated and intelligently adaptable labour
> force to meet new demands'.
>
> (HMSO 1963, p.5.)

In retrospect, the Newsom Report reveals an almost touchingly naive
faith in economic progress. It argued that the new technological
society would need a more skilled, enlightened and progressive
outlook amongst its citizens. This concern with improving the quality
and content of working-class young people's lives was extended to their

leisure activities as well as their educational and employment experiences. Hence Jephcott (1967), condemned the limiting and unimproving nature of working-class pastimes and called for more organised educational leisure provisions to counteract the influence of what was perceived as corrupting commercial entertainment: [19]

> 'Nor does interest in pop seem to develop a taste for rather more sophisticated types of music, for example, that of the folk world. According to one analysis, pop is no more than a bastard form of music which lessens the pain of youth without any real development'.
>
> (Jephcott 1967, p.161)

This concern was voiced in a series of government reports about the Education system, the Youth Service and the Youth Employment Service (now the Careers Service).[20] Writing at a later date, Maizels (1970) situated herself within a long tradition of government reports in order to evaluate what sort of impact these improvements had made. However, whilst purportedly assessing young people's 'needs' she also defined these needs on their behalf:

> 'Were their intellectual faculties nourished rather than neglected, therefore, the unsuitability of many of the present occupations of young people would be self evident'.
>
> (Maizels 1970, p.311)

Whilst on the one hand Maizels uses eloquent liberal rhetoric to argue for the improvement in young people's prospects and life chances, on the other she admits that perhaps the low expectations of working-class pupils and their lack of absorption of middle-class cultural values enables them to be better adapted to the kinds of jobs which they were expected to do. She therefore identifies a 'functional dysfunction', as it were, within the educational system.

From the late 1960's, faith in the limitless potentialities of affluent society started to crumble. Liberal middle-class ideologies were attacked from within by the middle-class counter-culture which

criticised the hollowness of the pursuit of growth and affluence.
(Martin 1983). Within academic circles this found expression in
the sociology of deviance and neo-marxism. Deviancy theorists argued
for a re-valuation of sociological theories from the point of view of
the oppressed, and neo marxist theorists argued that State expansion
merely served the needs of capital by maintaining profitability. More-
over, liberal educational ideologies were also attacked from the right
in a series of 'Black Papers' from the late 1960's onwards which argued
that educational reforms failed to meet basic standards. This phase
of economic expansion and liberal optimism was further undermined by
the decline in rates of economic growth and the apparent failure of
Keynesian economics,upon which the Post War 'Butskellite' consensus was
built, to resolve the crisis. This was followed by the oil crisis of
the early 1970's which marked the beginning of the end of economic growth.

Consequently, those studies written in the mid 1970's such as
those of Ashton and Field and Willis tended to describe the balanced
reproduction to different sectors of the work force instead of lamenting
the wastage of talent: the equilibrium became functional rather than
dysfunctional. Working-class children entered the education system and
emerged as working-class adults; the same happened to middle-class
children. The 'failure' of the education system to elevate working-
class aspirations and introduce a genuine meritocracy therefore became
its very function in a class divided capitalist society.[21]

The accelerated rate of economic decline after the mid 1970's
and the structural changes in the demand for young people's labour
prompted a new wave of studies and a new set of policies. These can
be divided into two strands: those which concentrated upon the supply
side of the labour market through an examination of young people's
attributes and those which concentrated upon the demand side through an

examination of employer's needs.   Each of these will be addressed in turn and the final section considers the new forms of amelioristic intervention by the State.

D)   The Disjunctions Between Home, School and Work.

    The 'equilibrium' model of the transition from school to work emphasised the _conjunction_ between class backgrounds, processes of socialisation and labour market destinations.   The new wave of studies emphasised the _disjunctions_ between the three stages in the process.   I have termed these 'mis-match' models and they can be expressed diagrammatically as follows:

Fig.2.

THE MISMATCH MODEL: Disjunction between Socialisation at Home,
                    at School and Occupational Entry.

Longitudinal Process of Socialisation

1. Home Background	2. Educational Career	3. Level of occupational entry
Middle-Class ⟶	Higher Qualifications ⟶	Professional Jobs
Lower-Middle/ Upper Working-Class ⟶	Some Qualifications or Further Education ⟶	Skilled Manual and Clerical Jobs
Working-Class ⟶	Few or no Qualifications ⟶	Semi- and Unskilled Jobs
		Unemployed
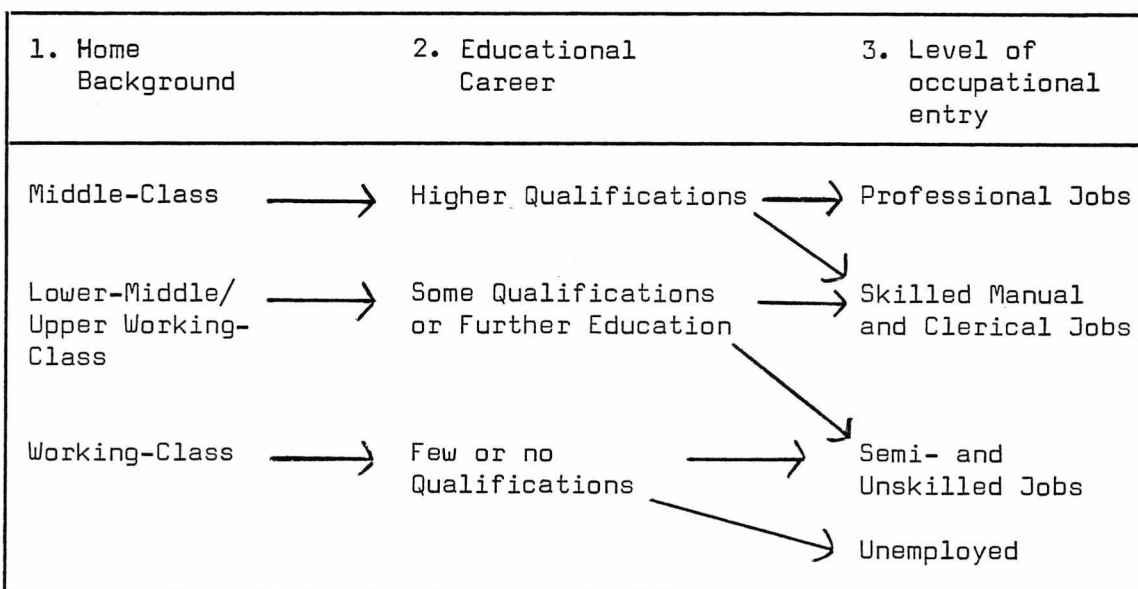
In this model the extended career jobs have become more scarce
and so some middle-class young people enter less ambitious white collar
jobs whilst many formal training opportunities have disappeared, pushing
those young people down into the unskilled categories. Finally the
unqualified are pushed off the job ladder altogether as this sector of
the labour market has also declined. This is related to the fact that
there are more young people leaving school as a result of the maturing
of the 1960's baby boom.[22]

Instead of downward mobility being a problem of adjustment for
individuals it becomes a problem for the whole generation of school
leavers.

The first to notice these changes were those who undertook studies
of black and asian youth. They found that opportunities in the labour
market were constrained by race, whatever the educational qualifications
of the candidate (Allen and Smith 1975).[23] Consequently the sons and
daughters of immigrants left school with high ambitions and were later
disappointed (Pryce 1979, Fuller 1980, Roberts et al. 1981, 198b).[24]

Moreover, even amongst white youth, changes in the labour market
resulted in traditional patterns of expectation and methods of job search
transmitted by the family being no longer appropriate. Moor in a study
of three schools in Newcastle argues:[25]

> 'These young school leavers knowledge of the local employment
> situation was on the whole very limited. It tended to be
> confined to traditional types of work and also to be highly
> personalised, reflecting their own, their friends and their
> families job choices rather than a more objective appraisal
> of the range of available employment opportunities.'

(Moor 1976, p.81)

It was also argued that the socialisation and selection processes
provided by the education systems had changed in character. Instead of
qualifications serving to select those at the top and middle levels

of the occupational hierarchy and 'cooling out' the aspirations of
those at the bottom, the importance of certification had increased at
all levels leading to the 'diploma disease' (Dore 1976).

This was assoicated with increasing evidence that those school
leavers who had the most difficulty in finding employment were, to quote
the title of a report on the subject, the 'Untrained, Unqualified and
Unemployed' (National Youth Employment Council 1974). From the late
1970's - and prior to that in areas of high unemployment - it appeared
that school truants and those most alienated from education values
were more likely to find themselves without work (Markall 1980,
Markall and Finn 1981, Gray, Smith and Rutter 1980).[26] Instead of the
'counter-school culture' preparing young people for manual work it
rendered them 'unemployable':

> 'Young labour is thus no longer easily disposable nor
> particularly cheap and when the hidden costs of their
> supervision and regulation are taken into account then
> the current disproportionate representation amongst the
> ranks of the unemployed indicates the extent to which the
> qualities and attractions they may once have held for capital
> no longer have the same appeal. Their 'employability' has
> consequently suffered'.
>   (Markall 1980, p.31)

Consequently, most attention has been focussed upon those at the
bottom of the occupational ladder, estimated by one report to be 43
per cent of all school leavers (National Youth Employment Council op.cit.).

This situation has produced an implicit crisis in educational
goals. Whilst there is a volume of evidence to show that competitive
education has always been 'unpopular' with the working-class and is
rejected by their children (Corrigan 1979, CCCS 1981) there are
indications that the increased emphasis on certification does not
necessarily reverse this trend. Thus, Markall (1980) has observed that

the most disaffected working-class young people become increasingly
alienated from educational goals in the context of rising unemployment
for this is given as the pretext for truanting from school in the final
year. Education thus becomes 'de-legitimised' for this group because it
is unable to transmit what are regarded as useful and rewarding skills
(Ball and Ball 1979, Brown 1984).[27]

What are the reasons for this mismatch? Firstly, some have
argued that unqualified school leavers make volatile and unreliable
employees during their first few years in the labour market (Markall
1980, Markall and Finn 1981, Phillips 1973, Casson 1979). Whilst in
the past the costs of this high rate of turnover were offset by the fact
that young people constituted a readily available pool of cheap labour,
during a recession employers can no longer afford to tolerate these costs
as the following extract from an OECD report illustrates:

> 'Employers are reluctant to recruit young people into permanent
> jobs. They complain that young people are not sufficiently
> motivated before the age of 25 to justify expenditure on
> training programmes and to give them job security'

> (OECD 1977, p.42)

Another argument is that young people leave school deficient in
the three 'R's and general educational skills. The Holland Report (1977),
reported that employers had complained of a decline in the calibre of
young applicants for jobs and claimed that this was alarming in the context
of an increasingly technological society which needs more skills, rather
than less. Elsewhere, Holland has made these concerns more explicit:

> 'In general, occupations in decline are those which demand the
> least training and the ones which are expanding are those which
> demand the most training. The expectation remains that there
> will be a major demand for technical skills, from employers with
> knowledge jobs, and a continual declining demand for unskilled
> or semi-skilled manual workers. Employers are looking increasingly
> for practical problem solvers, those who both have knowledge and
> can apply it'

> (Holland 1979, p.148)

Thus the Report concludes that the unqualified are more likely to become unemployed because they have less skills to offer.

A third argument sometimes used to explain the current disadvantages of young people in the work force is that their aspirations are too high for the jobs available. This argument would appear in some ways to contradict the previous one. The OECD Report already quoted claims:

> 'Whatever their educational level, young people are becoming increasingly reluctant to accept authoritative supervision. They rebel against the work organisation which imposes constraints and deprives them of initiative and responsibility. They refuse to accept the same pattern of human relations which adults have hitherto accepted as an inevitable social discipline'

(OECD 1977, p.40)

Jahoda (1982) argues that this set of attitudes may be generationally specific. Young people being better educated, are less willing to accept low skilled work uncritically and do not blame themselves for their predicament in the same way as those she studied in the 1930's.[28]

This would imply perhaps, that the goals and values set out in the Newsom Report, which called for the raising of individual aspirations, have been successfully absorbed by the generation of young people who came afterwards. If this is the case then, ironically, the 'Newsom generation' emerged from school at the very time when the labour market was unable to accommodate these raised aspirations.

It may therefore be claimed that youth in the late 1970's and 1980's are 'over-aspirated', underqualified, and that they do not easily accept the demands of employment. What emerges from these accounts is a new kind of deficit model: young people are unemployed because they lack the right qualities.

E)   School Leavers in The Labour Market

The arguments mentioned so far have all hinged upon the fact that

employer s' needs have changed. Increasingly, research has been directed

at assessing the 'needs' of industry (and the ways in which young people

fail to match them) rather than upon the needs of young people - the

task which Maizels set herself in the 1960's. This has led to a focus

upon the labour market as an allocative mechanism.[29]

In the classical economic model implied by the term 'labour market'

the supply and demand for labour would meet to form a 'natural' equilibrium.

Thus, Adam Smith in 'The Wealth of Nations' stated:

> 'The whole of the advantages and disadvantages of the different
> employments of labour......must in the same neighbourhood be
> either perfectly equal or continually tending towards equality...
> This at least would be the case in a society where things were
> left to flow their natural course, where there was perfect
> liberty, and where every man was perfectly free to choose what
> occupation he thought proper, and to change it as often as he
> thought proper. Every man's interest would prompt him to seek
> the advantages and shun the disadvantages of employment'

(quoted in Sofer 1975, p.8)

However, more sociological arguments have sought to demonstrate

that workers are unable to maximise their position in this way being

circumscribed by characteristics associated with race, age, gender, and

levels of skill (Blackburn and Mann 1979).

These studies have been concerned with both recruitment to first

jobs and the subsequent careers of young people during their first year

at work. Unfortunately few studies stretch beyond the first couple of

years in the labour market (Clarke 1978). Once in the labour market,

young people's ultimate destinations are determined by whether they

enter a 'primary sector' providing internal careers, promotion and secure

employment, or a 'secondary' sector of low paid and insecure jobs.

Whilst the 'primary' sector of the labour market has declined and excludes

many young people on account of their age (Ashton et al. 1982),

many of the jobs traditionally entered by young people in the secondary

sector have disappeared altogether. For example, such jobs as tea-boys,

errand boys and general 'dogs-bodies' are the first to be shed in times of industrial 'rationalisation' (Ashton McGuire and Garland 1982, Casson 1979, Sinfield 1981a).

The Holland Report argues that industry needs more skilled and qualified workers, this being one reason why many young people were disadvantaged. Studies of employer s' recruitment practices tell a different story (Ashton and McGuire 1980, Williams 1982, Jenkins 1982b). These report that the use of educational qualifications was prevalent only at the top end of the labour market: at other levels they were used either as part of a more general selection procedure, or not at all. The diploma disease or credentialism appears to pass by most of the workforce.

Williams (1982) for example shows that from 300 randomly selected vacancies,only 40% specified academic qualifications of some kind. Indeed there was no consistent set of criteria by which employers judged young people overall:

> 'Any generalisation about what employers want is almost certain, therefore, to be an overgeneralisation and this, indeed, is one of the main conclusions of this study. There is considerable variety in what employers expect of young employees'

> (Williams 1982, p.109)

Rather than selecting young workers through the use of educational certificates, employers used informal attributes which included vague qualities such as 'willing to work hard' (Williams, 1982) and 'gut feelings' on the part of recruiting officers. These have been elaborated as : family situation, general appearance and attitude, communications skills and so on (Jenkins 1982, Ashton and McGuire 1981). Moreover, employers increasingly used their own entrance test rather than referring to school certificates. Therefore, it seems that employers require general attributes rather than specific skills but that this varies

greatly between employers the 'needs' of industry are neither uniform

nor specifically related to educational standards (Finn 1982).

Those who have emphasised the importance of qualifications,

assumed that in a declining labour market they would be used to restrict

applicants. However, recent research has shown that whilst this is the

case at the upper end of the labour market, at other levels employers

were more inclined to restrict applicants by using word-of-mouth recruit-

ment [30] (Jenkins 1984, Ashton and McGuire 1980b, 1981). This led

one authority to speculate that qualifications merely appear to be more

important because more people have them (Ashton and McGuire 1981).

The importance or otherwise of these forms of recruitment varied

with the local labour market. Ashton and McGuire (1981,1982,1983) for

example, in comparing prosperous, declining and stagnant local labour

markets found that there were substantial differences in the importance

of qualifications and in the degree of 'fit' between school and work.

In the prosperous labour market, employers went into the school to recruit

suitably talented young people before they left, whilst in the declining

one they resented being plagued by careers officers and schools.

Youthaid (1981) by contrast,compared a traditionally high

unemployment area, a traditionally prosperous area, and a rural community.

They found that young people are very limited in their job choice since

they can only travel to within a few miles of their natal home:

> 'Thus after two years research we have established, no more and
> no less, than that the jobs available to young people were the
> jobs provided by the local economy within five to six miles of
> the parental home. The process of occupational allocation is
> effectively a process whereby school leavers from each catchment
> area are distributed among the number of jobs available within
> that radius'
>
> (Youthaid 1981, p.85)

Thus the nature of the local labour market determines the kinds of qualifica-

tions needed, the likelihood of being unemployed and the prospects of young

people once they have entered a job.

Finally, whilst some have concluded from this analysis that there is indeed a mis-match between young people's socialisation at school and their allocation to positions in the labour market and that this has implications for the role of education in the process, others have argued very vigorously that there is no such mis-match and that young people's lack of qualifications and putatively poor attitudes are irrelevant to their occupational entry. This latter school of opinion argues that problems derive not so much from the inadequacies of young people, as from the nature of the jobs (or the lack of them). Thus the main effect of youth unemployment upon the transition from school to work is to slow down the rate of absorption into the labour market and cause longer breaks between jobs (Raffe 1983, Youthaid 1981).

F)   Ideologies surrounding the Transition
                from School to Work from the mid-1970's

Discussion about young people in the late 1970's and 1980's suffers from attempts to generalise from disparate conclusions. On the one hand the 'problem' with young people is that they are under-qualified and on the other hand they are over-aspirated. Similarly, some argue that there is a 'mis-match' between young people's attributes and the opportunities available for them, whilst some argue that there is not. These ambiguities should be seen in the context of changes in the political climate of opinion. Politicians and others have posed the questions: research has often refuted them. It is now necessary to examine the definitions of youth as a 'problem'category in order to understand why these questions have been posed.

The first clear indication of a change of opinion can be traced

to the speech by James Callaghan in Ruskin College when he opened the

'Great Debate' about the role of education in relation to industry in

1976. He argued that education was failing to fulfil the needs of the

economy by providing an inappropriate curriculum and insufficiently high

standards. The response from the Department of Education and Science

(DES) was a series of 'Green Papers' and consultative documents, the

first of which in 1976 argued that:

> 'A new relationship will need to be created between education and
> the training services, and new methods will need to be adopted'.

> (DES 1976, p.8)

The Holland Report of 1977 recommended that the 'mis-match' could

be remedied through the expansion of a new training agency: the Manpower

Services Commission (MSC).[32] The MSC expanded exponentially within the

next few years under the aegis of the Department of Employment rather

than the DES and was specifically concerned with 'training' rather than

general 'education'.[33] The ways in which this was justified were

reminiscent of the 'human capital' theories of the 1960's, for it was

argued that increased training would compensate for the decline in jobs

for young people (Cathcart and Esland 1983). The DES responded with an

attempt to make general education more relevant to the needs of the

economy by introducing vocational preparation into schools:[34]

> 'It makes hard p ractical sense to give all young people a proper
> preparation for working life. British industry and commerce will
> perform better if employees are better educated, better trained
> and better informed...........better preparation for working
> life will yield immediate returns to employers in terms of
> performance and productivity'.

> 'The aim has been to encourage a general shift in development
> within the school system towards increasing the vocational
> relevance of much basic subject teaching. Progress is being made

in this as more teachers become directly involved with industrial and commercial links and thus <u>acquire a clear understanding of the relationship between education and the wealth producing sectors of the economy</u> and a willingness to devote teaching effort in that direction"

<div align="right">(DES 1979, p.3 and p.5)
(emphasis added)</div>

The 'Great Debate' and the subsequent State intervention have been attacked as being entirely spurious (Youthaid 1981, Cathcart and Esland 1983). Others have identified a 'mis-match' but not of the kind alleged by politicians. Still others have claimed the mis-match is created by 'The Great Debate' itself (Salter and Tapper 1981). A further group argue that the 'crisis' occurs when the economy cannot provide the jobs for which people have been educated at school and later trained on MSC schemes (Finn 1982). This may serve to actually undermine rather that to accentuate broader educational goals, particularly since the MSC have begun to invade the educational establishment itself.[35] (Raffe 1983, Rees and Atkinson 1982).

One qualitative study of a small group of young people on a Youth Opportunities Programme scheme charted their increasing disillusionment as the scheme progressed and the fallacy that more training would create more jobs became increasingly apparent (Stafford 1981). The 'compensatory' and fragmented short term 'training' provided by the MSC through a multiplicity of schemes with ever-changing acronyms has been criticised for not providing 'real' skills.[36] The response to these criticisms was to turn the Youth Opportunities Programme into the Youth Training Scheme in September 1983.[37] This was intended to provide an integrated vocational preparation for all young people leaving school, incorporating some of the Industrial Training Boards and much of the apprenticeship system. It nevertheless continued to provide more (and diluted) training for fewer jobs. This highlights the fact that the creation and expansion of the MSC and related schemes should of course be situated

in the context of rising youth unemployment. Despite all the pious rhetoric about training it is primarily a way of keeping young people out of the labour market for longer periods of time.

Moreover, it is evident that this form of State intervention is based upon an attempt to overcome the alleged deficiencies of young people outlined earlier. These deficiencies are defined, as in the 'human capital' theories of the 1960's, in terms of the needs of the economy rather than the needs of young employees. However, as we have seen, the needs of the economy as defined by various professional commentators are not borne out in labour market studies. Holland and others are perhaps more concerned with what the economy ought to need if expansion were to continue. The assumption underlying this is that what is good for the economy is also good for young people and so the State intervenes in order to 'improve' them accordingly. This is founded upon a rather naive faith that the economy will fulfil these expectations.[38] However, the relationship between young people and the economy is perhaps better characterised by a conflict between the interests of labour and those of capital.

Whatever the pretensions and limitations of this form of State intervention, it has become a crucial stage in the transition from school to work. The ways in which this operates in practice on the Isle of Sheppey will be explored later. However, firstly I shall consider how young people's experiences of unemployment have been conceptualised.

CHAPTER 3   FROM SCHOOL TO NO WORK:

Limbo

The Hero rides to heaven the public merely rot

for a fraction of forever in a designated spot

eternally paralysed the morbid orbit shifts

halfway to paradise stuck in the lift

some smart cracking bimbo says you can't be employed

sends you off to limbo on the stairway to a void.

                                John Cooper Clarke   1983

Yout. Rebels

A bran new breed of blacks

have now emerged,

leadin on the rough scene,

breakin away

takin the day

saying to capital neva

movin forward heva.

                                Linton Kwesi Johnson   1975

There are a growing number of studies concerned with youth unemployment: economists and statisticians debate as to whether it is caused by over-high wages, a decline in the economy, the 'crisis' of capitalism or industrial restructuring.[1] Some have argued that it is recession-induced, and therefore reversible and others that it is structural in nature, and therefore permanent.[2] These debates are well documented and I do not propose to discuss them here.

However, it is incontrovertible that unemployment has risen dramatically in the last few years with youth being particularly adversely affected. The proportion of those under 18 out of work has risen from 23.5 per cent in 1979 to 36.5 per cent in 1983. In 1983 it was estimated that more than one in two eighteen year olds who had left school were either unemployed or on Youth Opportunities Prog-rammes.[3]

These trends seem likely to continue. Moreover, the duration of unemployment has likewise lengthened (Raffe 1984). Ethnic minorities are more likely to suffer unemployment than other groups, and the unqualified more than the qualified (Colledge 1977, National Youth Employment Council 1974) and these figures do not include unregistered unemployed, estimated to be as many as 48 per cent of all unemployed in some areas (Roberts, Duggan and Noble 1981).

In this chapter I concentrate upon studies which assess how unemployment has been experienced by young people. There are two main approaches to this issue: first there are psychological approaches which have argued that unemployment leads to a decline in psychological well-being and therefore to a projected increase in social pathology. Second, there are those approaches which have stressed the adaptational responses of the young unemployed by documenting their coping strategies. I consider each of these in turn.

A) <u>The Psychological Approach to Youth Unemployment</u>

In 1982, Marie Jahoda, one of the most distinguished social

psychologists stated that:

> ...."given major social changes in the last half-century includ-
> ing a generally improved standard of living, is the psychological
> response to unemployment now different from what it was in the
> thirties? As was to be expected, the answer to this question is
> not simple, largely because the empirical evidence is still
> sporadic, not conclusive and rarely directly relevant to the
> psychological consequences of employment and their absence in
> unemployment."
>
> (Jahoda 1982, p.58)

In the last four years however, social psychologists have produced

a large number of studies on the subject constituting a distinct school

of thought. Whilst not being well theoretically elaborated, these

studies have two basic premises. The first is that unemployment has a

negative effect upon indicators of psychological health, and the second

is that there is a phased cycle of response to job loss (Fryer 1983).

A number of different research strategies have been employed. Some

of these studies began by reinterpreting the results available from

accounts of unemployment in the 1930's and from more recent sociologi-

cal studies of unemployment (for example Hayes and Nutman 1981).

However, any approach which uses secondary sources to construct a new

perspective has its limitations. More recently other studies have

been based on new empirical research.

A few have used a 'macro' approach by measuring economic cycles

against admissions to mental hospitals, and the rates of alcoholism,

suicide, mortality, morbidity and so on (Brenner 1973, 1979, Stokes

1981). These studies conclude that there is an overall relationship

between recession, indices of social pathology and health, but that

these depend upon an 'incubation' period of between six months and fifteen

years, depending upon which indicator is being used. This casts doubts

upon the validity of the results and there are also substantial methodo-

logical problems in using these kinds of measures.[4]

More recently psychologists have relied upon surveys of the
unemployed themselves the most common approach being to administer tests
of psychological well-being to unemployed and employed control groups.
Through using both cross-sectional and longitudinal comparisons, they
have produced a large body of evidence to show that the unemployed
suffer from impaired psychological health. All these results are
premised upon the idea that employment is a necessary prerequisite of
psychological health and that unemployment results in a sense of 'loss'
or 'shock' with psychological consequences for the individual. In other
words this is a 'deficit' theory. Some have tried to apply this to the
young unemployed using similar assumptions.

Thus Stokes (1981), using a sample of 67 unemployed teenagers and
47 employed ones, monitored their responses over a period of 24 weeks,
finding that the unemployed exhibited symptoms of anxiety, depression,
negative self evaluation and paranoid hostility. He concluded that:

> '............that this research project has indicated that
> in the United Kingdom during 1978-80 an inability to find
> stable employment after leaving school was likely to have
> been experienced as a severe threat to psychological health
> and rewarding interpersonal relations.'
>
> (Stokes 1981,p.334)

However, as Stokes only achieved a 25 per cent response rate his
conclusions must be treated with some scepticism. Donovan and Oddy
(1982) compared a sample of 12 unemployed male and female school leavers
with 12 employed ones using different tests from those of Stokes.[5] They
found that the unemployed sample suffered more emotional disturbance,
poorer 'life satisfaction', lower self esteem and higher depression and
anxiety. Unemployment they conclude could also lead to apathy, hopeless-
ness and isolation:

> 'Our results appear to show that without work young people
> rapidly fall prey to relatively serious social isolation.
> Indeed, we have found that even those friends they did
> have tended to be other young people without jobs. Thus,
> there appears to be a danger that a social network of
> 'second class citizens' will develop amongst the youngsters
> who will progressively have less and less in common with
> their working peers. '
>
> <div align="right">(Donovan and Oddy, 1982, p.25)</div>

Yet another approach is provided by Gurney (1980) who compares

stages of maturation emongst employed and unemployed school leavers in

Australia. His sample covered 247 males and 164 females. Although his

results were inconclusive, he did find that unemployment served to

inhibit maturation, especially amongst girls.

All the studies mentioned so far used rather small samples for

generalisations to be made across the population as a whole, and the

results do not appear to be overwhelmingly conclusive.[6]

However, the MRC/SSRC social and applied psychology unit at

Sheffield has produced substantial evidence using very large samples

and comparing employed and unemployed groups through the use of the

'General Health Questionnaire'.[7] They found that unemployed people

suffered increased psychological stress regardless of sex, age, class

and ethnic group. This was tested by using both cross-sectional and

longitudinal data and is further substantiated by the work of Bloxham

(1983) and Breakwell et al (1982, 1983). [8] Thus, Warr is able to

state with confidence that:

> 'Without doubt the psychological health of young people is
> significantly below that of people in jobs.'
>
> <div align="right">(Warr 1983, p.306)</div>

Moreover, Stafford gives us a detailed account of how unemploy-

ment affected 1744 school leavers in 1978 and 1979:

A high total score indicates reports of more symptoms and
hence the higher probability of minor psychiatric disorder
and of a deterioration in mental health. The symptoms listed
include being less able to concentrate, losing sleep more
often, feeling less useful, being less able to make decisions,
feeling under strain more often, feeling less able to overcome
difficulties, enjoying normal day to day activities less,
being less able to face up to problems, feeling unhappy or
depressed more often, feeling less confident, feeling worth-
less more often, and feeling less happy than usual.

(Stafford 1982, p.15)

However, Warr (1983) also notes that there are a number of
mitigating factors in this overall response. First, experience of
unemployment is related to the respondent's commitment to employment,
with highly employment-committed people being more adversely affected
by unemployment and more likely to find a job quickly (Jackson et al,
1983). Greater employment commitment was found amongst middle-class
respondents and Warr (1982) concludes that perhaps those who adjusted
more readily to unemployment were less likely to look for work. Secondly,
it appears that teenagers and those over 60 were not as adversely affected
as middle-aged workers (Jackson and Warr, 1983). Thirdly it appears
that the situation of the unemployed also affects their responses. Thus,
factors such as family support and personal vulnerability were likely
to lead to variations at an individual level (Warr 1983). Fourthly,
the nature of their employment prior to becoming unemployed likewise
affected their responses. Those with low-skilled and psychologically
destructive jobs were likely to <u>recover</u>, at least temporarily, on becom-
ing unemployed and Warr (1982) estimates that some 8 per cent of people
did so. Furthermore, there were a small minority who were heavily
'pro-active' in community affairs and informal work after becoming
unemployed. These seemed to be able to cope with unemployment,being
often assisted by strong ideological commitments to religion or politics
(Fryer and Payne, n.d.).

Finally, it was found that although there was a relatively uniform relationship between unemployment and psychological well-being for men, for women the results were more complicated as they depended on whether the woman was seeking employment, and what stage in the life cycle she had reached (Warr and Parry 1982).

Having noted the main results of these studies we may now consider more closely the theoretical assumptions, underlying these approaches (insofar as they exist). One assumption is that the protestant work ethic is a founing principle of our society and therefore inability to fulfil it leads to psychological anxiety and negative evaluation by others (Kelvin 1981 and Hayes and Nutman 1981). Furthermore, much of the research is an attempt to test Jahoda's thesis, derived from her work in the 1930's, that employment fulfils necessary psychological needs. Jahoda's argument (1982) is that employment provides _manifest_ functions in terms of a livelihood, but also _latent_ functions that are universally necessary to human fulfilment. These five latent functions described in her own words are as follows:

> "as an unintended by-product of its very organisation it
> (employment) enforces on those who participate in it certain
> categories of experience. These are: it imposes a time structure
> on the waking day; it enlarges the scope of social relations
> beyond the often emotionally charged family relations and those
> in the immediate neighbourhood; by virtue of the division of
> labour it demonstrates that the purposes and achievements of a
> collectivity transcend those for which an individual can aim;
> it assigns social status and clarified personal identity; it
> requires regular activity"
>
> (Jahoda 1982, p.83)

At first sight it might appear that all of these latent functions could equally be fulfilled by other activities : Fryer and Payne (n.d.) for example, argue that they are fulfilled for some through 'pro activity' . Indeed, they could equally well be fulfilled by joining a football team. Jahoda herself admits that the consequences of certain kinds of employment could be equally psychologically

deleterious but argues very firmly that only employment can offer all
of those functions together:

> ...whether or not they are aware of it, and whether or not
> they like it, employment makes necessary all of these cate-
> gories of experience....categories of experience from whose
> absence the unemployed suffer.... there is no other institution
> in modern societies which combines all the necessary main
> functions with enforcing all of these latent consequences in
> an obligatory fashion.
>
> (Jahoda and Rush 1980, pp.13,15 and
> 12, quoted in Payne and Fryer, n.d.)

As Payne and Fryer point out, this gives the proposition the status of
an irrefutable hypothesis.

Thus, a number of studies taking these functions as their basis
have shown that the young unemployed have no time structure to their
days, so that they confuse work, leisure and doing nothing (Kelvin
1981, Stokes 1981); that they lack a sense of purpose and this makes
them apathetic (Stokes 1981, Stafford 1982); that they become isolated
(Stokes 1981, Stafford 1982, Bloxham 1983); and that they define
themselves negatively (Bloxham 1983, Stokes 1981). Moreover, this
could lead to family tension (Stokes 1981, Bloxham 1983). Finally,
all these things are likely to lead to depression and anxiety although
it is difficult to judge which is cause and which is effect (Warr 1983).

Another proposition is that there is a phased response to job
loss (Hayes and Nutman 1981)[9] An Initial reaction of <u>shock</u>, is followed
by an intermediate phase of <u>optimism</u> and then a settling down period
when the individual moves through <u>pessimism</u> into <u>fatalism</u>. This model
of phased adjustment is derived from more general psychological models
developed to explain emotional transitions, such as bereavement. Follow-
ing from this, it is argued that the nature of psychological stress will
be different depending upon the stage of transition.

Why, then, do psychologists argue that young people

will be affected in ways different from adults? Whilst some psycholo-
gists argue that their model applies equally to young and old (Hayes
and Nutman 1981), others argue that the situation may well be more
serious for young people who cannot find jobs. Thus, Stokes asserts
that school provides a sheltering and protective environment so that
when young people leave, their situation is similar to that of a redundant
adult worker. Moreover, others argue that leaving school is a crucial
phase in a person's identity formation and that unemployment at this per-
iod will necessarily be critical (Gurney 1980, Donovan and Oddy, 1982):

> The transition from school to work may well represent a
> crucial stage in the formation of an adult identity. If
> an adolescent is denied the chance to take an adult role
> at this stage in his or her development, the adverse effects
> may be far more serious than when unemployment occurs after
> an adult identity has been established.

(Donovan and Oddy 1982,p.25)

Still others, however, have argued that unemployment is not so
bad for the young as it is for other groups (Jackson and Warr 1983).
Moreover, Banks and Jackson (1982) found that young people were more
anxious at school than after they left and they conclude that this must
be because they were anticipating unemployment! Evidently, there is no
agreement whether unemployment affects young people differently nor
why this should be. Gurney and Donovan and Oddy, working with smaller
samples, have produced the best theoretical schemes for accounting for
this aspect of unemployment, but it is difficult to generalise from
their results which seem to be contradicted by those working with
larger samples.

On the basis of these studies, some psychologists draw very
alarming conclusions as to the effects upon society as a whole. Thus,
Stokes argues that unemployment will lead to an increase in many kinds
of social malaise and Hayes and Nutman (1981) and Jahoda (1982)

conform this in reviewing the literature. Stokes even implies that the attitudes which he discovered in his tests may have led to the 1981 riots:

> 'The presence of significantly higher levels of paranoid hostility, when compared to employed controls, highlights the likelihood of delinquent and criminal behaviour occurring. Such punitive attitudes are not necessarily to be regarded as irrational and abnormal but an example of vague and diffuse manifestations of externalised hostility directed against the community, a consequence of an awareness that the responsibility for their misfortune is located external to themselves but are unable to isolate a responsible, tangible target.

> (Stokes 1981, p.305)

B)   Discussion of the Social Psychological
                          Approach to Youth Unemployment.

Most of the studies begin with a fairly simple empirical proposition and then extrapolate conclusions from the results rather than attempting to formulate general theories: this is what C. Wright Mills has termed 'abstracted empiricism'. However, whilst at first sight they appear to embody straightforward 'common-sense' questions and answers, underlying them are sociological conceptions of the individual in society. I now turn to some of the criticisms of this approach.

Firstly, even within psychologists' own terms, the relationship between unemployment and psychological well-being is not adequately theorised so that there is little explanation for why particular indices of psychological disorder are used (Hartly and Fryer n.d.). Moreover, the indices which are used are often very vague and imprecise. For instance, what does 'loss of regular activity' actually mean? Why should it lead to a loss of psychological well-being? Terms such as these appear to reflect the normative assumptions of psychologists.[10] Since there is no _general_ theory as to which symptoms will affect young people and why

(except in the case of Gurney) it seems almost as though any psychological
test of 'well-being' will suffice and an impressive array of tests with
scientific titles are conjured up, often without much explanation of
why these have been selected or what they mean. Furthermore, these
studies operate upon a somewhat crude one dimensional model of the
complexities of the human psyche.[11]

In order for psychologists' models to operate, they need to
present an artificially dichotomised model of 'employment' and 'unemploy-
ment' (Hartley and Fryer, n.d.). Unemployment is simply the absence
of employment and consequently when they measure the deleterious effects
of unemployment they assume that employment reverses them. In practice,
however, the boundary is much more blurred and it is difficult to find
examples of long term 'pure' unemployed, especially in the case of young
people, for whom the first years in the labour market are characterised
by intermittent employment, rapid job turnover and drifting in and out
of MSC schemes. (Makeham 1980, Roberts et al.1982a, 1982b, Youthaid 1981).

This raises the next question: how long does it take for these
symptoms to manifest themselves? Jahoda (1982) herself argues that it
took some 2 years for the effects of unemployment to appear in Marienthal
and most contemporary school leavers are seldom out of work for so long,
being at least guaranteed a place on an MSC scheme, if they are willing to
accept it, during that time. Others have quibbled about the length of
the 'incubation' period but the studies of young people have tended to
assume that the effects of unemployment and re-employment are more or
less immediate. Breakwell and associates (1982) and Stafford (1982)
argue that the latent functions of work can also be provided by joining
a YOP's scheme.

In order for the latent functions of work to be meaningful it
is assumed that unemployment means inactivity, although it is clear in

Jahoda's own study of Marienthal in 1933 that this meant inactivity

for men: women continued to bustle around as busily as ever. Thus, it

is clear that for women at any rate domestic work potentially fulfilled

many of the latent functions which were supposedly only provided by

employment.[12] Thus there is a very limited, androcentric view of work

underlying these models, which are really only a set of a postiori

justifications for the results achieved.

Psychological 'well-being' or the lack of it is defined by

psychologists' measures rather than by respondents themselves, and this

raises another, related problem. How far can symptoms which are

incipient measures of minor psychological disorders and which are not

medically reported, be used as a measure of the decline in 'well-being',

leading in turn to social pathology? Responses to psychological tests

do not necessarily predict behaviour, for none of this research into

young people demnostrates any actual decline in mental health, increase

in suicide, breakdown, or any other form of social pathology. Rather,these

tests imply that there may be a tendency towards such behaviour. It

is likely, however, that the reality is more complex,for self-reported

responses reflect only the individual respondent's perceptions of a

situation taken in isolation from the situation itself. Hence,the idea

of 'social isolation' is a psychologist's construct based upon a young

person's response to questions in a rather limited questionnaire.

By interviewing individuals out of context, no account is taken of how

these definitions are constructed through interaction, although Hayes

and Nutman (1981) attempt to rectify this. Youth unemployment, like

other psycho-social phenomena, exists in social contexts and this focus

on the individual independent of the social context is a distorting one,

especially where the alleged consequences are social ones.

This link between social and psychological dysfunctions is reminiscent of Kornhauser's (1965) attempt to show how unskilled manual workers were more likely to suffer psychologically than other workers. Ironically, Kornhauser was attempting to demonstrate that certain kinds of employment caused psychological distress. Many of the criticisms which emerged from that debate can also be levelled at this new generation of psychological 'deficit' theorists. For instance, there is some dispute as to whether it constitutes an aetiological explanation or whether it simply reflected processes of social selection: that is, does unemployment cause psychological disorder, or are those who find themselves unemployed likely to be those with psychological problems already. Whilst psychologists have attempted to take this into account, the question remains a pertinent one.

An additional criticism made by Miles (1983) is that it is uncertain to what extent these measurements of the psychological consequences of unemployment are simply measuring the effects of poverty. Nearly all unemployment precipitates a drop in income.

As well as addressing this model in its own terms we can also challenge its implicit sociological stance which conflates socio-economic dysfunction with individual psychological disorder and then goes on to impute social pathology from this individual response. It assumes that conforming to the status quo will produce psychological well-being and 'happiness' but the 'status quo' is rather narrowly defined. In Kelvin's words:

> ...first, there is a sharp distinction between those who do and those who do not have a job; second, there is the presumption that people need to work for reward, so that they may discharge their responsibilities for maintaining themselves and their dependents; finally the nature of the work itself is relevant because society is built up out of a functionally integrated division of labour - which implies, even if it is not 'inevitable' a hierarchy of social relationships.
> (Kelvin 1981, p.3.)

What is being assumed, therefore, is a simplistic Durkheimian model of
social and individual integration. The social order 'must' function
and in order to do so people 'must' fulfil their duties which will in
turn make them 'happy'. The invisible logic of the social order deter-
mines individual well-being for the fulfilment of 'supra'-individual
goals. Social pathology is therefore caused by dysfunctions in this
system: it is a disease in the healthy functioning of the organism.
Thus Brenner and Stokes attribute suicide, mental illness and crime
to these breakdowns, as though employment could prevent deviant behaviour.
This rather mechanistic correspondence between conventionally prescribed
social roles and psychological well-being ignores the conflictual and
oppressive demands which conformity to social roles engenders. It is
surely a misconception to assume that the oppressive and alienating nature
of most people's jobs under capitalism is conducive to psychological well-
being and indeed this is not borne out in most sociological studies.
Therefore, this model is both sociologically naive and psychologically
reductionist.[13]

The psychologists cited here assume that unemployment constitutes
an 'absence' leading to the collapse of the individual. Hartley and
Fryer (n.d.) indicate that this is a passive and negative conception of
human beings which effectively 'closes' the discourse against alternative
definitions of unemployment. Hence it is not possible, on the basis of
these models, to formulate other theories about the adaptation to
unemployment. Young people are portrayed as one-dimensional drones
in the social beehive.

Moreover, Hartley and Fryer indicate that this deficit model is
moral rather than objective in its foundations and social psychologists
judge the unemployed by their own morality. It assumes that the work
ethic is not simply an 'ideology' in society but that it has a psycho-

logical status too. Hence doing 'nothing' or watching television all day is regarded as evidence of apathy and listlessness, although Corrigan (1979) has indicated that for working-class youngsters 'doing nothing' can be an important activity in itself. An example of this unconscious value bias is provided by Stokes, who finds the drift into aimless street corner sub-cultures amongst his respondents deplorable:

> '....long-term unemployment amongst the young often leaving school, leading to resignation, apathy and settling down to a 'street corner' life style was an apt description of the young unemployed interviewed in Birmingham.'

(Stokes 1981, p.335)

This is due to unconscious middle-class professional bias under-lying these studies which assumes that work will be a central life interest and an orienting goal for the individual (Hartley and Fryer 1983). However, virtually all the research into working-class young people since the 1960's has indicated that for them work is not a central life interest, but only a means to an end: a means of earning money to pursue leisure. This implies that for working-class young people at any rate, the loss of income will be more serious than the loss of the latent functions of work. In effect, therefore, the implicit sociological model underlying the psychological theory is one of normative functionalism and the stance is one of the 'middle-class' investigator.

Although Jahoda (1982) claims that social psychology should be able to provide systematic scientific data about the nature of unemployment in the 1980's, and that it is inherently humanistic because it 'puts people first', it is in fact an argument for the status quo and therefore provides psychological support for social conservatism.[14] Although the methodology may purport to be scientific, the assumptions which are being 'proved'or 'disproved' are value loaded. Moreover, 'scientific' methods which make little attempt to define the connection

they are 'demonstrating' with theoretical rigour represent mystification of science rather than the use of it.

Perhaps one of the major empirical weaknesses of the psychological model is that it attempts to construct a 'universal' model of response applicable to all individuals. This is in contrast to economic and sociological accounts of youth unemployment which distinguish between the effects upon different social groups unemployment is by no means evenly spread. This universalising abstraction leads psychologists to understate the contrasts and differences between people. For example, 25 per cent of families in the Marienthal study did not suffer deleterious social-psychological consequences because of unemployment but their experiences were not emphasised. (Fryer and Payne 1983). Just as all kinds of employment should not be collapsed together, so all experiences of unemployment are not equivalent. Indeed, just a few years previously young radicals were demonstrating for the right not to work in order to pursue alternative life styles!

Apart from the theoretical weaknesses evident in these studies, they can also be challenged empirically. Alternative, adaptive models of youth unemployment have been put forward and these will be discussed next.

C)   Adaptive Approaches to Youth Unemployment

Sociologists and social anthropologists have approached youth unemployment very differently. A number of studies have examined the experiences of the young unemployed through using ethnographic methods with smaller groups or detailed, qualitative interviews rather than large scale surveys with pre-coded questions and tests.[15] The results from these studies are very different from those obtained by psychologists,

and black youth emerge as a distinctive category. Most of these studies
have been carried out in severely depressed areas where unemployment
has been rife throughout the 1970's. For example, Roberts' work exam-
ined   inner-city   neighbourhoods, Jenkins did his field work in a
protestant estate in Northern Ireland, and Pryce became immersed in a
black community in Bristol as an anthropologist. For the most part,
therefore, what is being described is an adaptational response to very
extreme conditions of economic and social deprivation.

There is some divergence in these accounts between those who
regard adaptation to unemployment in a declining labour market as to
some extent positive response and those who regard it as entirely
negative.[16] Some have also argued that unemployment inhibits the transi-
tion to full adult status (Hendry and Raymond 1983, 1984, Willis 1984).
In addition, some researchers have considered the effects of youth
unemployment upon the natal family (Allattand Yeandle 1984, Pryce 1979).

Since different accounts of youth unemployment have been produced
from different contexts they are difficult to compare. (This is,
perhaps, an important conclusion in itself: there are wide variations
in the way unemployment is experienced.) Roberts and associates'
study was the most systematically comparative, documenting responses
in a number of inner-city areas - Wolverhampton, Manchester, Liverpool
and London - by installing different participant observers in each of
these districts over the same period. (Roberts et al. 1981, 1982a,
1982b, 1982c). Other studies, however, have been limited by their very
nature to examining single locations as a participant observer can only be
on one place at a time. Only two of these writers have engaged specifi-
cally with psychological models of deprivation and deficiency (Roberts
and associates op.cit. Hendry and Raymond 1983).

The first conclusion to note is that the psychologist's model of universal deprivation and deficiency is not upheld in qualitative studies. For example, Roberts and associates' study began as an exercise to monitor 'out-reach' careers work - careers officers who went into the community to attempt to enfranchise the 'unattached'. They found that these out-reach careers officers had trouble convincing some of the young unemployed that they had a problem which the careers office could solve. These recorders therefore reject the 'calamitous' model of unemployment in favour of an 'adaptational' one. However, not all the young unemployed were equally adaptable and the study identifies a number of different groups with different reactions to the situation in different areas.

The second theme to emerge in these studies is that young people at the bottom of the social class hierarchy - the ones who for the most part have been the objects of study - fully expected to drift in and out of employment or MSC schemes and accepted unemployment as an inevitable fact of life. Their experiences of unemployment should therefore be seen in the context of their experiences of employment, for they were neither wholly employed nor wholly unemployed. Evidence for this life-style is provided by Corrigan (1979) in his study of working-class lads in Sunderland, Markall (1980) and Phillips (1973) in their account of school drop-outs in Salford, Roberts and associates in their study of inner-city youth and finally, Jenkins in his account of working-class youth in Northern Ireland. Roberts has termed this phenomenon 'sub-employment' for it also covers informal activities such as 'hustling' and casual work, and periods of not being registered as officially 'unemployed'.

Roberts and others also argue that much of this unemployment is

'self inflicted' since they found that two thirds of all job terminations had been due to dismissal for unruly behaviour or voluntary departure and Jenkins found the same amongst some of his sample.[17] For the young unemployed the most serious problem of unemployment is not in coping with collapse and breakdown - although they may feel depressed - but rather, boredom and the lack of money.

However, there are two ways of interpreting this. The first is that this is a rational response to adverse labour market conditions and unacceptable employment which lead young people to reject many of the jobs available:

> 'Self respect requires that such jobs be declined. Individuals
> are also protecting their personal integrity, and their status
> in the eyes of their peers when they leave jobs and tell
> employers to keep their 'shit jobs' and 'slave wages'. Willing-
> ness to risk unemployment proves to the individual and to others,
> that he is a real man (or woman) not tied down but in control
> of his or her destiny.'
>
> (Roberts et al. 1982, p.4)

This implies that occupational aspirations are a factor in the acceptance or rejection of particular categories of employment, and that unemployment should be seen in this context.

The second interpretation is that this pattern of intermittent employment and frequent job changing is counter-productive in the context of high unemployment. Markall (1980) for example, argues that as young people's periods of unemployment and records of dismissal accumulate, so they rapidly become unemployable. Responses appropriate to times of full employment are a disadvantage during times of shrinkage in the labour market and consequently he describes this group as the 'dinosaurs' of the labour market:

> These youngsters had a tendency to forgo notions of career
> and job commitment in favour of a more marginal approach
> to employment, drifting in and out of work, which was
> largely uninspiring, poorly paid and seemingly unattractive.

It was the nature of employment itself which fostered their
unstable performance and saw them drift inevitably towards
the poorest paid, most unattractive and insecure employment.
Their intermittent and uncommitted job history began to
betray them as employers came to regard them as unreliable,
ill-disciplined and lacking in the 'will to work'.

(Markall 1980, p.18)

Thus whilst Willis (1977) argued that the counter-school-
culture prepared young men for unskilled manual work from which they
expected little intrinsic satisfaction, Markall found that those who
had been members of the counter-school-culture became part of a
casualised lumpen proletariat on leaving school and this is confirmed by
Jones and associates (1981).[18]

Those who have studied black youngsters, found that irregular
employment could lead to the adoption of the status of deliberate
'occupational marginality' (Roberts et al. 1982a , 198b). Pryce, too,
gives an example of this:

'The hustler's response is one in which is expressed a dread
of having to work as a menial; abhorrence of having to take
orders from a 'cheeky white man' indifferent to him as an
individual; and resentment because these experiences hurt
his pride as 'a man'. The terms 'slave labour' and 'shit
work' are used interchangeably here to mean monotonous work
which the hustlers all say they can never put up with. The
attitude they adopt is: 'who wants to do de white man's
work anyway? Let them keep it! I will die before I stoop
to any white man. These attitudes are not unrelated to the
image the Jamaican constructs of himself as being tough and
aggressive and capable of fighting back and standing up for
his rights. Both dispositions - the rejection of work
associated with subordination to the white man, and the
readiness to fight for one's rights - are highly exaggerated
in the overall response of the hustler (and other West
Indians in the expressive-disreputable orientation). '

(Pryce 1979, p.56)

Whilst these responses arise out of a profound sense of injustice
to which the West Indian community have developed a culture of accommo-
dative defiance based upon centuries of racial oppression, there are

also examples of white youths who adopt a similar ideology:

> 'Labouring on building sites is a job which, although valued
> by the lads for its outdoor setting and relatively high
> wages, involves being treated as a 'message'. Some jobs,
> such as office boy, they see as a complete waste of time
> because of this. It may also be why some of the lads steer
> clear of apprenticeships. First year apprentices are believed
> to be treated as 'gets' ('get this and get that') or 'gophers'
> ('go for this and go for that'). '
>
> (Jenkins 1983, p.75)

However, Jenkins indicated that this should also be seen as a defensive response to conditions where these lads are likely to lose in the competition for better jobs.

Therefore, on the whole, those who have studied black youth have documented a proud defiance, whilst those studying white youth have discovered a reactive self-immolation.[19] This leads us to consider the next theme: to what extent are the experiences of black youth distinctive? Roberts and associates argue that there are particular circumstances which lead black youth to more cynical about employment opportunities than white youth.

Young blacks in the inner-city tended to place greater faith in the value of qualifications and held generally higher aspirations than white youths. Consequently, they are greatly disappointed when they found themselves in unskilled, low paid jobs or even unemployed. Rather than adjusting their expectations however, they blamed their predicament upon racial prejudice. Pryce (1979) locates this experience more specifically within the context of a West Indian 'generation gap' and patterns of immigration.

For some young unemployed, there existed the possibility of 'informal careers' outside employment and many of the unregistered, or long term unemployed in Roberts and associates' and Pryces' studies were pursuing such careers.[20] Just as Payne and Fryer (n.d.) had described

the 'pro-activity' of their small sample as alleviating the otherwise deleterious effects of unemployment, so informal careers can have the same function. These can even be taken up in preference to pursuing formal unskilled employment as they confer a certain degree of independence and status. Furthermore, Jenkins (1983) found that working 'on the side' could counteract some of the economic and social disadvantages of unemployment amongst white youth.

However the possibility of informal activity was also regionally variable. Roberts and associates found that whilst in Wolverhampton only about 11% of young people were thus engaged, in Manchester, they estimate that as many as 25% had additional sources of income. This ranged from obtaining money from sexual relationships (not necessarily prostitution), agricultural work, building work and 'tatting' or collecting anything of value. Most of the 'black' economy consisted of doing casual undeclared work. However, it has also been argued that in order to be able to participate in the 'black economy' young people needed both informal contacts and skills to sell, and this effectively excluded most of them: hustling was a minority career (Miles 1983, Roberts et al 1981 and 1982c).

This 'informal' work is related to the phenomenon of 'non-registration' described by both Roberts and Pryce. The unregistered were the unofficially unemployed and their numbers varied from 48 per cent in Brixton to ten per cent in Wolverhampton. Thus Roberts concludes that in some areas this was regarded as a common response whilst in others it was considered rare. The reasons for non-registration varied from a sense of pride in not resorting to State assistance to a general feeling of 'can't be bothered with the hassle' as well as a desire to escape State surveillance.

So far I have mainly described more positive responses to

unemployment based upon the rejection of 'trash' jobs, and the adoption

of alternative identities amongst a minority. However, others such as

Willis (1984) and Seabrook (1982), describe the meaninglessness and

vacuity of young people's lives when they are denied access to con-

ventional roles as workers and consumers. The alternatives, such as

drug taking, drinking and 'hanging around' in the High Street are

regarded as evidence of their exclusion from mainstream life and are

assumed to be undesirable as an alternative.

> 'They speak in metaphors, images, feelings, because they cannot
> see the society that has denied them any sense of purpose and
> an opportunity for self definition. They inhabit the fantasy
> of functionlessness, and are at the mercy of values and
> definitions shaped by the market place - a peculiar and uniquely
> contemporary form of captivity, which those who control it like
> to describe as freedom.'
>
> (Seabrook 1982, p.35)

Willis and Hendry and Raymond argue that young people value the

wage packet as a symbol of adulthood and consumer power and the unemployed

are thus denied the means to mature and be accorded respect in the adult

community. These young people are therefore truly in 'limbo' as John

Cooper Clarke describes it. However, both Willis's and Seabrook's data

are accounts based upon impressionistic evidence rather than systematic

surveys at present.[21]

Whilst for the psychologists the deleterious effects of unemploy-

ment were due to the loss of necessary psychological functions provided

by employment, in these accounts the disadvantages of unemployment are

due to exclusion from social and symbolic roles and from consumption.

They emphasise the loss of income as well as the loss of employment.

Seabrook's approach, however, can be criticised for implicitly

comparing the responses of the young unemployed with a romanticised

conception of how the working-class community used to respond, or ought

to respond, were it not corrupted by modern consumer culture. He

therefore paints a rather black picture of the young unemployed.

Walsgrove (1984), adopting a rather different approach, argues that young people resort to forms of fantasised escapism when faced with unemployment. They 'amplify' normality by behaving as though they were not excluded from mainstream youth culture - they pretend to be 'normal'. However, since the young unemployed appear to experience intermittent employment, this response is perhaps not altogether unrealistic.

Finally, all these studies indicate that the responses to unemployment vary between different groups within the community. Thus Hendry and Raymond find that there are three main responses to unemployment: vocational, vacational and ordeal-responses. Only the last of these was entirely negative:

> 'Unemployment was interpreted as an ordeal if the adolescent saw it as time which <u>should</u> be spent at work. When the adolescent perceived unemployment as a long term 'career' (vocational) or in terms of a temporary escape from the constraints of work (vacational) then the experience seemed to be given a more positive meaning. '
> (Hendry and Raymond 1983, p.37-38,
> (Parentheses are added)

Pryce and Jenkins relate these different orientations to three different life-styles to be found in the community, whilst Roberts identifies only two: those from respectable homes where the children are encouraged by parents to seek work and those adopting a 'rough' orientation, by rejecting regular work. For Pryce, a 'hard core' of adult hustlers and their younger apprentices form the 'expressive-disreputable' orientation and the respectable members of the black community are very critical of this life style. For Jenkins, there are the 'lads' who accept unemployment pragmatically and have developed communal methods for coping with it; the 'citizens' seeking respectable jobs and excluded from the sub-employed peer group and the 'ordinary'

kids who want a job at any cost, and are more likely to remain in it.
Living 'on the brue' was more acceptable to some groups than to others.

D)   Discussion of the 'Adaptive' Approach to Youth Unemployment

The studies described in the preceding section examine the
adaptive responses mostly through the use of more qualitative fieldwork.
However, they are also unsystematic, fragmentary and difficult to
compare (although this applies more to some studies than to others).
They do not therefore constitute a distinct school of thought in the way
one might construct from the psychological literature.

It is important, however, to be aware of the limitations of
descriptive accounts such as these. Although some try to incorporate
their data into more general theories of reproduction or race (Jenkins
1983, Pryce 1979) most of them are descriptive and more general
conclusions have to be inferred by comparison.

These accounts also contain many ambiguities (as is inevitable in
any ethnographic research). For example, to what extent are the
responses described here rationalisations for the inevitable or to what
extent do they represent the genesis of a 'bran'new breed of black' as
Lynton Kwesi Johnson describes it? Similarly, to what extent are these
responses 'rational' and to what extent are they evidence of a capri-
cious volatility which is ultimately self-defeating ? These accounts
of youth unemployment also add a new dimension to the study of the
transition from school to work as they would appear to confirm the
'mis-match' model and the rather pessimistic conclusions of the OECD
report (1977). Rather than having been socialised to accept labour
market destinations, young people reject the opportunities available
to them.[22]

One distorting factor in these accounts is that they have tended
to concentrate upon the bottom end of the hierarchy of school leavers -
those without qualifications and jobs. These are also the most alienated
with the   most spectacularly antipathetic responses, yet the 'lads' are
only representative of a minority of school leavers, as Jenkins makes
clear. Therefore, it is possible that <u>both</u> the psychologist's model
of deficiency and deprivation <u>and</u> the sociologist's and anthropologist's
models of adaptational response have value when applied to different
groups of school leavers.

Moreover, all these studies should be analysed in terms of the
perspective of the researchers, for all social research necessarily
incorporates some value bias. Thus whilst Willis and Seabrook 'see'
only the aimless and hopeless aspects of their respondent's life styles
others 'see' a vigorous self defence. It is also possible that these
different conclusions are related to different geographical contexts.
Willis has examined young people in Birmingham for whom unemployment is
a new phenomenon (Birmingham being until recently an area of full
employment). Roberts, Pryce and Jenkins examined youth in areas
where unemployment had always been high. Thus, established sub-cultural
responses may exist in such deprived areas which are transmitted to young
people whilst they are still at school.

Another very important criticism which can be made of these
accounts is that, as with all the literature reviewed so far, they are
invariably androcentric. Most of the examples are of <u>male</u> youth, whether
white or black, and although there is no systematic well documented
accounts of female unemployment in these studies there are some indica-
tions of different responses. For example, Roberts mentioned the fact
that girls are likely to drift into casual prostitution and this is also

described by Pryce (although for white girls), but this alternative has
a very different status to the life of the freewheeling hustler
Willis (1984) hypothesises that girls' status may rise as that of boys
declines due to unemployment.

One reason for this absence of any extensive documentation of
girls' unemployment is perhaps that, as in the sociology of youth culture,
many of these studies have concentrated upon the visible street-life of
the unemployed and not upon the home where girls are more likely to be
found. Jenkins mentions that for this reason girls were more likely to
be 'citizens' or 'ordinary kids' than to participate in the aggressive
machismo culture of the 'lads'. One cannot help concluding that perhaps
these researchers regarded the lives of unemployed young women as rather
dull and predictable.

Finally, other criticisms of these accounts have been made
by Raffe (1983) and Hirsch (1983), who both criticise Roberts'
conclusions. Raffe argues that whilst his results may apply to the 1970's,
when there were still opportunities for young people, they do not apply
to the 1980's, when opportunities were very limited. He illustrates
from his own study of Scottish school leavers that they are now less
likely to leave jobs voluntarily. However, the fact that Roberts
deliberately chose areas where unemployment had been endemic for some
time means that his conclusions could also apply to the 1980's. Raffe's
criticism probably applies to the more respectable average school leaver,
whereas Roberts''hard-core' and Jenkins 'lads' are likely to have
increased in numbers.

E)   General Discussion:
                Two Approaches to Youth Unemployment

Despite the different approaches used in these accounts of youth

unemployment, it is nevertheless possible to draw some more general

conclusions. It is apparent from accounts of unemployment in the 1930's

that the unemployed saw worklessness as a disaster for which they blamed

themselves (Jahoda 1982). Orwell, one of the original ethnographers

of the 1930's described this as follows:

> 'When I first saw unemployed men at close quarters, the thing that
> horrified and amazed me was to find that many of them were ashamed
> of being unemployed..... I remember the shock of astonishment it
> gave me when I first mingled with tramps and beggars to find that
> a fair proportion of them, perhaps even a quarter, of these beings
> whom I had been taught to regard as cynical parasites, were decent
> young miners and cotton workers gazing at their destiny with the
> same sort of dumb amazement as an animal in a trap. They simply
> could not understand what was happening to them. They had been
> brought up to work, and behold! it seemed as if they were never
> going to have the chance to work again.'

(Orwell 1937, p.76 in 1977 ed.)

A similar picture of despair and calamity is presented in Walter Greenwood's

'Love on the Dole' and this would seem to fit psychologists' models.

However, it is arguable that there are important differences between

the young unemployed and adults, and between the 1930's and the 1980's.

Firstly, as I have indicated the young unemployed of the 1980's

are not generally out of work for long periods of time, although there

appears to be a growing number of long-term unemployed amongst them.

Secondly, from descriptions provided by researchers (Phillips

1973,Markall 1980, Roberts et al. 1982a,1982b,1982c), it appears that the

young unemployed pragmatically accept unemployment and do not appear to

be suffering from 'dumb amazement' like an 'animal in a trap'. This may

be due to a number of factors. Finn (1982) for example, suggests that

educational expansion may have raised the expectations and confidence

of youth.

Thirdly, because young people have left school voluntarily rather

than being thrown out of work involuntarily, they have no occupational

identity to lose. A number of studies show that they leave school with jubilation rather than resignation, for school was experienced as oppressive (Willis 1977, Corrigan 1979, Markall 1979). Many young people leave their jobs with the same feelings with which they left school - a sense of relief. It is therefore likely that school leavers' experiences of unemployment will be related to their experiences of employment <u>and</u> of school. Thus, responses to unemployment by young people are not necessarily all negative and passive, as described by Orwell,since they may also reflect a positive rejection of inappropriate employment.

Fourthly, it is conceivable that young people in the 1980's will experience unemployment differently from those in the past because their role within the family has changed. Hence, whilst in the Pre-War period low income families depended upon young people's earning power, in the 1980's parents attempt to shelter children from the effects of unemployment (Allatt and Yeandle 1984).

Finally, it is also arguable that in the Post-War period young people have acquired a recognisable social status as consumers as well as workers. This institutionalised 'space' offers alternative sources of identity through sub-cultural activities, and by implication a source of confidence from which to resist negative labelling (Cashmore 1984).

One major limitation in all these studies of unemployment and the transition from school to work mentioned so far, is that young people are represented as an undifferentiated age set, although in practice most of the studies have focussed upon the period immediately after leaving school and up to one year later. It is arguable that attitudes to work and unemployment vary over the period after leaving school and that the volatility documented in several of these studies merely

constitutes a 'settling down' period rather than a long term trend.[23]

The long term effects of unemployment upon young people later in their

teens are perhaps more serious than they are in the period immediately

after leaving school, although this has not been systematically

investigated.

CHAPTER 4   FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION:
                                SOCIAL AND CULTURAL REPRODUCTION

Most of the studies discussed in the previous chapters have

been concerned with ways in which young people come to fit the needs of

the economy and of society, and the ways in which this process breaks

down. They can all therefore be situated within the general problematic

of social reproduction: how each generation of children becomes the

next generation of workers and citizens. It is now necessary to consider

this broader issue of social reproduction and the ways in which it

has been conceived.[1] This has been the most extensively elaborated

by those writing within the marxist tradition.

In negotiating this abstract and philosophically hazardous terrain

it is necessary to be as analytically precise as possible about how

terms such as 'cultural reproduction' are used in each paradigm. I shall

therefore proceed through the marxist theories of reproduction in their

logical order of development.

In one of the original formulations of the ideas of Marx and

Engels,it was argued that ideology simply reflected economic forces:

> 'What else does the history of ideas prove, than that intellec-
> tual production changes its character in proportion as material
> production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever
> been the ideas of its ruling class.'

                                        (Marx and Engels 1977 p.57)

The first theory to be considered here, seeks to demonstrate the

'correspondence' between material production and social reproduction through

the education system.

The French marxists of the 1960's however, developed different

strands within marxism. Althusserian theory argues that the operations

of the State take on a logic of their own which are only economically

determined 'in the last instance'. Althusser's conceptualisation of reproduction is followed by that of Bourdieu and Passeron who illustrated how reproduction takes place through 'culture' as well as ideology.

Both these major developments in marxist thought were in turn challenged by 'resistance' theories of reproduction which provided an explanation for <u>how</u> social reproduction took place in practice through forms of cultural production.[2] This latter perspective represented the crystallisation of ideas developed in a number of different intellectual traditions. In order to understand its strengths and weaknesses, the third section traces its intellectual pedigree and explores the methodological and epistemological foundations upon which it rests. The final section of the chapter considers the overall contribution of 'reproduction' theories and describes some of the lacunae that remain.

The concept of reproduction takes as its problematic Marx's stricture that capitalist society must reproduce its own social relations in order to persist just as surely as it must procure raw materials for transformation into goods. Reproduction is therefore a conceptual and material prerequisite for social life:

> 'As Marx said, every child knows that a social formation which
> did not reproduce the conditions of production at the same time
> as it produced, would not last a year. The ultimate condition
> of production is therefore the reproduction of the condition of
> production.'
>
> (Althusser 1971, p.123)

For marxists, the important thing to explain in social reproduction is how an unjust and exploitative system of class relations continues to elicit consent from those whom it oppresses. Or in Willis' words:

> 'The difficult thing to explain about how middle-class kids
> get middle-class jobs is why others let them. The difficult
> thing to explain about how working-class kids get working-
> class jobs is why they let themselves.'
>
> (Willis 1977, p.1)

One way in which this takes place is through the education

system and hence all these perspectives address the relationship between

education, the economy and society under capitalism.

A)   Correspondence Theory

The work of Bowles and Gintis (1976) has been termed 'corres-

pondence theory' because they argue that the education system reinforces

the class structure by directly reproducing the needs of the capitalist

economy:

> 'The economic system will be embraced when, first the perceived
> needs of individuals are congruent with the types of satisfaction
> the economic system can objectively provide... Thus, the social
> relations of production are reproduced in part through a harmony
> between the needs which the social system generates and the means
> at its disposal for satisfying those needs.'

                                        (Bowles and Gintis 1976, p.127)

These 'needs' are fulfilled at three levels: working-class

students at school are taught to be docile, perform low grade and

repetitive tasks and obey authority; middle-class students are trained

to obey orders, be diligent and to master a high level of numerical and

linguistic competence; upper-class students are expected to be

intellectually and cognitively competent, to understand the rules, but

also know when to break them. This latter group, are expected to show

initiative and creativity but others are not. These characteristics

are inculcated by the rewards and punishments meted out at school and

by the different types of school attended by different social classes.

Thus the needs of the capitalist economy for different kinds of workers

are fed by education. This has been described as the most comprehensive

Marxist account of the relationship between schooling and capitalism.[3]

Another version of 'correspondence' surfaces in the work of

marxist historians who argue that the imposition of state schooling for
the masses coincided with the rise of the factory system and the need
for a docile and disciplined workforce.[4] Johnson (1976) for example,
re-wrote the history of mass schooling during the nineteenth century
showing that rather than the development of state schooling representing
the march of liberal enlightenment, progress and philanthropy it was an
attempt to discipline and control the working class and to destroy their
pre-existing autonomous educational traditions. Schooling was able to
impose the needs of capitalism through the use of bells, routines and
timetables and hierarchies of authority, all of which resembled the
organisation of the factory. Middle-class reformers assisted in this
process by indicating the need to 'improve' the working-class and save
them from their supposedly ignorant and vicious ways. Johnson described
this as a 'cultural onslaught':

> 'When economists or economic historians tell us that the industrial
> revolution 'required' new skills in the labour process, we may
> doubt the premise and also reply that it seems to have needed
> new human beings with a new, more disciplined sociality'

(Johnson 1976 p.48)

However, the notion that there is a direct correspondence between
education and the needs of the economy has been extensively criticised
by marxists and non-marxists alike. It has been described as mechanistic,
economistic and deterministic, because it reduces the complexities of
educational practice to the needs of the economy without any inter-
vening processes. Thus, some have argued that Bowles and Gintis fail
to describe the mechanisms by which these needs are translated into
schooling practices (Cole 1983). By concentrating upon capitalist
reproduction at the global level, the actual relations inside the
school are unexplored and it is difficult to imagine either teachers
or pupils perceiving their roles so narrowly. Because the system

functions reflexively there is no account of how individual conscious-
ness operates within it.

Other critics have complained that this emphasis upon functional
correspondence ignores the disjunctions between the State and the economy
and the breakdowns within the reproduction process.[5] Indeed, some have
argued that school is not in fact a very efficient vehicle of repro-
duction at all, for it imposes its disciplines only with extreme diffi-
culty.[6]

Hickox (1982) turning Bowles' and Gintis' own logic back on
themselves, questions whether capitalism actually needs a stratified
educational system in order to reproduce itself and hypothesises that
a comprehensive system would probably do the job better. He also
questions whether capitalists themselves would regard the function of
the education system as being one of social control, or whether the
system is actually controlled in any way at all by capital. However,
the fact that these functions are not consciously recognised by indivi-
dual actors would not necessarily refute the correspondence thesis.

These general criticisms lead Bowles and Gintis and other
American marxists to reformulate their model in order to incorporate
forms of struggle and resistance.[7] Willis' (1977) work has been
influential in this trans-Atlantic cross-fertilisation although its
status has been ambiguous. Some have seen his account of practices of
resistance as confirming the model presented by Bowles and Gintis,
whilst others have claimed that it contradicts it by illustrating the
sources of non-correspondence in the reproduction process.[8]

B)   Structuralist Theories of Social Reproduction

The structuralist conception of reproduction follows logically,
if not temporarily from Bowles and Gintis, for Althusser was trying to

rescue marxism from its more economistically reductionist tendencies.
This theory deserves to be addressed separately for although it appears
only in the form of some loosely sketched notes,many of Althusser's
concepts have been incorporated into the vocabulary of contemporary
marxism.[9]

Althusser argued that schooling would become increasingly
essential to the reproduction of capitalist social relations, replacing
other forms of socialisation, such as training 'on the job' or in the
family. Children learn technical 'know how' at school but they also
learn how to know how:

> 'The reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction
> of its skills, but also, at the same time, a reproduction of its
> submission to the established order.'

> (Althusser 1971, p.127)

Whilst for 'correspondence' theorists the relationship between
education and the economy was a directly reflexive one, for Althusser
the needs of the economy were mediated indirectly through 'Ideological
State Apparatuses' (ISA's). Thus, ideology was enthroned as the main
vehicle for the reproduction of social life under capitalism. The ISA's
and other apparatuses of the State were not directly dependent upon the
economy, instead they were 'relatively autonomous'. Although Althusser
lists at least seven ISA's, he argues that education was the most
crucial, gradually displacing the others in importance.

But what does 'ideology' mean for Althusser and how is it related
to social practices? Althusser argues that ideologies were both real
and imaginary: on the one hand, ideology is a "representation of the
imaginary relationship of individuals to the real conditions of existence"
(p.152 ibid.), and on the other hand ideology was made concrete in
real material practices.

Like Bowles and Gintis, Althusser argues that the mass of

students were ejected at various points in the educational process

equipped with the skills and aptitudes appropriate for that level.

What differs is the means by which this was achieved.

Althusserian structuralism has inspired some of the most

vituperative criticisms, a common one being that it is over-deterministic:[10]

> 'Understandings such as these (referring to Willis' and Corrigan's
> work) have no place in Althusser's theoretical machine which
> steam rollers along, flattening all reality in its path. There
> are no methodological checks in this highly structualist account,
> no observations of the everyday routines of schooling.'
>
>   (Hargreaves 1980, p.176)[11]

Another criticism is that in emphasising the nature of structural

determination through the ISA's there is no account of the role of

individual resistence because individuals are mere 'cyphers'. (Hargreaves

1980). However, this criticism is misplaced. Althusser did have a

conception of individual consciousness but it was very different from that

normally assumed in English marxism and within British sociology in

general. ISA's were means of 'interpellating' individuals: thus, they

were 'hailed' or 'invoked' by external structures and did not exist as

independently constituted subjectivities.[12] This point is important for

the way in which Althusserian theory has been applied in England and one

to which I return later.

Bourdieu and Passeron produce a different model of the nature of

structual determination and the role of ideology within social reproduc-

tion. They are not concerned with determination by the needs of the

economy, but rather they argue that it is the class structure as such

which needs to reproduce itself, in a similar manner to the kinship

system in non-capitalist societies.[13]

Bourdieu, like Althusser, concentrates upon the educational system

particularly because he accords it a crucial role in the maintenance
and continuity of capitalist society. Unlike Althusser, however,
Bourdieu assigns culture rather than ideology, a central role within the
process. The distinction between ideology and culture is important and
deserves some elaboration since it forms part of a complex of ideas at
the heart of this chapter and of the 'reproduction' debate overall. For
Althusser, ideologies inhabit the ISA's (and to a lesser extent other
State apparatuses) and they have no existence outside of these. They
can also misrepresent: they are 'imaginary representations'. Althusser
describes them as an 'imaginary assembly, bricolee, pure dream, and
illusion'.

For Bourdieu, the world of ideologies is similarly an ethereal
world of shadows. Culture, however, is more real and concrete. It
represents the qualities, symbols and artefacts that are most valued by
a given society. 'The best that has been thought and said, regarded as
the summits of achieved civilization ' (Hall 1980, p.59). Culture is thus an
'arbitrary' assemblage of symbolic items which are owned and controlled
by the dominant classes, for in a hierarchically ordered society, the
dominant classes define what is culture and then appropriate it, symboli-
cally, for themselves. [14]

This cultural 'arbitrary' is perpetuated by being institutionalised
in the educational system, for the dominant classes use culture as a
form of 'capital'. Real money is 'translated' or 'transformed' into
cultural capital through long (and expensive) years in the education
system, and the latter can be 'cashed in' in the form of research grants
and higher incomes, in exchange for qualifications which are the 'currency'
of the cultural market place. However, the symbolic power of cultural
capital is more important than its material manifestations and for
Bourdieu this is most appropriately described in the language of economics.

Bourgeois parents are able to 'invest' in education through their children, and the children in turn, profit from education in proportion to their cultural capital. Those with no cultural capital have less chance of acquiring any - consequently the education system reproduces class society through the imposition of a 'cultural arbitrary' which defines what is considered true or false, legitimate or illegitimate, tasteful or vulgar and has meaning only within the structure of that society at a given time. The absorption of this cultural arbitrary (towards which bourgeois children are already predisposed) defines the nature of 'intelligence' and 'ignorance'.

The 'cultural arbitrary' is imposed through the use of 'symbolic violence' in pedagogic practices (including 'pedagogic authority' and 'pedagogic work'). It is upon the authority of the teacher in the classroom or the lecture hall that the symbolic order rests and with it the structure of social relations found under capitalism.

The cultural arbitrary is apprehended indirectly through hidden transmissions and hence its basis is obscured: it is in style, comportment, and above all in language that the cultural arbitrary is transmitted. Thus, the working class student could absorb all the requisites of bourgeois culture but still be betrayed by something as inarticulate as 'style' or 'tone' or presentation. So the working-class, discouraged, 'eliminate themselves' from the educational system whilst those at the top suffer from 'over selection'.

Bourdieu and Passeron, unlike Bowles and Gintis, do not argue for a direct correspondence between the educational and the social hierarchy. Those at the top of the ivory tower in the world of academia do not have precisely the same language and behaviour as the captains of industry, but there are enough similarities for each to acknowledge the other

across landscape of familiar cultural forms.[15]   There are middle-class

casualties of the educational system, just as there are proletarian

meritocrats laboriously climbing the staircase to academic success.

Bourdieu and Passeron therefore argue that the school system is better

seen as 'semi autonomous' from the hierarchy of wealth.   In this way

it is able to effectively reproduce bourgeois society but at the same

time appear to be a fair, rational system of assessment.   It is this

property which is its most important attribute for it is thus able to

operate as a form of 'legitimation'.   Its real purpose is 'misconceived'

and so it is able to reproduce a class society by consent.

> 'It is through the particular manner in which it performs its
> technical function of communication that a given social system
> additionally fulfils its social function of conservation and its
> ideological function of legitimation.'

<div align="right">(Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, p.102)</div>

Bourdieu, wishing to combine both a phenomenological 'subjectivist'

approach with a structualist 'objectivist' one, developed a concept of

'habitus' as the site of intersection of the two.   Habitus, being the

day-to-day activity or practice of social groups, represents a

'homologisation and harmonisation' of the two philosophical

positions.   Jenkins (1983), arguing that this notion of 'habitus' is

vague and unhelpful, re-writes it firstly as' sub-culture' and then as

'life-style' - terms more familiar to British social scientists.   However,

in doing so he makes 'culture' the property of all classes rather than

something owned exclusively by the bourgoisie and this distorts Bourdieu's

original concept.   Jenkins (1982a)also argues that Bourdieu reifies the

social structure in precisely the same deterministic manner

which he claims to reject and fails to distinguish clearly between

'folk models' and those of the sociologist.   This account of reproduc-

tion has also been criticised for being a-historical and functionalist, using a principle of fossilised heredity (Browne 1981). Others ask who, in practice, are the functioning agents in this system? (Hargreaves 1982)

There has also been one major attempt to test Bourdieu's model of cultural reproduction empirically. Halsey, Heath and Ridge (1980), for instance, drawing upon social mobility data, take issue with Bourdieu's notion of the inheritance of cultural capital. They 'test' his theory against their educational evidence from age cohorts in England, and conclude that the middle-class do not simply reproduce themselves in their offspring because the rates of upward mobility in the post war period are too high to be so easily accounted for. They find that a high proportion of those passing through institutions of selective education and into Further and Higher Education are from backgrounds which are not educated:

> 'Even at the apex of the educational system, eighty-eight per cent of the boys at University came from families in which neither parent was a graduate and forty-one per cent from homes in which neither parent had been to a selective school. The state system of education, therefore, gave 'superior' education to vast numbers of boys from 'uneducated' homes. It is the dissemination rather than the reproduction of cultural capital that is most apparent here.'
>
> (Halsey, Heath and Ridge 1980,p.199)

Hence they argue that the education system plays an independent role in selecting and preparing new members of the middle-class, although even in Britain there is evidence of a self-recruiting tendency amongst the elite at the very top of the class structure (Heath 1981). However this empirical data doesn't necessarily refute Bourdieu's model for in becoming upwardly mobile, students replicate and reinforce 'bourgois ' criteria of success. The symbolic order of the system survives regardless of who inhabits it at any point in time.

Williams and Garnham (1980) question the historical specificity

of Bourdieu's model. They argue that in the situation of the late
1970's and the 1980's,   the collapse of the labour market and the increa-
sed competition for jobs led to a situation of 'certificate inflation'
whereby the ruling groups have had to devalue their own educational
currency.

Politically and ideologically, Bourdieu has been described as a
'pessimistic egalitarian' (Halsey, Heath and Ridge 1980), or as a
'pessimistic relativist' (Garnham and Williams 1980), since he fits
neither liberal nor conventionally marxist ideological moulds. Bourdieu
accepts the marxist problematic, but at the same time recommends 'interven-
tionist' solutions which his own deterministic theories would appear
to preclude. He attacks both right and left-wing theorists as perpe-
tuators and products of an elitist educational system, capable only of
intellectual shadow boxing rather than radical reconstruction. Indeed
his theory has been interpreted as a critique of theoreticism itself,
although his usage of esoteric philosophical formulae means that he
could be criticised on the same grounds.[16]

Bourdieu and Passeron's theory has been described as 'the most
comprehensive and elegant theory since Talcott Parsons' (Garnham and
Williams 1980) and it perhaps suffers from some of the same weaknesses.[17]

Both this theory of social reproduction and that of Althusser's
hinge ultimately upon the notion of 'relative autonomy' although the
elements which are described as being in this relationship to one
another vary between the two paradigms. For Althusser, the State
apparatuses were relatively autonomous from the economy, whereas for
Bourdieu and Passeron the education system was semi-autonomous from
the social structure. Relative autonomy in both senses has been
extensively criticised, for whilst the concept appears to offer an
alternative to more mechanistic variants of marxism, it means little

in practice.[18]

c)   <u>Resistance Theories of Reproduction</u>

       The third major marxist approach has been typified as 'resistance

theory',[19] for rather than examining the functional fit between the

education system and the capitalist social structure, this has concentra-

ted upon <u>resistance</u> to the process by those who are its victims -

working-class students. However, it is argued that resistance too is an

essential element in the reproduction process. This poses a challenge

to correspondence models of reproduction in the same way as it challenges

conventional socialisation approaches to the transition from school to

work. Resistance theories also extend the analysis offered by Althusser

and Bourdieu by revealing new dimensions of ideological struggle.[20]

       I shall examine this approach primarily through the work of Willis

(1977) who applies resistence theory to the transition from school to

work specifically, providing an approach which inspired a number of

subsequent studies. Willis' work stems from that of the Centre for

Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) who in formulating their own theoretical

and methodological approach, constituted a distinct school of thought.

The work of the CCCS traces an intellectual lineage from at least three

different sources and was very influential in the approach to youth in

general during the 1970's. Consequently, I shall consider their approach

in some detail.[21]

       Initially, the CCCS was strongly influenced by the tradition of

English humanist marxism as developed in the work of E.P. Thompson and

Raymond Williams among others.[22] This emphasised the role of the

conscious actor in shaping the development of English society and the

pervasive influence of culture as a 'lived experience' so that the

working class stamped their distinctive mark upon many English social

institutions. This approach stressed an <u>evolutionary</u> conception of culture to which the working-class in English society contributed as 'men (who) make their own history, but they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves' (Marx 1951, p.225) (and it was indeed mainly men's history which was being written about).

The CCCS were able to continue this tradition by re-intepreting the post war history of the English working-class from accounts provided by empirical sociology.[23]

During the 1970's, this indigenous marxism was combined with the more theoretically rigorous 'science' of Althusserian structuralism and a revival of interest in the work of Antonio Gramsci.[24] This new body of thought emphasised the role of ideology and the 'hegomonic' nature of dominant culture, so that analysis of the terrain of struggle was shifted from popular institutions to the realm of beliefs, cultures and the apparatuses of ideological control.

In this CCCS synthesis of different traditions a new definition of culture was developed. Rather than representing the flower of civilization (as Bourdieu had typified it), it became instead a more anthropological and generalised concept (as in the English left wing intellectual tradition), a complex of beliefs and practices, partly received from previous generations, partly forged anew with each generation, partly containing an awareness of the realities of class society, and partly a defensive reaction to those realities:

> 'We understand the word 'culture' to refer to that level at which social groups develop distinctive patterns of life and give <u>expressive form</u> to their social and material life experience.'

> (Hall and Jefferson 1975, p.10)

Unlike the French marxists, the English school at Birmingham credited oppressed groups and the working-class in general with their

own alternative culture, their own understanding, 'knowledges' and set

of valorisations. These were related, but also dialectically forged

in opposition to, culturally hegomonic forces and structures. This was

therefore a dynamic model of culture, very different to the 'historical

tableaux' presented by previous generations of sociologists such as

Hoggart (1958) , Jackson (1968) and Carter (1966).

Willis and others set themselves the task of 'reading' or

'decoding' this culture:

> 'We need, as it were, an account of the basis for working-class
> knowledge, for a working class epistemology, from the point of
> view of the dominated.'
>
> (Willis and Corrigan 1980,p.301)

Indeed, they argue that it is possible to decode these cultural

forms semilogically and understand their deeper underlying meanings

and Willis applied this to the counter-school culture.[25]

The Birmingham school attribute a very different kind of

consciousness to the working-class to that of other schools of thought.They

are neither the oppressed and passive dupes of the dominant ideology

described by the French marxists, nor are they part of a noble tradition

of class conscious actors described by the English marxists. They are,

as it were, 'semi conscious' class agents - the 'dreaming' rather than

the 'sleeping' giant of history.

Thus, Hall (1980) in trying to combine the French and English

traditions, argues that 'the strengths of culturalism are in fact the

weaknesses of structuralism,for culturalism conveniently explains the

independent role of the working-class whilst structualism explains how

that role is circumscribed. However, it could be argued that there are

also tensions between the two traditions for whilst culturalism emphasises

the role of voluntary actions, the structuralist tradition emphasises a

form of predestination within social reproduction. There is also a very

different definition of the individual within the process. Within

culturalist marxism the individual is a conscious agent in their own

destiny, albeit shaped by external forces, but in the structuralist paradigm

the individual is not independently constituted. This leads the CCCS

and others to describe some forms of working-class action as representing

conscious knowledge, some as latent and some as an emergent conscious-

ness.[26]

The second line of intellectual heritage implicit in the work of

resistance theorists and pervading the CCCS as a whole, is that of the

sociology of deviance. This tradition stems from perspectives provided

by the National Deviancy Conference and descends ultimately from the

work of Howard Becker and the Chicago School of Sociology.[27] In the

late 1960's and the early 1970's this perspective provided ideological

and methodological ammunition with which to bombard the bastions of

academic orthodoxy, for it involved adopting the position of the deviant

or outsider as a way of understanding 'normal' society. This was

therefore a 'radical' rather than marxist position. It led to a rash

of studies of quasi-deviant groups of youth such as skinheads, rockers,

mods, teds and others,[28] and was developed into the 'new' sociology

of youth by combining a relativistic or a 'symbolic interactionist'

methodology with a marxist framework (Smith 1981).[29]

However, the deviancy approach also led to some distortion in

the study of youth, for it concentrated mainly upon the more bizarre

and extreme examples. Indeed this bias has led some to reject the idea

of a 'sub culture' as a useful concept for the study of youth as it

refers only to exotic minorities rather than describing the more mundane

and hum-drum life of the average adolescent (Jenkins 1983). The CCCS

argue, however, that these exotic expressions of working-class culture

can tell us something about the category as a whole.[30] This tendency

to understand the 'normal' from the point of view of the outsider is evident in Willis' work, particularly where he adopts a rebel's perspective of school life. The attempt to combine this deviancy perspective with that of marxism was recognised to have various problems. Whilst symbolic interactionism, associated with the deviancy perspective, was compatible with culturalist marxism it was less compatible with structuralist marxism. It complemented culturalist marxism because it was able to show how the subjective meanings constructed by actors related to objective, historically determined conditions. It was not compatible with structuralist marxism because, as I have already indicated, Althusser did not recognise this distinction between the 'subjective' and the 'objective' in the same way.

A further influence upon the ideas of the CCCS was the work of Cohen (1972) who provides an historically materialist account for the emergence of youth cultures. He argues that the destruction of the traditional working-class community through the decline in traditional industries, urban renewal and the drift to the suburbs, produced an incipient crisis in working-class culture. Young people solved this crisis by creating an imaginary solidarity of their own:

> 'It seems to me that the latent function of subculture is this -
> to express and resolve, albeit 'magically', the contradictions
> which remain hidden or unresolved in the parent culture.'

<div align="right">(Cohen 1972,p.10)</div>

Hence this was a means for relating culture to material conditions. Others who were influenced by the work of the CCCS argued that youth cultures either provided real solutions to the contradictions of working-class life (Brake 1980) or alternatively, that they were simply styles which could be semiologically decoded and did not embody the needs and contradictions of any one social group (Hebdidge 1979).

The third intellectual heritage in Willis' work can be traced to the 'new' sociology of education, although like the 'new' sociology of youth it is beginning to look a little middle-aged and jaded.[31] During the late 1960's and early 1970's, the 'new' sociology of education had begun to mount an offensive against the 'old' sociology through adopting a radical approach to the organisation of knowledge and power in the education system. Willis' work was influential in this tradition because he combined an analysis of the day-to-day life within the class room with a more global framework which explained how that was externally structured.

D)   Learning to Labour

The work of the resistence school therefore synthesised and challenged different perspectives within different sociological fields. Having described the background to this approach I now analyse it in relation to the work of Willis (1977).

In 'Learning to Labour' Willis provided a detailed account of the conversations and behaviour of twelve non-conformist 'lads'and he attempts to probe the latent meanings and principles underlying the lads' behaviour. Whilst consistent with the 'new' sociology of youth culture, this approach marked a radical theoretical and methodological departure from conventional analyses of the transition from school to work which had more often been undertaken through the use of large-scale surveys. Firstly, instead of investigating 'values' which were assumed to be indications of a consistent orientation in the respondent and accessible through questionnaire research, Willis explored the symbolic meanings expressed through cultural production. Secondly, rather than being static and final in nature (as questionnaires generally assume) these meanings were actively expressed, often in

gestures and behaviour, and therefore had to be interpreted or 'de-coded'. These could be internally contradictory and were continually changing. Thirdly, rather than examining the values and attitudes of <u>individuals</u>, Willis demonstrated how these cultural meanings were produced and reproduced in small informal <u>groups</u>.

According to resistance theory, the cultural universe was not simply transmitted from one generation to the next in a linear process. It was created out of <u>opposition</u> to the dominant culture and insofar as the dominant culture was expressed through the institution and structures of schooling, so the <u>counter</u>-school-culture of the lads expressed and recreated working-class culture in microcosm.

Willis shows how this counter-school-culture draws elements from the factory floor culture and adapts them to the school situation, indicating the similarities between the operation of hierarchies of authority in a factory and those of the school. In the same way that factory workers express resistance by subverting the discipline of the factory, so the counter-school-culture operates by exploiting gaps and spaces in the school timetable and ritualistically ridiculing authority. Hence, there was a continual 'guerilla warfare', conducted on a symbolic level, to wrest back time and space for the group. In this way the group socialised itself into the factory culture - not by absorbing school values, but paradoxically, by learning to resist them. Through learning how to manipulate humour and subversive language at school, the lads could transfer this experience to coping with both the vertical authority of the managers and the horizontal authority of co-workers on the factory floor.

Another element of this paradox is that working -class lads did not enter working-class jobs resignedly. In actively espousing working-class values as a way of opposing the school system, they celebrated

their own oppression and regarded their entry into factory life as a form of liberation rather than as an enslavement.

This enthusiasm to leave school and enter unrewarding, 'dead-end' jobs had of course been observed by many researchers previously (Ashton and Field 1976), but what is interesting for Willis is the way in which the lads' culture also provided opportunities to expose the oppressed position they were in. Willis terms this as a 'cultural penetration'. However, because they condemned themselves to a life of exploited labour and because their counter culture was founded upon racism and sexist beliefs, Willis suggests that it also contained 'limitations'.

The other members of the school community outside the lads' small exclusive circle, are called 'ear 'oles' because they passively absorbed middle-class dominant values transmitted by the official school ideology and conformed to the system which the lads had rejected. Willis conjectures that these would probably enter upwardly mobile occupations, but that if they found themselves on the factory floor they would suffer from persecution by co-workers and authority alike, having developed no defences. Employers, he argues, would therefore probably prefer to employ lads, despite their insubordination, because of their greater adaptability to shop floor contexts and their ability to 'fit in'.

This active construction of a social milieux by the lads is important for explaining how decisions were made and how different factors were valued or devalued. It provided resources from which individual identities were constructed and created the conditions out of which 'choices' were made. It therefore forms what Gramsci would call a 'common sense' universe.

The paradoxical conclusion emerging from Willis' account is that the lads collude in their own oppression. This is illustrative of

a contradiction at the heart of the transition from school to work observed by others too, for by failing in its own terms, schooling better prepares young people for the work place (Ashton and Field 1976, Maizels 1970). Willis added the dimension that it was the <u>resistance</u> to schooling which prepares young people for work rather than institionalised failure alone.

This is also a contradiction in Willis' own philosophy. He appears to be standing Marx on his head by reversing his central premise that social being determines social consciousness , for the lads contribute independently to their own class oppression. The logic of this position is that working-class youth recreate their own culture and reproduce their own class position in the process: their'solutions' reinforce the problem.

This may be a product of the incompatibility of the different traditions within marxism. Whereas the culturalist tradition would emphasise the active and creative element of working-class culture, the structuralist position would stress the invisible logic whereby individuals are subordinated to the reproduction of the system as a whole within which culture is merely ephiphenomenal.

Jenkins (1981a)by contrast rejects the idea that working-class students collude in their own oppression. He shows from his own study that since they cannot succeed in an educational system where the dice are loaded against them, working-class pupils resort to their own cultural alternatives as a defence. This calls into question the extent to which Willis' lads are genuinely rebelling against a dominant culture or simply accommodating it. The concept of an 'accommodative culture' discussed by Parkin (1972) is a more apt description of Jenkins' lads. Many of their 'penetrations' simply confirm their position of subordination.

To return to Willis' central paradox, it is clearly not accept-
able within a marxist framework to assume that class culture serves to
recreate capitalist society, but it is equally unlikely that material
conditions create class cultures as a reflexive response. Willis
demonstrates how factory culture is translated into counter-school-
culture, but in doing so he constructs a nebulous and mythical image
of the workplace as an 'imaginary' context. Despite its crucial import-
ance in his own analysis as a socialising factor, Willis does not
actually investigate the factory culture in detail. Instead it operates
at the level of a socially constructed stereotype a 'factory in the mind'
both in the lads' culture and that of the author.[32] In this model,
unlike humanist versions of marxism, working-class experiences are deter-
mined not by historical traditions rooted in the past, but by the tyran-
nous inevitability of the future, such as is more commensurate with the
structuralist paradigm.

Moreover, factories provide only one arena of working-class life.
By concentrating upon the factory rather than any other context we are
given only one set of connections between school and the outside world:
a masculine dominated one. If culture can be used in a very general
sense as the location around which world views guiding individual
behaviour are constructed, then we must assume that there are also
other sources of cultural transmission which have not been explored.
Experiences for instance of feminity, of neighbourhood, of family life
and so on outside a particular kind of work place are not mentioned.
This is a curious omission because, as I have already indicated, other
studies of the transition from school to work have tended to stress
the influence of the family of origin.

Furthermore, because Willis adopts the perspective of one social
group, those at the bottom of the school hierarchy, he accepts their

view of the rest of the school community as being somewhat undifferen-
tiated. This is consistent with the 'deviancy' perspective. The 'ear'oles',
of which the rest of the school seems to consist, are dismissed as passive
conformists to middle-class culture and the school itself becomes the
embodiment of that culture. Whilst it may be that Willis selected the
lads for observation precisely because they were the most dramatic
example of non-conformism within the school and therefore the best means
by which to illustrate the idea of resistance and domination, this leads
to a certain bias. It is also possible that the 'ear'oles' have had an
unfair press. Perhaps they too are resisting the school culture in their
own way, but in a less easily identifiable manner.

The polarisation of cultures described by Willis simplifies the
subtle and complex nature of status positions and divisions within the
middle-class and the working-class which culture has a role in creating.
Whereas it may be true in abstract that in a capitalist society there is
a fundamental conflict between labour and capital, this cannot be so
directly translated into cultural behaviour. For instance, cultural
practices might include the complex fragmentations of class based upon
fractions of capital and upon different residential and geographical
environments. Willis mentions the divisive influence of race and gender
upon working-class consciousness, but does not mention the infinite
graduations of respectability by which people define themselves.[33] The
'ear'oles' I would argue, are no more representative of an homogenous
middle-class culture than the lads are representative of a working-class
one.

The expansion and proletarianisation of white-collar and service
employment - particularly for women - the rise of different consumption
groups, based often upon property ownership has led to the creation of

new status groups.[34] Although Willis' lads may see themselves as

representatives of a generalised labour power, other sections of the

working-class would surely want to disassociate themselves. Altogether

these lads are probably more representative of a virulently racist and

sexist 'rough' element than of the working-class as a whole and Jenkins

(1983) shows that similarly self-defined 'lads' in Northern Ireland were

better characterised in this way.

Moreover, the middle-class do not represent a homogenous cultural

entity either, for there are also non-conformist members of the middle-

class - marxists, presumably, being amongst them! Thus, conformity to

school does not necessarily mean that middle-class values have been

uncritically absorbed.

This raises the whole issue of the nature of conformity itself.

Symbolic interactionists, such as Hammersly and Turner (1980)

 have criticised   Willis' one dimensional view of conformity.

Through intensive analysis of classroom interactions they conclude that

informal groups are more fluid than Willis portrays them, and are defined

in opposition to or in distinction from a number of situations arising at

school, depending upon the 'frame' or context within which they are set.

It seems from the examples in the volume edited by Woods (1980) that

'conformism' means adopting different sets of practices under different

circumstances and individual pupils have to conform to their peers'

expectations just as much as to the teachers' in order to survive in

school. This involves a complicated balancing act involving sufficient

conformity to each opposing set of expectations. The most popular and

successful pupils are often those who manage both successfully. Accord-

ing to these writers this kind of negotiation process is a feature of

all school students' experience. Conformity, therefore, according to

their definition, is a calculated strategy rather than being the passive

absorption of school values.

A further criticism levelled against Willis by non-marxist critics is that he makes a very biased assessment of what constitutes 'rational' behaviour and what is merely an 'ideological' illusion. These critics would claim that this is evidence more of Willis' own value system than an accurate reflection of the lads, as theoretical rigour and political commitment are confused (Jenkins 1983, Hargreaves 1982). This is perhaps an example of what Goldthorpe (1979) has rather sceptically indicated as a tendency for the intellectuals to hitch the working-class to their own ideological wagons.

I have already mentioned the fact that the resistance theory was regarded by some as solving various problems within marxist and interactionist models by uniting the two so that their strengths would buttress one another (Apple 1978). Others, however, have described this coupling as a marriage of convenience rather than a triumphant union (Hickox 1982). They claim that both traditions huddled together for comfort in the bleak economic climate of the 1970's, when marxists were able to explain why the new radical educational sociology was either rejected or slashed by expenditure cuts. Marxism, on the other hand, found a 'mechanism' of reproduction in accounts of the 'hidden curriculum' which its own theory was too clumsy to explain. Moreover, it is claimed that politically despairing marxists seized upon resistance theory as promising a bright socialist future (because of the implications of socialist potential which it contained) which their deterministic and futuristic theories had seemed to preclude. All these factors indicated that the match would not be a long or a happy one. Interactionists appeared to favour the idea of the two traditions going their separate ways (Woods 1980, Woods and Hammersly 1977). Indeed there would seem philosophical grounds for this, for whilst symbolic

interactionism is an inherently relativistic perspective, marxism by contrast is inherently teleological. This has led educational sociologists to focus upon the interactions within the classroom. However, in doing so they no longer concern themselves with the more general issues of social reproduction. Any account of social reproduction should be able to connect the broader issues of social formation with the ways in which this is experienced in practice. The marriage of interactionism and marxism provided one, perhaps flawed, means of doing so.

There have also been a number of other studies using 'resistance' model to explore working-class youth's behaviour with detailed empirical material. Those of Humphries (1983) and Corrigan (1979) begin by documenting the development of education since the nineteenth century, portraying it as a hegemonic cultural onslaught and a means of exerting social control. They illustrate how it was regarded as a form of oppression by working-class children and add some new dimensions to the debate. Thus, Corrigan's 'lads' do not celebrate manual labour, they find it boring.[35] Finding a job, simply provided an income with which to pursue leisure. Humphries extends the historical scope of 'resistance' by showing that working-class pupils have always resisted schooling, using oral history accounts going back as far as 1889.

Like Willis, they equate all middle-class behaviour as a class offensive and assume that this is represented unproblematically through the education system. In doing so they ignore conflicts within the middle-class over educational policy, for Victorian philanthropy is equated with the most brutal demands of an expanding industrial capitalism. In practice there is an inherent contradiction between the needs of capitalism for a workforce and the extension of schooling (itself a drain on profits) : capitalists at the time bitterly opposed this extension.

Moreover, school does not unproblematically represent middle-class interests. The polarisation in these accounts ignores the fact that the middle-class inflicted cruel and repressive forms of schooling upon their own children - who also resisted.

As well as collapsing all middle-class behaviour together into a class offensive, resistance theorists are also inclined to interpret any form of action by working-class students - from suppressed giggles and humour to school strikes and punching the teacher - as forms of 'resistance'. Almost any kind of ripple in the surface of classroom interaction is taken as evidence of a class war.

In portraying an underground class war, these 'resistance' theories rather glorify the role of the youthful working-class warrior. Unconscious of his or her role, the working-class students' spontaneous resentment of the arbitrary, and at times cruel, authority of the classroom is re-interpreted as a class revenge.

Despite these limitations (which can be summarised as reductionism and romanticism) resistance theory provides a sympathetic account of a view of education which is otherwise ignored or treated as evidence of 'ignorance' or cultural deprivation and helps to provide an alternative way of assessing the evidence. Interactionists by contrast, in providing us with a more sensitive and complex account, are unable to stretch beyond the intricacies of the pupil-teacher interface. The so-called Weberian synthesis provided by Hargreaves (1980) is at present only weakly formulated.[36]

E)   Discussion

In conclusion I shall summarise the main problems with these approaches and indicate ways in which I think these can be surmounted.

Firstly, some of the same criticisms as were levelled at socialisation theories can be made of correspondence and structuralist accounts of social reproduction: Bowles and Gintis' theory for example is a functional 'equilibrium' model dressed in marxist vocabulary. The resistance paradigm rescues both of these from functional rigidity and at the same time challenges analogous theories of the transition from school to work. However, in doing so, it raises another set of problems. It rescues marxist theory by elevating and even romanticising working-class culture and conflates working-class consciousness in general with that of a deviant minority, (or with 'normal' working-class youth at deviant moments).[37] This position, as we have seen, is implicit in the methodology of the CCCS upon which resistance theory draws.

The role of the unconscious class warrior emerged because socialist theorists sought evidence for potential revolt, leading them to over-emphasise the role of resistence. Ultimately they undermined their own cause by glorifying a transient role.

Secondly, because of the position adopted, they neglected to analyse how incorporation and complicity take place, for this is assumed to be unproblematical. Marxists analysts describe a dramatic dichotomy between conformist (middle-class) pupils and resisting (working-class) ones which makes their accounts appear implausible and biased; they have been justifiably criticised for this by inter-actionists. Not all conformity is middle-class any more than all alternatives are working-class.

Thirdly, this raises the issue of the role of the middle-class, usually male, researcher. The marxist researcher appears either as an impartial 'scientist' capable of piercing the cultural forms to reveal the underlying truth (as in structualist paradigms) or

a footloose socialist in search of a proletariat. In fact critical socialists are also likely to be drawn from the ranks of the disaffected middle-class and have developed their own centres of opposition within Higher Education.[38] If schooling produces middle-class conformity, how do they explain their own position?

Fourthly, the emphasis upon functional reproduction has attempted to explain the fit between capitalism and schooling but in so doing, the disjunctions have been ignored. These disjunctions, by 1984, are becoming increasingly apparent. It is evident, for example, that the educational system is not reproducing workers to the satisfaction of capital, and that it is perhaps incapable of doing so. Indeed, capitalists themselves are very critical (Holland 1977). Moreover, it is arguable, that young workers are also reproduced through other forms of discipline and coercion, such as the family. Perhaps it is possible that only one ISA has been explored at the expense of others?

The 'new marxists' have rejected Mannheim's (1932) conception of a 'generational consciousness' in favour of a more general conception of class in explaining the responses of young people (Murdock and McCron, 1975). Yet they introduce the idea by implication in their historical analysis of the growth of post war sub-cultures (Smith, 1981). It is apparent that the situation facing young people leaving school in the 1980's is very different from that of the 1960's and early 1970's and this may in itself produce a distinctive set of generational responses which the functional 'equilibrium' model of the marxists and others have not taken into account.

Indeed, sociologists themselves could be classified in terms of 'generational' consciousness as the 'new' sociologies of youth and education are products of historical and cultural circumstances which prompted particular kinds of awareness amongst those in Higher Education.

By taking these historically specific considerations into account
perhaps the a-historical nature of reproduction theories could be
overcome. For example, it is evident from studies of social mobility
that there are periods when the class structure is more fluid than at
others and that this is related to economic change. At present it is
solidifying under conditions of labour market contraction (Heath 1981).
Moreover the divisions within the working-class have also changed
in the Post War period. Perhaps the 'ear'oles' were more easily
incorporated during another period? However, as Hickox (1982) argues,
the education system is perhaps now <u>losing</u> legitimacy as qualifications
appear to be becoming increasingly inappropriate and the skills trans-
mitted, useless. We are perhaps entering a period of crisis in social
reproduction.

'Reproduction' has been interpreted as a conservative concept.
If it is 'reproducing' relations of the past then there is inevitably
a certain amount of inertia in the process, and it cannot respond to
the rapidly changing needs of capitalism in the future.

Although the education system attempts to reproduce class society,
as the writers reviewed here argue, this does not necessarily mean that
it will succeed. An emphasis on the disjunctions between capitalism
and schooling could help to reveal the problematical nature of 'reproduction'.
It should also help to cicumvent the mystical 'futurism' implied by
structuralist models. Insofar as Willis' work helps to illustrate the
breakdowns and crises of reproduction it can also pave the way towards
transcending many of the limitations of the marxist model discussed so far.

Other sociologists have criticised these models of social repro-
duction for being implicitly male oriented (MacDonald 1980). Apart from
Willis, none have attempted to incorporate the role of patriarchy and
the reproduction of gender roles in the process. Nor have they

considered how the experiences of female youth might be different to

that of male youth.   Consequently, it is now time to bring the women

back in.

CHAPTER 5   BRINGING THE WOMEN BACK IN

Most of the literature discussed so far has either concentrated

exclusively upon male youth or has been written about 'youth' in general

but implicitly assumed a masculine model.[1] It could therefore be des-

cribed as andocentric.[2] However, recent research suggests that female

experiences of the transition from school to work, of unemployment and

of youth culture require separate attention. A number of studies since

the mid-1970's have concentrated upon girls' experiences and have

elaborated theories of patriarchy to account for them. This has contri-

buted an important dimension to the discussion of social reproduction

in particular, for they take into account the way in which domestic and

gender roles determine the lives of teenage girls: young people are

reproduced not just as workers but as women and men.

A number of different and often competing strands have emerged

within this perspective and these have been applied to the following

areas: schooling, youth culture, employment and unemployment. I shall

now consider each in turn.

A)   Patterns of Socialisation at School

A number of studies have addressed themselves to the way in which

girls are nudged into feminine roles and women's jobs by overt and

covert socialisation processes at school. (Sharpe 1978, Blackstone 1976,

Clarricoates 1980, Deem 1978, 1980, Marks 1976, Byrne 1978, Spender and

Sarah 1980). These studies conclude that schooling serves to reinforce

gender differences and the divisions of labour in society as a whole.

By the time girls leave, their educational expectations have been

appropriately lowered and they are socialised to accept low status,

low paid jobs in the secondary labour market, to get married and to

devote themselves to the family. Thus, Deem concludes:

> '......it is clear.....that the reproduction in schooling of
> gender categories, of class, of the sexual division of labour,
> of the relations of patriarchy, plays a significant part in the
> maintenance of the subordinate position of women in our society,
> whether in paid work, public life, or the family.'

> (Deem 1980, p.11)

Within Government policy, two alternative models of education
for girls have been put into practice: the selective school system
ensured that middle-class girls would be educated for careers whilst
working-class girls were prepared for marriage and motherhood through
'vocational' training.[3] The second philosophy emerges, for example, in
the Newsom Report which argued that:

> 'For all girls, too, there is a group of interests relating to
> what many perhaps most of them, would regard as their most
> important vocational concern, marriage. It is true that at the
> age of fourteen and fifteen, this may appear chiefly as a
> preoccupation with personal appearance and boy friends, but many
> girls are ready to respond to work relating to wider aspects of
> homemaking and family life and the care and upbringing of
> children'
> (Newsom Report 1963, p.37)

However, school also operates to reinforce the sexual division
of labour in other ways too, and these have been extensively
documented (Spender 1980, Deem 1978, 1980, Marks 1976, Blackstone
1976, Sharpe 1978). The arguments can be very briefly summarized
according to forms of sex role socialisation through the <u>overt</u>
curriculum (the planned and self-conscious structuring of education)
and those through the <u>hidden</u> curriculum (or the organisation of know-
ledge and power within the school). The overt curriculum ensures that
different subjects are available for boys and girls, with girls taking
subjects which were less likely to lead to rewarding careers and which
reinforce the sexual division of labour in society as a whole (Frith
1981, Deem 1978).

In addition to these overt forms of gender segregation, there is also the 'hidden' curriculum which made girls aware of their positions in a more subliminal manner. This included such things as the symbolic spatial ordering of the school (Clarricoates 1980) the hierarchies of authority within which men were more likely to assume power (Deem 1978) and the different forms of behaviour encouraged in girls and boys by teachers: girls were encouraged to be passive and 'feminine' whilst boys were encouraged to be more enterprising and assertive (Spender 1980, Sharpe 1976, Deem 1978).

These processes resulted in girls being 'cooled out' of education. They do less well in secondary school than in primary school and are under-represented in higher education (Deem 1978). Girls fulfil their teachers' expectations of them by not persisting with their education, turning to marriage and motherhood as an alternative (Sharpe 1976). The careers education they receive reinforces this by pushing them towards clean, respectable servicing careers (Sharpe 1976, McCabe 1981) and this is also reinforced on YOP's schemes (Deem 1978). Deem and others therefore conclude that all girls are oppressed by both their class and their gender: their opportunities are extremely circumscribed.

It is sometimes claimed in the accounts mentioned so far that patriarchy and the needs of capitalism reinforce one another in a con-veniently functional fit: girls' experiences at school reinforce their careers in the home and labour market. However, since neither patriarchy or capitalism produce unified monolithic ideologies, it is important to be aware of some of the contradictions between them.

Firstly, some have suggested that the rigid division between the sexes maintained at school is anachronistic and inappropriate to the needs of the modern labour market (Blackstone 1976). In fact, it

is argued that capitalism now 'needs' more flexibility (McDonald 1980).

Secondly, although schooling attempts to inculcate various feminine or 'lady-like' qualities amongst girls, it also attempts to de-sexualise them through the use of school uniforms and prohibitions on personal adornment. This, claims Sharpe, leads some girls to find school irrelevant and boring. It is perhaps more irksome for working-class girls since it implies a middle-class model of extended childhood against which symbols of mature sexuality are perceived as a threat.

A third contradiction, observed by many writers is that working-class girls are trained vocationally on the assumption that they will leave work and get married, whilst middle-class girls are encouraged to embark on careers which they are later forced to abandon. In practice, the situation is reversed once they leave school for middle-class girls are in a better position to give up work and working-class girls are likely to carry on working throughout their married lives (Macdonald 1980).

A fourth contradiction is that many schools attempt (and mostly fail) to inculcate an ethos of non gender-linked meritocratic competition. This overt ideology may be in conflict with norms absorbed from the wider society and with the 'hidden' curriculum.

Therefore, whilst on the whole, writers such as Deem, Sharpe and Spender have emphasised the functional convergence of patriarchy and capitalism in the subordination of women through ideologies of schooling, these contradictions would suggest that this is not unproblematical.

Perhaps one criticism of some of these models is that they have tended to regard patriarchy as all pervasive in order to emphasise its universality. They have subsequently tended to under-emphasise contrary examples. It is also arguable that in recent years, the effects of

educational expansion and the contradictions described above have made middle-class women at least more aware of the constraints upon them: feminism is as much a product of capitalism as femininity.[4]

B)
Girls' Counter-School Culture:
Is Femininity Conformist or Oppositional?

There is a division in feminist accounts of girls' behaviour at school between those who claim that girls have no real focussed counter-school-culture, and those who have argued that they do.

Some for instance, have argued that girls are predisposed to conform to school by their socialisation (Spender 1980, Sharpe 1976). Others argue that when they do 'resist' they do so by reinforcing cultural ideals of femity and this is simply retreatist and defensive (McRobbie 1978, McRobbie and Garber 1975). Another argument is that girls do not collectivise their protests, like boys do, but rather resort to 'individualised' opposition such as filing their nails and reading in class which do not challenge authority in the classroom (Griffin 1983, McRobbie and Garber 1975). It is claimed that girls preoccupations are defined by the culture of romance and femininity which is equally as oppressive as that imposed by the school. Sharpe(1976)illustrates the consonance between feminine roles learned at home, those imposed at home, those imposed by the school, and the girls' own culture:

> 'Girls, however, are still schooled with the marriage market in mind, although this may not be acknowledged consciously. This inevitability in their lives provides as much excuse within the school, as for the girls themselves, for their ultimate under-achievement. The belief that a girl finds her deepest and truest satisfaction in a husband and children is very prevalent (and many of the Ealing girls endorse this), despite discussions about sexual equality and women's increasing presence in the work force. It shows the power of the market for the romanticism portrayed in magazines, but also shows the investment in the care and needs of people that is perfectly understandable in the light of women's working history and their alternatives'.

(Sharpe, 1976, p.130)

Moreover, according to Griffin (1983) whilst boys use masculinity as a form of opposition at school, for girls the adoption of sex-role stereotypes was not necessarily a form of opposition:

> 'The young women themselves rejected such labels and assumptions (as either 'supermums' or trouble-makers) but there was no neat relationship between 'problem girls' anti-school attitudes and counter-school culture'.
>
> (Griffin 1983, p.2)

Therefore, there appears to be some ambiguity in these accounts: opposition to school implies conformity to femininity but conforming to school is feminine too. Every aspect of girls' behaviour is further evidence of their oppression.

More recently, however, a number of empirical accounts of girls' behaviour at school have been reported which challenge some of these models, and alternative perspectives have been proposed. Thus, accounts by Meyann (1980) of white girls and Fuller (1980) of black girls show that they do develop peer groups which are a very important part of their social lives at school. Fuller's black girls based their sub-culture on their pride at being black and female, manifested in a strong sense of outrage at the discrimination against them on both grounds. However, this was not antithetical to their achievement in educational terms. On the contrary, Fuller's girls had a great faith in the value of qualifications and worked diligently for them, whilst at the same time trying hard not to be seen to do so:

> 'The black girls conformed to the stereo-tyoes of the good pupil only in so far as they worked conscientiously at the school work or homework set. But they gave all the appearances in class of not doing so, and in many other ways displayed an insouciance for the other aspects of the good pupil role'
>
> (Fuller 1980, p.59)

Therefore we find that different forms of femininity can be associated either with conformism to the school, or with a self

immolating rejection of the school and espousal of adult femininity <u>or</u> with a proud sub-cultural defiance which does not detract from academic commitment. What is being expressed here perhaps, is that girls forms of opposition and sub-culture are more varied and complex than those of boys. Alternatively, these accounts suggest perhaps that models of boys' resistance and conformity have been over-simplified. It is likely that boys too, have a number of strategies of accommodation and resistance but the concentration upon more spectacular forms of opposition has tended to conceal this.

However, more recently, there has been a wave of research from a marxist-feminist interactionist perspective which has taken the view that girls, like boys, express their opposition to school in many different ways. Some of these forms of opposition subverted conventional models of femininity and some used femininity as a strategy of collusion. Accommodation and resistance can take place simultaneously, for girls' resistance strategies can range from blushing and giggling to more outright confrontation.

For Anyon (1983) resistance can be unconscious as well as conscious and Davies (1983) argues that it is because girls are so oppressed that they need to create spaces in order to assert their own kinds of power. There are a number of different ways in which this is done and these have been previously interpreted as evidence of conformity rather than resistance. These writers suggest that girls' behaviour can be better explained by adopting an <u>active</u> rather than a passive model of femininity.

> 'Accommodation and resistance, even when it takes the form of turning away or withdrawal, is an active process. The analysis above suggests that most girls are not passive victims of sex-role stereo-types and expectations but are active participants in their own development'.
>
> (Anyon 1983, p.33)

c)   <u>Girls in Teenage Culture</u>

In examining the reasons for the absence of girls in the sub-
cultures literature, McRobbie and Garber (1975) ask whether this is
because girls are really not active in sub-cultures, or whether they are
rendered 'invisible' by the prejudice of male researchers. On another
occasion, McRobbie (1980) argues that radical male researchers identify
with the excitement, machismo and iconoclasm of male sub-cultures which
makes them critical of the role of the home and family which the girls
seem to represent:

> 'The writers, having defined themselves as against the family
> and the trap of romance as well as against the boredom of
> meaningless labour, seems to be drawn to look at other, largely
> working-class groups, who appear to be doing the same thing'

(McRobbie 1980, p.39)

These feminist writers answer their own question by arguing that
girls are not present in male sub-cultures - apart from as girlfriends
and hangers-on - because they have their own cultural forms of expres-
sion based upon a retreat from male defined situations into an alterna-
tive culture of 'femininity' based around the girls' bedroom and
being a 'fan'. This sub-culture is therefore negatively defined:

> 'They are marginal to work because they are central to the
> subordinate and complementary sphere of femininity. Similarly,
> marginality of girls in the active, male focussed leisure sub-
> cultures of working-class youth may tell us less about the
> strongly present position of girls in 'complementary' but more
> passive sub-cultures of the fan-club'.

(McRobbie and Garber 1975,p.211)

In theorising sub-cultures the CCCS (1975) drew a diagram of
concentric rings with middle-class culture at the centre. Working-class
girls' sub-culture was the most peripheral of all in this scheme.
These girls were 'more marginal in every dimension' to working-class
boys or the working-class as a whole. Hence McRobbie, Sharpe, Deem,

Griffin and other feminist writers have used this analysis to interpret girls' culture as being one of 'structured secondariness'.

Another factor in the sub-culture of girls is that it is home-centred rather than being enacted on the streets like the male cultures. Furthermore, parents place physical and financial restriction upon the girl leaving the home after school or after work because of the danger of sexual contamination. In the home, girls' magazines promote a 'teeny-bopper' culture, described contemptuously as 'one of the most highly manufactured forms of available youth-culture - it is almost totally packaged' (McRobbie and Garber 1975, p.220).[5]

These writers indeed present a very dismal impression of the life of the teenage working-class girl: isolated at home, duped by manu-facturers and passively socialised. For these girls, the main interest of their teenage years is in getting a man and to this purpose they become absorbed into an ideology of romance - what Greer (1971) calls 'falling in love with love'. This pre-occupation with appearance and boyfriends appears to obsess working-class girls more than middle-class ones (Sarsby 1972 and 1983, Sharpe 1976).

However, a number of criticisms can be made of this model. Why is it that girls' groups are regarded as retreatist giggling cliques whilst boys' peer groups are vehicles of revolt? Why do the CCCS and other feminist writers portray working-class girls as utterly oppressed and marginal? One answer is provided perhaps in McRobbie's (1980) own analysis. She argues that male researchers identify with working-class lads because of the personal political position they have adopted. By the same criteria, these writers perhaps fail to identify with working-class girls because they appear to represent the values from which they have personally and politically disassociated themselves.[6] This more

subtle form of class bias is perhaps evident in the approval shown towards sixth-form 'semi-feminist' cultures (McRobbie and McCabe 1981 and Sharpe 1976)[7] which are described as expressing a 'primitive' oppositional alternative. Hence this position leads these feminist writers to interpret all working-class girls' behaviour as evidence of further oppression in the same way that the CCCS and others interpret all working-class boys' behaviour as evidence of resistance. They are blind to other forms of resistance which working-class girls might make.

Secondly, these feminists accept the masculine model of sub-culture which defines it as quintissentially street culture. According to this model anything which does not take place out in the streets is of no interest. McRobbie and Garber point out that this is an andro-centric bias and yet by describing the 'structured secondariness' of girls' culture they are implicitly accepting its validity.

Thirdly, they portray the family as 'marginal' to working-class culture and this too is surely a masculine-biased definition. Other studies of working-class life have emphasised its matrifocality (Young and Wilmott 1956) and this is certainly strongly present in black culture (Stacks 1974). Indeed, some writers have regarded the working-class home as the last bastion of defence against the predations of capitalism (Humphries 1980). Matrifocality can be a source of strength and power for working-class girls, particularly for black girls, who questioned the superiority of men on this basis (Fuller, 1980, Davies, 1983) .

Moreover, those who have studied girls' deviancy found that although they were rendered 'invisible' in court records and sociological accounts alike, they were in fact fully-fledged gang members and resisted parental attempts to control them at the risk of negative sexual labelling (Smith 1978, Wilson 1978). Despite this defiance, however, they still

felt compelled to conform to the 'oppressive triangle' of love, sex
and marriage in order to legitimise their participation in street
culture. Thus, the denigrating portrayal of family life by men in
street-corner peer groups should not be taken as an accurate reflection
of its role. Girls are no more likely to be gullible, oppressed
drudges than boys are unwitting class warriors. However, what these
accounts do illustrate is the fact that girls can actively define and
manipulate the situation for their own purposes in order to acquire
some 'space'.

D)   Girls in The Labour Market

        Once out of school, girls' occupational roles are circumscribed
by the structure of opportunities in the labour market and by their
anticipatory socialisation which leads them to think in terms of a
very narrow range of careers. Their future roles in the home serve to
limit both their own perceptions of the situation and the ways in which
they are viewed by employers.

        There is a considerable body of recent evidence showing that
girls enter different sectors of the labour market from boys. The more
skilled girls are likely to enter clerical work. Shop and distributive
work also absorbs a large proportion and the remainder enter unskilled
assembly work, mostly in the engineering and textile industries.
(Youthaid 1981, Ashton and McGuire 1980).

        There are a number of possible reasons for this. Firstly, there is
discrimination by recruiting managers who consider girls and boys
appropriate for different jobs (Ashton and McGuire 1980, Newton and Keil
1980). Secondly there was the belief that girls were more nimble fingered
and patient than male workers (Pollert 1981, Ashton and McGuire 1980):

"The large employers have frequently remarked to us that women
are far better at coping with boring, repetitive assembly
work than males"

(Ashton and McGuire 1980)

Thirdly, those entering traditional male jobs had to contend
with pressure and ribald commentary from male peers (McRobbie and
McCabe 1980). Fourthly, informal and familial recruiting networks
tended to have a conservative influence in that boys were recruited for
boys' jobs and girls for girls' jobs (Kiel and Newton 1980), and
fifthly, some employers gave legislative factors such as shift work
restrictions and maternity benefit as a reason for not employing girls
(Ashton and McGuire 1980). One disadvantage which girls have in the
labour market however, is they compete with older married women who are
thought to be more reliable and therefore they are increasingly vulner-
able to unemployment in certain sectors (Ashton and McGuire 1980).

However, differences between boys and girls' experience in the
labour market is not only limited to their initial entry. As they grow
older these differences are likely to widen for girls are less likely
to receive any training and such training as they do receive is of the
'sitting by Nellie' variety (Pollert 1981, Kiel and Newton 1980). In
addition,girls were less likely to get promoted and enter 'internal'
labour markets once they are in a job. Even those entering clerical
work are likely to become de-skilled or superfluous as office technology
increases (Downing 1981).

Thus altogether, boys and girls enter different sectors of the
labour market and their careers after they have entered a job are often
very different.

The labour market destinations of girls is also structured by
their own preferences. Their preferences are formed well before they
enter the labour market by socialisation processes at school, at home

and in society generally. They will therefore already have formed an opinion about what is 'a nice job for a girl' (Sharpe 1978).

In the literature about girls' decision making, two bodies of opinion have emerged. One argues that girls simply enter the jobs available in the local labour market and adjust their expectations accordingly (Youthaid 1981). Another school of thought is that girls' preferences are unrealistic, reflecting feminine ideals of glamour rather than labour market realities, and it is to this group of writers that I shall turn first.

Clerical and office work is seen as very desirable and quint-essentially 'feminine' work by many girls, especially in areas such as London where such work is readily available. Office work is desirable because it is clean, respectable and allows girls to 'dress up' (Griffin 1983, Sharpe 1976, Downing 1981). Parents too, feel that office work would be a 'nice' job for their daughters and it gives the appearance of upward mobility by offering non-manual labour without the necessity of numerous qualifications. Other unrealistically glamourous jobs mentioned in Sharpe's sample included air hostessing and modelling : all extensions of feminine roles.

Moreover, girls tended to regard marriage rather than employment as their main concern and studies of girls' aspirations have reinforced this. Hence Turner (1963) found that girls' expectations were shaped entirely by marriage, which for them was a career. Other feminist writers have likewised assumed that it is the expectation of marriage which shapes girls' adolescence and it is for this reason that they are concerned to 'dress-up' and are besotted with romance (McRobbie 1978, Sharpe 1976).

However, in the context of the 1980's the fact that girls expect

to get married need not necessarily mean that they will give up work,
nor structure their ambitions wholly around men as in Turner's survey
of the 1950's. In Sharpe's sample of Ealing girls the majority expected
to stop work for only a few years when their children were small.
Fuller's West Indian girls by contrast, were very determined to continue
working whatever their domestic responsibility and had high aspirations
in career terms. These sentiments were mixed with the belief that it
was not good for a girl to be too dependent upon a man. In the words
of one of her respondents:

> 'I want a proper job first and some kind of skill so that if I
> do get married and have children I can go back to it; don't
> want just relying on him for money, 'cause I've got to look
> after myself. There must be something I can do'

<div align="right">(Fuller 1980, p.57)</div>

In practice most girls will be workers for a major part of their
lives for the proportion of women in the workforce has increased and
England has an exceptionally high activity rate for women in general
(Ashton and McGuire 1980). Thus, it appears in this context that the
kind of education recommended in the Newsom Report (of which this genera-
tion of girls is a product) is singularly inappropriate. This leads to
contradictions in girls' orientations   to employment: they are
expected to be wives and mothers which implies a career of full-time
home-making, but the reality of the situation is that they will need
to earn a living.

Thus Pollert, in her study of women in a tobacco factory found
that rather than their absorption into unskilled employment serving to
reinforce sexual identities, as it did for Willis' lads, their gender
identities and their occupational ones were in conflict. Working in a
factory was not a 'nice 'job for a girl and hence they were at the bottom
of both the sexual and occupational hierarchy. Romance offered an

ideology of escape but at the same time there was an acceptance of

the reality that manual labour was an inevitable part of their lives.

Hence their responses were ambiguous:

> 'And for the working-class women this world is simultaneously
> that of social production and human reproduction: the work
> place and the family'
>
> (Pollert 1981, p.88)

E)   Girls and Unemployment

The dual status of women as employees and as domestic workers

has confused the discussion of women's unemployment (Deem 1984, Marshall

1984)[8] It is assumed that women who are not employed must be working

in the home and hence neither employment nor unemployment can be as

serious for them as for men and discussion of the role of domestic

labour has paradoxically served to reinforce this view of women's

unemployment (Marshall 1984).

For example Jahoda et al (1933) in her study of Marienthal found

that whilst unemployed men became isolated, slowed their rate of

activity, lost a sense of time, lost status and identity and ceased to

pursue their hobbies, their wives seemed as busy as ever. The author

however, did not regard this as remarkable for housewives were not

'unemployed'. Indeed, in most studies womens' problems in relation to

unemployment are associated with the unemployment of their husbands.

More recently, Jahoda still claims that unemployment is less of a problem

for women because many of them prefer to be housewives than to be

employed:

> 'And even if women prefer to have a job, unemployment hits them
> less hard then men psychologically speaking because an alternative
> is available to them in the return to the traditional role of
> housewife that provides some time structure, some sense of
> purpose, status and activity and even though it offers little
> scope for wider social experiences'.
>
> (Jahoda 1982, p.35)

Studies addressing unemployment amongst adolescent girls have shown that they are more likely to take on domestic responsibilities and this provides an alternative source of activity for them outside employment (Roberts et al 1981, 1982c, Donnovan and Oddy 1982, Stokes 1981). However, unemployed girls were also more prone to suffer from psychiatric disorders, loss of self-esteem and retarded maturation than unemployed boys were (Warr and Parry 1982, Stokes 1981, Gurney 1980, Breakwell 1983):

> 'Girls readily find a role for themselves within the home but as time passes and their social isolation continues or increases they may well become dissatisfied with this existence'.

(Donovan and Oddy, 1982, p.26)

To what extent it is _unemployment_ which leads to depression and to what extent it is domestic labour itself is unclear. Furthermore, informal work outside employment followed clear lines of gender segregation with women less able to pursue informal careers and 'fiddles' and more likely to find themselves in the lowest paid and most exploited informal work (Wallace and Pahl 1984, Morris 1983, Pahl and Wallace 1980, Roberts et al. 1981, 1982c).[9]

In general, it might be hypothesised that girls are more deleteriously affected by their experiences of unemployment than married women for Warr (1982) observes that the deleterious effects of unemployment are related to the extent to which the individual is committed to employment. He argues that girls are more committed now than they were in previous decades. Thus it seems that girls are beginning to regard employment as an important part of their identity at the very time when their employment is being eroded (Pahl 1978)[10].

Altogether the evidence about this subject is fragmentary and there is little systematic theorising of girls' unemployment and its

implications. Will increasing unemployment lead to increasingly 'feminised' roles for girls? Brake (1980) argues that it will and Griffin (1983) found that unemployment led to girls being even more concerned with finding a man. McRobbie (1978) also found that unemployed girls found it very difficult to escape from the home and this increased the oppressive control which their parents had over them.

Thus, the research into girls' unemployment indicates that whilst girls are able to find alternative sources of status and activity within the home, this is more likely to make them depressed than to mitigate the effects of unemployment. However, a dimension which has been ignored in all these studies is the fact that the 'home' for the adolescent girl is the parental home, whilst for older women it is normally the marital home. Undertaking domestic work in the parental home does not constitute a 'career' or an alternative source of status in the same way as marriage and motherhood does. This failure to distinguish between women at different stages of the life cycle and in the context of their roles within different domestic spheres has confused the discussion of women's unemployment still further.[11]

F)   Discussion

Whilst correcting the androcentrism found in other accounts, the perspective of feminist writers is often one of the middle-class researcher looking down upon working-class practices. They have tended to view these practices as the very antithesis of feminism: girls are passive, over-socialised, unambitious and home-centred. In other words, they produce another 'deficit' model although those writers who have attempted to analyse girls' behaviour in terms of an _active_ model have to some extent corrected this bias.

The researchers reviewed here have indicated the ways in which patriarchy and the needs of capitalism serve to oppress women and the ways in which the education system reinforces this. However, whilst at times there is an alignment between these forces, serving to crush girls into subordinate roles, there are also contradictions between them. The angry middle-class feminism which emerged in the 1970's is perhaps to some extent a product of these contradictory expectations.

However, there are two general criticisms which can be made of the literature. Firstly, most of these accounts assume that femininity is one dimensional: whether girls sit neatly in the classroom doing their homework with their legs crossed, or whether they paint their nails and swear, they are nevertheless conforming to feminine socialisation. There are perhaps a number of conflicting models of feminine behaviour.

Secondly, whilst studies of girls' socialisation has emphasised the reproduction of domestic roles, studies of boys have emphasised their reproduction as workers in different social classes. There are clearly important differences in the ways in which gender roles structure the experiences of girls and boys, but it is arguable that insights derived from the study of girls' sex-role socialisation could be fruitfully applied to boys as well. There is some evidence that 'settling down' to steady jobs in the case of boys is likewise associated with position within the life cycle and their roles within the family.[12] Furthermore, it is possible that elements in the sub-cultural activity of boys could be explained by the ways in which their gender identities are constructed. The focus upon class relations in the study of youth sub-culture has tended to obscure this issue although some have sought to explain the role of masculinity and masculinism (Willis 1977, Brake 1980). Therefore in my own empirical work I shall illustrate the ways in which both sexes construct gender roles and how this is related to experiences of work, school and unemployment.

<center>PART 2.</center>

<center>School, Work and Unemployment on The Isle of Sheppey</center>

CHAPTER 6   FROM THEORETICAL OVERVIEW TO THE ISLE OF SHEPPEY

In Part I of the thesis I have critically evaluated previous research relating to school, work and unemployment amongst young people and indicated some of the main weaknesses. The central conern of the thesis is the problem of social and cultural reproduction. Social reproduction in this section is used in the sense of the transmission of social roles as men, women and workers to young people. Cultural reproduction is used in the sense of the meanings, values and behaviour associated with these social roles amongst different social groups. In Part II I illustrate how this takes place in a particular context - the Isle of Sheppey - and the way in which economic restructuring and social change has effected it. In Chapters 7 and 8 there is an historical analysis of patterns of change in education and the labour market and the links between these two in reproducing different kinds of workforce. Chapters 9 and 10 examine the ways in which social roles were received and recreated amongst the SSES and FUS samples of young people with particular attention to gender roles. In order to relate specific issues raised in the first part of the thesis to the empirical data, I have organised Chapters 9 and 10 around hypotheses derived from other studies. The hypotheses are listed below:

1.   <u>That the concept of 'occupational choice' is misconceived because</u> <u>young people have already been socialised to accept their</u> <u>occupational roles before leaving school.</u>

This hypothesis is based upon the argument that the individualistic concept of occupational choice is not applicable to the experiences

of most school leavers whose opportunities are constrained by class, gender, race and the nature of the local labour market. Young people have been prepared to accept their positions in the labour market by socialisation in the family and at school, so that working-class school leavers expect to do working-class jobs and middle-class school leavers expect to do middle-class ones. Young peoples' subjective perceptions of their abilities are therefore adjusted to suit their entry into the labour market at different levels.

2. <u>That young people have difficulty finding employment because they do not possess the kinds of skills required by employers.</u>

This hypothesis is based upon arguments that young people emerge from school ill-equipped for working life. This is because they have insufficient knowledge of basic educational skills - such as the three R's - and because they are deficient in attributes sought by employers such as versatility and the practical application of knowledge.

3. <u>That girls are less committed to employment than boys are because they are resigned to accept their future roles as wives and mothers.</u>

This hypothesis is based upon arguments that girls are more easily 'cooled out' of educational aspirations and out of careers in the labour market because their main preoccupation is with finding a man and getting married. Consequently, they regard employment as simply a means of filling time before they settle down to their real careers in the home. They therefore find themselves in low paid, unskilled and unrewarding employment.

4. <u>That the loss of employment leads to the loss of five latent
functions of work which are essential to social and psychological
well-being.</u>

This hypothesis is based upon argument that employment provides
five latent functions; a time structure, status, collective participa-
tion, a source of activity, and social contact. These functions can
<u>only</u> be provided by employment and so unemployment leads to social
isolation, purposelessness, loss of status, loss of a time structure
and exclusion from collective projects. This can lead in turn to a
decline in psychological well-being and a rise in social pathology.

5. <u>That unemployment leads to exclusion from youth cultures.</u>

This hypothesis is based upon arguments that participation in
youth cultures depends upon the capacity of young people as consumers
and that this in turn is founded upon access to employment. With no
income they cannot participate in the consumption activities of other
young people and consequently become isolated.

6. <u>That unemployment for girls is less serious than for boys because
they have alternative sources of status in the home.</u>

This hypothesis is based on the argument that because girls are
committed to their future roles as wives and mothers, as well as their
roles as workers, unemployment is less serious for them than for male
school leavers. Teenage girls are able to find compensatory roles
within the home when they become unemployed.

CHAPTER 7   INTRODUCING THE ISLE OF SHEPPEY:
                    SCHOOL IN A LOCAL CONTEXT.

        The transition from school to work described here takes place

in the context of both a particular school and particular labour market:

some features of it reflect national trends and some are specifically

locally based. This chapter will describe those aspects of the Isle

of Sheppey which helped to shape the experiences of young people living

there.

        In writing this chapter I was able to draw upon the large volume

of data which had been collected in the course of ESRC project between

1980 and 1984. This was available in a series of reports, some of which

I helped to write.[1] In addition, the information from the 1981 Census

was supplemented by a more detailed one in nine sample surveys adminis-

tered by Social and Community Planning Research (SCPR) in the same year. In

chapters 7 and 8 I have only selected information which appeared to be

most relevant to an understanding of the processes affecting young

people. I therefore begin with a description of the social geography

of the Island followed by an account of the education system and its

background.

        The history of the labour market and the education system on the

island are related and there are two events which stand out : the closure

of the naval dockyard in 1959 and the comprehensivisation of the education

in 1970. This chapter will attempt to describe both the real changes

taking place over this period and the way the Islanders perceived them.

Although these events took place before my sample were born or before

many of them arrived on the island, they nevertheless shaped the

consciousness of those leaving school. Social reproduction should be

seen in terms of traditions inherited from the past as well as destina-
tions determined by the future. Cultural traditions which are trans-
mitted easily in a small community with one large secondary school
influence the perceptions of children and parents of a later generation,
or those who are newcomers and constitute part of the local conscious-
ness. This account is therefore intended to provide a background to
the statements made to me in the course of my survey by analysing how
traditions arose and why they were perpetuated.

A)   The Social Geography of The Isle of Sheppey

The Isle of Sheppey is separated from Kent and the surrounding
Borough of Swale by a muddy tidal stretch of water. On either side of
the channel is an expanse of marshland, inhabited mainly by sheep. A
road-rail bridge joins the Island to the mainland and driving across it
means leaving behind the cosy patchwork of neat Kentish orchards for
Sheppey presents a very contrasting impression: one of a declining
industrial area. The landscape, otherwise bare and treeless, is littered
with the debris of de-industrialisation in the form of empty factories,
abandoned machinery and residential areas which have declined as industry
and people moved elsewhere. However, the Island has had a colourful
history, for situated at the confluence of the Thames and Medway rivers,
it has been of strategic military importance ever since it was first
occupied by the Danes as a base for raiding England.[2]

The main road leading towards Sheerness Docks, a major commercial
port occupying the site of the old naval dockyard, is now a busy
thoroughfare with articulated lorries bringing goods in and out. Lines
of imported Japanese cars waiting to be taken away cover the land in
every direction around the road. Approaching Sheerness the steel mill

looms ahead. Usually shrouded in a pall of polluting orange-coloured smoke, it is a major source of employment for adult men and is surrounded by black piles of twisted metal and slag.

The population of 33,053[3] is scattered around the four main residential areas with one or two farms and small villages between them. There is an open prison on the site of the old Air Force base at Eastchurch. At the northernmost tip of the Island lies the town of Sheerness itself. The older part, known as 'Marine Town' was built to house the dockyard employees during the nineteenth century: the architecture of the houses reflects the periods of dockyard expansion. The streets are laid out in a grid-iron pattern with a network of narrow alley-ways connecting them at the back: many small corner shops and tiny pubs, open at all hours, are tucked in between. The houses themselves front onto the street allowing neighbours to stand outside chatting, for this is an old established working-class community. Some houses, freshly painted in bright colours with picture windows and pebble dashing, reflect the attempts of their owners to refurbish them with the help of Government Home Improvement grants.[4] Other houses, are damp and decaying as this part of the town has been subject to frequent flooding from the sea.

However, most of the residents of Sheerness live in an area which people call 'Mile Town' and is mainly composed of Council estates: by contrast it is bereft of pubs and shops. The sense of cramped intimacy found in Marine Town is replaced by a spacious barrenness with long, uncomfortable walks between blocks.

The town of Sheerness is worth describing in detail, for it represents the focus of teenage leisure life on the Island. A short walk up the High Street enables people to encounter most of their acquaintances locally. Indeed, for teenagers, parading up and down the High Street is a pastime in itself. At the centre stands the town clock, the site of drunken New Year revelries which occasioned the only arrest

for 1981 rioting in Kent.[5] On each side of the High Street are well known pubs with particular reputations. At one end, nearest the docks is an old-fashioned mirrored bar where the local prostitutes consult the shipping Almanacs to prepare themselves for the arrival of their customers off the boats. Most of them are outsized and middle-aged, making a precarious living from council houses in Mile Town. Some of the younger girls who occasionally join them are among my sample of school leavers.

Further along the High Street is another pub which is the site of the local drugs mart. Transactions are carried out around the pool table by hard-eyed young men and women in the sweet smelling hazy smoke. It is rumoured that the previous landlord died after being hit on the head with an iron bar by one of his customers. Still further along are the large, ostentatiously decorated pubs and discotheques where teenagers go on a Saturday night out. On these occasions, dressed in their best clothes - which are flimsy and close fitting even on the coldest winter night - they move from one pub to another: they might visit each pub three times in one evening on the look-out for 'talent', fights and excitement. Meanwhile, their parents are in one of the many smaller, shabbier 'locals' or Working Men's Clubs where shows and sing songs are held at weekends.

At the end of the town is the market place and amusement park and from there one can walk on to the beach. In summer, the centre of adolescent life shifts to the sea-front where young men walk up and down displaying their torsos and tattoos whilst young women sun themselves.

The old town of Queenborough is only two miles away, and yet it is claimed locally that the inhabitants speak with a different dialect. This is where many of the older factories are found. The ancient High

Street and Borough Hall (now a museum) were familiar to Nelson, Lady Hamilton and Hogarth, but most of the population live in dilapidated terraced houses and council estates which reflect the generally poor and rather rough character of the neighbourhood.

Moving towards the centre of the Island on elevated land, lies Minster, full of widely-spaced, detached houses where the most prosperous section of the population live. The houses are individually built and designed, often by the owners themselves and are given names such as 'Shangri-La' or 'Buona Vista'.[6] This area reflects the boom in house-building since the 1960's, which on the Island took a distinctive form. It allowed many small local builders and traders to prosper and to spend their wealth on building their own houses in Minster. The image of the self-made, self-employed man is therefore a popular local archetype. Moreover, there is evidence of still more building going on and some of the roads are, as yet, unmade. The rutted mud and stones is hazardous to cars and pedestrians alike and sometimes becomes impassable in winter. At the crown of Minster is an ancient Saxon Abbey endowed by Queen Sexburga. Nearby is the local hospital converted from a Work-House.

Between Minster, Queenborough and Sheerness lies the aptly named 'Halfway' which is the site of the Sheppey Comprehensive School and Careers Centre. Some new tidy, low-cost housing estates built in the last two decades have sprouted around the fringes of Halfway. Their relative cheapness attracts commuters.

Moving eastwards, through Eastchurch village, we arrive at Leysdown, a traditional Londoners' holiday resort before cheap packaged tours tempted them abroad. The holiday camps are comprised of lines of peeling chalets and caravans enclosed by grim wire fences: some Londoners nevertheless return to enjoy the long sandy beach and knees-ups in the local pubs. In winter, Leysdown is boarded up and resembles an abandoned film

set, but in summer there is a colourful parade of amusement arcades, fun fairs and bingo halls. Small stalls containing a cornucopia of balls, jaunty hats and sticks of rock spill into the road. Most of these stands are staffed by young people, either at school or after they have left, and were owned or controlled, until recently, by a mafia-style entrepreneur.

For the teenager, one of the most important features of Leysdown are the two discotheques which attract bus-loads of visitors from as far away as London. Each discotheque is extravagantly constructed around an imaginary theme: one is a tropical island, and the other a science fiction futuristic fantasy, boasting the most sophisticated equipment in Europe. Those who arrive for an evening's dancing, drinking and flirting have to pay heavily for their pleasure and run the risk of being caught in a fight afterwards.

The Island is surrounded by water and from Sheerness there is a view across the Thames Estuary towards the lights of Southend. When the tide is out, the beach is furrowed with lines of lumpy mud where the lug-worm diggers and cocklers have been searching for a harvest. This provides a convenient extra income for the young who can earn £3.50 for a hundred worms (in 1984). They now complain that as unemployment has risen, so the beach is becoming exhausted. The surrounding creeks and sea also provide a living for some fishermen and casual work for the young people who help them, whilst the marshes are full of rabbits which can be trapped and sold: many young boys own a couple of ferrets.

There are many myths about the Isle of Sheppey. Local Government officers refer to it as the 'Sceptic Isle' because of its reputation for social problems and the Chief Inspector of Police claims that it is renowned in his force for its roughness, violence and juvenile delin-

quency. When I first arrived I was repeatedly informed that it was full of long established, in-bred, extended families. I was also frequently told that the Sheppey school was a place where children were allowed to run amok and emerged as wild and undisciplined delinquents who were virtually unemployable. This was contrasted to the 'good old days' of the naval dockyard when young lads learned a skill and son followed father in a respectable tradition of dockyard employment. As will be demonstrated later, some of these myths were created and sustained by the local newspapers. There are two newspapers circulating on the Island: both are regularly read by most of the population.

However, analysis of the data collected in the course of the ESRC project shows that in fact the Isle of Sheppey is more similar to Britain as a whole than these reports would suggest. Although there were some long established families among my sample, 41 per cent of the SCPR survey sample had arrived in the last 20 years (Pahl and Wilson 1984). The age structure of the Island is similar to that in Great Britain as a whole (Table 1) but the social structure is skewed slightly towards the working-class (Table 2). The population does, however, possess less cultural capital than one would expect in such a class distribution. Table 3 shows that most adults left school at the minimum age.

Despite the overall predominance of working-class households there is a high percentage of owner occupiers, 69 per cent altogether. This is an unusual feature of the Island, for it is far higher than the national average, being partly a consequence of Island traditions in patterns of construction and partly a result of the low cost of housing. This is important because it offers the opportunity for 'housing careers' through moving home every few years thus progressively improving the prospects of the household. Thus, the contrast between 'rough' and

Table 1   Age Structure of the Isle of Sheppey, as given by the OPCS & SCPR Survey,
and compared with U.K., 1981 *

Age Breakdown	OPCS %	Sheppey %	United Kingdom %
0 - 4	7	7	6
5 -15	17	19	16
16 -24	14	12	14
25 -34	14	15	14
35 -44	12	13	12
45 -54	10	9	11
55 -59	5	5	6
60 -64	5	5	5
65 -69	5	6	5
70 -74	4	4	4
75 +	6	6	6
N =	1,958	2,042	54,285,422

* Source: OPCS 1981 Census, National Report, G.B. Part 1.   HMSO 1983.

From Pahl and Wilson (1984)

Table 2: Social class of Sheppey households compared to the UK

| Social class | Social class of: | | Social class breakdown of United Kingdom ** |
	Male in couple households in Sheppey*	Respondent in single person households in Sheppey	
	%	%	%
Class 1	17	6	16
Class 2	35	44	39
Class 3	48	50	45
N (100%) =	512	185	2,769,102

* Source: 1 in 9 Household Survey of the Isle of Sheppey, 1981.
Note: These numbers exclude people who have never had formal paid employment.

** Source: OPCS 1981 Census, National Report G.B. Part 2, 10% Sample only; HMSO, 1983, Table 46.

From Pahl and Wilson (1984)

Notes: The classification of social class was derived from the 17 Socio-Economic Groups used by the Registrar-General and combined thus:

1. Profession and Managerial (S.E.G.'s 1, 2, 3, 4 and 13).
2. Intermediate and Junior non-manual; foremen; own account workers; farmers; armed forces (S.E.G.'s 5, 6, 8, 12, 14 and 16).
3. All manual workers with personal service workers. (S.E.G.'s 7, 9, 10, 11 and 15).

Table.3: Age at which Respondent left Full-Time Education

| AGE | Respondent is | | | |
| | Male | | Female | |
	N	%	N	%
13	5	2	10	2
14	106	35	171	40
15	90	30	127	30
16	64	21	68	16
17	14	5	15	4
18	3	1	17	4
19	7	2	4	1
20	1	n	2	n
21	6	2	3	1
22	-	-	2	n
23	3	1	-	-
24	-	-	1	n
28	1	n	-	-
Did not answer	3	1	7	2
Totals	303	100	427	100

Source: SCPR 1981 Sample Survey

from Pahl and Wilson (1984)

'respectable' Islanders is concretely manifested in the care and
maintenance of their homes (Wallace 1984).

The Island has two youth clubs: one at Sheerness run by an un-
employed volunteer and the other attached to the school with formally
employed youth leaders. The school 'Youth Wing' is regarded as more
respectable than the 'County' Youth Club although the latter is a focal
point for teenage activity. There is one Police Station and the Island's
reputation for juvenile crime and multiple social problems resulted in it
becoming the site of a 'community policing' experiment in 1982 based
upon the co-operation between education, social and probation services
and the police. Table 4 shows the crime rates on Sheppey compared
to the County as a whole. It is evident that many of the crimes
found on the Island are those associated with poverty: breaking
into electricity and gas meters, 'stealing electricity' by tampering
with the meters and so on.[7]

The Chief Inspector admits that he has his own style of community
policing whereby he has made a special study of the licensing laws,
allowing some of the many tiny pubs to stay open for longer hours (one
of the only ways they can make any profit). In return he obtains infor-
mation from contexts in which felons are likely to wax garrulous or to
spend their proceeds of the crime. Consequently, the Sheerness police
are renowned for invariably getting their man.

B)   The Education System on The Isle of Sheppey

Some of the most widespread and pernicious myths found on Sheppey
are those concerned with the Comprehensive School. For example, when I
went to the local library to borrow a book by Cyril Poster, the first
Headmaster, I was told by the librarian: 'I didn't know he had written

Table 4   Crime Rate on Sheppey compared to Kent as a whole

Class of Crime	Sheppey			Kent		
	No. Committed	% detected	ratio per 100,000	No. Committed	% detected	ratio per 100,000
Murder	1	100	3.02	9	77.8	0.61
Attempted murder	-	-	-	5	100	0.34
Threats or conspiracy to murder	2	100	6.05	9	77.8	0.61
Manslaughter/Death by dangerous driving	-	-	-	1	100	0.06
Grievous bodily harm	2	50	6.05	75	89.3	5.11
Wounding/Assault	61	86.9	184.55	2077	77.7	141.52
Buggery	-	-	-	8	75	0.54
Indecent assault on males	1	100	3.02	63	74.6	4.29
Gross indecency between males	-	-	-	9	111.1	0.61
Rape	1	-	3.02	19	63.2	1.29
Indecent assault on female	6	50	18.15	263	56.7	17.92
Unlawful sexual intercourse with girl under 13	-	-	-	2	100	0.13
Unlawful sexual intercourse with girl under 16	-	-	-	60	98.3	4.08
Incest	-	-	-	9	77.8	0.61
Procuration	-	-	-	1	-	0.06
Abduction	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bigamy	-	-	-	4	100	0.27
Burglary in dwelling	176	28.4	532.47	7771	37.8	529.49
Aggravated burglary in dwelling	1	100	3.02	7	71.4	0.47
Burglary other than in dwelling	190	34	574.83	7176	41.5	488.95
Aggravated burglary other than in dwelling	-	-	-	1	100	0.06
Going equipped for stealing	1	100	3.02	68	100	4.63
Robbery and assault with intent to rob	3	30	9.07	171	44.4	11.65
Blackmail	-	-	-	18	83.3	1.22
Theft from the person	1	-	3.02	194	21.1	13.21
Theft from the dwelling	43	51.16	130.09	1418	37.9	96.61
Theft by employee	4	100	12.10	445	92.1	30.32
Theft/unauthorised taking from mail	1	100	3.02	10	40	0.68
Abstracting electricity	6	100	18.15	128	95.3	8.72
Theft pedal cycles	99	13.13	299.51	2751	12.5	187.44
Theft from vehicles	160	21.87	484.07	9633	28.3	656.36
Theft from shops and stalls	101	93	305.56	5747	89.4	391.58

Table 4 (cont)

Class of Crime	Sheppey			Kent		
	No. Committed	% detected	ratio per 100,000	No. Committed	% detected	ratio per 100,000
Theft from machines/meters	36	30.55	108.91	788	35.3	53.69
Theft/unauthorised taking of motor vehicles	179	33.51	541.55	8276	35.4	563.9
Other thefts	220	26.81	665.59	8499	26.00	579.1
False accounting	-	-	-	4	125.0	0.27
Obtaining by deception and other frauds	16	56.25	48.4	1318	51.8	89.80
Handling stolen goods	27	100	81.68	641	99.5	43.67
Arson	13	46.15	39.33	710	15.6	48.37
Criminal Damage over £20	67	32.83	202.7	3799	33	258.85
Threat to commit criminal damage	1	100	3.02	11	100	0.74
Forgery and uttering of drug prescription	1	100	3.02	11	100	0.74
Forgery and uttering of valuable security	-	-	-	40	97.5	2.72
Treason, riot, etc.	1	-	3.02	1	-	0.06
Other serious offences against the public order	-	-	-	9	66.7	0.61
Perjury	1	100	3.02	6	100	0.40
Aiding and Abetting suicide	-	-	-	1	100	0.06
Perverting the course of justice	-	-	-	4	100	0.27
Absconding from lawful custody	103	81.55	311.62	137	96.4	9.33
Miscellaneous crimes not classified elsewhere	-	-	-	4	100	0.27
Totals	1525	41.63	4613.8	62411	41.2	4252.53

Sources: 1) Population of Kent from 1981 Census OPCS
2) Population of Sheppey from 1981 Census OPCS
3) Crimes for Kent as a whole from Chief Constables Report of Kent 1982 Appendix 1
4) Crimes for Sheppey from Chief Constable of Kent 1982

The ratio of crimes per head was calculated per 100,000 of the population as follows: $\frac{\text{crimes committed}}{\text{population totals}} \times 100{,}000$

1981 population of Kent = 1,467,619
1981 population of Sheppey = 33,053

any books. I thought all he did was allow them all to run wild up there.'

Although the Sheppey School is in most respects no worse than any other comprehensive school in a similar area, and in many respects has a better record of success, it is regarded by parents and students as being responsible for their educational problems and providing insufficient discipline and control. Those parents whose children are most educationally disadvantaged are the ones most likely to voice this criticism. I was frequently informed in the course of my interviewing 'He/She was alright until they went to that school'. On the other hand, those who were educationally advantaged were generally satisfied with the education they had received. This suggests that the reputation of the school was used as a way of rationalising educational failure.

In spite of its reputation, the Sheppey School attempts to develop a progressive response to the needs of the community. Why are these efforts misinterpreted? Perception of schooling needs to be seen in the context of the historical development of the education system locally and its relationship with the local labour market and the community. Whilst there had been unemployment and poverty before the dockyard closed, at that time there was a tight, organic and easily recognised link between education and employment. The introduction of comprehensive education coincided with the decline of opportunities for young people and severed this close link. On account of this transformation in the relationship between education and employment,[8] Sheppey makes a good case study of the effects of economic change upon schooling.

The background to these events can be divided into three historical phases: the period before the dockyard closed, the period between 1960 and 1970 and the period after 1970. The final section describes the school and its organisation at present in order to provide a background to the qualitative research described in subsequent chapters.

(i)   Education System on Sheppey before 1960

Until the Second World War, and to a lesser extent in the post-war period, the dominant employer and the education system in Sheerness were linked very closely.   The Naval Dockyard, founded in the seventeenth century, employed a large number of Islanders for nearly 200 years.   Inside the Dockyard itself was the Dockyard School, providing technical training for dockyard workers at each stage of their career. One of its main functions was to educate dockyard apprentices.   However, its educational influence extended beyond the dockyard itself, for the Sheerness Technical Boys School served to select and prepare the dockyard workforce before they entered employment.[9]   Thus, a high proportion of those leaving the Technical School went straight into the dockyard. Whilst this direct link ended in 1959 when the dockyard was closed, it will be discussed at length here because many of those still living on the Island, including some of the fathers of my respondents, were products of this system and it is arguable that its influence lingers in familial ideologies of education and employment.   Moreover, an analysis of these traditions helps to explain the hostility towards the introduction of a comprehensive system later.

The Technical School and the Dockyard School complemented each other in a number of ways, one of the main ones being the examination system.   The Technical School socialised its pupils into a graded and competitive selection process based upon performance in examinations and for those who became apprentices, the examination system continued every year as a form of assessment and promotion.   Those who gained the highest grades in the dockyard entrance test, could enter the prestige apprenticeships by becoming a shipwright, an electrical or engine fitter; those who did less well entered the lesser trades and those who failed

became labourers or joined factories. It would be difficult to find an
example of an education system so neatly reproducing the workforce as
that in Sheerness.

Considerable kudos came from successful performance at the Tech-
nical School and the Dockyard entrance test. Fathers encouraged sons to
do well and enter prestige trades thus reinforcing a family tradition.
One respondent referred to the brother who had failed his exam in these
terms: 'Dad wasn't very kind to him (the brother). As I say, because
he didn't have the brains to get into the yard, and that created a little
bit of resentment between them - father and son' (Buck 1981, p.76).

Moreover, an indication of the importance of this examination
system is given by the fact that ex-Dockyard workers remembered their
precise grade and place in the examination system even to this day:

> 'Oh, if you was passed the dockyard exam, then your name was on
> the front page of the Guardian when it was published. My father
> never forgave me, I got 499 marks - no, I got 999 marks - and
> he never forgave me 'cos I didn't get the thousand, out of 1500.
> I came eleventh on the - , I came top of the forms where I was
> at the - well I never did - I couldn't make the thousand mark
> and he never forgave me for it! Very proud though, when I did...'

(Buck, 1981, p.76)

Another way in which the Technical School and the Dockyard educa-
tion system complemented one another was in the content of the education
provided for the Technical School syllabus was heavily weighted towards
science and engineering subjects. Continuity in traditions was ensured,
with five of the teachers at the school being ex-pupils themselves.[10]

In addition to supplying recruits for the dockyard and providing
a suitable education for them, it was claimed that the school supplied
more entrants to the Armed Services than any other school in the country.
This too fitted the local labour market for there was a large Naval,
and Airforce presence on the Island as well as a military garrison
after the Second World War.

Moreover, a dockyard apprenticeship could lead to more than simply a dockyard craft. It also provided access to other posts in a continuation of a graded selection system that extended even beyond the Dockyard itself, so that some graduates from the Dockyard School and Technical School were sent to University. This is reflected in the fact that many of the Local Government officers appointed before the re-organisation in 1974, and some of the older teachers, were graduates from this integrated education system.[11]

The hierarchy of trades and skills in the Dockyard was also reflected in the residential organisation and the community culture of the town. Dockyard workers dominated most of the social activities including the numerous chapels, the Co-operative Society and the Working Mens' Clubs. The structure and lay-out of different forms of housing in Sheerness mirrored the different grades of workers, so that positions within a competitive education system ultimately determined future positions in the town in a very direct and obvious way. This education system had therefore provided a unified vocational, technical and social preparation for adult life with well established traditions. Individual careers could be developed within it so that it was universally recog-nised as a 'fair' and meritocratic preparation for positions in the community.

I will now describe how this tight organic link between education, individual careers and employment was replaced by a more indirect one when the dockyard closed and the comprehensive school opened.

(ii)   The Reorganisation of The Education System between 1960 and 1970.

In the course of comprehensivisation the potential discontinui-ties in educational traditions were inflated into a bitter local contro-versy from which the reputation of the school never recovered.[12]

During the 1960's a tri-partite selective education system
existed on the Isle of Sheppey which was similar in organisation to
that in the rest of Kent. There were 13 primary schools containing
pupils up to the age of 11, two technical schools and two secondary
modern schools for girls and boys respectively. Those attending the
grammar schools travelled off the Island to Sittingbourne and some
Sittingbourne students travelled to Sheppey to attend the technical
schools. This daily travelling by some 300 students in each direction
was clearly inefficient and there had been moves by County Councillors
to have a grammar school situated on the Island since 1948. This idea
of introducing a comprehensive system was championed by the Labour County
Councillor returned by Sheppey in a dominantly Tory County, who exerted
a great deal of personal influence over both local and regional politics.[13]

Kent County Council, being in every sense conservative in its
ideological climate, had not so far attempted any comprehensivisation,
but the 1964 Education Act enabled them to develop alternative plans
and later on the ministerial circular of 10/65 obliged them to do so.
Sheppey, which needed new school buildings and was Labour controlled,
was therefore an ideal place to build a comprehensive school within
the County. A three-tier system was suggested which involved the
transfer of pupils from primary schools at the age of 9 to middle
schools from 9-13 and from there to a single co-educational comprehensive.
Together, these proposals constituted a complete reorganisation of the
education system.

Despite a number of public meetings before the school was
opened, local teachers felt that they had not been sufficiently consulted.
Consequently, whilst the Educational Officers were satisfied that full
'consultations' had taken place, local teachers complained that the
scheme had been bulldozed through without their consent. Rodd (1969)

provides a string of quotations from different parties in the dispute
to illustrate the very different definitions of the situation which
developed. A selected few are listed here:

> 'Reorganisation was mooted before I came to the area. There was
> a feeling of despair. Teachers felt it was not worth fighting.
> K.E.C. bulldozed the idea across.' (Head Teacher)

> 'At no time until Mr...... (teacher's representative) read a
> statement to the Divisional Executive on 10th March had any
> suggestion been made known to the Education Committee or myself
> that (the Isle of Sheppey) teachers had not been fairly and
> properly consulted by normal and reasonable means...... The
> K.E.C. and their officers have taken great pains to ensure that
> teachers and those concerned with the conduct and administration
> of the schools on the Isle of Sheppey have had adequate opportu-
> nities to express their opinions over a period of several months.'
> (K.E.O. in letter to local newspaper 8th April, 1965).'

> 'No teacher was told anything. The heads were sworn to secrecy.
> Even I knew nothing officially and I had to get a little infor-
> mation from one and another." (Local secretary of one of the
> teacher's Associations).'

Rodd attributes these conflicts to the fact that there was no
single unified body to represent the teachers' views, and that there was
an institutionalised conflict between teachers and administrators,
teachers and head teachers, and between different groups of teachers.
Co-ordination was difficult because the Head Teachers resented any
attempt to shackle their powers and were unused to co-operating with
any other group, especially those from rival schools. Teachers, too
opposed the changes because they would be likely to lose positions of
responsibility carrying extra income and status in the community, be
subject to competition from more qualified external applicants and
their teaching would be open to scrutiny and assessment.[14]

The local papers too, joined in the debate with one local news-
paper consistently opposing comprehensivisation. It is unfortunate
perhaps that when the scheme was first mooted in 1964, one local news-
paper ran the headline: 'Three-tier system would mean the end of

11 plus selection: Bold Educational Plan: Sheppey may be chosen for

experiment,' and then the first paragraph read:

> 'The Isle of Sheppey may become the 'guinea pig' for an educational
> experiment in Kent. The County Education Committee is consider-
> ing the development of a three-tier education system and feels
> that the area is the most suitable part of Kent for this.'
> (North East Kent Times, 16 December 1964).

Local people were appalled at the thought of being used as an

educational 'experiment' and this terminology has lingered into the

present.

Given the number of interest groups involved in the dispute, and

the fact they were not represented by any single body, much of the

argument was carried out in the letters page of the local newspapers.

The controversy continued until the Comprehensive opened and many

ill-founded rumours circulated. The teachers were an influential body

of opinion because many of them were born locally and as individuals

they held a number of over-lapping roles in the community (Rodd 1969).

Thus, by the time the School opened it had many enemies.

The School itself cost £1 million to construct and this made it

the largest educational investment in Kent at the time. The site chosen

was at Minster, in the centre of the Island, and it was planned as a

'campus' with open-plan buildings and subject 'blocks' which students

would circulate between. It was assumed that some 1500 pupils would

attend at one time, although in fact there are nearly 2000 at present.

Other schools on the Island became 'Middle Schools' and their intake

was restricted by 'zoning', introduced at the same time as comprehensi-

visation until that time parents had been able to choose which school

their children attended, and there had been a clear hierarchy of prestige

amongst schools on the Island.

Reorganisation in 1970 therefore precipitated a number of major

changes in the educational system on the Isle of Sheppey. Firstly, education was comprehensive rather than selective; secondly there was zoning rather than competition between schools; thirdly education after the age of 13 was to be mixed rather than single sex, and fourthly there was to be one large comprehensive centralising all educational facilities rather than a number of smaller schools all run idiosyncratically.

How did parents view these changes? Unfortunately we have little information about this since the parents' opinions were overshadowed by those of administrators, teachers and political spokespeople. Rodd's survey of parents is small scale and incomplete but he concludes that parents were more or less ignorant of the proposed changes and were uninterested in educational organisation for the most part, because their concerns were primarily child-centred. According to the local newspaper parents were anxious that co-education might lead to promiscuity and a small contingent were keen to retain school uniforms.[15] The parents' response, insofar as it was known, is therefore a fairly conservative one.

(iii) The Sheppey School after 1970

The new Headmaster of the Sheppey School was in a crucial and influential position to develop a new educational policy locally and the one appointed was Cyril Poster, an advocate of the Community School, with a nationally recognised reputation.[16] He had written a book entitled 'The School and the Community' published in 1971 shortly after he took up his new post, and here I refer to this source for his views. Poster used the reorganisation to introduce an entirely new and avante-garde concept of education onto the Island. His views and educational methods are the subject of much folk-lore locally, so I

shall summarise them briefly below.

The Community School, he argued, was to be a substitute for the extended family and become the focus for community activity. Recreational, artistic and social facilities were all to be combined on the school campus, and teachers should educate not only pupils but adults as well in a total 'life oriented' concept of education.

This new style of education, covering a wider franchise would require a whole new curriculum,not limited by narrow traditional academic subjects, but inter-disciplinary in nature and incorporating community and environmentally related issues. He accorded a particularly important role to the study of the local community in order to encourage students to understand their environment and develop independent opinions about it:

> 'The importance to the community school of these curricular developments cannot be underestimated because they (the integrated subjects) identify needs and problems of society, they lead students to become concerned about the quality of that society. Education becomes relevant.'

> (Poster 1971, p.81)

The form of schooling Poster proposed also required a new administrative structure with an emphasis upon pastoral care as well as formal teaching. The Head would thus become a 'manager' rather than the traditional apex of authority and pupils would be able to participate democratically in the decision-making process along with staff. School could also actively stimulate social activities in the community by building links with local associations and voluntary groups:

> 'It is difficult to see how any school that aspires to the title of community school can fail to bring social service within the curriculum. Only thus can investigation of the needs of the community be linked with planning to meet those needs.'

> (ibid., p.84)

This was a 'liberal' view of the role of schooling. It was based

upon Poster's analysis of the problems of modern society which he attributed to the decline of the traditional 'community' resulting in social disintegration and anomie. Only the school, he argued, could compensate for this decline of community and provide an alternative 'Gemienschaft' which would serve to mitigate many of the social problems assoicated with young people:

> 'The breakdown of the extended family must be balanced by an increased communal concern, and only the school is likely to be a catalyst for this process.'

(<u>ibid</u>., p.88)

Poster also instituted other educational reforms including the abolition of corporal punishment and uniforms. He attempted to manage by winning consent rather than by coercion. In many ways his conception of education approached a 'free school' philosophy and he encouraged a casual and informal relationship between staff and students rather than a formal and authoritarian one. It is rumoured that he even asked the students to call him by his first name.[17] Poster therefore visualised an independent role for schooling in counteracting the fragmentation and class-polarisation of modern society.

Once appointed, Poster introduced all these reforms simultan-eously in one grand sweep. New staff were brought in: young, progressively-minded college or university educated 'career' teachers appeared on the Island introducing a new professional stratumto the local social structure.[18] However, even Poster's most fervent supporters have reservations about the way in which these reforms were introduced. Altogether, 1350 pupils were brought into a new school building over a period of 3 days. Given that this was in the context of new staff and a new organisational structure with which everyone was unfamiliar, the resultant chaos was inevitable. Indeed during the first two years there were considerable

'teething' problems, for the contrast between this school and the small, more traditional schools that had existed previously could hardly have been greater.

Enemies and critics of the school found ample opportunity to mount attacks and the local paper was eager to publicise scandals as it remained hostile to the new system. The supposed lack of 'discipline' was a popular theme but there were also stories of fights, sexual promiscuity and so on,which were false or exaggerated, but the school nevertheless lost credibility in the eyes of local people as a result.[19] It was also claimed that the pupils' education suffered and that educational standards were lower than average.

Poster retired some six years later and was replaced by another Head who introduced more 'traditional' teaching paradigm. A measure of discipline and formality was imposed upon the organisation of the school and truanting, among other things, was treated more severely. However, he retained some of the original objectives of the community school.

(iv)   The relationship between school and community in 1979

The Sheppey school is currently the largest in Kent containing 1,846 pupils in 1979.[20] The administrative hierarchy is very complex with pastoral and academic responsibilities being organised in parallel pyramids of authority. Conflicts between staff and between teaching paradigms are institutionalised within the formal organisation of the school, for those staff who were transferred from the previous school system and who were often hostile to the implementation of comprehensive Community School were mostly given positions within the pastoral system. New, more progressively minded teachers obtained positions within the academic structure. There is therefore no uniform educational philosophy among staff.

In 1979, the school continued in some of its objectives of making education relevant to the needs of the community. There were four main ways in which this was put into practice: firstly through providing a progressive curriculum, secondly through principles of 'life oriented' education, thirdly through flexible Sixth Form entry and fourthly through building links with industry. I shall now consider each in turn.

Firstly then, the school attempts to provide a genuinely comprehensive curriculum including subjects intended to fit the needs of a future labour market such as 'Design Technology' and 'Computer Appreciation' and students are encouraged to do practical work in the community as part of their studies. They are able to shop around between some 60 subjects in what Bazalgette (1975) has termed a 'market' principle of education.[21]

Secondly, there is a policy of encouraging students to take at least one examination, no matter how reluctant they were to do so and altogether 93.2 per cent of school leavers had sat examinations in 1982. This is partly because the school has been concerned to build its examination record in recent years and Table 5 indicates that by 1984 standards were approaching those of Kent as a whole in CSE subjects although they were lower at GCE. It is estimated that there was an average of some 6.51 examinations per student in 1982.[22]

However, by this time teachers had begun to question the emphasis placed upon examination success. As one Deputy Head argued:

> 'We have to balance educational needs with responsibility for the individual and these are in some ways incompatible. We've been successful so far in using the examination carrot, despite unemployment, but it's beginning to look increasingly dishonest.'

Consequently, a conference was convened to re-evaluate School goals in April 1983, addressed by representatives from Industry and other professionals concerned with vocational preparation. This resulted in

Table 5

Examination Results: Sheppey School and Kent Compared 1982

	SHEPPEY	KENT
TOTAL NUMBER IN YEAR 530		
Average number of exams per student	6.51	-
Percentage of GCE passes	61.4%	86.4%
Percentage of CSE passes	91.3%	93.5%

Source: K.E.C. data.   Sheppey School Statistics

a document restating school goals and emphasising the 'life oriented' concept of education.

The third policy through which the School attempts to meet the needs of the community is through its flexible Sixth Form entry and the range of vocational courses available at the post-compulsory level. Although only 23 per cent of Fifth years stayed on to the Sixth Form in 1979, compared to 31 per cent in Kent as a whole, the basis of this entrance is different to that in other schools (Table 6). At Sheppey School it is possible to take a number of one year vocational courses in the sixth form which enable students to improve their prospects in the labour market and 'technical' and 'office skills' courses were the most popular.

Table 6 also illustrates that girls are more likely to stay on to the Sixth Form in Sheppey than in Kent as a whole for the local labour market provided less opportunities for skilled training for girls than for boys.

Many leavers who cannot find jobs drift back into the Sixth Form after the summer holidays: some later drift out again when they decide that it does not suit them. Students with few qualifications are not discouraged from doing this, as they would be in other schools.

The fourth means by which the school attempts to accommodate the needs of the surrounding community is by participating in local initiatives in order to understand and meet the 'needs' of local industry.[23] Consequently, there are regular meetings between employers, Careers Officers and representatives of the Education Service and the aims are defined as follows:

> 'The object of this committee is to define and harmonise the medium and long term industry needs/school requirements with the educational requirements for young people at school'

> (Meeting of Action Committee on Strategic Considerations
> Minutes - 17th May 1984)

TABLE 6

Proportion of Fifth Years Staying on to Sixth Form in 1979: Sheppey and Kent Combined

| | SHEPPEY | | | KENT | | |
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Fifth Form	(295)	(270)	(565)	(11,144)	(10,665)	(21,809)
Fifth Form Remaining at School	(57) 19%	(75) 28%	(132) 23%	(3,222) 29%	(3,573) 34%	(6,795) 31%

Despite this range of 'progressive' educational policies attempting to be responsive to the needs of young people in a declining labour market, there are a number of ways in which these policies are undermined.

C)   Discussion

The educational system and its relationship to the local labour market and community changed radically over a period of 20 years. Both the traditional schooling system dominated by the Dockyard and the present educational system established links between schooling and the local economy, but they did so according to two very different models. The first was a tight, traditional and organic link, the second a more indirect liberal and self-consciously 'progressive' one. There were also important changes in the labour market itself and I shall now analyse these links more generally.

Studies which have compared schools organised along 'traditional' lines with those operating according to more liberal child-centred principles conclude that these two systems are very similar in their effects (Corrigan 1979 , Willis 1977). This is because the structural position of schooling with in the social system as a whole remains the same, and so the ultimate goals and functions of schooling are consistent despite individual variations in organisation. However, the ecology and ideology of the school do affect the way in which it is experienced by pupils. I have already indicated that the structure of class relations and the possession or otherwise of cultural capital by the incoming students, ensures that working-class children continue to be more disadvantaged than middle-class ones. The 'liberal' orientation which fuelled the educational expansion of the 1960's and is evident in Poster's own thinking, assumed that sufficient and judicious State investment could counteract the effects of class origins to build an

alternative, more meritocratically based system. However, this was
in the context of an expanding labour market: in the 1970's the role
of education in the economy was regarded less optimistically. Therefore,
whatever the principles underlying the organisation of education on
Sheppey, it would inevitably reproduce the characteristics of the
intake in that area - which in Sheppey is to a great extent working-
class.

Consequently, it is not surprising that in the course of my
interviews I found that rather than overcoming class differences as
Poster hoped, the organisation of the Sheppey school served to reinforce
differences based upon home origins. Rather than the range of subjects
serving to overcome wider inequalities it reproduced them: middle-class
students 'chose' academic subjects and working-class ones 'chose'
vocational subjects. Furthermore the more middle-class students I
interviewed appreciated the open and liberal structure of the school and
the wide range of subject 'options' available. Being more self-moti-
vated, middle-class pupils did not need external coercion to help them
perform. Working-class students on the other hand, experienced the
school very differently. Both parents and students were more critical
of the school and felt confused and lost in the open-plan structure.
They complained that the school was 'too big' and that no-one cared
about them. They felt that they had no formal structure to attach
themselves to and define themselves against. Bazalgette (1975) too
has observed that those from less privileged backgrounds lacked the
confidence to utilise the 'market' system of education.

Moreover, it was the working-class students and their parents
who expected the school to be more disciplinarian and authoritarian and
seemed disappointed in this respect. They regretted the absence of

corporal punishment, coercive measures and uniforms and they blamed
their own educational failure on the organisation of the school itself.
Therefore, the open school did not undermine traditional authoritarian
attitudes and 'restricted' codes of behaviour, as Poster had hoped.
Paradoxically they were reinforced.

Perhaps ultimately, the Community School failed to achieve some
of its more utopian objectives because of flaws in the concept itself.
The 'liberal' middle-class biased perspective behind the idea of
community schooling was unable to take into account the contradictions
implicit in educational reform. Thus, whatever its organisation, the
school inevitably fulfils goals which are set outside its perimeter
fence and many of these are antithetical to a 'community' ideal: it
encourages competition rather than co-operation, and individualism rather
then communalism. Those who benefit from a curriculum which encourages
individual choice and self-development are the ones who are most pre-
disposed towards this already. Therefore, schooling was unable to have
the independent effect upon the community which Poster had hoped for.

Comprehensivisation was particularly traumatic on Sheppey because
of the clash in cultural traditions between the new and the old school-
ing system. The previous schools had been small, hierarchical and
militaristically oriented which reflected the respectable, deferential
ethos of Dockyard employment. The comprehensive school by contrast was
organised along more egalitarian principles encouraging a more informal
approach to human relations.

Although the change was not sudden - the dockyard began winding
down after the Second World War and there was some ten years between
its disappearance and the opening of the comprehensive school - it may
have produced an effect of 'generational lag'. Thus, the parents of
my own sample of school leavers found the new system difficult to relate

to. The new school appeared to them to lack the tight corporate identity, clearly established hierarchy of authority and well defined goals of the previous system. Therefore they condemned what they regarded as the laxity of the school and blamed it for the educational problems of their children.

Educational goals and experiences need to be situated in the context of the local economy and social structure. The reorganisation of the education system on the Island coincided with important changes in the local labour market and the social composition of the Island. This will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8   THE SHEPPEY LABOUR MARKET

I have argued that responses to schooling were conditioned by
cultural traditions,prevailing in the local community. These cultural
traditions along with the class and status ideologies with which they
were associated,were also derived from experiences of employment locally.
The contrast between that provided in the dockyard and that provided
by the labour market at present has resulted in an inter-generational
shift in expectations and opportunities. The perceptions of employment
and the cultural reproduction of different sectors of the workforce will
be explored through my survey in Chapter 9. Here I document the con-
figurations of the local labour market in order to provide a background
to these perceptions.[1]

The concept of a 'local labour market' presents a number of
empirical problems, since it is difficult to define its precise
boundaries (Norris 1979). The local labour market on Sheppey,
however, is comparatively easy to define. Being a relatively isolated
location, a large number of local people tend to work in a small number
of local industries. For young people there is an even more marked
concentration upon local employment, as their lower wages and lack of
access to transport facilities forces them to depend upon a fairly
limited geographical area within easy reach of the parental home
(Youthaid 1981). As the demand for young people's jobs at present
far outstrips the supply, their degree of objective 'choice' is limited
to the jobs which are available. Therefore, for the 'local labour
market' I shall describe the employment structure of the Island, whilst
the labour market for young people in particular will be defined by all
those employers recruiting school leavers.

Research into labour markets has indicated that there are

divisions between 'primary' and 'secondary' sectors (Blackburn and Mann 1979, Barron and Norris 1976, Doeringer and Piore 1971). Primary sectors are those offering stable employment with internal ladders of promotion whilst secondary sectors provided unstable unskilled jobs (Doeringer and Piore 1971, Ashton and McGuire 1982). An alternative definition of primary and secondary labour markets is that the former provide secure, high paying jobs, regardless of skill or promotion whilst the latter provide low paid unstable jobs (Barron and Norris 1976) It is argued that young people are more likely to enter the secondary sector, especially in times of recession (Markall and Finn 1981). However, this depends upon the character of local industries, the level of entry, skill, ethinicity, and gender. Labour markets are therefore segmented both vertically between primary and secondary sectors and horizontally by the characteristics of the workforce.[2] (Ashton and McGuire 1982 , Jenkins 1983)

Thus, it is argued that patterns of cultural reproduction are determined by the nature of the local economy and this in turn effects employer's strategies of recruitment in different sectors. [3]

However, all these studies are based upon cross-sectional analyses of the labour market at particular points in time, whereas cultural reproduction implies a sense of historical continuity. Therefore, in the following pages I shall document patterns of labour market seg- mentation on Sheppey showing how they have changed over time, and the implications this has for the characteristics required in young people.

The chapter begins with an account of the historical changes in opportunities for young workers. Secondly, I document patterns of labour market segmentation at present and thirdly the opportunities for young people in Sheppey are compared with those in other labour markets. In

addition I discuss patterns of unemployment and the role of Government's special measures in combatting it.

A)   Historical Changes in the Labour Market
                            for Young People on The Isle of Sheppey

The patterns of job entry and labour market segmentation on Sheppey changed substantially after the closure of the Naval Dockyard. This is illustrated in Table 7 which compares the labour market in the 1950's with that of the present based upon records of placements by the Careers Service. These figures should be treated with caution because the classification of occupations and the methods of recording also varied between the two periods, but they can at least give an overall indication of patterns of change.[4]

This table shows that there has been a change between sectors, between levels of skill and between segmentation by gender. Firstly there has been a decline in recruitment to offices with around *18* per cent of girls entering the clerical sector in *the* 1950's and only 9 per cent in *1979*. Girls are now more likely to continue in Further Education before entering the labour market, which is why they are under-represented in the totals for 1979, but in the 1950's they entered the labour market directly.

There has been a similar decline in recruitment to factories and distributive sectors and these are more likely to be entered by girls now than in the past. Most striking of all however, is the decline in apprenticeship places. However, this decline has been suffered by boys - girls were as unlikely to find apprenticeship places in the 1950's as they are at present.[5] This is   illustrated in Table 8 which records the recruitment to the Naval Dockyard in the 1950's. It is evident that at that time the Naval Dockyard alone recruited more

Table 7: Recruitment of School Leavers to Jobs in Sheppey : The 1950's and 1979 compared

	1950's			1979		
	Boys	Girls	Totals	Boys	Girls	Totals
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Apprenticeships	21	2	10	17	3	11
Office	2	18	11	5	9	6
Agriculture	2	–	1	3	1	2
Unskilled Factory	53	41	46	25	46	33
Distributive	22	34	29	11	31	19
Domestic Service	–	5	3	–		
Other Sectors	–			39	11	28
Total School Leavers finding employment	(130)	(186)	(319)	(179)	(117)	(296)

Source: Careers Office Records

Notes: 1)   In this table I have included only those sectors from the 1979 sample which were comparable to the 1950's.   Those which were not comparable are included under "Other Sectors".

2)   The data for the 1950's is taken as an average of figures for 1951, 1952 and 1953 as there was some fluctuation.

Table 8   Recruitment of School Leavers

by H.M. Dockyard Sheerness

	1952	1953
Skilled Apprentices	22	38
Other Apprentices	35	16
Labouring	29	21
Totals:	86	75

Source: Sheppey Careers Office Data

Note: These figures are different to those in Table 7 because
different sources of data at the Careers Office were used.
It is possible that Table 8 records placements by the
Careers Service and that not all Sheerness Dockyard recruits
were placed in this way.

apprentices than were recruited on the entire Island in the 1970's. Moreover, in the 1970's those employers who trained apprentices were regionally based, whilst during the 1950's they were based upon the Island and constituted an integral part of the local community.

Therefore these data would support the conclusion that there has been a historical de-skilling in opportunities. There was a drop in skilled training for boys and in clerical training for girls.

Given these contrasts between the 1950's and the 1970's it is now appropriate to turn to the overall processes of change.

The closure of the Naval Dockyard in 1959 displaced 2,500 workers and it had employed as many as 4,000 during the Second World War. Although many of the skilled craftsmen were transferred to other dock-yards, this precipitated a rise in unemployment from which the Island never recovered: it has remained at roughly twice the national average ever since (Pahl and Dennett 1981).

After 1960 a large number of firms came to the Island although many of them closed down again causing considerable turbulence in employment.[6] Some firms, however, did manage to establish themselves and these helped to change the structure of employment locally.[7] The Naval Dockyard became a commercial port in the 1960's and a pharmaceutical firm was established on ex-Admiralty land. One important employer was a Steel Mill constructed in 1972. In addition, the longer established industries at Queenborough continued to employ a significant proportion of the labour force. These are known familiarly by their nicknames: there is the 'Bottle Works' (Canning Town Glass), the 'Potteries' (Allier Doulton Sanitary Wear), the 'Glassworks' (Tudor Glass and until 1972, Pilkingtons), the 'Glue Works' (a chemical and fertilizer firm) and the 'Iron Foundry' (Lodders Iron Foundry). These names have persisted for decades even though the ownership of the firms has

changed many times.

The employment provided by these firms is very different from
that in the Naval Dockyard. For men, there is heavy, unskilled labour-
ing with secure,and high paying jobs in some industries and insecure,
low paying jobs in others. School leavers are excluded from the secure,
high paying sectors, being for the most part too young and not physi-
cally strong enough. Thus, the primary and secondary labour markets
were distinguished not so much by internal promotion as by wage levels
and job security and young people are displaced into the secondary
sector.

For women, there is unskilled factory work, mainly in the
electrical assembly and in the garment manufacturing firms which arrived
after the dockyard had closed. Despite being described as 'semi-
skilled' these jobs required considerable manual dexterity, but the
wages were roughly half those of the average man's (Pahl and Dennett,
1981). These jobs were open to young girls as well as to older women
and account for the increase in factory work for girls observed already.

The patterns of cultural reproduction encouraged by these
industries are in striking contrast to that of the Naval Dockyard. This
had required a low paid, but deferential work force of highly skilled
and 'respectable' workers with a tradition of internal promotion. The
firms at present, however, offer little possibility of internal promo-
tion. Instead there is mainly unskilled undifferentiated work
encouraging the solidaristic 'machismo' characteristics in men described
by Willis and requiring a docile but dextrous work force from women.

One important feature of this new labour market was that some
firms sub-contracted 'out work' to be undertaken for piece rates at
home.[8] It was more common to find housewives at home in the evenings

doing electrical sssembly in front of the television than it was to find them knitting. Children and unemployed young people helped them with it. This could almost be described as a sub-secondary, or under-ground, labour market.

B.)   Unemployment on Sheppey

In analysing youth unemployment, some have concluded that it reflects patterns in unemployment as a whole and that the figures for youth are merely an amplified version of those for adults (Makeham 1980, Raffe 1984). Others have argued that youth unemployment is 'structural' in nature reflecting long-term changes in the labour market as a whole (Ashton and McGuire, 1982). In Sheppey, youth unemployment figures reflect both trends. Table 9 indicates that youth unemployment has risen alongside adult unemployment, but it has also risen as a propor-tion of adult unemployment. This has to be seen in the context of the structural changes in the employment of young people on Sheppey since the 1950's.

Turning now, to the jobs lost in the more recent recession, Table 10 contrasts the pattern of recruitment of young people by major local firms in 1974 and 1979. Insofar as the two sets of figures can be compared, it appears that there has been a substantial reduction in the numbers of young people recruited by these firms. [9] Large employers and State monopolies employing apprentices and offering internal careers have cut back considerably. Local factories, an important component of the Sheppey youth labour market, have also reduced recruitment and the opportunities for clerical work have likewise declined. Indeed, 22 of those firms who regularly recruited young people in 1974 employed none at all in 1979 and these are not included on the table. It is the small

Table 9 :   Unemployment Rates on the Isle of Sheppey 1960 - 1979

Years	Men		Boys		Women		Girls		Total Youth		Total
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	N
1960 - 1964	60	(289.2)	5	(22.2)	32	(153)	4	(17.4)	8	(39.6)	(481.8)
1965 - 1969	71	(261.2)	5	(19.2)	20	(73.8)	4	(14)	9	(33.2)	(368.2)
1970 - 1974	77	(379.6)	6	(31.4)	13	(63.8)	3	(16.8)	10	(48.2)	(491.6)
1975 - 1979*	79	(590)	7	(54.4)	7	(54.4)	7	(50.2)	14	(104.6)	(749)

*   1978 figures for July and October only.

    1979 figures for January and April only.

Note: From 1960 until 1977 figures are derived from monthly averages.
         From 1978 - 1979 figures are averaged from quarterly returns.

Source   Regional Manpower Intelligence Unit and local Job Centre.

Table 10:   Comparing Recruitment by 43 main employers
in the Sheppey Labour Market between 1974 and 1979

Industrial Sector	No. of Employers in each Sector	Numbers of School Leavers Recruited		Jobs Lost
		1974	1979	1974 - 1979
Retail	11	34	23	- 11
Large companies and State monopolies	5	24	12	- 12
Clerical Sector	2	10	3	- 7
Small Employers	8	16	5	- 11
Local Factories	17	92	44	- 48
Totals:	43	176	87	- 89

Note: 1) The 1974 figures are based upon estimates of average annual recruitment for each employer, whilst the 1979 figures are based upon the actual recruitment for that year by the same employers

2) This is not an exhaustive list of employers. In the 1979 lists there were many more not mentioned in 1974. This is perhaps because the 1974 lists were intended to cover only the main employers of school leavers.

Source: Sheppey Careers Office.

employers who seem to be the most buoyant in a declining labour market and their importance will be discussed later.

C)   Patterns of Labour Market
                    Segmentation and Recruitment in 1979

I have described the broad characteristics of the labour market and the structural changes in employment over the last thirty years. I shall now consider the patterns of labour market recruitment of young people in 1979 - the year in which I conducted my survey - using data collected at the Careers Office.[10] I concentrate upon segmentation by gender, employment sector and by skill.

Table 11 illustrates the destinations of all 418 young people who left the Sheppey School in 1979 and it is evident that there was a clear division in employment entry by gender.

Girls were more likely to enter factory and retail employment, which accounted for 50 per cent of the girls altogether, but only 27 per cent of all the boys. Boys on the other hand were more likely to find their first employment with one of the many small employers on the Island. A small proportion of boys were also employed directly by relatives in family businesses. Many of the boys (8 per cent) joined the Armed Services, although this is almost certainly an under-estimate as some will have joined at a later age.

It is evident that the Tertiary Sector is extremely small indeed on Sheppey and there is very little white collar work for school leavers.[11] The opportunities are almost entirely in manual work. Consequently girls are more likely to continue in education, as 14 per cent did so as against only 1 per cent of boys. This is perhaps a response to the

Table 11: Destination of 1979 School Leavers on First Leaving School

Destinations of School Leavers	Boys		Girls		Totals	
	%		%		%	
Factories	19	(44)	30	(54)	23	(98)
Retail: Large Shops	4	(9)	8	(14)	6	(23)
Retail: Small Shops	4	(10)	12	(22)	8	(32)
Agriculture	1	(3)	1	(1)	1	(4)
Fishing	1	(3)		-	1	(3)
RAF/Army/Navy	8	(19)		-	5	(19)
Merchant Navy	-	(1)		-	-	(1)
Large Employers & State Monopolies	7	(16)	2	(3)	5	(19)
Tertiary Sector	3	(6)	2	(4)	2	(10)
Seasonal	5	(11)	7	(14)	6	(25)
Working for brother/father	3	(8)		-	2	(8)
Small Employers	21	(49)	3	(5)	13	(54)
Unemployed/At home	3	(8)	5	(9)	4	(17)
Further Education	1	(2)	14	(25)	6	(27)
YOP's Schemes	9	(21)	3	(6)	6	(27)
Left Area	2	(4)	3	(5)	2	(9)
Not Known	9	(22)	11	(20)	10	(42)
Totals:		(236)		(182)		(418)

Source: Careers Office Records

Notes to Tables 11 and 12:

1. The Data in these tables were derived from a list of all 1979 school leavers, provided by the Careers Office. This list provided only minimal information about each employer. I was able to supplement the list with my own knowledge of the local labour market in order to classify employment sectors.

2. Those entering the Armed Forces and Merchant Navy have not been classified according to occupational status because the Careers Office list gave no information about their level of entry.

3. These tables do not provide an accurate record of unemployment because the Careers Office were concerned to record the first job of each school leaver.

4. Where the Careers Office data was incomplete I supplemented it with evidence from my own survey of school leavers at the same period.

limited opportunities for girls in the local labour market, but could also be associated with increased credentialism in that sector.

The main employers of young people were factories and retailers. Amongst the factories, the garment manufacturing firms employed nearly one third of all those entering this sector and the large supermarkets accounted for most of the jobs amongst the retailers.[12]

The seasonal trade is to a large extent staffed by young people, and although declining it still recruited 6 per cent of all school leavers. Most of these seasonal jobs were based at Leysdown and there were equal numbers of boys and girls entering the seasonal trade although the girls mostly went into catering, whereas the boys worked on the Fun Fairs.

Finally, there were the small employers, which play an important part in the youth labour market. There were 44 of these small employers altogether, employing just one or two school leavers each and they consisted of small workshops, contractors and self-employed artisans: they are mainly locally based.[13]

This category of 'small employers' was to a large extent a residual one and did not cover the small employers in other sectors. If we now look at the small employers in the different sectors together, then there are many more of them and their importance increases. As well as the 44 small employers included in that category, there are also 12 seasonal employers, eight family employers and 28 small retail shops. Therefore there is a total of 92 small employers recruiting young people from school.

Since Pahl and Dennett (1981) concluded that in general Sheppey lacked an 'undergrowth' of small firms, we might assume that this sector employs a disproportionate number of young people. Small employers, being mostly labour rather than capital intensive, often provide

insecure jobs. They are also likely to pay lower wages, are less likely
to be unionised and are prone to exploitative practices. Young people
receive less formal and legislative protection in this sector. More-
over, these firms cannot offer 'internal' labour markets in the same
way as large firms can and are therefore 'secondary' on a number of
dimensions.

Obversely, it is evident that the largest employers of adult
labour on the Island are not those firms which recruit young people.
Pahl and Dennett (1981) have reported that the labour market in general
is 'top heavy' in character with a few large employers providing most
of the jobs. These are also some of the firms which offer high paid,
secure manual work for men. Young people, by contrast, are more likely
to enter a secondary sector of small, unstable employers. Even the
factories which recruit large numbers of young people are amongst the
smaller establishments in Pahl and Dennett's survey.

Therefore, this table indicates that there is an overall pattern
of recruitment by gender and school leavers are concentrated into three
sectors: factory, retail and small employers. The labour market on
Sheppey is segmented both by age and by size of employer.

Turning now to the kinds of jobs these industries provide on
Sheppey, Table 12 compares the different levels of employment entered
by school leavers in 1979 out of the 296 who found work. It is apparent
that by far the highest number of school leavers (70%) entered unskilled
employment and this does not include those joining the Armed Forces
whose skill level was not recorded, but most of whom became ordinary
soldiers.[14] Most of this unskilled employment was provided in factories
and retail shops, although small employers also recruited numbers of
unskilled school leavers, mainly boys.

Table 12: Employment Sector and Occupational Status of 1979 School Leavers on Sheppey

	Clerical		Apprentice-ships		Trainee		Unskilled		Totals		Totals whole sample
	Boys %	Girls %	Boys %	Girls %	Boys %	Girls %	Boys %	Girls %	Boys %	Girls %	%
Factories	(2)	(3)	(6)	--	-	-	(36)	(51)	25 (44)	46 (54)	(98) 33
Retail:											
Large Shops	-	-	-	-	(1)	-	(8)	(14)	5 (9)	12 (14)	(23) 8
Small Shops	-	-	-	(3)	-	-	(10)	(19)	6 (10)	19 (22)	(32) 11
Agriculture	-	-	-	-	-	-	(3)	(1)	2 (3)	1 (1)	(4) 1
Fishing	-	-	-	-	-	-	(3)	-	2 (3)	-	(3) 1
RAF/Navy/Army	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11 (19)	-	(19) 6
Merchant Navy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	(1) -
Large Employers :											
State Monopolies	(1)	(1)	(13)	ᵻ	(2)	(2)	-	-	9 (16)	3 (3)	(19) 6
Tertiary Sector	(6)	(4)		-		-	-	-	3 (6)	3 (4)	(10) 3
Seasonal	-	-	-	-	(1)	-	(10)	(14)	6 (11)	12 (14)	(25) 8
Working for father/brother	-	-	(3)	-	(5)	-	-	-	4 (8)	-	(8) 3
Small Employers	-	(2)	(9)	-	(4)	-	(36)	(3)	27 (49)	4 (5)	(54) 18
Totals: Boys & Girls	5 (9)	9(10)	17(31)	3 (3)	7(13)	2 (2)	59 (106)	87(102)	(179)	(117)	
Totals: Whole Sample	6% (19)		11% (34)		5% (15)		70% (208)				(296)

Source: Careers Office Records

The category 'Training Places' covers those receiving formal training, those receiving informal training and finally, those receiving some kind of training which could not otherwise be classified.

Clerical opportunities were mainly provided by the large companies, State monopolies and by the Tertiary sector. Only 6 per cent overall found clerical work and surprisingly there were nearly as many boys as girls. It is likely therefore that the decline in opportunities for apprenticeship places for boys resulted in them moving sideways and competing with girls in this sector.

Apprenticeship places were mostly provided by the large companies and State monopolies and only 11 per cent found such training, all of these being for boys. Some small employers offered apprenticeship places, as did some of the local factories, but between them they contributed very few training places. The large companies and state monopolies[15] offered better quality training than the smaller companies who were less likely to register their apprentices formally. Many defaulted on their promises of providing apprenticeship places after the young person had begun work.

The traineeships in large companies and state monopolies were often training for management or positions which extended beyond that of a manual career. These traineeships offered more potential for the young applicant than the ordinary apprenticeship. However, in local firms and small employers, traineeships were of a more limited kind than the formal apprenticeships. Many included what I have termed 'informal' apprenticeships: young people learning a trade by watching or assisting a tradesman although the tradesman may not necessarily be formally qualified himself and the young persons will not be registered at College or receive a certificate. Indeed, the dividing line between formal and informal apprenticeships is often a blurred one as many of those undertaking apprenticeships with small local employers may have in fact been given 'informal' apprenticeships. This will be discussed in more detail

in Chapter 9.

D)
<center>Sheppey Labour Market
Compared to Other Parts of England</center>

The local labour market in Sheppey has been compared where possible
with a study by Youthaid (1981) which surveyed 250 young people in three
different regional labour markets: Newcastle-upon-Tyne, London and rural
Northumberland. This survey, consisting half of girls and half of boys was
carried out in the same year as the SSLS. The results are set out in
Table 13.

Youthaid notes that there were regional disparities in the
desirability of apprenticeship places for boys and that this reflected
'cultural labour market traditions' (Vol.1, p.62). Hence seven boys
aspired to apprenticeship places in Berwick, and eight actually found
them, whilst in Newcastle only half of the 64 per cent who aspired towards
apprenticeship places found them. In Sheppey the situation was much
more grim with only 12 per cent of all young people obtaining apprentice-
ships. Sheppey would therefore appear to be unusually disadvantaged in
the supply of apprenticeship places.

Sheppey also seems to have a higher proportion of unskilled
employment with 75 per cent of jobs being unskilled: in other areas
there were only 58 per cent in this category. Moreover, whereas there
were 21 per cent less skilled jobs for boys on Sheppey compared to
Youthaid samples, the situation was even more dire for girls, for whom
there were very few skilled jobs compared to other areas. Therefore, it
could be argued that the Sheppey labour market offered few skilled
and clerical jobs compared to other areas and the situation was
particularly serious for girls leaving school. The main conclusion of
the Youthaid survey was that school leavers had little objective 'choice'

Table 13: Comparing Occupational Status of School leavers in Youthaid Survey and Sheppey 1979

Occupational Status	Youthaid Survey						Sheppey					
	Boys		Girls		Totals		Boys		Girls		Totals	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Skilled manual and non-manual	54	(53)	32	(32)	43	(85)	33	(53)	13	(15)	25	(68)
Unskilled	46	(46)	68	(67)	57	(113)	67	(106)	87	(102)	75	(208)
Totals:		(99)		(99)		(198)		(159)*		(117)		(276)

* Not including those entering armed forces or merchant navy.

Source: 1) Youthaid (1981) Vol. I. tables 8.7 and 8.8.

2) Sheppey Careers Office Data.

in their employment. If there is little 'choice' for young people in
the Youthaid survey there is even less for boys and girls on Sheppey.

E)   Special Measures on Sheppey

        Before concluding my analysis of the Sheppey school and labour
market, it is necessary to consider the role of Government Special
Measures, since many of the 1979 school leavers either went straight
onto these schemes or were recruited later in their post-school careers.

        These schemes ostensibly aim to provide 'training' and work
experience for otherwise unemployed school leavers, on the assumption
that this will improve their job prospects. In the words of the Holland
Report:

> 'Each individual opportunity within the programme should be
> designed so as to increase the options for the individual....
> Each component of the new programme must therefore be designed
> to enable the individual to do more things, achieve a higher
> level of skills, knowledge and performance and adapt more readily
> to changing circumstances or job requirements. The question
> should be 'What is he capable of?' rather than'what is he
> qualified to do?''
>   (Holland Report 1977, p.34)

        However, in the context of a declining labour market where there
is little need for higher levels of skill, knowledge and performance the
training content is irrelevant and the schemes have served instead to
lower expectations. Indeed, since only a shrinking minority actually
find work after leaving the schemes their function has been more one of
'containing' young workers for a period and they have been widely
condemned as being of only 'cosmetic' importance. The schemes are
nationally co-ordinated but their implementation is regionally disparate.
Therefore whilst some schemes operating on Sheppey were the same as
those elsewhere, others were distinctive.

        At the time I began my fieldwork, measures to combat unemployment

took the form of the Job Creation Programme (JCP) later replaced by the

Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP).[16] The YOP schemes were divided

between three branches: the Youth and Community Project, the Short

Industrial Courses and the Work Experience Programme (WEP) which also

included Work Experience on Employers Premises (WEEP).[17]

The Short Industrial Courses were held at Technical Colleges

around Kent and lasted 13 weeks. These centres, all many miles

from Sheppey, were at Maidstone, Gravesend, Folkestone and Ramsgate and

consequently few young people from Sheppey attended them.[18]

The Youth and Community Project was run on different principles

to the other schemes. This set up some workshops in Sittingbourne and

organised a task force of teams of young people under older, experienced

trainers who travelled around the district undertaking different projects.

The projects were non-profit making and the waiting list for those request-

ing work to be done stretched for years ahead. On Sheppey, they had

prepared a bird sanctuary at Elmley, tidied the Queenborough churchyard,

turned the neglected Minster Abbey Gatehouse into a museum and, at the

time that I interviewed them, were salvaging the Sea Scouts Hut

on Sheerness marshes from years of vandalism. The girls were more

likely to be sent to work for one of the Kent County Council Social

Services, by helping   at a home for the mentally handicapped,

or in a local   nursery. The Youth and Community Service projects

were more person-oriented and they attempted to adapt the schemes to

the needs of the individuals on them. However, because of the greater

flexibility of these schemes they tended to receive those school leavers

who were hard to place or were deemed to have behavioural or learning

difficulties.

However, by far the most important YOP scheme was the Work

Experience on Employers' Premises. The WEEP shemes were the most

numerous because they were popular with employers - being used as a cheap source of labour and a potential screening device for new recruits - and with the MSC itself for whom they were much cheaper than other schemes and administratively more convenient.[19] These schemes, however, were often regarded as exploitative by the trainees themselves for they were paid £21.50 per week (in 1979) for doing the same work as those who were regularly employed and received more. Moreover, it is difficult to see how doing unskilled manual work of this kind could be described as 'training'. Those who were taken on to this scheme needed to fit the employers needs, and the Careers Service and MSC were concerned to send them suitable trainees in order to retain their support, so the young people on these schemes tended to be the most competent and conventionally 'employable'.

It is difficult to estimate to what extent 'substitution' took place on Sheppey although it can be seen from Table 14 showing the distribution of those on the Youth Opportunities Programme that those employers who took on YOP trainees were the very ones who also employed numbers of young people anyway.[20] Indeed, the local Careers Officer commented wryly that he was surprised at the tardiness of local employers to exploit this opportunity.

These schemes, despite some regional variation, are similar to national ones. However, one initiative unique to Sheppey was a project called 'Swale Work Initiation Measures' (SWIM) which was launched in July 1981. SWIM aimed initially to employ 600 young people and 70 supervisors and administrative staff, although in fact it has never even reached one third of this target. It was created by a local employers' 'ginger' group called VOICE and orchestrated by the Local Authority Industrial Development Officer. The Swale Borough Council contributed

Table 14:   Young People on YOP schemes September 1979
compared to First Employment by Sector

	YOP Trainees		Proportion of all School Leavers Recruited in that Sector	
	%	n	%	n
Employment Sector				
Swale Borough Council and Social Services	28	(9)	-	-
Factories	19	(6)	33	(98)
Retail	22	(7)	19	(55)
Clerical	3	(1)	6	(19)
Small Employers	16	(5)	18	(54)
Youth and Community Project	13	(4)	-	-
Totals:		32		(296)
Total Male		20		
Total Female		12		

Note: The numbers in the third and fourth columns are derived from the total 296 School Leavers who found work in 1979.

£25,000 and some empty school premises, whilst employers gave a couple
of thousand pounds and provided equipment and ideas.[21] The scheme,
applauded nationally as an example of a local 'self help' initiative,
was opened by Jim Prior, who was at that time the Employment Secretary,
and reviewed approvingly in the Financial Times. It was also cited as
Kent's answer to unemployment in the House of Commons,where Mr. Moate
the local Tory M.P.,said:

> 'I hope that the House appreciates that I emphasise the importance
> of this project because it can be emulated in other parts of
> Britain. I suspect that such schemes are being created elsewhere
> but this is an outstandingly good example and it has been a great
> privilege to visit its various premises and observe what is being
> achieved....When referring to problems in Kent, I hope I have
> shown that we very much believe in self-help. We are not crying
> out for the sort of assistance being granted to many other areas.'

(Hansard 5 March 1982, p.519)

SWIM differed from other MSC schemes in that it sought to create
the infrastructure for new industries on the Island, particularly
tourism, and because it was intended to initiate profit-making schemes
which could then become self-funding. In practice, however, none of
the schemes have become profit-making, many have fallen through and
SWIM has not lived up to the high hopes which it engendered. By 1983
it was only providing 150 places. This illustrates the fact that
fortunes of Government measures depend upon the conditions in the
economy generally: in times of expansion they can provide a route to
employment, but in times of contraction they are merely a poor substitute.

The introduction of the MSC schemes radically changed the role
of the Careers Service, for the Careers Office acted as the main
allocating agency.   When I began fieldwork in 1979 there was a
temporary boom in the local economy and so the careers services were
able to allocate some jobs. However, by 1980, the Careers Service would
have faced something of a crisis, for almost no vacancies were notified.

Fortunately at the time the YOP schemes began to play a role as an intervening stage in the transition from school to work and within the space of one year the careers office was transformed from a service providing information about employment to a service which selected recruits for YOP schemes.[22]

This process was assisted by the fact that in 1978 Sheppey was accorded a special status under the MSC regulations. Due to the exceptionally high levels of unemployment there, school leavers could pass straight from school on to the MSC schemes rather than having to wait the statutory six week period.

The emphasis on schemes of a 'work experience' nature in employers premises rather than 'job creation', may in fact have served to diminish the real employment opportunities for young people rather than increasing them. One effect they will certainly have had is to re-distribute employment and unemployment across a broader range of young people: the YOP schemes provide temporary employment for a range of young people rather than stable, long term jobs. Moreover, the bulk of the schemes placed people in unskilled employment where there was little chance of promotion and did not therefore compensate for the decline of genuine training places.

The imbalance between places on YOP schemes provided for girls and those for boys in Table 13 reflects national trends (Deem 1978).

F)   Discussion

Analysis of the local labour market indicates both that the opportunities for young people have declined historically and that patterns of labour market segmentation have changed. Whilst the Naval Dockyard was the main employer, the labour market was divided into two

main sectors: the primary sector consisted of jobs with promotion, training and security whilst the secondary sector consisted of unskilled, unstable jobs. Both were low paid. Young people had access to both labour markets through their performance in competitive examinations. However, since the Dockyard closed, there has been a shift towards alternative patterns of segmentation. In the primary sector there are high paid, secure jobs for adult men and in the secondary sector there are low paid, insecure jobs for young people and women. Both are primarily unskilled. The first model of segmentation fits Doeringer and Piore's (1971) and Ashton and McGuire's (1982) model, whilst the second fits Barron and Norris' (1976). YOP schemes have contributed in this shift towards the secondary labour market by further fragmenting employment opportunities.

There has been a decline in opportunities for skilled and clerical training historically, but Sheppey also appears to have far fewer of these jobs than other comparable labour markets at present. The bulk of jobs are unskilled.

These changes have resulted in long term shifts in the segmentation of the labour market by gender. Boys compete with girls for clerical jobs and girls go into Further Education. There are a number of employers recruiting girls exclusively and these provide mainly unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. Factories and retailers dominate the labour market for young people, but small employers are important recruiters of young people if not adults. There is therefore evidence of segmentation both by gender and by age.

These changes have implications for the relationship between education and employment discussed in the previous chapter. The

comprehensive system was introduced at the very time when there was
a decline in employment opportunities for young people, particularly
in skilled training. The previous education system served to reinforce
the division between primary and secondary sectors of the labour market,
but the pattern of segmentation at present is not related to processes
of educational selection (except for that minority who found formal
skilled and clerical training). Divisions between primary and second-
ary sectors depend not upon qualifications but upon gender, age and the
nature of the industry. Consequently, despite the efforts of the
Sheppey School to integrate education with the needs of industry,
there is little objective 'fit' between educational selection and labour
market opportunities.

This leads to a disjunction in processes of cultural reproduc-
tion in the family, in education and in the labour market. Whilst the
dockyard exerted its cultural and social hegemoney of the Island,
family ideologies, educational careers, employment careers and positions
in the community all reinforced one another. Education did indeed serve
as a source of legitimation. However, under present conditions, the
cultural reproduction appropriate to unskilled 'heavy' manual labour
and factory work is irrelevant or antipathetic to meritocratic and
individualistic educational goals. Seventy-five per cent of school
leavers did not need qualifications for the jobs they were to perform.
Thus, rising unemployment and the decline in skilled and clerical
training leads to an implicit 'crisis' in educational goals. School
becomes less and less relevant to the needs of the labour market not
because it fails to impart sufficiently high standards, but because
no educational standards are required for the majority of jobs. Education
thus becomes de-legitimised: it can no longer offer the ticket to a good
job, or indeed to any job.

CHAPTER 9   INTO WORK: PATTERNS OF OCCUPATIONAL PREFERENCE
                   AND JOB ENTRY AMONGST SHEPPEY SCHOOL LEAVERS

        The information about young people presented in this chapter

is derived from two surveys conducted between 1979 and 1980. The first

survey (SLSS) covered a cross-section of school leavers as they left

school and documents occupational aspirations and first employment.

There were two rounds of interviewing. In the first phase, which took

place between March and May 1979, fifty-three Easter leavers were

contacted. These respondents had left school at the earliest possible

opportunity before sitting any examinations. The second phase of the

survey was carried out between June and September of the same year and

covered a mixed ability cross-section of 100 young people from one

division of the Sheppey School. Some of the second group of respondents

remained at school, some went to college and others left at the minimum

age either with or without qualifications. The sample as a whole was

weighted towards minimum age school leavers because of the inclusion of

the Easter leavers. There was only one refusal out of all those

approached. The names and addresses of respondents were supplied by

the school and so most were interviewed at home. Some, however, were

contacted at youth clubs, cafes or in other places of recreation.

        The second survey (FUS) conducted in the summer of 1980, traced

103, or 90 per cent of the minimum age school leavers after one year in

the labour market. Both surveys are discussed together in this chapter.

The questionnaires are included in Appendix I.

        The long itudinal data proved difficult to classify and cross-

tabulate due to the highly diverse nature of employment careers which

included individuals drifting in and out of school, college, employment,

informal work and MSC schemes. However, this fragmentation and instability in employment careers was an important feature of the data itself.

The survey data has been organised in such a way as to test the hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 which are set out at the end of the chapter on pages 198 to 201.

In the following pages I begin by drawing on the SSLS to discuss firstly,how educational careers relate to occupational aspirations and secondly how these in turn relate to the first jobs of young people on the Isle of Sheppey. Thirdly,I use the FUS to explore occupational preferences and work cultures in more detail. Finally,I discuss patterns of job search, job departure and the role of informal work in influenc-ing young people's entry into and subsequent careers in the labour market.

A)   How Were Educational Careers
                              Related to Occupational Aspirations?

From the discussion in Part I we would expect educational careers and occupational aspirations to reflect social class backgrounds. The SSLS were classified using a measure of 'household class' rather than the occupation of the male head of household alone as this could give a better indication of social backgrounds.[1] These are cross-tabulated with educational careers, giving a measure of the degree of commitment to schooling. From Table 15 five distinctive educational careers can be demonstrated, namely: the scholastically orientated, the vocationally orientated, qualified school leavers, unqualified school leavers and rebel school leavers. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

The top 12 per cent of the SSLS were the most scholastically orientated as these were staying at school to improve their qualifications through extended education. It can be seen that the majority of them were from Household Class I backgrounds. For this group, education was

TABLE 15

Class Background by Educational Career

HOUSEHOLD CLASS

Educational Career	1		2		3		ALL					
							Boys		Girls		Total	%
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n		
Scholastically orientated	72	(13)	17	(3)	11	(2)	12	(9)	11	(9)	(18)	12%
Vocationally Orientated	38	(6)	44	(7)	19	(3)	8	(6)	13	(10)	(16)	11%
Qualified School Leavers:												
(a) with 'O' levels	42	(8)	37	(7)	21	(4)	9	(7)	15	(12)	(19)	12%
(b) with CSE's	16	(6)	43	(16)	41	(15)	30	(22)	19	(15)	(37)	24%
Unqualified School Leavers	14	(6)	24	(10)	62	(26)	31	(23)	24	(19)	(42)	27%
Rebels	10	(2)	10	(2)	81	(17)	9	(7)	18	(14)	(21)	14%
TOTALS:		(41)		(45)		(67)		(74)		(79)	(153)	100%

a career in itself. The second group were the <u>vocationally orientated</u> who constituted 11 per cent of the sample. These were intending to remain in the education system but only in order to acquire vocational training through office skills and technical courses at school, or catering and pre-nursing courses at Technical College. They regarded education as a means to an end.[2] This group were more likely to come from Household Class 1 and 2 backgrounds. The third group <u>qualified school leavers</u> represented 36 per cent of the sample. They can be divided between those who had sat 'O' levels and were therefore better qualified and those who had sat CSE's and were therefore less well qualified.[3] Whilst these accepted educational goals sufficiently to have submitted themselves to examinations, they were nevertheless keen to leave and start work. It can be seen that this group were distributed between all three household classes.

A further group of 27 per cent left school without having sat any examinations and these are the <u>unqualified school leavers</u>. These either had jobs already arranged, and therefore left school before taking any examinations, or were antipathetical towards schooling, since it was the school's policy to encourage everyone to take some examinations. These were mainly from Class 3 backgrounds.

The final group of <u>rebels</u> represented 14 per cent of the sample. These were the most directly opposed to schooling, for to be included in this group individuals would have to have been prosecuted for truancy, expelled or relegated to special classes at the school intended for those who were otherwise too disruptive to teach. This group's opposition to school was therefore more than symbolic - they also broke the law or faced disciplinary consequences. Eighty-one per cent of them were from Class 3 backgrounds. Whilst these latter two groups may have accepted the ultimate legitimacy of education they did not conform

to the social order of the school.[4]

Altogether, 77 per cent of the SSLS had left school at the minimum age, a high proportion being unqualified because many of them were Easter leavers. Their educational careers broadly reflected their class backgrounds. It is also evident in Table 15 that there were more better qualified and educationally committed girls than there were boys. There were also twice as many female rebels as male rebels, implying that female non-conformity has been overlooked in studies which have stressed feminine passivity.

Having described the different groups of young people in SSLS it is now possible to assess how far these patterns of class and educational backgrounds were reflected in occupational aspirations. The equilibrium model suggests that educational careers influence occupational aspirations,with individual school leavers modifying their ambitions to suit their educational level and that these in turn reflect labour market destinations. Table 16 classifies occupational aspirations into five broad groups: professional and managerial, clerical, skilled manual, unskilled manual and the Armed Forces. Only a small minority sought clerical work (7 per cent) and most of these were girls. This is much lower than was found in other surveys. (Sharpe 1978, Jones et al. 1981) and reflects conditions in the local labour market where there were very few opportunities for such work. The majority of the sample (43 per cent) sought skilled training of some description and most of these were boys. Nine per cent wished to join the Armed Forces.[5] Only 26 per cent were resigned to doing unskilled manual work.

For the first two occupational categories, there was a strong relationship between educational careers and aspirations: those who wanted to do clerical work or have extended careers were the better

TABLE 16

Occupational Aspirations and Educational Careers

EDUCATIONAL CAREERS

Occupational Aspirations	Scholastically Orientated	Vocationally Orientated	Qualified School Leavers		Unqualified School Leavers	Rebels	ALL		
			'O' Levels	CSE's			Boys	Girls	Totals
Professional /Managers	82% (18)		9% (2)		9% (2)		59% (13)	41% (9)	14% (22)
Clerical		36% (4)	55% (6)			9% (1)	9% (1)	91% (10)	7% (11)
Skilled Training		18% (12)	8% (5)	32% (21)	27% (18)	15% (10)	62% (41)	38% (25)	43% (66)
Unskilled Manual Work			10% (4)	23% (9)	45% (18)	23% (9)	28% (11)	73% (29)	26% (40)
Armed Forces			14% (2)	50% (7)	29% (4)	7% (1)	64% (9)	36% (5)	9% (14)
TOTALS:	(18)	(16)	(19)	(37)	(42)	(21)	(75)	(78)	(153)

qualified. The two exceptions were boys who left school at Easter to

join their fathers' firms - one in the scrap metal business and one in

a motorway tarmacking firm. However, for the other occupational cate-

gories, educational careers did not entirely match levels of aspiration,

particularly for those aspiring to skilled training. Only 8 per cent

had sat 'O' levels and 18 per cent were undertaking vocational educa-

tion courses in order to improve their prospects. On the other hand,

27 per cent of those seeking skilled training were unqualified and 15

per cent were school rebels. Thus, more than one third of the sample

hoping to find skilled training possessed no qualifications.

This discrepancy is partly accounted for by the fact that there

was a range of different trades and different levels of training being

sought, some of which required more formal qualifications than others.

This will be discussed more fully later. Of those seeking to join the

Armed Forces, some held qualifications and some did not, and this

determined their different levels of entry. Those who were resigned to

doing unskilled manual work however, were among the least well qualified:

their aspirations had been 'cooled out' by experience at school. By

far the majority of these were girls. Boys had on the whole higher

aspirations, being more likely to aim for skilled training and profes-

sional jobs although they were less well qualified. The four with 'O'

levels seeking unskilled work were all girls. This implies that boys'

aspirations are higher than girls' irrespective of qualifications.

Given that there were a large number seeking training, how did

they hope to realise their aspirations? Table 17 cross-tabulates

categories of occupational aspiration by the means through which they

were pursued. There were a number of different avenues for pursuing

occupational goals and qualifications were of greater or lesser importance

depending upon which was being used. There were four strategies for

TABLE 17

Occupational Aspirations and the Means of Achieving Them

MEANS OF ACHIEVING THEM

Occupational Aspirations	Extended Education	Formal Training	Informal Training	No Training	Totals
Professional /Managerial	82% (18)	9% (2)	9% (2)		14% (22)
Clerical	45% (5)		54% (6)		7% (11)
Skilled Manual Training	18% (12)	53% (35)	29% (19)		43% (66)
Unskilled Manual Training				100% (40)	26% (40)
Armed Forces		43% (8)	57% (8)		9% (14)
TOTALS:	23% (35)	28% (43)	23% (35)	26% (40)	(153)

seeking skilled and clerical work. The first was to remain in the education system and improve qualifications either at school or at college. Nearly half of those seeking clerical work and 18 per cent of those seeking craft skills did this along with the majority of those seeking professional careers. The second was to secure a place on a formal training programme and the majority of those seeking craft skills began by using this strategy. This involved sitting the relevant examinations to obtain a universally recognised credential. The third was to join the Armed Forces and at least be assured of some kind of training: 6 school leavers aimed to do this. The fourth strategy was to seek some kind of informal training whilst learning on the job without necessarily signing indentures or acquiring a certificate. One third of those seeking skilled training along with a half of those seeking office skills used this avenue. Those pursuing the first three strategies emphasised the importance of educational qualifications, whilst those pursuing the fourth saw them as less relevant to their occupational goals. Hence, whilst skilled work was a popular occupational goal there were a number of different routes for arriving there.

Most young people had broadly realistic aspirations in that they recognised that becoming a carpenter, for example was a realisable prospect whilst becoming an airline pilot was not.[6] However, not all of those seeking skilled work were well qualified, for they regarded practical, concrete knowledge as being of a different order to the abstract intellectual capacities required to pass examinations. They thus maintained the division between mental and manual labour by arguing that they were 'good with their hands' and did not therefore require qualifications - these were for 'brainy' people. Becoming a craftsman required different capacities.

B)   How Were Occupational Aspirations
                    Related to Job Destinations?

Those adopting the equilibrium model argue that aspirations

are attuned to labour market conditions: most school leavers more or

less get the jobs which they expect.   Table 18 cross-tabulates first

jobs found with occupational aspirations for all those for whom I had

information. The numbers along the diagonal line represent those who

found the jobs they sought. Those above the line are the ones who found

better or equivalent jobs, and those below are those whose first jobs

were at a lower level than that to which they aspired. It can be seen

that only a minority of school leavers had managed to find the craft

training and office work to which they aspired, and the majority had to

settle for less - many of them entering unskilled work. Altogether over

half of those who had sought craft or office training were downwardly

mobile. This led them to modify their aspirations. Those who had

sought to secure places on formal company training programmes faced

fierce competition with some 70 applicants for each place. By September,

many of them had applied to a dozen or so companies and when they failed

to secure a place sought inferior apprenticeships or informal training

with one of the smaller local employers. Hence one third of those who

had originally sought formal training undertook informal training. A

further strategy to emerge after young people had left school was to

enter the Youth Opportunities Schemes in the hope of securing suitable

training and work experience. Consequently there were two kinds of

Youth Opportunities Scheme trainee: those who were 'instrumentally'

orientated and therefore enthusiastic and those who had no alternative

and were therefore more likely to be disaffected.

There would appear to be evidence of a serious 'mismatch' between

levels of aspiration and labour market conditions in Sheppey in 1979.

TABLE 18

Aspirations by First Jobs Found: 1979 School Leavers

Jobs Found	Aspirations						Boys	Girls	Total
	Professional /Managerial	Clerical	Formal Skilled	Informal Skilled	Armed Forces	Unskilled			
Professional /Managerial	(4)						(4)	-	(4) 4%
Clerical		(4)	2		1		(5)	(2)	(7) 6%
Formal Skilled			(9)	1			(6)	(4)	(10) 9%
Informal Skilled			10	(5)			(11)	(4)	(15) 14%
Armed Forces					(7)		(7)	-	(7) 6%
Unskilled		3	11	10	3	(28)	(16)	(39)	(55) 50%
YOP Schemes			2	3	1	5	(9)	(2)	(11) 10%
TOTALS:	4% (4)	(7) 6%	(34) 31%	(19) 17%	11%(12)	30% (33)	(58)	(51)	(109)

Notes: Ten of the 119 minimum age school leavers had emigrated, fallen pregnant or their destinations were not known.

This is because there were very few training or clerical places available in the local labour market and even those which had existed had been cut back severely during the 1970's. There was thus a disjunction between socialisation processes in education (which in turn reinforced those of the home background) and opportunities in the labour market.

However, a number of these disappointed school leavers explained that they were doing seasonal or 'filling in' jobs which they regarded as temporary whilst they continued to search for other employment. Labour market destinations are therefore not final in the period immediately after leaving school and hence it was necessary to conduct a further survey the following year.

It might be argued that those who were disappointed were the very ones possessing insufficient qualifications and this would support the 'tightening bond' thesis: that as opportunities decline so the importance of certification increases.[7] I therefore cross-tabulated educational careers with first jobs entered and this is set out in Table 19. This table demonstrates that only one third of all qualified school leavers had managed to secure formal training or clerical places. A further 13 per cent had found informal training. However, 12 individuals had managed to secure such a place without the benefit of qualifications, all of these being with small local firms. Therefore, educational qualifications were only important for a minority: those who sought training with large firms or in offices. For this group there was indeed a 'tightening bond' between education and employment. However, these sectors of the labour market were the very ones which had declined historically. For others, the qualifications they had acquired at school were of no use to them once they left for they found themselves on Youth Opportunities Schemes or in unskilled work alongside those with none.

TABLE 19

Educational Career and First Employment

Educational Career	First Job September 1979						Totals
	Skilled/ Clerical Training	Informal Training	Unskilled	Armed Forces	YOP Scheme	Unemployed/ Not known/ Pregnant	
Qualified School Leavers:							
(a) 'O' levels	(10)	-)	(7))	-)	-)	(1))	18
	) 33%	) 13%	) 38%	) 5%	) 5%	) 9%	
(b) C.S.E.'s	(7))	(7))	(14))	(3))	(3))	(4))	38
Unqualified School Leavers	(4) 10%	(4) 10%	(20) 48%	(3) 7%	(7) 17%	(4) 10%	42
Rebels	- -	(4) 19%	(14) 67%	(1) 5%	(1) 5%	(1) 5%	21
TOTALS:	(21) 16%	(15) 14%	(55) 53%	(7)	(11) 10%	(10) 7%	119

oreover, in some cases other strategies were just as useful in securing training places as educational certificates: unqualified school leavers were better able to secure _informal_ training places as 10 per cent of these and 19 per cent of the rebels had managed to do so.

C)   Occupational Aspirations and Preferences Reconsidered

In the previous section I have referred to occupational aspirations: that is, jobs which were aimed for prior to entering the labour market. Here I shall consider in more detail what is implied by this term.

It has been argued that the concept of 'ambition' or 'choice' is not a useful one for describing the orientations of the majority of school leavers since they rapidly abandoned their 'choices' once in the labour market (Roberts 1968, Youthaid 1981, Corrigan 1979). As I have indicated, most of the aspirations described here were realistic ones in the sense that they reflected the educational levels and social class backgrounds of individual school leavers, but they did not necessarily fit the realities of the labour market in 1979. It might therefore be more accurate to describe these occupational goals as _preferences_ since although some young people may have preferred to do skilled manual work, they recognised that they might eventually have to take unskilled employment and lower their aspirations. Moreover, preferences were often _negative_ as well as _positive_ in nature. Phillips (1973) has noted that in Salford, young men were more likely to state their negative preferences than their positive ones, and they would begin with the last job as one which they definitely did not want to do again. Jones and associates (1981) systematised these preferences by producing a hierarchy: for boys skilled work came first, followed by outdoor jobs and finally factory work. For girls, there was clerical work at the

top followed by shop work and then factory work.

The category of those preferring 'unskilled work' which I have used so far can be unpacked if these more weakly held preferences are taken into account. In the SSLS, as in Jones et al's sample, factory work was considered the least desirable form of employment by most school leavers. Table 20 illustrates the preferences of those seeking unskilled manual work and it can be seen that school leavers did not regard unskilled work as undifferentiated: they discriminated between different jobs and different work places. Girls in particular would state that they preferred working with animals or in shops although these jobs tended to be lower paid than other unskilled work available. Those with no preferences who entered unskilled work would respond: 'I suppose it's better than the dole' or, 'It's a job, isn't it?' Which would confirm Youthaid's (1981) contention that the fear of unemployment casts a grim shadow across the transition from school to work. However, most of the sample held positive preferences for jobs when they first left school.

These differential evaluations of skilled and unskilled, factory and retail work and so on were related on the one hand to the self image of the individual and on the other hand to the work cultures which different jobs implied. Young people preferred particular jobs because the work culture fitted their subjective image of themselves. Different work cultures were in turn related to different constructions of mas-culinity and femininity which conferred status within the community.

Others have examined cultural reproduction in terms of working and middle-class culture (Willis 1977, Corrigan 1979) or in terms of rough and respectable orientations (Carter 1966, Ashton and Field 1976, Jenkins 1983). Here I examine six distinctive cultures which co-existed

TABLE 20

Preferences in Unskilled Work: 1979 SLSS Sample

	Boys	Girls	%	Totals
No preferences	(6)	(11)	43%	(17)
Prefer specific factory	(1)	(4)	13%	(5)
Retail work	(1)	(9)	25%	(10)
Work with animals	-	(3)	8%	(3)
Other	(3)	(2)	13%	(5)
TOTALS:	(11)	(29)	100%	(40)

within the same community and within the overall category of 'working-class' jobs and life styles. In doing so, I distinguish between orientations referring to the relationship of the individual to a particular occupation; the kind of work which could involve a range of different formal and informal jobs; and the culture associated with each kind of work.

The six work cultures familiar to those in the SSLS and FUS samples on Sheppey were associated with the following types of work: Office work, skilled work, shop work, outdoor labouring, the Armed Forces and factory work. I shall describe the attitudes, values and gender identities associated with each one in turn. In doing so, I draw upon data from the 1980 Survey as school leavers sometimes abandoned previous preferences or developed new ones after immersion in the labour market. This is not an exhaustive typology, but for purposes of clarity I have set out the numbers who espoused different work cultures at different periods in Table 21. The last column in this table records the numbers who had done these different kinds of work at any time during their first year in the labour market.

D)   Work Cultures

   (i) Office Work

Altogether 7 per cent of the 1979 sample and 11 per cent of the 1980 sample aspired to do office work and these had developed identities associated with office culture. Office culture was regarded as a smart, 'feminine' job for girls which was thought to provide variety, interest and the opportunity to meet exciting people. Sharpe (1978) has observed that in practice it was often less glamorous than girls imagined it to be, but it was nevertheless more 'respectable' than working in a factory. Moreover, office work did provide some prospects for training and promotion

TABLE 21

Types of Work Preferred and performed by Sheppey School Leavers 1979 - 1980

TYPES OF WORK	ASPIRATIONS IN 1979			PREFERENCE in 1980			DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORK PERFORMED 1980		
	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
Office Work	(1)	(10)	(11) 7%	(2)	(9)	(11) 11%	(2)	(8)	(10) 10%
Craft Training	(41)	(25)	(66) 43%	(22)	(11)	(33) 32%	(7)	(5)	(12) 12%
Armed Forces	(9)	(5)	(14) 9%	(7)	(6)	(13) 13%	(7)	(3)	(10) 10%
Shop Work	(1)	(9)	(10) 7%	-	(6)	(6) 6%	(1)	(21)	(22) 21%
Factory Work	(3)	(7)	(10) 7%	(3)	(5)	(8) 8%	(13)	(20)	(33) 32%
Outdoor Labouring	-	-	- -	(14)	-	(14) 14%	(1)	(20)	(21) 20%
Not Classifiable Here	-	-	(42) 27%	-	-	(18) 17%	-	-	- -
TOTALS:			(153)			(103)			(103)

Notes to Table 21

(1) This is not an exhaustive typology. Ail those which were not classifiable are numbered at the bottom of the page.

(2) The total for those who have experienced different kinds of work in 1980 is not the sum of all those in the column because a number of people had done several kinds of work. Percentages are calculated from the total of 103 school leavers.

which was not available in other forms of employment locally.

The three girls who found the clerical work which they were seeking in 1979 were satisfied with it one year later, which indicates that it affords more rewards than other employment available locally. These girls tended to come from 'respectable' homes and they planned their lives carefully in all respects. As one mother stated:

> "She's a planner that one, what she wants, she plans for and then she gets it".

Three quarters of the girls who had adopted 'office culture' were well qualified, possessing 'O' level certificates: it therefore provided a respectable career for better qualified school leavers, and their faith in the value of qualifications was confirmed.

The office culture was very different to other cultures described here, as it was thought to be higher status although it was mostly lower paid than other jobs. Thus, the average income from office work was between £20 and £30 per week in 1979 whereas in factories most young people were earning over £30. When girls who aspired towards office jobs worked in factories they found both the work and the work culture intolerable and soon left. This had happened to six of these girls by 1980. Even being unemployed was regarded as at least preferable to such demeaning labour and the majority of girls seeking office work had spent some time unemployed by 1980. They were supported in this by their parents, for it was felt that factory work would tarnish their status in the community. Two girls had entered YOP schemes in offices as a means of acquiring skills and experience.

Office culture was in many ways a feminine culture but two boys had entered office work as well. One of them, having failed to find a formal apprenticeship, regarded this as an equivalent 'respectable' career for a qualified school leaver to undertake. Like the girls

these boys were generally neat, 'respectable'and spoke politely. They

regarded this work as leading to a more extended career and spoke

enthusiastically about their plans and prospects for promotion.

(ii) Skilled Training

I have indicated that there was a strong craft orientation

amongst the SSLS, even though such aspirations were for the most part

unrealisable. Altogether 66 of the SSLS sample aspired to do some form

of skilled training.

There was a distinct gender division in this orientation and so

I begin by describing why craft skills were accorded such importance

by male and female school leavers and then discuss the fortunes of

those who had held this aspiration.

Most of the girls aimed for skills which offered a respectable

'feminine' occupational identity - caring careers and hairdressing being

the most popular. Sharpe (1978) had indicated that girls were attracted

to jobs which appeared to offer the most 'glamour'. However, only three

girls on Sheppey mentioned unrealistically glamorous jobs - one as a

beautician and two as hostesses aboard ships and aeroplanes. On the

whole, girls in Sheppey held no illusions about the opportunities

available to them.

Hairdressing was the most popular craft aspiration for girls for

it offered both training and the opportunity to develop traditionally

feminine preoccupations. Eight girls sought apprenticeships in this

trade and recruitment was mostly informal in character, vacancies being

notified through personal contacts. Most girls who found hairdressing

apprenticeships had been working in these shops on Saturdays already

in the hope of being taken on permanently. The second popular career

was in caring jobs with animals, the sick or the handicapped. These

too could be regarded as extensions of traditional feminine roles and girls would give reasons such as: 'I like children', or 'I like looking after people'. However, there were also other elements in their attraction to such careers. They would argue that such jobs were more intrinsically worthwhile in the social division of labour as they perceived it, even though they were less well rewarded than other occupations. Furthermore, girls argued that these jobs were more varied and interesting than 'dead end' work in a factory or a shop. They also offered formal training, a secure professional identity and a career structure. Examples of this orientation are given below:

> 'It's the job satisfaction, not the pay that's important. I like meeting people, and you meet more in nursing. Just working at Canning Town Factory (her present employment) would drive me batty, it's not going anywhere. I have to go and do something, not sitting there all the time, doing the same thing. There's more variety in nursing. You're always learning something, not like in a factory.'

> 'The job satisfaction is most important and you do get that in nursing. It's not like factory work where you're trapped in. And you can always aim higher in nursing, there's a career structure.'

> 'I like children and it's the job satisfaction that's most important, not the money. It's a chance to get off the Island and travel.'

For these girls therefore traditional feminine pursuits were compatible with occupational careers to which they had considerable commitment.

Some girls however, also sought non-traditional employment. Three girls wishing to become mechanics had applied to garages but they were unsuccessful as none were recruiting apprentices. Two of the girls then applied to YOP schemes in the hope of finding some training, but were sent to work in shops instead - to which they strongly protested. A third girl joined the Army as a trainee driver in order to fulfil her aspiration. The fourth girl applied to a Merchant Naval training course. She was the only girl applying and was told to try again when she had

improved her maths sufficiently to pass the entrance test, but abandoned the idea. Instead she went to work temporarily as a deck hand aboard a sailing yacht. Clearly, these girls were exceptional but they did represent just over 6 per cent of all female school leavers and illustrate the point that whilst some girls' occupational preferences reinforced traditional feminine roles, other girls resisted them.

The importance of skilled training was mentioned more frequently by boys than by girls, and this craft culture was perhaps related to male traditions of employment at the Chatham and Sheerness Dockyard many of the boys applied to Chatham Dockyard as their first preference. A variety of trades were mentioned, including: motor mechanic, plumbing, sheet metal work, tool making, carpentry, building, butchery and electrician amongst others and a few simply said 'Anything as long as it's a trade.'[8]

Boys, like girls, justified their aspirations by referring to the fact that skilled work was more varied, creative and interesting than other employment. Like girls too, they saw craftsmen as being people with status in the community and performing jobs which were more useful and important in their perception of the social division of labour as a whole.

Many boys, and some girls, mentioned the fact that acquiring a skill allowed them to become self-employed later and thus have greater independence and more control over their work. Another reason for preferring craft work was that in a declining labour market craftsmen would be the last out of work: even if they found themselves unemployed, they could always resort to doing jobs 'on the side' if necessary. As one boy said: 'There'll always be a need for plumbers, won't there? Even if all the firms close down.' Fathers reinforced their sons'

ideas in this respect, for even if they had no trade themselves, they could see the advantage of having one. Some examples of this craft orientation are given below:

> 'I would like to get a career. The pay's not very high (in an apprenticeship). It could be better, but you earn quite a bit when you come out. And you can do little bits on the side too when you come out..... You see, labouring's alright, but it's not secure.'

> 'I just want an apprenticeship, it doesn't matter what, but not in stupid things. You see, you need metal work for instance. Some things there's no need for like painting, but you need metal work to make tools. It's useful, and there are career prospects as well. And job satisfaction... (self employment) well you're on your own boss, you do what _you_ want.'

> 'Job satisfaction is more important. It's better to learn a trade no matter what the money is... in something that's not boring. And security - you can always do something even if you're laid off. And you can stand on your own if you've got the money behind you. You see, they'll always want plumbers, even if nothing else.'

Paradoxically, the importance of acquiring craft skills - both in terms of social status and job security - increased in conditions of declining employment, the same conditions which led to craft training being cut back. For those who found the training which they sought there were considerable personal rewards as the following quotation from a boy who was employed in his brother's firm makes clear:

> 'I thought I wanted to _be_ something. There's carpentry and there's bricklaying in building. I thought you didn't need much intelligence to be a bricklayer, but it's quite hard really. But it's outside, and I like that, I did a bit before I left school. You've got to stick at something and do it well, that's my motto. It's always at the back of my mind that. My brother's a bricklayer and the other one is a carpenter, so I did brick- laying too...... there's more enjoyment in bricklaying, I enjoy doing it. It's more outdoors really, more achievement. You see what you've done and you think to yourself: 'I built that, I have!' I do lots of jobs, painting and that to help out, glazing and I can artex. I'd crack up in a factory. We had a job down the Steel Mill one time..... they were like morons walking around in there as if there was no time of day. I would never work in a place like that, it would crucify me. I like my freedom.'

How did these craft orientated school leavers fare after a year in the labour market? Table 22 sets out the fortunes of the 47 school

TABLE 22

Strategies for Finding Skilled Training Amongst Sub-sample from FUS 1980

STRATEGIES FOR SEEKING SKILLED TRAINING	Male	Female	All	
Numbers seeking skilled training who were followed up	28	19	47	
Successful				
Found formal apprenticeship with large employer	2	-	2)	
Found apprenticeship with small employer	2	5	7)	
Employed by family	2	-	2)	) 38 %
Still in training in 1980	4	3	7)	
Dropped Aspirations				
Terminated training and dropped aspiration	2	2	4)	
Dropped aspiration without having done any training	4	11	15)	) 40%
Alternative Strategies				
Joined Army	-	2	2)	
Joined YOP scheme	4	-	4)	
Other	11	3	14)	) 53%
Factories and businesses offering unskilled related work	5	-	5)	

NOTES: Percentages are calculated from the sub-sample of 47 originally seeking skilled training not from gross total because some young people used more than one strategy between 1979 and 1980.

leavers originally seeking craft skills who were followed up in 1980.

These can be divided into three groups: those who were successful in

finding training places, those who dropped their aspirations and those

who pursued alternative means of achieving them. These groups are not

mutually exclusive, for an individual may have used more than one

strategy in the course of the year.

Of the first group who had successfully found some form of

training (38per cent of those who originally wanted it) only two of

the thirteen boys who had begun by applying to the large regional

employers had managed to secure a place. Others had applied to the small

local employers and this group included some of those who were unable to

find a place with the large employers. Small employers more often

recruited through personal contacts and two boys were employed directly

by their families. However, these small local employers proved to be

unreliable sources of training - four of them defaulted upon their

promises of training and two went bankrupt. Thus, only seven young

people found skilled training places which were still secure one year

later. A total of three young workers left their apprenticeships

complaining that they did not like the employers or the conditions of

work: it appears that the term 'apprentice' was often a euphemism for

a cheap and highly exploited young assistant.

Forty per cent had abandoned their aspirations, and most of

these were girls. This was partly because there were fewer opportunities

for girls to pursue alternative strategies and partly because girls were

more easily discouraged than boys. The girls who had wanted to train

in traditionally male crafts were amongst this group.

Altogether, 53 per cent pursued their training in other ways.

These included joining the Army, joining YOP courses which appeared to

offer the skills they were seeking, and working in establishments in
an unskilled capacity but with the hope of learning skills informally or
eventually becoming an apprentice. Examples of this latter strategy
were two boys who sought to become carpenters by working in furniture
assembly factories. The category 'other' includes a range of formal
and informal work. For example, individuals would help family, friends
or small craftsmen in their work and this could be either paid or
unpaid. Some sought casual or labouring jobs which provided similar
training: for example, working on a building site was a means for
learning bricklaying or painting and decorating. In this way they
acquired informal rather than formal training, but they felt on the whole
that this was acceptable, since it did not involve the college attendance
and low wages endured by apprentices. Many of those adopting alternative
strategies still hoped vaguely that an opportunity for a formal apprentice-
ship might arise but had lowered their sights and accepted semi-skilled
work instead. Labouring jobs on boats, building sites or with local
'cowboys' were the best alternatives because, like skilled work, they
allowed some autonomy and variety. [9]

The job careers of this third group of young people are very
difficult to classify because they involved formal and informal employ-
ment (some of it being undeclared), 'self employed' work (meaning being
hired on a sub-contractual basis rather than as a regular employee),
part-time work, voluntary work, seasonal employment, periods unemployed
or on YOP schemes, periods of undertaking unskilled work just to 'fill in'
until something better came up and so on. Consequently, I shall illus-
trate this pattern by providing two examples - one of a male and one of
a female school leaver. Carol had been working for a year part-time at
a hairdressers before leaving school in order to be assured of an

apprenticeship place. Just as she had started working full-time, the hairdresser went bankrupt. Carol found a job in a local supermarket for a few weeks - although she disliked the work - whilst she sought alternative vacancies. Eventually she found another job at a hairdressers although she needed to start again from the beginning as an assistant before managing to persuade them to make her a full apprentice:

> ....'Yes, I spent some time at Liptons, but I didn't like it there. Then Brian, my friend from 'Hackers' (the previous place at Queenborough where she had held an apprenticeship) put in a good word for me at Queenborough and got me in there. My mum went round there a few times first to see the place.... I spent a whole year there just shampooing really, which was a year wasted, but they at last took me on as an apprentice and I can go to college now. '

The second example is Ron who found a job as a labourer in a large local factory but left when he could not tolerate the shift system. He then began working as an assistant for a local odd-job man and described himself as a 'fitter's mate'. In this way he could acquire informal skills. However, this job was irregular and paying as little as £16 (in 1980) for which he frequently had to work at nights or at weekends. He was happier working these hours for the odd-job man than in a factory because it was varied and he was learning something he regarded as useful. However, after some months of this kind of work, his mother persuaded him to give it up as he was clearly being exploited and there seemed no likelihood of being taken on full-time:

> Mother: 'He had to work 18 hours a day and he got no overtime. He's a hard little worker and he was taken advantage of.'

> Ron: 'I don't mind hard work and I can turn my hand to anything you see. I did with Brian Hawkes. I did everything there.'

Mother: 'Yer. And he was ripped off.'

Since that time he has been unemployed. His mother berates him
frequently for leaving the job at the factory and she blames his present
plight upon this.

Skilled work was therefore associated with both masculine and
feminine occupational cultures. For girls it was associated with a
search for a secure occupational identity and provided an extension of
a feminine concern with personal adornment and caring for others. For
boys it was associated with job security and status as a respected member
of the community who could use manual skills constructively. The
acquisition of a craft and thereby a status became all the more important
in a declining labour market.

(iii) The Armed Forces

Seven boys and six girls had joined the Armed Forces by 1980. The
girls had waited until they were seventeen whilst the boys mostly joined
straight from school. Two boys had left the Forces by 1980 - one because
he disliked the authoritarianism of the Navy and the other was dis-
charged for an injury. Although two of these young people wanted to
enter the Police Force, the majority chose the Army.

There were a number of reasons for joining. Those who aspired
to join the Forces before leaving school were often following family
traditions: as I have already indicated, the Island had a long military
heritage. A number of these boys had been members of the Army or Sea
Cadets for a number of years and so joining the Forces was a natural
continuation of their interests. Paradoxically, these were boys who
most resented what they regarded as arbitrary authority and petty

supervision at school.

There was both a 'pull' and a 'push' effect associated with
wanting to join the Armed Forces and the nature of these factors
differed between genders. For boys the Armed Forces were popular because
they provided opportunities for travel, excitement and a progressional
career. As well as these positive attractions, there were also other
factors which propelled them into the Armed Forces, for in a local
labour market with rising unemployment and unrewarding jobs the Army
offers a secure alternative as the following quotations illustrate:

> 'I always wanted to join the Army, 'cos I used to go to the
> Army Cadets. There's nothing really going round here anyway'.

> 'To get off the Island and make new friends. I've always wanted
> to do that - it's the best job going'.

Another reason for joining the Forces was that by 1980 a number of
young people were disappointed by their experiences in employment and
were seeking a more interesting alternative. Others regarded it as
the only means for finding the skilled training which was not being
provided locally. For girls, the Armed Forces held different attractions.
They were more often propelled out of the Island by a desire to escape
from the family. The Armed Forces offered an escape from the constraints
of domestic life and unhappy family circumstances. For example, one
girl, after a year of working in a factory, said that she was joining
the Army:

> 'To get away from home and be independent - you learn to live
> on your own and to cope, but your expenses are all taken care of,
> so you're better off really in the long run. And you meet lots
> of people - its easy to meet people in the Army. Also you've
> got chances of promotion - you can get on if you want. Then,
> there's the chance to travel. You go all over Britain and get
> cheap holidays abroad...it's a good life if you work hard at it.'

Thus, for male school leavers the Army provided a culture of masculine comradeship, job security and adventure. For female school leavers it provided an escape from the home with some form of guaranteed security.

(iv)   Shop Work

Shops were amongst the main recruiters of young workers. In the S S sample, 7 per cent had actually specified shop work as a preference and the majority of these were girls.[10] For those girls who preferred shop work it was thought to offer 'clean','nice' and 'respectable' employment. Shop work was also thought to be more interesting than factory work because it did not involve being dominated by a machine:

> 'I would do shop work if I could - any kind really, especially
> a clothes shop. Just sitting on a till all day would be boring,
> but in a clothes shop you're helping customers - giving opinions
> and that and staying up to date with all the fashions.'

The girls who preferred shop work regarded factory culture as vulgar and unfeminine and preferred the individualistically orientated atmosphere of the shop to the raunchy collectivism of the factory. They also distinguished between different kinds of shops. Supermarkets, were thought to encourage the same collective vulgarity as factories, and tasks were equally as fragmented and meaningless, whereas small shops were thought to be 'friendlier'. However, many of these girls were disappointed with their experiences of shop work which was less interesting than they had first imagined. Moreover, because of its 'respectable' image, shops and restaurants enforced strict codes of dress and conduct which some girls found irksome as the following quotation indicates:

'It was horrible.....I left because they complained about my
clothes. I had a T-shirt on - a nice one, with frills round
the top - it looked smart. And they said: 'Oh, going up the
beach are you?' They said I looked scruffy, but I looked okay.
The only thing I could wear was a blouse which had to be
buttoned up to the neck, and it was really hot in there....'

Although a small number of girls preferred to do shop work, many

others were forced to undertake it for lack of an alternative, and 21

per cent of the sample altogether had done some kind of retail work by

1980. Most of these were girls and this was reflected in the generally

low wages. For girls who had sought clerical work or jobs in one of

the caring professions, shop work provided a more acceptable alternative.

Shop work was therefore related to a 'feminine' individualistic

culture of respectability and serving others.

(v) Outdoor Labouring

Twenty per cent of the FUS sample had undertaken labouring work

by 1980: all of them were boys. This was an emergent category, for

boys who had been seeking informal skills or who were dissatisfied with

their experiences of factory work found outdoor labouring to be a desir-

able alternative. It was therefore mentioned specifically as a prefer-

ence by 14 boys in 1980. Much of this outdoor labouring work was

casually hired and some of the boys described themselves as 'self-

employed'. However, this was regarded as an advantage rather than a

disadvantage for it provided the individual with maximum flexibility to

come and go. Examples of this kind of work included painting and

decorating, working on boats, on farms or in scrap yards. However, work

on building sites was prized most highly. Whilst some labourers were

regular employees, others were paid in cash or worked for a share of

the profits.

There were a number of reasons for preferring this kind of work. Firstly, it was associated with a tough, masculine, individualistic status much sought after by some boys. Secondly, it was thought to be more interesting and varied than other forms of employment: a young person might be moved around a building site and have the opportunity to see the fruits of their labour before them. Thirdly it was a means for acquiring a range of useful skills which could be used 'on the side' later on as a source of extra income. Finally it appeared to provide more freedom from supervision: on a building site boys could move around and avoid the watchful eye of the foreman whereas on a production line they were trapped:

> 'I wouldn't work in a factory. I don't like being shut in, working at a machine all day. My friend, he's an apprentice book-binder, and he just watches the books go into the machine all day. That's all he does. I couldn't stand that. I would rather be unemployed. No, there again, I would rather be at work.....'

> 'I wouldn't like to work inside, I just like it out in the open and I don't mind the weather. I couldn't stand being locked in all day, doing the same old job all the time. In building you can do different jobs all the time, so it's interesting, you can talk to people at the same time. You have a good laugh when you're working.'

There was no feminine equivalent to outdoor labouring, although some girls preferred outdoor work such as fruit picking and three girls had done this kind of casual work by 1980.[11]

Thus outdoor labouring was associated with a culture of heavy masculine labour. However, unlike heavy labour in factories it also offered a form of individualistic autonomy and held the promise of high financial rewards for although the work was irregular, hourly or daily wages were high.

(vi) Factory Work

Factory work was defined by 80 per cent of the SSLS as the most negative preference: other jobs were judged by their degree of contrast with factory work. Nevertheless, factories were some of the major employers, and 32 per cent of the FUS sample had worked in them during their first year in the labour market.

Why was factory work rejected? Thirteen of the FUS sample reacted negatively to their experiences of factory employment by leaving the job, and gave the same reasons as those who had refused to do it in the first place. They felt that the work involved spending too much time indoors, having to perform repetitive tasks, too much supervision and being tied to a machine:

> 'Well, I stayed six months but I was so pissed off with it I left. I'm just not cut out for factory work. It was terrible doing the same thing all the time and all those fiddling little bits you had to do (making fuses). You couldn't stop for breath and I started getting headaches. It was just so boring - and the dirt and the noise and that. It is like a rabbit hutch in there - no windows and it's so hot. I never thought it would be so awful.'
>
> (female aged 18)

> 'I went to work in the rubber factory in March for six weeks, but I didn't like it. It was too hot in there and I don't like being told what to do. What's why I left. You're doing one job and they tell you to do another. It was the same at school that's why I left that.'
>
> (male aged 17)

Factory work was associated with raunchy collective culture which could be either masculine or feminine in character depending upon the labour force employed in different factories. This involved a form of aggressive sexual humour and remorseless teasing and horseplay which some of the young people with quieter temperaments found difficult to

tolerate. Below are two examples of boys who became victims of this form of aggressive collectivism:

> 'Oh that.....It was terrible working with the women all day. I had to go round emtying the trucks and I had to pass all the women. It's hard on you, they get mouthy with you and you can't mouth 'em back because ther's too many of them. Mind you, I didn't get bullied as much as some of the others. I wouldn't put up with that. I used to hate it, having to walk along the rows past thirty women, all giggling at me. I just ignored 'em.'
>
> (male aged 17)

Another boy received similar treatment from male workers:

> 'They were horrible to me, so I left. They put petrol in my tea one time.....this bloke called Nigel, a rough lout of about twenty tried to strangle me. I think he must have been a bit demented.'
>
> (male aged 17)

Others resented what they saw as the vulgar and crude culture of the factory as this girl illustrates:

> 'People in there were what I call stupid. It's like that in a factory, they were all shouting and loud-mouthed. Shouting all around the place.'

Given this general antipathy towards factory work and factory culture amongst the majority of the sample, how did those who remained in such jobs accommodate them?

Willis (1977) argues that for boys the collective solidaristic culture of the factory was precisely what made this work attractive to his 'lads'. The factory culture was fused with a sense of masculinity

through the espousal of an inverted ideology: other kinds of work were

regarded as effeminate. Some in my sample also voiced this orientation:

> 'The management, they dress smart because they think they run
> the place. Of course they don't. They don't make the paper do
> they? The workers do that......I'd like to do packing jobs
> again, it's a cushy job. In a factory, I like working in a
> factory, I wouldn't work anywhere else. I would have liked to
> have been a mechanic, but not out in the streets. I'm supposed
> to be a working-class person, it's something I believe in, like
> some people believe in God.'

C.W.   Explain?

> 'Well, you've got your working-class and you've got your upper-
> class. You don't do nothing you should do and stuff you
> shouldn't do, you do it. If there's any trouble going, I'm in
> it. If there's anything you're supposed to do, I don't do it.
> Do what you feel and not what anyone else wants you to.'

Similarly, boys identified some factory jobs as being better than others

because they implied the same sort of strong masculine sense of power

associated with outdoor labouring.[12] Hence work at the steel mill was

attractive not only because the wages were high, but also because of

the association with a form of strong elemental masculine toughness.

Wrestling with fire and steel was more 'masculine' than minding machines:

it possessed an almost heroic quality of control and mastery over the

environment.

However, others were more ambivalent. They resigned themselves

to factory work by arguing that the wages were some consolation and any

job was better than nothing. They cited the same disadvantages as

others who had rejected such work but regarded it as something which

simply ought to be endured as the following quotations from some male

factory workers illustrate:

C.W.   What sort of work do you prefer?

'Factory work. Or otherwise labouring on building sites, in the summer out in the fresh air. All the money seems to be there these days and you get a sun tan. It's the money and the general picture of it I suppose, in summer anyway. Not stuck in a factory, like I am now. That's one thing about factory work, you never see the daylight. You're in there from 7 a.m. until 6 in the evening and it's hot and sweaty in summer and freezing in winter.'

'I didn't have no ambitions, I just wanted to get out of school and get a job. I don't have any ambitions now, I just live from day-to-day at the moment.'

'I always wanted to work outdoors or else factory work. I went for this job because I thought it was outdoors, but I suppose I would have taken it anyway. Now I've been doing this job I think it is probably better than outdoor work anyway. All the lads want to do outdoor work because they get well built and a sun tan.'

Therefore, only a small number of boys were able to embrace the

culture of masculinity and celebrate unskilled labour in a factory in

the manner described by Willis.

Given these possible compensations for boys, how did girls

adjust? Pollert (1981) has argued that becoming a factory worker was

both low status and unfeminine and consequently girls could not resort

to the gender-linked inverted ideology espoused by the boys. Rather,

they sought to escape from the realities of factory life through domestic

roles and the ideology of romance. Some girls in the FUS sample were

certainly dissatisfied with factory work and they also sought to escape

by leaving the job altogether. However, other girls valued the sense of

collective feminine comradeship provided by the factory - the very

feature which some girls had rejected. There were opportunities for

companionship, merriment and works outings:

C.W.   Why do you like factory work?

'Because in a factory you can have a laugh, you can please

yourself. You can sit down with all your mates in the canteen
together. You meet friends and you can go out drinking with
them in the evening.'

However, the most common way of 'adjusting' to factory work for
both boys and girls was to leave it. Factory work was accommodated only
with reluctance despite the fact that factories were among the main
employers on the Island.

Thus factory work was associated with a collective solidaristic
culture which could be either masculine or feminine in character and
involved some aggressive banter and teasing by both genders which some
young people had difficulty in accommodating, but others saw as the
main advantage of this kind of work. Whilst Willis and others at the
CCCS have emphasised the sense of collective solidarity sought by working-
class male teenagers and reproduced through sub-cultural activities, in
Sheppey there was also a strong sense of working-class individualism.
Many school leavers felt appalled at the prospect of being reduced to
a small unit of labour in a vast process and swamped by the collective
culture of the factory which had evolved to accommodate this. They
sought instead jobs through which they could assert a direct sense of
individual control. For girls this took the form of a preference for
individualised, person-oriented contact with people in shops or feminine
professions. For boys this was associated with the independent masculine
identity which craft work and outdoor labouring provided. The value placed
upon being 'self-employed' was one expression of this and fitted with the
'self-made' traditions of the building industry locally,whereby it was
thought that some men were able to make their fortunes through their
own initiative. The tradition of working-class male individualism
therefore valued individual entrepreneurial talents more than submission

to the demands of employers.

I have shown how different kinds of work were associated with different forms of cultural reproduction. Work cultures could be differentiated according to the following dimensions: degrees of 'roughness' or 'respectability', models of masculinity and femininity, and different forms of collectivistic or individualistic orientation. These work cultures were associated with the reproduction of cultural traditions within the community and did not constitute an homogenous class culture. Rather, there were different strands which were often conflicting and incompatible.

I shall now turn to strategies of job search as these were associated with the work cultures in different kinds of employment.

E) <u>Strategies of Job Search</u>

There were three strategies of job search: through formal agencies, through informal agencies and by contacting employers directly.

Formal mediating agencies included the Job Centre, the Careers Service,[13] and the local newspapers. Those seeking formal craft apprenticeships, office jobs or careers in the Armed Forces had to use these formal agencies. The Careers Officers themselves tended to emphasise the importance of formal training and Further Education in the search for employment and hence their values clashed with those of young people who were antipathetic to school goals or preferred informal training and casual work. These young people complained that the Careers Officer 'put you off things' or 'persuaded you out of things'.[14]

Informal job search strategies involved the mediation of informal networks of friends and relatives. These were used for seeking jobs in factories, as labourers, in shops and with small local employers: I

was frequently informed that in a tight labour market 'who you know is more important than what you know'. Local networks were alerted before the young person left school and even if this was not successful in securing a first job it might lead to the second or third. Parents often 'spoke for' their children at their places of employment, but they complained that as jobs became scarcer, so even this 'traditional' pattern of recruitment became more difficult.

The third strategy of job search was to contact the employer directly and this was more often used for recruitment to factories and building sites. This involved going round to local employers and 'putting your name down', usually a number of times. When young people described themselves as 'out looking for work' they were often doing a circuit of the factories or shops depending upon which type of employment they sought. The circuit had to be continued indefinitely since employers tended to recruit individuals on the spot.

It would be difficult and distorting to count the numbers using each kind of strategy since most individuals tended to use a combination of these strategies simultaneously. Friends or relatives would hear of a potential vacancy because someone was leaving or because the firm was expanding and ensure that social networks were alerted even before it officially arose. For this reason, many complained of the futility of applying for jobs through the Job Centre for most of the vacancies had been informally filled before the job reached the display board. New firms, such as the Tesco's, which opened during my period of field work, used the Job Centre for recruitment but more established industries with extensive pre-existing communications networks seldom needed to do so.

F)   Patterns of Job Departure[15]

Job departure has been regarded as evidence of poor socialisation

or a general defectiveness amongst young people or the agencies which

serve them. Maizels (1970) and Carter (1966) conclude that the problem

could be remedied by providing a better Careers Guidance Service.

Baxter (1975) found that it was associated with other forms of social

and cultural deficiency such as deprived homes and poor education whilst

others have found an association with school truancy and individual

problems such as minor psychiatric and nervous disorders (Gray, Smith

and Rutter 1980, Cherry 1976). In the context of rising unemployment,

job departure has been identified as one of the factors leading to a

decline in young people's employment opportunities as bad job records

lead to a lengthening period of unemployment (Markall 1980,

OECD 1977).[16]

The patterns of job changing for young workers on Sheppey, are

set out in Table 23. Less than one third had been in the same job

continuously between 1970 and 1980 and many of these were guaranteed

steady employment by joining the Armed Forces. Others who had worked

continually had found apprenticeships and office training: those who

remained employed were often in the most secure and rewarding jobs. A

further 17 per cent had held only one job, although they might have been

unemployed or participated in a YOP scheme, but the majority had held

two jobs or more.[17]

What were the reasons for job departure? Table 24 illustrates

the different reasons for leaving jobs out of the total of 97 job

departures in the sample. It can be seen that although 44 per cent

were voluntary in nature - mostly a result of disliking the work or

the supervisors - more than half were involuntary. This latter group

TABLE 23

Number of Jobs Held by School-Leavers in 1980

	Males	Females	%	Totals
In same job 1979-80	(18)	(12)	29%	(30)
One job only	(7)	(11)	17%	(18)
Two jobs	(14)	(18)	31%	(32)
More than two jobs	(9)	(8)	17%	(17)
Never worked	-	(6)	6%	(6)
				(103)

Note: This does not include YOP Schemes.

TABLE 24

Reasons for Job Departures : 1980 Survey

	Male	Female	Totals	%
Voluntary:				
Did not like supervisor/ work	(14)	(21)	(35)	
Poor Conditions	(2)	-	(2)	44%
To find better job	(4)	(2)	(6)	
Sacked	(3)	(3)	(6)	6%
Involuntary:				
Temporary/casual employment	(4)	(17)	(21)	
Made Redundant	(6)	(14)	(20)	
Discharged	(1)	-	(1)	49%
Moved/emigrated	(2)	-	(2)	
Pregnant/married	-	(4)	(4)	
TOTALS: N	(36)	(61)	(97)	
%	37%	63%	100%	

of young people were made redundant or recruited to specifically temporary

employment. Dismissals accounted for 6 per cent of all job departures

and these could be regarded as partly voluntary and partly involuntary.

The rate of voluntary job departure was therefore lower than that found

in other studies.[18] The majority of job departures cannot be attributed

to young people's attitudes, for they were unable to find secure employ-

ment. Any 'deficiency' should perhaps be attributed to conditions in

the labour market. YOP schemes contributed towards these rather frag-

mented and unstable patterns of employment, for employers were able to

use them to fulfil their need for labour on a temporary basis: only

five out of the sixteen in the FUS sample who had been on YOP schemes

found regular employment after leaving them.

Some forms of job departure could be regarded as a means to

maximise the individual's labour market position - hence they left to

find better jobs or in order to seek special training. However,

others were simply reacting against unacceptable employment and bad

conditions.

The culturally valued trait of 'standing up for yourself' led

to friction in employment as well as at school. It demanded redress

for what were seen as infringements of personal dignity and could lead

to arguments resulting in either dismissal or the young person leaving,

although many of these actions were embellished in being retold. For

example a girl who had been a hairdresser's apprentice reported:

        'I was going to the apprenticeship, but I got sacked and then
        I got angry about that. She was going to give me my job back,
        but I gave her a load of mouth and left. They're a bit high
        and mighty in those hairdressers places.'

Another girl who had left a shop job explained:

> 'You see, I don't like being told what to do. That's why I'm
> going into the Army, to get away.'

One boy who had left his job in a butchers said:

> 'I didn't like it there. I didn't like the manager who kept
> bossing me about. I got locked in the fridge one day for a
> joke and I dropped the lamb once. He told me off, right in
> front of all the customers for that, so I left.'

In the case of boys some of the job changes were due to the fact
that they preferred casual labouring which was inherently unstable in
nature. Indeed its lack of permanence was regarded as an advantage
rather than a disadvantage. In jobs where young people were regarded as
easily dispensable labour, personal dignity and a sense of self worth
could often be better preserved by leaving jobs.[19]

Girls' higher level of job departures was also related to the
fact that girls' jobs were lower paid and were less likely to provide train-
ing than were boys' jobs. Moreover, it was more difficult for them to
resort to casual labouring than it was for boys thereby introducing
some flexibility into their employment careers.

Altogether then, job changing could be seen in the context of
unstable and unrewarding employment which was often experienced as
oppressive. Job departure was one way of escaping from, or protesting
against, this oppression, even though it may not lead to long term
benefits. What needs explanation perhaps, is how young people came to
'settle down' and accept the demands of employment rather than why
they rejected it. One inducement was regular training and the possibility
of some prospects provided through the job. The other was to have

children thus ensuring commitment through the need for a regular income.

Some girls who had left factory jobs and later had babies, told me

that their evaluation of such employment had changed as a result:

C.W.   Have your ideas changed, do you think?

Girl: 'Yes, I would do machining work now and I would stick to it.'

C.W.   Why?

Girl: 'Because now I've got somebody to look after.'

This would support the argument that rather than being due to individual

deficiency, job changing was a rational strategy for unqualified school

leavers under poor conditions of employment.

G)   The Functions of Informal and Occasional Work

        The transition from school to work is normally conceptualised as

a transition from full-time education to full-time employment. Indeed,

some of the recent government intervention in the process is intended to

bridge this alleged gulf by introducing work experience into schools.[20]

However, school leavers in Sheppey already had extensive working exper-

ience before they left school, for the entire SSLS sample had undertaken

some kind of part-time or casual job. Such jobs included: assisting

with clay pigeon shooting and beating, farm labouring, working on fishing

boats, lug-worm digging, seasonal work, car cleaning, window cleaning,

working on ice cream vans, fish and chip shops and vans, cellar boy in

Working Men's Clubs or pubs, golf caddying, paper rounds, catering,

working on market stalls, cafe attendants, shop assistants, leaflet

delivery and gardening. In addition, a number did factory out-work for
their families. This list does not cover all the jobs undertaken by
young people, but is broadly representative. I have termed such jobs
'informal and occasional work'.[21]

Many of those who persistently truanted from school were the
ones most heavily engaged in this kind of informal and occasional work.
They felt that this was better preparation for employment than they could
have found at school, as the following extract from the local paper
makes clear:

'Father Pays Son a Regular Wage

Rather than allow his 16-year-old son to play truant or roam
the streets, Henry Payne "apprenticed" him to a trade and paid
him a regular wage, magistrates heard on Friday.

But by law, the boy is not entitled to leave school until Easter,
and Payne, of Cliff Gardens, Minster was fined £50 for failing to
ensure his regular attendance.

Payne pleaded guilty to not insisting that the boy was at school,
told the court that he was happier to have him working with him
learning some basic skill rather than be idle, possibly get into
trouble, or play truant from school.'

Sheerness Times-Guardian 21 March 1980

Casual and informal work could be the one means of securing a
permanent job after young people left school, for 19 of the SLSS sample
(17 per cent) found jobs which were related in some way to their
previous casual experience. Some, like the hairdressing apprentices,
were taken on full-time as a result of this experience and for this
reason it became part of a deliberate job search strategy. This then
explains why some of the unqualified school leavers and 'rebels' were
able to secure training places as easily as those who were qualified.

Moreover, many young people continued this pattern of doing casual, informal work and part-time employment after they had left school. Some were able to pursue alternative careers through working 'on the side' or through petty crime. For boys, jobs 'on the side' included casual labouring, digging lug-worm, mending cars and motor-bikes or helping on boats. For girls, there was fruit picking or caring for children as an informal 'nanny'. These jobs were often pursued during periods in which young people were not registered as unemployed and altogether eleven boys and three girls had undertaken informal work which may or may not have been remunerated.

It has been argued that informal work was less available to young people than to adults because they lacked the contacts and the expertise (Roberts 1984) However, certain marginal occasional jobs were more available to young people than to adult workers, for they were prepared to work for a few extra pounds whilst they were living at home, subsidised by parents. This implies that a whole sector of the local economy was probably manned by young people in low paid 'runabout' informal positions,particularly small shops, instant food vans and the holiday trade. There are forms of segmentation in the informal labour market as well as the formal and young people find the lower paid and more marginal jobs informally (Wallace and Pahl 1984)

Informal work thus had a number of functions for young people after they had left school. Firstly, it provided some extra income and a source of activity whilst they were unemployed, as illustrated below:

C.W.: Did you keep busy though?

> 'I did, I used to go out, like when I was at school. I used
> to go round doing cars and that. I helped out with that at
> weekends so I went there (to the yard) and helped at weekends
> or in the evening and that. I started on one car, the car was
> all smashed up, it had gone straight through a wall...and I
> started rebuilding it.'

C.W.:   Are you doing that at the moment?

'Yes, I'm doing up this Cortina at the moment (he goes into a
lengthy description).....It keeps me busy, I can't stand having
nothing to do.'

Secondly, as I have already indicated, it could be a strategy
for learning skills informally. Thirdly, some young people undertook
this casual work - either paid or unpaid - in the hope that it might
lead to permanent employment. The boundary between some forms of casual
and 'self-employed' labouring and informal jobs was a blurred one.
Teenagers would spend periods drifting from formal to casual employment
and back again even whilst working for the same employer. There was a
clear incentive for employers to hire young people casually but not to
declare it, so that employees themselves were often uncertain as to
their status.[22]

H)   Discussion

The general conclusions are set out under the hypotheses 1-3
listed earlier. After discussing each hypothesis in turn I shall suggest
alternative ways of approaching the transition from school to work in
the context of high unemployment.

Hypothesis 1. That the concept of occupational choice is misconceived
because young people have already been socialised to accept their
occupational roles before leaving school.

The results presented here confirm those of others: that young people
had little objective choice in their search for employment because
opportunities in the local labour market were very limited. On leaving

school, their aspirations had already been shaped by anticipatory socialisation so that working-class school leavers expected to do manual jobs and middle-class school leavers expected to find extended careers with professional training. There was also a group that aspired towards short-term careers through apprenticeship training, Further Education or clerical work. These results appear to fit the equilibrium model.

However, whilst these occupational roles had been 'reproduced', as it were, amongst this sample of 153 young people, they did not fit the opportunities in the local labour market: there was a degree of disjunction between aspirations and actualities. The decline of apprenticeship training, white collar work and the predominance of factory employers resulted in aspirations being in general too high for the jobs available. Rather than a 'tightening bond' between educational credentials and employment there was a skewed link. For those seeking jobs with large employers and offices qualifications were increasingly important, but for the majority they were irrelevant.

The hypothesis now needs to be modified in several ways. Firstly aspirations and preferences are better terms for describing school leavers' occupational orientations than 'occupational choice'. Whilst aspirations were positive in nature - specifying some form of work which was aimed for - preferences were often negative - specifying some form of work which would not be tolerated. Preferences were developed, acquired or lowered over a period as a result of experiences in the labour market. Experiences in work were therefore important for the socialisation of young workers, especially where there was a disjunction between processes of anticipatory socialisation and labour market opportunities.

Secondly, whilst the concept of 'occupational choice' is clearly

misconceived, young people on Sheppey discriminate between different kinds of employment according to these sets of preferences. These preferences should be seen in the context of the reproduction of cultural patterns from which identities were constructed, which are rooted in turn in the local social milieu.

Thirdly, whilst young people broadly accepted the social divisions of labour which they encountered in the labour market, and their own position within it, many of them were not resigned to doing unrewarding and unskilled work. Some jobs were regarded as more interesting, more varied, more respectable, more useful and offering greater scope for creativity and control than others: these were not necessarily the highest paid or the most secure jobs. This was the basis for accepting some kinds of employment and rejecting others. Whilst the OPCS and others would classify most of the jobs undertaken by young people in the Sheppey labour market as undifferentiated unskilled or semi-skilled manual work, young people themselves judged them by their own distinctive values.

Hypothesis 2 That young people have difficulty finding employment because they do not possess the kinds of skills required by employers.

Firstly, it is necessary to define what 'skills' means in this context. Most minimum age school leavers had their own conception of 'skills' based upon traditional craft and office cultures. They distin-guished between a practical skill - such as being able to fix a car - and more abstract inapplicable skills - such as being able to pass an examina-tion. Although keen to acquire the former variety they were prevented from doing so by the reduction in training places. Nevertheless, many had managed to 'skill themselves' through their own efforts.

Holland (1979) and others have defined skill as forms of technical expertise required by expanding technological industries. However, there was little need for such skills on Sheppey where only traditional forms of employment were available.

Other definitions of skill which are being put into operation by the MSC have been defined by the Institute of Manpower Studies as ones of general competence.[23] One of their manuals intended for use by instructors states that: 'Competence in this Guide is defined as the ability to USE knowledge, produce and process skills and, as a result, act effectively to achieve a real purpose' (From the User's Guide to Training for Skills Ownership in the Youth Training Scheme, MSC 1983, p.13) It could be argued however, that young people on Sheppey already possessed such skills, for they had been working for some time before leaving school. Therefore, the hypothesis is partially confirmed in the first sense of skill, not confirmed in the second sense and refuted in the third sense.

Hypothesis 3. That girls are less committed to employment than boys because they are resigned to accept their roles as future wives and mothers.

There was a distinct division in aspirations between genders. Occupational preferences were important for the construction of gender identities for both boys and girls alike. Although some girls left school and became pregnant or were married within one year, most regarded themselves as workers at this stage in the life cycle. However, their aspirations were generally lower than boys and were more readily 'cooled out' which would appear to confirm hypothesis 3.

Girls were no less critical of their employment experiences than boys, but whereas boys were able to find casual labouring through which to balance the needs of employers with those of their own, girls could only express their discontent by leaving the job altogether.

Altogether, girls were forced into particular roles by the nature of opportunities and by the expectations of others. This is illustrated by the examples of girls who sought non-traditional careers but were forced to abandon them. Those girls seeking skilled training of some kind were likely to stress the secure professional status which this provided, in the similar manner to boys, although they mentioned gender-specific occupations. Boys, however, were better able to find jobs which offered the possibility of some kind of training.

Those girls with domestic responsibilities conformed to unrewarding work but there were not enough boys in my sample in a similar position for generalisations to be made about them. It is likely however, that the acquisition of domestic roles forces young people to conform to prevailing conditions.

One issue which is that the role of informal and occasional work should be emphasised. As well as drifting in and out of employment or MSC schemes, young people periodically took up a range of casual and part-time jobs. Whilst not all young people had access to these kinds of work, it was nevertheless important for some in their search for work. Informal jobs were important as sources of income and experience but they also provided opportunities for acquiring skills or simply staying occupied. Paradoxically, they were likely to exercise more skills and expertise outside of formal employment than they did within it.[24]

Finally, it is evident that there was considerable turbulence in the labour market careers of young people after leaving school. Job departure could be interpreted as a rational strategy under certain employment conditions but was also precipitated by the disjunction between aspirations and opportunities. The jobs which were provided by the main employers - factories and retailers - were also the most unpopular.

CHAPTER 10   OUT OF WORK: UNEMPLOYMENT AND ITS
                    IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL REPRODUCTION.

          <u>There is a Happy Land</u>

          Let me take you to a far away land
          Where all the people are stoned
          And all the beaches are golden sand
          And the grass is really home grown
          No bickering, no backstabbers
          A fair place, a dream
          If only it were real
          If only I were Queen!

          Another thing with paradise
          You don't need money to live
          All the food and dope is free
          It's the best grass we could give!

                         Song by SPUNKY
                         (Unemployed Sheppey Punk aged 17)

     The data presented in this chapter is derived from the 1980 FUS

Survey extended interviews with young people between 1979 and 1980 and

participant observation.[1]

     The chapter is organised in such a way as to test hypotheses 4-6

which are set out at the end of the chapter (pp. 236-238). Most of the

quotations are taken from the five case studies described in Appendix II

and referred to by the following pseudonyms: Jenny, Ada, Gary, Steve and Sally.

Where other quotations are used I have referred to these respondents

simply by age and gender.

     The accounts presented in this chapter have concentrated to a

great extent upon school leavers most alienated from school and from

employment, because they are the ones most likely to suffer unemployment

during the first year after leaving school. Moreover, as much of the

information used in this chapter was derived from participant observation

it suffers some of the limitations in range discussed in the introduction.

TABLE 25

Job Turnover, Unemployment and Educational Careers of FUS School Leavers

Educational Careers	Job Careers						Totals
	Same Job	One Job	Two Jobs	More than two Jobs	No Job 1979/80	Experienced Unemployment	
	% N	% N	% N	% N	% N	% N	
Qualified School Leavers:							
(a) 'O' Levels	24 (4)	12 (2)	47 (8)	6 (1)	12 (2)	47 (8)	(17)
(b) CSE's	38 (11)	21 (6)	21 (6)	17 (5)	3 (1)	31 (9)	(29)
Unqualified School Leavers:	37 (14)	18 (7)	21 (8)	18 (7)	5 (2)	50 (19)	(38)
Rebels	11 (2)	21 (4)	42 (8)	21 (4)	5 (1)	63 (12)	(19)
TOTALS:	(31)	(19)	(30)	(17)	(6)	(48)	(103)

NOTES: 1. Included amongst those with 'O' levels are two young people who dropped out of further education and one who was doing work experience before going to college.

2. The column 'Experienced Unemployment' is not included amongst the totals at the end of the table.

I begin by documenting patterns of unemployment amongst Sheppey school leavers using survey data; secondly, I examine experiences of unemployment in relation to the loss of the five latent functions at work.[2] Thirdly, I describe the effects of unemployment upon family relations and fourthly its implications for the reproduction of gender roles.

A)   Patterns of Unemployment in the FUS, 1980 Sample

Experiences of unemployment should be set in the context of job departure, for as I have already indicated the first year in the labour market was characterised by movement in and out of employment, involvement with Manpower Services Commission Schemes and irregular work.[3] It has been argued that those most likely to be disadvantaged in this way are the "untrained, unqualified and unemployed".[4] Table 25 documents the rates of job departure and unemployment for school leavers at different educational levels. It can be seen that both qualified and unqualified school leavers experienced job turnover and unemployment. This indicates that in conditions of high unemployment, school leavers at all levels are likely to be affected. However, the rebel school leavers suffered both the highest rates of job turnover (18 per cent with more than two jobs) and the highest rates of unemployment (63 per cent with experience of unemployment) implying that they are indeed the most disadvantaged.

Given the widespread incidence of unemployment and the fragmented nature of employment careers there was no single category of 'unemployed' for all school leavers had held at least one job or placement on an MSC scheme by 1980 unless they became pregnant or disabled. They would therefore be better characterised as sub-employed.[5] This is important in assessing the nature of their responses to unemploy-

ment and it is to this that I now turn.

B) <u>The Loss of the Latent Functions of Work</u>

It has been argued that the loss of employment leads to: "the experience of time (i.e. loss of a time structure), the reduction of social contacts, the lack of participation in collection purposes, the absence of an acceptable status and its consequences for personal identity, the absence of regular activity" (Jahoda 1982, p.39). Each of these are inversely related to the social psychological benefits of employment and consequently it is necessary in each case to contrast experiences in and out of work. I shall now consider each in turn.

(i) <u>The Loss of Time structure</u>

School leavers were familiar with two externally imposed time structures: those of school and those of employment. That imposed by schooling however, was not always regarded as acceptable and could be resisted through truanting, for the following comment is typical of many others:

Gary: 'I truanted all the time at school. I got bored with it. I
       get bored very easily. You get into a routine, and then its
       boring. At school it was always the same pattern, every week.
       I was bored at school, but I was also bored, after a while,
       truanting as well.'

The time structures imposed by employment could be equally oppressive and one of the main areas of conflict between young people and their employers was precisely over time: young people were concerned to balance their personal time with the structures imposed by employment and one of the advantages of casual labouring or being 'self employed' was that it allowed freedom to do this:

Gary: "The plumber and the carpenter are going self-employed and
        they want to take me with them. I'd like to be my own boss,
        be self-employed, because you can knock off when you want and
        then not lose a day's pay."

Why was the control of time so important?

For the working-class school leavers cited here employment
involved exchanging units of their time for a wage. 'Their' time
therefore became the property of others and unless rewards were
sufficient, it was time 'wasted' as the following quotation indicates:

Jenny: "There's Tesco's, the Shirt Factory and shit like that.
        Boring, repetitive jobs, sewing jeans and stacking shelves.
        I wouldn't do a lot of factory work unless I was really
        desperate because I would think it a waste of my life.
        In a factory.....doing the same thing all day. You need
        an awful lot of money to be able to stand that."

For these reasons then, time structures could be a source of domination
as well as social-psychological fulfilment and they were consequently
resisted.

Being unemployed however, did not necessarily provide a satis-
factory alternative. Time was still 'structured' by the need to eat,
sleep and 'sign on' every week and the unemployed described regular
patterns of activity which in turn became 'routine'. Getting up was
invariably mentioned as the first event of the day and the unemployed
slept longer hours in the morning than those who were obliged to go to
work. Walking down the High Street in the afternoon, watching tele-
vision and visiting friends and relatives were also mentioned and these
activities took on a regular pattern as the following quotations indicate:

Gary: 'When unemployed, - I don't want to sound like I was giving up,
        I didn't want to stay on the dole - but I just lost interest.
        I don't know how to describe it really. I just got up at
        10.30 to 11.00 o'clock, then I'd work on the bikes in the
        mornings, walk round the town in the afternoon and then go round
        the pub in the evening. I was sort of getting into a rut I think.
        It was just the same thing every day. I was bored on and off.
        It was okay when I was doing something but I go out more now I
        am employed, because after a hard day's work, you feel like a
        nice pint afterwards. I go out every night, and quite often I
        practice in the group as well.'

Ada: 'I used to get up in the morning, go down the pub, or walk
        down the town first, see if we could con anybody for ten
        pounds, then stay there 'till the pub closes. Walk up the
        town, walk back down it, walk up it again, walk down it. At
        one stage we got to, we just used to turn round at a certain
        point, walk up and down, go round someone else's houses, have
        something to eat or a cup of tea there, go out, go to another
        house. Used to be alright.'

        Thus, whilst externally imposed time structures were resented,

the time spent unemployed was regarded as purposeless. This daily

pattern was punctuated by the arrival of the Giro every other week or

by other unexpected windfalls of money or goods which provided the

opportunity for frenzied bursts of consumption.

C.W.   How much do you drink each day?

Ada: 'All me money's worth. I got twenty-five quid the other week
        and I went out, no-one was out, so I decided to get drunk on
        me own. I just......as soon as I've got the money I just blow
        it all. Oh yeah, and on the machines. Half of that money
        went on machines and the other half went on drink.'

Since income was irregular this encouraged patterns of hedonistic

over-consumption followed by periods of non-consumption for it was

not possible to plan anything very far in advance. This pattern,

forced upon them by necessity, was also justified as a way of life:

C.W.   What do you think you will be doing in five years time?

Jenny: 'I don't know 'cos I never think about it - no I don't think
        about next week, I think, as far as I'm concerned I think
        about it in terms of a couple of hours - don't think about
        what you're going to do tomorrow, you might go out and get
        run over by a bus. Don't even plan anything for a time. I
        just think, well, if I'm here I'll see what happens. Don't
        sort of plan anything. You never know what's going to
        happen. Might not be anyone here.'

Those who were regularly employed for the entire period, by

contrast, invariably told me of their long term goals and plans which

included buying cars and houses. Long term time structures in terms

of personal life projects were therefore available to those in regular

employment, but not available to the sub-employed.

Thompson (1967) has argued that industrial capitalism imposes

a time discipline upon the otherwise 'natural' rhythm of pre-industrial

life. Whilst the young unemployed were certainly aware of time disci-

pline and resisted it, the alternative was a sense of emptiness and a

pattern of activity dictated by the irregular availability of money

rather than a 'natural' rhythm.[6]

(ii)   The reduction of social contacts

Unemployment, it is argued, leads to social isolation.[7] However,

the young unemployed interviewed on Sheppey did not depend upon the

work place for their sources of social contact. In a small community,

with large numbers of young people being unemployed for at least some

period in their teenage years there was no shortage of social contacts.

Indeed, some complained that going to work interfered with their social

lives and at times the latter took precedence over the former:

> 'Yer, I got sacked 'cos I kept going in late. I'd go to
> work in the morning and then I'd see some of me mates and
> start talking. And then I'd think: 'I'll just stay half
> an hour', and then it was an hour, and time creeps away.
> After a while you don't want to go in all day.'
>
> (Male aged 17)

Those who did complain of isolation were young people who had

lost contact with their friends from school, who were kept at home

deliberately by parents, who lived in isolated locations, or whose

friends were all working full-time. In general, most respondents

agreed that the presence of unemployed contemporaries served to mitigate

some of the worst features of unemployment:

Gary: 'No, I wasn't on my own when I was unemployed, because three
of my mates had broken legs and were off sick for ages. I
was bothered to get a job, and yet I couldn't be bothered.
I was having fun, but I also wanted a job. My friend was
disabled for a year and he was in the merchant navy, and
he got really fed up.'

Ada: 'No - it used to be all right when everybody used to be
unemployed 'cos we all used to go down the pub and that,
but now everyone's employed, no-one's a dosser - and
everybody used to go out every day of the week, but
now they don't, they all stay indoors - till Friday or
Saturday - it doesn't matter about the time really.'

(iii) Loss of participation in collective purposes

Employment is not the only source of collective purpose. Some

of the young unemployed had collective projects of their own and this

provided them with what they regarded as meaningful activity. For

example involvement in music bands, bike gangs, and the CND[8] provided

more satisfactory and genuinely collective participation than employ-

ment did, for as I have indicated, employment was regarded as time sold

to someone else at a personal cost rather than a source of fulfilment.

Those with such recreational pursuits, were sometimes able to pursue

them whilst unemployed. However, most young people did not have such

absorbing pastimes and their lack of financial resources meant they

were unable to develop any. Such collective projects as existed were

ones which could be pursued whilst they were either employed or unemployed.

(iv) Absence of an Acceptable Status and its Implications for Personal Identity.

Whilst 'status' depends upon the judgement of others, 'personal

identity' refers to the individuals' own perception of their status.

It has been argued that unemployment leads to loss of a sense of well-

being because individuals attribute unemployment to their own failure.[9]

To what extent did young people on Sheppey blame themselves for unemploy-

ment? In conditions of high unemployment, such as existed in the Isle

of Sheppey, roughly half of all school leavers were likely to find

themselves unemployed within a year (Table 25). Most of these reacted

with incomprehension when I asked them if they ever felt ashamed or

embarrassed about being unemployed. It was a fact of life.[10] However,

there was some tension between negative labelling by others and their

own subjective perceptions of their status. Whilst parents and elders

often berated them for their inability to find a job, young people

themselves did not always readily accept such definitions:

Jenny: 'Old people are prejudiced against you. You've not only got
       to be standing in the pub and the old gits come in and say..
       'Oh so that's who I'm supporting is it? That's where all my

taxes are going?' But a lot of people try to understand. I
don't care what they think. I just try to get on with what
I'm doing.'

They were more inclined to blame external circumstances familiar to

everyone, such as the state of the economy:

Ada: 'No, I don't think there's no hope now. Unless you get a
        shop job or something. See there's everyone being laid off,
        and made redundant. In the main factories on the Island.
        'Cept for Abbotts and then you have to join a big waiting
        list. Twinlocks, Arthur Millars, that typewriting place,
        all just laying people off.... I s'pose it's got to get
        worse before it gets better.'

Furthermore, employment was not the only source of status for

teenagers immediately after they had left school. Status amongst

peers was judged by positions in the local sub-cultures. These alter-

native sources of status resulted in some teenagers adopting self

images which were deliberately antithetical to those required by

employers, such as the 'punk' image:

Ada: 'Then there was this bloke above. He was a good bloke.
        He always tried to talk me out of being silly and that.
        Being a punk. But that was what I wanted. That was
        part of the trouble. I wouldn't give in to him, by
        changing to coming in all nicely dressed and that.'

Jenny: 'And what else came up? Oh, I went for the job, at the
        White House - I had to go down that Farm Shop down in
        the Broadway and the bloke who interviewed me said:
        'Well, of course you know, if you get this job you've got
        to have very smart appearance - you've got to wear a skirt
        everyday and be really smart and no cheekiness", and this
        and that, 'And if you don't hear from us by Saturday
        you'll know you haven't got the job". And I didn't hear
        from them and that was that. (Laughter). I look smart
        when I want now.'

At times this determination to assert individual identity at the risk of losing jobs could _enhance_ status in the peer group:[11] teenagers would recount with pride how they confronted employers even when this involved losing jobs. However, this was in a context where employment did not offer a secure status and failed to fulfil the aspirations which young people had held. An alternative status provided a means of appearing to reject employment before they were rejected by it. This was therefore a short term defensive strategy.

(v) The loss of regular activity

Unemployed teenagers on Sheppey complained that one of the worst features of being unemployed was the boredom which resulted from having no worthwhile activity. Leisure was a commodity which they could not afford and hence the absence of an income was exacerbated by the need to fill large tracts of time.

I have already indicated that some young people were able to pursue alternative occasional and informal activities but these seldom consumed all their time. Most of the time was spent 'doing nothing'.[12] Doing nothing in fact involved a regular pattern of activity, but it was not defined as worthwhile activity. For unemployed teenagers 'doing nothing' was contrasted with doing 'something'. 'Something' involved some departure from routine activity.

Jenny: 'When I've got no money, I stay in and wait and see if anyone comes round. No, I just stay in, play records, go round Keith and Sue's, go up me mum's, go round and see someone, or just wait here; do some washing. Don't know, it depends, you can never tell, 'cos things always sort of crop up, and you think: 'God, I've got to see her again', doing nothing, then something sort of happens.'

C.W. So you're never really sitting around doing nothing for long?

Jenny: 'No more than a day.'

C.W.   Then you go somewhere else and do nothing?

Jenny: 'Yes. There's always something really, it never
            gets that bad'.

C.W.   You feel most bored when you haven't been doing a lot?

Jenny: 'Yer. Well. I just sort of...... before when I used
            to get bored I just used to jump the trains and go up
            to London or something. Or do something. But now I've
            got a bit lazy and I've not been doing much. Been more
            sort of boring. If I get bored I just go and have an
            argument with someone.'

C.W.   You'd do something to sort of liven things up a bit?

Jenny: 'Yes. Well I wouldn't do anything drastic, nothing.....

C.W.   Like smash a window?

Jenny: 'No. Just sort of. Just something. There's always
            something you can do.'

Such'somethings' could either occur spontaneously in the course of

the day or had to be created through wild adventures which might other-

wise appear irrational.[13]

    Boredom was the corollary of doing nothing. Indeed, boredom

was mentioned so frequently, that I began to inquire more deeply into

it's true meaning. Boredom was used to describe a range of undesirable

states of being, but there were two kinds of boredom: boredom imposed

by others and boredom which was self-generated. Having to perform

tasks under the authority of others - whether at school or at work -

was boring:

C.W.   Did you ever get bored?

Ada: 'Yes. Sometimes. I used to fall asleep. At Abbots
              they used to give you the women's job. You just done
              that same job all day. Just sticking labels on
              bottles or just putting bottles on a conveyor belt.
              Just doing that all day. Just sitting there. Your
              mind wandered, you're thinking abour something, you
              fall asleep.'

However, escape from the supervision of others could also be boring

if there was no meaningful activity to fill the space, Ada goes on

to explain:

C.W.   Were you more bored working than on the dole, or the
              other way round?

Ada: 'I was bored in a different way. Just sitting there
              doing bottles all day. Just get totally bored. It
              just drives you mad. You're not doing nothing. Just
              sitting there doing the same actions all the time.'

C.W.   Would you rather be at home doing nothing then?

Ada: 'Yer. Because you're not doing nothing. You're
              doing something. You can get bored at your own
              expense. Like you can do what you like there, but
              when you're at work, you have to do that. When
              you're at home you can do something and not bore
              yourself. Play records, or read a book, or something
              like that, or go out for a walk.'

Any kind of routine activity could become boring, whether it was

imposed by employment or caused by having nothing else to do. The

latter kind of boredom however, was at least under the control of the

individual and as with the control of time, young people felt they

needed to assert control over their activities. Whilst the absence of

each of these latent functions of employment was experienced as a loss

under some circumstances, there was considerable ambivalence in responses. Nor did young people necessarily regard employment as providing an acceptable alternative. They were thus trapped between employment and unemployment, trying to escape from both.

It was evident however, that they recognised certain life-styles associated with being unemployed, but they did not necessarily welcome these as an alternative to employment. For example, when asked how they felt about others who were unemployed, nearly every school leaver in the FUS sample replied:

> 'Most of 'em, it's not their fault, so you can't blame them. But some of 'em, they just don't <u>wanna</u> work. They've been years like that and they won't ever change.'
>
> (Unemployed female aged 17)

They also condemned this life-style of permanent unemployment as purposeless:

Jenny: 'I wouldn't want to be like Andy. He's just vegetating I think. He's been like that for years, not going nowhere.'

Consequently, whilst young people adapted fairly readily to life without work through creating alternative life-styles and even valued these as a means of controlling personal time and activity, this was no long-term 'solution' to unemployment.

The young unemployed are frequently described as though they were individual atomised units. However, the majority of school leavers live in families and the nature of the support within the family can serve to mitigate or to exacerbate features of unemployment described so far. It is to this that I now turn.

c)   Unemployment and the Family

Experiences of unemployment varied with the degree of support

provided by the family: this was different for boys and for girls.

Some parents supported their offspring quite generously whilst they

were unemployed, whilst others either refused, or were unable to do

so. This often depended upon the family's own financial circumstances.

Those in families with low incomes or other members out of work felt

considerable financial pressure to find a job. Relatively affluent

families were able to subsidise young people's life-styles to a greater

extent - but nevertheless exerted moral pressure upon them to find jobs.

From the moment the young person started to receive supplementary

benefits or an income, they were expected to pay 'keep' to their parents.

This was usually set at nominal level and not according to the earnings

of the young person. Hence in 1980 it was normally between £5 and £10

per week, when in fact it would cost more than this to maintain a

young adult. Some parents reduced the level of 'keep' when the young

person was unemployed, but it seldom dropped more than a couple of

pounds. Consequently any money earned over the level of 'keep' was

disposable income for the young person. Those earning a reasonable

wage could spend it and those without an income had little surplus.

'Keep' was paid to the mother as part of the housekeeping budget.

Consequently, one of the reasons that it was set at unrealistically low

levels was that it represented an additional source of income for the

mother who was thereby better off once her children had left school

irrespective of how much they actually cost to maintain.[14] Parents

also subsidised young people (either employed or unemployed) indirectly

through buying cigarettes and clothes for them occasionally, for even

parents in difficult financial circumstances were loath to see their

children go without:

C.W.   Do you ever get help from anyone in your family?

Jenny: 'What, close family? Well me mum if I, well I can just go
        up me mum's any time and just sort of walk in and open the
        fridge and eat anything I want to, and I mean, I do that -
        I don't feel guilty about doing that, 'cos I know me mum
        won't mind at all. If I go into her and say: 'Is it alright
        if I have such and such?' She says: 'Yes, silly cow, you
        can have what you bloody well like, just take it, sort of
        thing. And if I haven't got any money, she'll always just
        lend me some. I never sort of borrow a lot of money off her,
        but like, if she gives me fifty pence here and there, or a
        quid here and there, and she'll say: "No, forget it -
        I don't want it back", sort of thing. But I try and pay
        back most of what I have off of her, what I borrow, a
        couple of quid now and then. I nearly always pay her back.'

    Variations in the financial circumstances of the young unemployed

depended upon the level of this _indirect_ subsidy by parents: poorer

families could not provide much in the way of subsidies but more affluent

families could. This indirect subsidisation served to shelter young

people from some of the more brutal consequences of unemployment: they

did not have to face accumulating bills and court orders, or to dread

knocks on the door from debt collectors in the way that the adult

unemployed householders did. It was this security provided by the natal

home which perhaps allowed young people the confidence to be critical of

employment conditions, to adopt alternative identities and to leave jobs

which they did not regard as acceptable. The financial pressures which

unemployment exerted upon the young people were therefore of a very

different kind to those experienced by their parents.

    However, parents did exert _moral_ pressure upon young people to

find jobs and to remain in them, for they often found it difficult to

understand why their children rejected employment. The following

comment from a boy who had been unemployed during most of the year since leaving school illustrates this:

Mark: 'I told me mum about the apprenticeship and she got me to go for it. Dad said the same thing. They all say it. That's the main reason I actually got the job. You keep having people nagging at you and in the end you get fed up with it. Me mum and dad wanted me to prove that I could do it. And they wanted to prove to the other relatives that I could do it, like me gran and grandad. They're old-fashioned me gran and grandad (he lives with them) and they believe in doing a steady job and all this sort of thing. It's their generation I suppose.'

and one girl said:

'You see they don't understand (the parents). They don't understand what it's like being unemployed. They think I'm not <u>looking</u> for work. It wasn't like this when they left school. It's not their fault though really, I suppose - it's the way they were brought up.'

Other parents found jobs for their children and were angry when their children failed to keep them, as the following incident from the interview with a boy who had left a number of jobs indicates:

C.W. What would you like to do?

Mother interrupts - 'Precisely what he's doing now - nothing! Because he's got no interest in sticking a job for longer than two weeks. It makes me mad. He's just left all of them. I would never help him get another job.'

The boy himself grinned sheepishly at this.

Parents resented their children adapting to a life without work and this frequently caused arguments in the home. They also tried to encourage young people to do work around the home partly as a contribution to the household and partly as a moral discipline. Boys were expected

to mow the lawn or put up shelves whilst girls were expected to do the

housework, and indirect subsidisation was justified in this way:

Sally's
Mother: 'She's alright. She helps me with the washing and cleaning
and the ironing. I don't let her sit around all day
doing nothing.'

However, girls were expected to do a great deal more housework than

boys were, usually being given a set of daily tasks. Consequently,

they often felt oppressed by this re-allocation of domestic labour.

Employed girls, by contrast, did much less housework, so one of the

main incentives for girls to find employment was precisely in order to

escape from domestic labour.

Thus, whilst girls had alternative roles to turn to, these were

not necessarily welcome ones. Another way of escaping from this was

to find their own home, either independently or by moving in with a male

partner, for at least in this way they could control their own domestic

work:

'Yer, well I didn't used to like it (housework). But this
is me own home, so it'sdifferent. In fact I'm very houseproud
now. You do it the way you want.'

(Married female aged 18)

The indirect subsidisation by parents was an ambiguous advantage.

Earning a wage had traditionally been a means by which the young person's

status within the home was transformed. They could go out where and

when they liked because they did so with their own money. Therefore,

unemployment led to greater dependence upon parents and greater control

by parents, particularly for girls who were more domestically cons-

trained.

D)   Unmemployment and the Transition to Adulthood

I have discussed the short-term strategies for maintaining status

in the face of rising unemployment. However, in the long term there

were other perhaps more serious problems associated with the reproduction

of social roles. Whilst young people defended their freedom to 'doss

about' for a few years by drifting in and out of work, they assumed

that ultimately adult gender identities required men to have jobs and

women to become housewives and mothers supported by a wage-earning man.

These expectations were undermined by the real conditions of life in

which many men did not have jobs. Therefore whilst in the immediate

period on leaving school feelings of deprivation were due to lack of

surplus income or having nothing to do, in the long term it was the

loss of an acceptable adult role which was the most threatening

prospect as the following statements make clear:

> 'Yes. Because I want, like everyone else I want everything
> in life. I don't want to get married to a girl and 'ave
> nothing behind me. You know, I want something behind me
> before I get married. 'Cos it's no use getting married and
> you're on the dole, you ain't working or anything like that,
> I mean you've got nothing to look forward to. I'd sooner
> 'ave a job behind me, the money behind me, before I get
> married anyway.'

                              (Male aged 18)

> 'I wouldn't get married if I didn't have a job. I'd feel
> cheap living off me wife's work. I'd want to get a job
> behind me.'

                              (Male aged 18)

> Ada: I wouldn't get married on the dole. Where would you live?
>   How would you get food in? You couldn't build nothing up
>   on the dole. You're stuck with what you've got.'

Thus, the transition to adulthood required both an assumption of adult

domestic roles and patterns of consumption associated with home building

which were predicated upon access to regular employment: in other words,
the 'package of adulthood'.[15] Therefore young people ultimately had
very traditional and conservative views of gender roles. Girls on
the other hand were more *critical of these.*

I shall now consider the construction of gender identities
amongst school leavers and the ways in which employment and unemploy-
ment affect them, then turn to the reproduction of domestic roles under
these conditions.

E)   Employment, Unemployment
                   and the Reproduction of Gender Roles

(i) Expectations of Feminine Roles

Those who have focussed upon the reproduction of gender roles
amongst girls have argued that it is important to take both their roles
as workers and their future domestic status into account. They have
also argued that there is some contradiction between these different
expectations in the experiences of young women leaving school
(Pollert 1981, Griffin 1983, Gaskell 1983).

This tension between domestic status and employment status was
expressed by girls on Sheppey too, for whilst they recognised that
ultimately they would have family responsibilities, they insisted that
they wanted to be independent and 'live a bit' before 'settling down'.
Thus, in a number of discussions before they left school, girls argued
that they would not have children until their mid-twenties in order to
enable them to do this: [16]

> 'Of course, you want to travel a bit first, see
> the world, do something exciting...... I don't
> want to end up like my mum - she never gets to
> do anything.'

> 'Oh, I want to get a flat up in London. As
> soon as I've got some money together. Not just
> staying here all the time, that's too boring.'

Thus, whilst in the <u>long term</u> girls recognised that they would have to fulfil traditional feminine roles, in the short term many resisted them. This desire for independence was based upon the assumption that employment would provide a regular income enabling them to pursue other life goals.

Girls' perceptions of their roles within the family were likewise constructed around the assumption of their roles as workers. Hence, they argued that women who were working should expect men to perform some of the domestic labour:

> 'Well, its not fair, if the man's at home and the
> woman's working then he should help with the
> housework....... 'cos you can't do it all otherwise.'

This sentiment corresponds with the findings of the 1981 SCPR sample survey which explored the domestic division of labour in households on the Island. Those households where the woman worked full time were the ones which were more likely to share domestic labour.[17]

Boys were more uniformly conservative in their opinions: they insisted that a woman's place was in the home and a man's place was out at work:

'Well, it stands to reason, don't it? If the blokes out working he should have his dinner ready for him when he gets back. A wife should be at home. That's what they're for. A man's a breadwinner.'

However, one year after leaving school, half the girls in the FUS sample were engaged or 'courting' and one fifth had got married, had babies or were cohabiting. Despite their initial resistence, girls had been 'caught' in domestic roles. The other half however, continued to reject this set of expectations.

Jenny: 'I don't believe in it. Marriage is - oh - awful. I mean if you - I can't see how you can really think that much of one person anyway - but if you do - marriage is just greed I think. It's just jealousy. It's sort of a little bit of paper saying 'You belong to me', sort of it's just, it isn't fair - if you think of it. It's better to live with them and get on with it, whenever it comes. It's just a bit of paper isn't it? Just like ownership. Yer. Like having a dog licence.'

C.W. What do you want to do?

'Not just stay on this island and get married and have a husband and a baby and get out to work; dinner on the table and 'What did you do today?' That's terribly boring. I want to do something different. Do something with my life. Families are boring altogether. You know it's 'my family's better than yours, my baby's better 'n yours'. I live next door to a young family and it's all hassle all the time. The young girl up the road, she's got 2 children and she's worrying all the time about how she can pay the bills, because her husband's not living with her.'

(Female aged 17)

Before considering the experiences of girls who did assume roles as housewives and mothers in the FUS sample it is necessary to explore the ways in which gender roles were ascribed and received by young people in the Isle of Sheppey. Gender roles were reinforced materially by the fact that girls received lower wages than boys and were therefore obliged to be supported either by family or a male partner, socially

through expectations of appropriate adult behaviour and _symbolically_ through codes of conduct which prescribed social behaviour for both genders.

(ii) Symbolic codes of behaviour

The transition to family life took place at a much earlier stage for girls than for boys for in their first year after leaving school, most were in stable relationships, often with boys whom they had known whilst still at school. Their boyfriends or fiancees were normally some years older. Consequently girls were expected to behave as adult women and become initiated into adult social activities at an earlier age than were boys. This vertical integration into adult roles was reinforced by being given adult domestic responsibilities within the home. Boys,by contrast, mostly associated with peers of their own age and theirs was therefore a horizontal, age-specific transition into adulthood.[18]

Gender roles were characterised by symbolic codes of 'sexual honour' which it was necessary to validate publicly.[19] For girls, sexual honour was defined by the universal distinction between 'nice girls' and 'whores' and this meant that honour was maintained _defensively_. One means of doing this was through ideologies of romantic love, for to be too sexually available was to risk 'pollution' and loss of status. Hence, girls had some incentive to exert proprietorial rights over male partners, for if the man was a 'bit of a lad' this would undermine their own status. However, honour was not simply passively received, it needed to be _actively_ maintained, and girls were self-consciously aware of the contradictions this imposed. As one girl said: "If I was a bloke, I would screw everything in sight, but as a girl you've got to be more careful". Romantic love was therefore partly a _strategy_

to legitimate relationships with men and allow participation in the
male-defined public places, such as pubs. Consequently, it sometimes
took exaggerated public forms. These exaggerated forms were particularly
evident when relationships ended,for girls were expected to display any
grief publicly and would also harrass any new girlfriend of a former
partner for months afterwards even when the man was irretrievably lost
to them. This manipulation of codes of romantic love is very different
to the passive   retreat into romance described by some writers.[20]

Whilst for girls honour could more easily be lost than gained,
for boys it had to be <u>won.</u> [21]   This was achieved through codes of prowess
which were highly ritualised and were communicated publicly by the
retailing of stories. Thus, honour could be won through grand Quixotic
gestures of defiance against those in authority - such as employers,
the school or the police - and many of their supposedly deviant activi-
ties could be explained in these terms. Although the young man might
risk suffering punishment it nevertheless enhanced his status in the
community. Honour could also be won through predatory sexuality, by
aggressive sexism and by 'pulling the birds' and hence was inversely
related to girls' sexual honour. This too had to be publicly displayed
leading boys to invent or exaggerate their conquests when they retold
them afterwards.

For boys, honour was lost won or redeemed through their status
in the peer group. Consequently, the male peer group was bonded through
the celebration of wild behaviour. This included embellished stories
of fighting, or more commonly, excessive bouts of drinking or drug
taking which could perhaps be described as a form of self-immolating
heroism. In this way, apparently irrational behaviour became a source
of status and prestige.

Thus, it would appear that male teenager's sense of masculinity was insecure - it needed to be continually reaffirmed and 'proved'. This imposed rigid rules upon masculine behaviour with those who refused to conform being labelled as 'poofs'. This universally derogatory labelling was not so much a consequence of the fact that homosexuals threatened them in any physical way - the few homosexuals on Sheppey kept a very low profile - but rather because homosexuality implied an ambiguous masculinity.

Male sexual honour was also defined through women. Whilst women exerted proprietorial rights through romantic love, men often asserted control through threats of violence. If their wife or girlfriend betrayed them, they were expected to exact revenge in terms of an 'irrational' frenzied burst of rage which might involve assaulting the man responsible. The woman's own preferences were not as important as the public vindication of sexual honour and the papers, cafes and pubs were full of stories of these 'crimes passionelles'. In fact these 'irrational' fits of rage served a social purpose and hence it was important that they became public knowledge.

These characteristics of working-class masculinity have been interpreted as ritualised resistance or the reconstruction of 'magical' forms of working-class solidarity (Hall and Jefferson 1975, Mungham and Pearson 1976). However, they could also be interpreted as attempts to assert and reinforce an otherwise fragile masculinity.

The combination of predatory male sexual honour and the defensive female sexual honour produced an in-built tension in any courting relationship. Girls attempted to control male behaviour by curbing their more excessive escapades and the public presentation of their relationship in the male peer group. Boys resisted this

because being 'under the thumb' of a girlfriend led to a loss of status
in the male peer group. Thus boys would describe themselves as being
'tied down' to girlfriends if they were courting and look back wist-
fully to their wilder days or insist that they preferred their 'freedom'
if they were not courting. Whilst in the short run male sexual honour
would be asserted through symbolic codes of behaviour, in the long run
it was validated through the adoption of more 'traditional' domestic
roles which led to wilder activities being dropped or lessened. This
was partly on account of new patterns of expenditure - money was put
into the building society rather than consumed in excessive bouts of
drinking - and also because masculinity did not need to be 'proved'
quite so emphatically.[22]

(iii) Unemployment and Masculinity

The reproduction of gender roles amongst girls has been the
subject of much debate but for boys it has been regarded as unproble-
matical as long as employment was available. Some have discussed the
importance of the wage packet and employment for maintaining a sense
of masculine power and the impotence associated with the loss of these
things (Willis 1984, Wal sgrove 1984). I have indicated that the
reproduction of family roles for girls also had implications for male
roles and that both boys and girls held very traditional conceptions
of what the male role should be: that of 'breadwinner'. Boys who were
unable to find regular employment were excluded from the masculine
status associated with access to the workplace and the wage packet,
and their potential domestic status within the family in the long-
term was also undermined.

Hence, for boys, the material and the social bases of masculinity
were undermined - they had no money and no status as wage earners -

and consequently, the <u>symbolic</u> expressions of status were exaggerated. The stories through which masculine status were communicated were much dramatised amongst young men who were sub-employed. This was partly a result of the need to create incidents in order to avoid 'doing nothing' and partly a consequence of the fact that story telling was one way of filling time. Stories about otherwise unremarkable incidents were therefore elaborated into ever more fantastical forms, and some of these were presented to me as factual accounts during interviews. However, such stories fitted identifiable ritualised patterns, the form of which remained similar even when the content varied between accounts. These tales were almost entirely about male adventures and whilst girls enjoyed them too, they were also more inclined to dismiss them as fatuous.

A number of these tales covered confrontations with those in authority such as the police, employers and staff at the DHSS. They transformed potentially humiliating encounters with those in power into personal triumphs through <u>a postiori</u> reconstruction in narrative form. The narrator, who would normally be the victim of such encounters, was thereby elevated into a hero and able to exact a form of symbolic revenge even when the net result was further punishment. Consequently, a number of stories about frenzied bursts of rage at the DHSS offices circulated in the community even though in practice such incidents were rare.[23] Outwitting the authorities was likewise a popular theme although in practice the unemployed lived in conspicuous poverty and many of them did not even get the minimal benefits to which they were entitled.[24]

> 'So I went down there to sign on, with me painting and
> artexing gear, didn't I? Parked the van outside. Covered
> in paint I was. Went in there and I says to the geezer
> over the counter, I says, 'Hurry up mate, I'm busy. Got
> things to do, money to spend. I can't afford to hang about
> in here all day'. That makes 'em mad, see? 'Cos they can't

pin nothing on me. I just like to see their faces."

Being marginal to mainstream adult society themselves, unemployed teenagers identified vicariously with romantic rebels whose spirit remained uncrushed, as Ada's description of the songs which he and his friends had written indicates:

C.W.   What sort of songs are they?

Ada: 'Adverts, you know, adverts on the telly. Like just about
       that. And crime, you know, just about people going out
       and famous criminals and that, doing things on the run.'

C.W.   What famous criminals?

Ada: 'The Ripper, a few other ones. There's 'On the Run'.
       That's about being tied down, the bloke gets out, kills
       a few people. And just life in general, that's all.
       It's not just fantasising.'

C.W.   But it's not about your lives is it?

Ada: 'No, er.... just about life in general. You get something
       about speed and the way it affects you. And there are songs
       about nuclear war, and about politicians - "Politicians make
       you sick, they think they know it all, but they don't know
       nothing at all", sort of thing. Always telling lies, they
       say we're going to do such and such, but it never happens.
       It's just a waste of time.'

Similarly, violent confrontations with other groups of youths could be used to elaborate a form of aggressive masculine identity, as this account by an unemployed, self-styled 'skinhead' indicates:

C.W.   What hobbies do you have?

'Bikes and fighting. The only things I enjoy. Have scraps
with someone from Sittingbourne, because they are all poseurs.
They call themselves punks and skinheads and then they hang
around with the soul boys. We wouldn't hang around with
soul boys. Real punks couldn't go to Rock and Roll do's
except for a punch-up outside. We've got this war with the
Sittingbourne lot at the moment. It was Gary Smith and
Darren Dawes went there for a drink one day and that
started it. This bird knew their phone number, so they
phoned up for a gang, so we went over and we massacred 'em.
Then the following Saturday 40 of them came over here and 7
of us kicked them off the Island. They called us 'psycho-
paths', but they're not proper punks. Then next they tried
the Minster crew and they came unstuck and we done 'em in
again when they got to the station in Sheerness. They were
supposed to come last Saturday, but we were all waiting for
them in town and they didn't show up, so a few of us went
over there, and we did a few, and then all the pikies
(gypsies) came along and we beat it. Dave Foreman scrambled
under a car, but he was all cut up and Skinner was all
kicked in. Then they came over to Sheerness later, but the
blokes on the seafront (workmen on sea wall) done 'em in.
The gypos are mostly older blokes, they do weightlifting and
that. They're great for scraps, but you don't mess with
them. I hid in a bush."

He has the 5 Borstal dots tattoed on his arm. I ask him about them.

'I was supposed to go to Borstal, so I got them done, but I
didn't go in the end. I got 2 years' probation instead, and
the police did their nut. The police hate me, because they
know I done things but they can't prove it. I get grassed
up - like for the lead - but they wouldn't tell me who had
done it, because they knew I'd get him.'

(Unemployed male aged 17)

As well as accounts of heroic confrontations with others, some

young unemployed also told dramatised accounts of <u>self</u> destruction

and 'excess' hedonism:

C.W.   Where do you get the money from then, apart from the dole and
        odd jobs?

Ada: 'Er, sold all, virtually all, me belongings to a second-hand
        shop and that. Push bike er, things, I sell me records -
        stuff like that - I don't buy no records now - I used to be
        always buying records - I just go out and blow all me money....
        er, didn't know the value of money, all me belongings -

C.W.   Do you regret that?

Ada: 'No, I haven't got no value for it, 'cos I just go out and
        sell them - I've got value for it, 'cos I think if I want
        some money I'll just sell it.'

C.W.   Has that been since you were unemployed then?

Ada: 'Yep.'

C.W.   So when you were working you were collecting things, and
        since you've been unemployed you've been selling them?

Ada: 'No, I didn't collect nothing - I was working - used to buy
        the odd record, used to just, sort of say, go out and blow all
        me money as usual - pay day. Get paid Thursday night - Friday
        morning I used to be borrowing - and the next week.'

        '....I found the keys on the floor of the fair, so I started
        doing the machines when I needed the money. I got about
        £2,000 but all they could prove I had on me when they caught
        me was £2.15 pence. When they caught me, I said I found the
        keys the day before, but I had been doing it for quite a time.
        It's my word against theirs. They hadn't seen me doing it,
        so I got £2,000 and I blew it all down the pub. I gave Barry
        Baines a fiver a day. I gave it to everyone. I just used
        to open the machines and dig my hands in. They make quite
        a lot up there. All the school kids go down there to spend
        their dinner money, don't they? I'd get it out of the
        machines and give it all back to 'em. I spent most of the
        money down there anyway.'

                              (unemployed male aged 17)

        Masculinity was also asserted in other ways. Tattooing provided
an ideal medium,for it furnished an emblem which could be displayed to
the world and it also provided evidence of the ability to endure pain
in the same manner as the drinking and drug taking stories: it was
a form of masochistic heroism. For those who resorted to tattooing,
the number of tattoos increased with the duration of unemployment.

Boys who had done outdoor labouring jobs were also likely to have been tattooed. Consequently, although tattoos usually began on the arms or hands, having particularly tender parts of the body tattooed could confer more kudos. Thus, there were supposedly tattoos on penises, lips, nipples, backs (this was regarded as painful) and so on. The tattoos were often traditional elaborate sublimated symbols: snakes, daggers, roses, scrolls and tigers being the most popular.[25] In addition, there were the 'home made' tattoos which were normally a mark of having been in a penal institution, although some, like the unemployed boy quoted earlier, tattooed themselves without having been in penal institutions as a mark of toughness.

By using this interpretation of story telling as a means for asserting an increasingly insecure sense of masculine identity, the accounts of informal and occasional work can likewise be re-evaluated. Survival skills were highly prized, expressing the same ideal of independent individualism as was embodied in the self-employed, self-made orientation to outdoor labouring and craft work. Far from concealing this, many young men boasted of their abilities to 'get by'. Consequently, there were stories of how they had refurbished old cars and sold them for a profit or managed clever and perhaps slightly shady deals. The rewards from this were more social than financial for these individuals appeared to be no more affluent than the rest.

The pursuit of craft skills was likewise important in this context for they conferred social kudos by demonstrating a masculine power to transform the world, thus counteracting the sense of impotence associated with being without employment.

(iv) <u>Employment, Unemployment and the Reproduction of the Family</u>

Thus far I have explored responses to employment and unemployment

amongst single teenagers in the FUS sample, and indicated that it was

the transition to adult roles within the family which was inhibited by

unemployment. I now describe the accounts of those in the FUS sample

who did make this transition.

A number of studies have indicated that there are 'two roads

to the altar" [26] in working-class life: the planned and the precipitous.

(Leonard 1980, Jenkins 1983, Rubin 1976) The former involved a long

engagement, extensive savings and a wedding ceremony. The latter was

normally precipitated by unplanned pregnancy and could lead to poverty,

bad housing and multiple social deprivation in what Iniechin (1977) has

termed the 'vortex of disadvantage'.

Amongst the FUS sample, 3 girls in 1980 had planned marriages:

one of them had married immediately on leaving school. All of these

had bought or were buying houses and planned full wedding ceremonies.

However, those who started families during the first year after leav-

ing school mostly followed other routes with eight girls and one boy

pursuing the 'precipitous' method. Thus, 6 per cent of the sample of

girls in 1980 had unplanned pregnancies. [27] However, it should be

noted that these were over-represented in the FUS sample because the

'planners' would have made this transition at a later age. Whilst

the 'planners' used 'safe' methods of contraception or abstained from

sexual relations the rest used minimal precautions or none at all.

These girls were fully aware of contraception, yet they described

themselves as 'falling' pregnant. Once pregnant, they felt that it

was their responsibility to raise the child: any suggestion of an

abortion was strongly condemned. Since most girls expected to have

children at some point in their lives, these unplanned pregnancies

were not necessarily unwelcome and did not altogether surprise them.

Unplanned pregnancy was a consequence not of ignorance, but of the codes of honour which circumscribed their behaviour. Using 'safe' contraceptive methods outside of marriage at the age of fifteen or sixteen was regarded as evidence of sexual availability and could lead to a negative labelling: girls could have sex as long as they did not expect it. For some girls this strategy was a rebellion in itself:

> 'You know, I was rebelling really. I had to prove something.
> I had to show 'em all, show 'em that I could do it, could do
> it all on me own. They just think 'Oh that Alison, she's
> just a wild one, she'll never do anything', but you see I
> got a family now and I can do it on me own.'

However, other girls who planned their marriages or cohabitation and intended to buy houses and cars before having children regarded this strategy as foolish:

> 'I'm getting engaged in October - that's my 18th birthday -
> and then we're getting married in the following year. We've
> been saving since before Christmas and we've put in for our
> own house so we should get that before we're married and
> have the reception round there. We want to get a car first
> really.......

C.W.: Who would you not like to be like?

> 'Carol. I wouldn't want to be like her. She's ruined
> her life completely. I wouldn't want a kid at her age
> and living in that house she's in now... and he's been
> inside 'e had. He's never going to work. And she was
> quite clever at school, but she never got no qualifications
> after she went with him. He won't get a good job. She's
> had no enjoyment at all.'

The girls in the FUS sample differed from those described in other studies for unplanned pregnancy did not necessarily lead to unplanned matrimony.[28] None of the girls wanted to marry immediately and five of them had their babies at the parental home. The majority either

started cohabiting with their boyfriends when they found out they were pregnant or after the baby was born and this was regarded as preferable as a means of getting to know the partner before committing themselves to marriage:

> 'We got engaged in September and we moved into the flat
> when Eddy (the baby) was 8 weeks old. That was about
> 4 months ago and we'll get married perhaps in 2 years
> time. We'll see how it works out first.'

A further 3 girls in 1980 were cohabiting with boyfriends although they were not pregnant. They did not necessarily intend to get married although these relationships were sometimes legitimated through being described as an 'engagement'. Thus cohabitation was seen as a preliminary stage or as preferable to marriage by many girls.[29]

Parents generally approved of these arrangements and saw no reason for their daughters to marry hastily. However, on becoming a father boys were under strong moral pressure from family and in-laws to find a job and provide for their dependents. Parents disapproved of their daughters being attached to men who were not working, and some even went to great lengths to try to sever their daughter's relationship with such men: this was one of the reasons why some of them preferred their daughters to cohabit than to get married. Cohabitation was a less permanent attachment.[30]

Thus whilst there was some flexibility in styles of domestic arrangement, traditional gender roles were strongly reinforced for both boys and girls. For some girls marriage, cohabitation or pregnancy (mostly the latter two) provided the possibility of an escape from the natal home, a new status in the community and an independent sphere over which they could exercise control.[31] It was also a

strategy for asserting secure proprietorial rights over an otherwise

potentially straying boyfriend, for controlling and holding down a man

were important for the maintenance of a woman's sexual honour. I have

already indicated that there was more incentive for girls who were

unemployed to escape from oppressive relationships and domestic

exploitation in the natal home. Although the FUS sample was not

large enough to give any indication overall of the relationship

between life-cycle transitions and unemployment, it can be seen that

this did provide an alternative status to that of extended dependency

upon parents. For girls marriage, cohabitation or pregnancy were a

short cut to adult status.

F)   Discussion

I now return to hypotheses 4, 5 and 6 in order to assess how

far they have been confirmed or refuted.

4.   That unemployment leads to the loss of the five latent functions

       of work which are essential to social and psychological well-being

       Each of these five latent functions have been considered in turn.

       a) Time Structure:

       Whilst employment imposes a time structure this was also

       resisted. Being unemployed too, was associated with a regular

       pattern of activity but was perceived to be purposeless. Time

       was indeed experienced very differently by the young people

       when they were out of work compared to when they were in work.

b) <u>Status</u>:

Status could be maintained through rejecting some forms of work and through adopting alternative identities. However, this was a defensive strategy. Young people's sense of personal identity did not necessarily correspond with the status ascribed to them by others.

c) <u>Collective participation</u>:

Participation in collective projects could be pursued more fruitfully through activities outside of employment. However, not all the unemployed had access to these.

d) <u>Social isolation</u>:

Most of the unemployed were not isolated in their first year after leaving school. Only those who for various reasons were unable to associate with other unemployed friends became isolated.

e) <u>Lack of Activity</u>:

The lack of meaningful activity was regarded as one of the main disadvantages of unemployment. However, most employment was not thought to provide particularly worthwhile activity either.

Thus whilst all these categories of experience were applicable to some school leavers under some circumstances, their responses were ambivalent. There was also some diversity in experiences of unemployment and this depended upon the situation of the young person within the natal family and the presence or absence of a circle of peers.

5. <u>That unemployment leads to exclusion from youth culture.</u>

The Sheppey data illustrates that unemployment did not necessarily lead to exclusion from youth culture: some youth

cultures were created around unemployment.[32] However, it did
lead to exclusion from adult working-class culture and the
package of adulthood.

6.   <u>That unemployment for girls is less serious than that for boys</u>
      <u>because they have alternative sources of status within the home</u>
      Analysis of the Sheppey data shows that unemployment was
      experienced differently by male and by female youth . For
      girls it could mean an absorption into domestic roles although
      this was not particularly welcomed by all of them. Indeed,
      the incorporation into the domestic division of labour in the
      natal home could serve to push girls out. Domestic labour
      within the natal home under the direction of parents was
      regarded far more negatively than domestic labour in their own
      home.

Altogether the young unemployed adopted a number of defensive strategies
for preserving personal identity by creating alternative sources of
status. These sources of status often inverted conventional ones.
Hence boys and girls would adopt the opposite form of behaviour to
that expected by parents and employers. However, this was a short-
term strategy only. In the long term, they were expected to conform
to traditional male and female roles based upon positions within the
nuclear family. Unemployment served to undermine these roles for
young men whilst it reinforced them for young women. Girls responded
either by rejecting these roles or by espousing them through marriage,
pregnancy or cohabitation as a route to independent adult status. Boys
on the other hand, were more likely to retreat into fantasised roles
and status which were created and sustained through ritualised
anecdotal story-telling. Thus it was not the latent functions of employment
which were lost through unemployment so much as the <u>social reproduction</u>
of traditional domestic roles.

CHAPTER 11   CONCLUSIONS

School, work and unemployment on the Isle of Sheppey have been
described in some considerable historical detail. I have shown how
the more general processes of socialisation and social reproduction
discussed in abstract in Part I take place in a specific context as
part of a continuing process of recreation and transmission.
Whilst institutions such as the family, school and employment are
universal , the ways in which they are experienced are locationally
specific. It is now necessary to return to the more general level
and here I discuss some features of social reproduction which
emerged from the empirical data.

The hypotheses derived from Part I of the thesis have been
modified in the following ways: firstly, models of socialisation and
occupational choice need to take into account the importance of job
preferences in determining perceptions of labour market entry amongst
young people on first leaving school. Job preferences are in turn
related to the reproduction of occupational cultures. Secondly,
young people cannot be accused of lacking the appropriate skills for
employment, when the skills required locally are very limited and those
which are necessary have been absorbed through experiences of informal
and occasional work prior to leaving school. The universalised
formulations of new skills required in a changing economy described
by Holland and others and put into operation through the MSC schemes
do not necessarily apply in specific contexts. Thirdly, girls
regarded themselves primarily as workers on first leaving school, but
these expectations were in conflict with their ultimate destinations
as domestic workers within the family and consequently their aspirations

were lower. Their roles as workers however, were undermined by unemployment. Fourthly whilst the latent functions of employment were recognised as being important to young people, they were also opposed. There was therefore some ambiguity in young people's responses to employment and unemployment and the one was not necessarily the solution to problems associated with the other. Fifthly, whilst young people were able to cope with unemployment through creating sub-cultural responses which opposed dominant expectations - often by inverting them - this was a short-term defensive strategy since the assumption of full adult roles in the working-class community was predicated upon access to employment. Finally, traditional feminine roles were reinforced by unemployment - although some girls resisted this - whilst traditional masculine ones were undermined.

These hypotheses needed to be modified because they were originally based upon normative assumptions about the role of employment in an expanding or stable economy. In such a situation, subjective perceptions of roles acquired through socialisation within the family and within education, came to fit the objective conditions in the labour market and the workforce was thus 'reproduced'. On the Isle of Sheppey however, the historical de-skilling in the labour market and a more recent drastic decline in the opportunities for young people, resulted in a disjunction between expectations derived from schooling or the family, and labour market destinations. Subjective perceptions of identity do not entirely match objective conditions. This does not necessarily imply that socialisation processes had broken down altogether, for the family and education system still served to reproduce divisions in the work force between mental and manual, skilled and unskilled, male and female labour, but rather that

there were some problems of adjustment associated with the initial entry into work. Consequently, young people were concerned to escape from unsatisfacory experiences at school and from the undesirable impositions of much of the employment which they were expected to undertake. This resulted in some volatility in the labour market for those who extended their resistance into leaving unacceptable jobs, and a measure of resignation or discontent amongst those who accommo-dated them.

Whilst most accounts have described this transition as one from full-time education to full-time employment, it is evident that on Sheppey this was a far more fragmented process involving periods in and out of employment, informal and occasional jobs, periods on MSC schemes, and so on. Informal and occasional work could serve as a strategy of job search, a means of learning appropriate skills and a way of filling time between jobs. It was associated with the indivi-dualistic ethic of self-employment which pervaded some sections of the community on the Island. However, this was no long term 'solution' to unemployment nor an alternative to full employment, but rather, a short-term temporary substitute.

Why was there resistance to employment under conditions of labour market decline? At one level this can be explained by the disjunction between subjective expectations and labour market conditions. However, another explanation is that young people were not fully reproduced as workers when they first left school. It is evident that employment imposed brutal and oppressive requirements upon young people which they perceived to be alien to their own needs. Whilst they wished to assume roles as workers in the community their exper-iences of employment were far from satisfactory. They would surely

recognise Marx's description of alienations:

> 'What constitutes the alienation of labour?
> Firstly, the fact that labour is <u>external</u> to the worker
> i.e. does not belong to his essential being; that he
> therefore does not conform himself in his work, but denies
> himself, feels miserable and not happy, does not develop
> free mental and physical energy, but mortifies his flesh
> and ruins his mind. Hence the worker feels himself only
> when he is not working; when he is working he does not
> feel himself. He is at home when he is not working, and
> not at home when he is working. His labour is therefore not
> voluntary but forced, it is <u>forced labour</u>. It is therefore
> not the satisfaction of a need but a mere means to satisfy
> needs outside itself'
>
> (Marx 1975, p.326)

The question would therefore be better phrased in reverse: what needs
explaining is not why young people resist employment but how it is
that they eventually come to accept it. Thus, whilst young people did
not necessarily shirk work - indeed they had (for the most part) high
expectations of it - they did resist the terms and conditions of
employment which were perceived to be <u>arbitrary</u> in nature. The latent
functions of employment were imposed in what was felt to be an arbi-
trary manner: one which did not take into account the young person's
own satisfactions, needs and priorities. It was through this arbitrari-
ness that the nature of power relationships were revealed - and resisted.[1]

Given the nature of this latent tension, phenomena such as job
departure, resistance to work roles and the inversion of 'respectable'
expectations are more explicable. Furthermore, I have indicated that
the incorporation of young people into the work force depends not only
upon their socialisation as workers, for this is problematical, but
ultimately upon the reproduction of social roles in general. Hence,
their roles as men and women, mothers and fathers and consumers as
well as their roles as workers, need to be taken into account. The
social reproduction of the family life cycle and the social expectations

which this implied. This more generalised social reproduction can be

described diagramatically as follows:

Fig.3.

THE SOCIAL REPRODUCTION OF ROLES AND RELATIONS

Parallel Stages in the Reproduction Process

I	II	III
School ⟶	Entry into the Labour Market ⟶	Full Incorporation into Labour Force
Family of Origin ⟶	Courting ⟶	Family of Destination
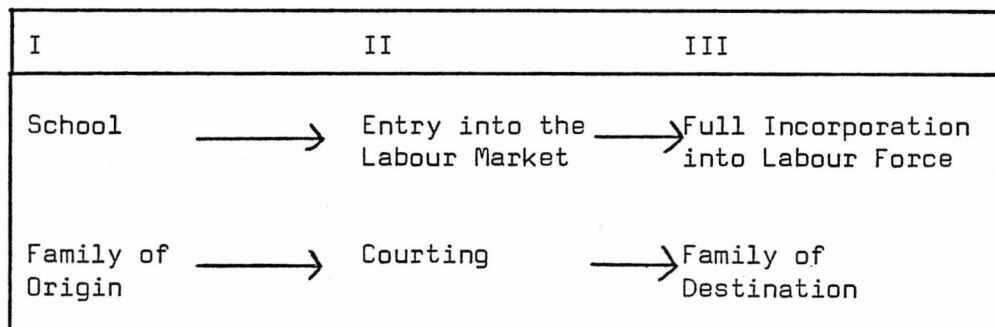
This cycle of reproduction can take place over the period of just a

few months - as in the case of working-class female school leavers -

or over a longer time span as in the case of those continuing into

Further and Higher Education. Taking each part in turn, I now consider

both the longitudinal relationship between stages, and the vertical

relationship between different levels of social reproduction.

Whilst schooling serves to reproduce divisions within the work-

force, irrespective of whether the organisation of the school is

'progressive' or 'traditional', the manner in which it does so depends

upon the character of the local economy. Where employment is low

skilled and poorly rewarded, and where qualifications are relevant for

only a minority in the search for work, then forms of cultural reproduc-

tion external to school are more important for habituating young people

to their roles within the workforce. In conditions such as those

prevailing on Sheppey, schooling reinforced the social division of

labour in general but was an inefficient vehicle of reproduction for

specific work roles. These were learned outside school.

The period between leaving school and becoming fully incorporated

as adult workers and consumers was characterised by erratic and highly
changeable behaviour. Attitudes, aspirations and ambitions were
often experimental and in the case of some young people involved the
adoption of deviant identities. Parker (1975) and Corrigan (1979)
have described how this takes place in the case of boys and Wilson (1978)
in the case of girls. However, girls being more vertically inte-
grated into the family and the community. They became absorbed into
adult roles which demanded more conformity to dominant social expecta-
tions. Boys, by contrast, are expected to demonstrate their gender
identities through public displays of prowess within the peer group.

Turning now to the reproduction of the domestic cycle, it is
evident that this too should be seen in its historical context. For
the pre-Second World War generation of working-class adults, the
grandparents of my sample, adolescence implied a different set of
expectations. They were sent out to work at the minimum age because
their income was regarded as a contribution towards the household
budget. Working-class families at that time could seldom afford to
keep children in education beyond the minimum age   (Gillis 1974,
Humphries 1981). As recently as 1942, Jephcott describes the mortifica-
tion of one of her respondents who could not find a job at the age of
fifteen because she feared that she would become a burden to her
parents.

The post-war period saw the birth of the teenage consumer and
relatively high wages for young people compared to previous periods
(Abrams 1961, Casson 1979). Moreover, young people being better fed,
better housed and better educated, gained a new confidence through the
growth of the consumer market and youth cultures which became sources
of commercial exploitation. 'Youth' became a distinctive social
category (Cashmore 1984).

Their position in relation to the domestic cycle changed

correspondingly as the age of marriage and courtship fell throughout the twentieth century. After the Second World War, young people began getting married younger in the expectation of being able to support themselves independently (Leonard 1980). Working-class youth became more like middle-class youth in the sense that instead of being a source of income for their families, their families began to subsidise them. The flow of resources from children to parents was reversed and this had implications for the moral basis of traditional family roles. Parents who grew up in the prosperity of the 1960's with the explosion in teenage consumption, were anxious that their children did not fall behind in the race to acquire consumer goods and this is perhaps more a preoccupation for working-class parents than for middle-class ones : their affection was expressed through ensuring their children always had new clothes. Moreover, this concern was also expressed in 'over-subsidisation' or an ideology of indulgence towards children - what Leonard has termed the phenomenon of 'spoiling'.

This pattern of indulgence is also associated with the ethos of expressive hedonism which developed in the 1960's and which middle and working-class youth cultures embodied (Martin, 1981). The stern puritanism of the old middle-class and respectable working-class family (as described, for example, by Hoggart), was swept away and replaced by an ethic of consumption.

The erosion of the material bases of traditional working-class roles and life-styles took place contemporaneously with these broader cultural changes. The dismembering of the traditional pre-war community, cemented by poverty and extended kinship, was assisted by the construction of new housing estates and the drift to the suburbs. Established adult roles and models having disappeared, working-class

youth resorted to 'magical' solutions (Cohen 1972, Hall and Jefferson, 1975).

Open-plan comprehensive schools began to replace austere Victorian buildings for disciplinarian education. These were governed through the use of repressive tolerance, rather than repressive authoritarianism, although like the new housing estates they soon deteriorated into new forms of public squalor.

Finally, a spirit of individualistic, home-centred privatisation replaced solidaristic collectivism amongst some sections of the working-class (Newby et al. 1984) This was encouraged materially by the growth of owner occupied housing, private transport and the privatisation of collective consumption (Saunders 1982). It was further facilitated by the growth of instant credit and hire purchase schemes.

Consequently, during the post-war period of expansion young people developed new roles both in the family and in society generally based upon their financial independence and consumer power. Parents were able to express their affection through the indirect subsidisation of teenager's life-styles. The symbols of this new social status - such as cars, motor bikes and stereos - were acquired ones. Although many of those who have analysed youth cultures argue against the existence of a 'generational consciousness', it was nevertheless loudly proclaimed in popular culture.[2] An example is provided in a song by 'The Who': 'My Generation'.

This generational change in cultural styles and the material bases of social roles took place at the same time as theoretical changes in the means of accounting for them within sociology. The post-Robbins expansion in Higher Education encouraged the recruitment of a generation of sociologists sympathetic towards working-class styles

and expressions and anxious to account for them in terms of 'primitive' revolt. Hence there was an emergence of a 'new' sociology of youth.

However, unemployment serves to undermine this status. Firstly, the lack of a full income erodes the independence and freedom young people had come to expect over the Post War period. Rather than achieving independence through consumer culture, they are forced into an extended dependency upon parents. Since this role is very different from that experienced by the preceding generation, parents find it difficult to accept the apparently aimless lives of their offspring. This could be a source of tension in some families.

An additional factor was that some parents were themselves afflicted by unemployment. In these cases, they could no longer afford to provide indirect subsidisation for children. Thus, the family became more economically dependent upon the young person's contribution, in a similar manner to the working-class family before the Second World War, and 'keep' became more than merely a token gesture. Whilst some young people accepted this readily and increased their financial contribution, others were resentful - why should they have less to spend than their friends? This too was a possible source of conflict. Altogether, 29 or nearly one third of the FUS sample had left home by 1980 and roughly half of these moves could be attributed to tensions within the family.3

Finally, moving to the last stage in the reproductive cycle, the transition to the home of destination, this was likewise based upon assumptions developed over the Post War period. The formation of a new family implied social expectations of the different roles men and women were to perform and forms of consumption associated with 'home building': the good man was the one who was steadily employed

and spent his time and his money in the home, the good woman, whether

employed or not, also spent her time helping to build a comfortable

home. This home building required certain consumer items such as a

three piece suite, a television and preferably a home of one's own,

which symbolised the family itself.[4] These were of course <u>acquired</u>

symbols.

Thus whilst young people might have a 'wild' period in their

youth they ultimately expected to conform to dominant expectations and

their families reinforced these expectations.

Therefore, the importance of social maturation in the construc-

tion of gender identities serves to reproduce young people as workers.

Glickman (1975) had indicated there is no clear rite-de-passage in

our society and therefore the transition to adulthood takes place

through the acquisition of consumer symbols which are conferred a

cultural meaning   (Willis 1977, Seabrook 1982). <u>It is through roles

as consumers that reproduction takes place.</u> Buying a car

or saving for a mortgage are powerful incentives to remain steadily

employed and the pressures to participate in these forms of consump-

tion increase as the young person moves into their late teens.

The process of social maturation is further encouraged by the

construction of gender roles amongst teenagers. Courting, engagement,

marriage and parenthood forced young people to conform to external

requirements which they may have been able to resist when they first

left school.   Courting also encouraged the acquisition of consumer

symbols and was circumscribed by strict codes of sexual honour which

eventually ensured the reproduction of adult gender and family roles.

Unemployment, however, served to undermine these roles and

these patterns of consumption. The socially ascribed status of

breadwinner was no longer possible, nor were the acquisition of the consumer items which comprised the home . However, the fact that these future roles were threatened, made young people even more conservative in their normative expectations. For girls, one road to independence and adult status was to get married, cohabit or become pregnant. For boys, the erosion of the material and social bases of masculine roles led them to assert status more aggressively through symbolic forms of machismo.

The model of social and cultural reproduction proposed here can be used to situate accounts of youthful deviance, labour market behaviour and the ascription of gender identities within an overall process. Feminist accounts emphasising the importance of domestic roles and accounts of male behaviour emphasising the role of resistance can be shown to be complementary rather then contradictory. The reproduction of gender roles is important for both sexes.

Moreover, this model indicates that the MSC funding through YOP's or the Youth Training Scheme, is directed at the very period of adolescent life when young people are able to assert the most resistance. The reproduction of the domestic cycle serves to socialise young people into work roles far more efficiently than Government sponsored training. The fact that such training is not welcomed enthusiastically by young people does not necessarily mean that a generation of 'unemployables' is being produced.

Moreover, this model also enables us to situate different accounts of unemployment. Unemployment is experienced differently depending upon at which stage of the transition it occurred. At the beginning of the process it could be used as a strategy of resistance to employment whilst at the end of the cycle its implications are more serious.

Finally, this model adds an additional dimension to theories
of 'cultural reproduction'. It is not simply the reproduction of
orientations to work through the education system which recreates the
workforce, as these are incomplete and contradictory. It is the
acquisition of mature adult status in the community through consumer
symbols and the reproduction of the life cycle which complete the
process. The unemployed, denied access to real sources of status,
resort to fantasy to fulfil these goals and this affects males more
adversely than females. How far these fantasies can be sustained in
the longer term as unemployment rises must be the subject of continuing
research.

Footnotes to Chapter 1

1. The New Society article was based upon 142 essays written by pupils at the Sheppey School. They were asked to imagine that they were looking back from the end of their lives and to describe what had happened to them (Pahl 1978).

2. The full list of reports are listed in Chapter 7, footnote 1.

3. Relevant publications arising from the project are listed below:
   Pahl, R.E. and Wallace, C.D. (1982), The Restructuring of Capital, The Local Political Economy and Household Work Strategies : All Forms of Work in Context. Paper prepared for the Xth World Congress of Sociology, Mexico City.

   Pahl, R.E. (1984), Divisions of Labour, Blackwells.

   Pahl, R.E. and Wallace, C.D. (1984), 'Household Work Strategies in an Economic Recession', to be published in Beyond Employment : Household, Gender and Subsistence. Redclift, N. and Mingione, E. (eds) Blackwell (forthcoming).

   Wallace, C.D. and Pahl, R.E. (1984) Polarisation, Unemployment and All Forms of Work. Paper to be published in BSA Conference Vol. 1984

4. At the time of writing this thesis I was engaged in some research for the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust. This involved re-interviewing the same 153 school leavers after a period of 5 years. Whilst the results of this survey are not included here, they inevitably coloured my conclusions.

5. One of the things which distinguishes the human from the natural sciences is that the theories and conclusions offered by social science are inevitably embedded in the political and ideological climates within which they are written. Sociology therefore has a relationship - often a combattative one - with prevailing climates of opinion (Bell and Newby 1977).

6. There is no single method within social science because social reality is many layered. There are therefore a multiplicity of approaches (Phillips 1973, Runciman 1983). The positivist approach assuming a cumulative enlightenment through either fact-gathering or through systematic hypothesis testing has been extensively criticised (c.f Kuhn 1962)

7. The sample was drawn from the only secondary school on the Island and we can therefore assume that this represents nearly all the population of that age.

8. Conducting a survey necessarily involves formulating questions in advance. It does not allow scope for the respondent's own priorities and preoccupations to be imposed. Hence, Corrigan (1979) found that many of the questions used by social scientists in interviewing school leavers were irrelevant and meaningless to his respondents. Participant observation of the other hand allows respondents' own preoccupations to be taken more comprehensively into account (Becker 1970). There are also crucial differences between these two methods in terms of the relative power of the interviewer. Individual interviews can be more directly controlled by the researcher than social contexts in which he or she is an observer.

Footnotes to Chapter 1 (cont)

9. Of course, not everything can be recorded in a field diary. However, keeping a field and a research diary enables the researcher to be more reflective about his or her own observations and possible sources of bias (Wright Mills 1959, Cicourel 1964).

10. People frequently asked my assistance in their contacts with those in authority. For example, I had to write letters for individuals or accompany them in interviews with the DHSS and Housing Officials. I also represented people at Supplementary Benefits Appeals Tribunals. As a result I was soon branded as a 'trouble maker' by those officials.

11. I decided to avoid too much association with teachers whilst I was at the school as this would have prevented me from approaching pupils. These problems of selective association are discussed in McCall and Simmons (1969) and Denzin (1970)

12. Some research can only be undertaken through assuming another identity (Henry 1975). Other research roles vary from total participation to detached observation and the degree of involvement determines the kinds of results obtained. This is discussed in McCall and Simmons (1976) Denzin (1970). In general, however, the researcher's role is circumscribe by race, class, gender and age as well as personal idiosyncratic characteristic.

13. Some rational strategising is obviously necessary. However, the researcher can never entirely control the situation and the presence of the researcher inevitably colours the kinds of responses obtained.

14. I was confronted with a number of moral dilemmas in the course of my field work. For example, girls asked me for advice as to whether they should have abortions or marry their boyfriends. I was aware that the advice I might give would be contrary to the morality prevailing in the community. On another occasion I was arrested and questioned by the C.I.D. Clearly, my role as a researcher prevented me from revealing information.

15. Hence, my role in talking to a gang of skinheads was different to my role in interviewing a 'respectable' parent.

16 Problems of 'verstehen' are discussed by Runciman (1983) and Truzzi (1974). There are two kinds of verstehen : <u>aktuelles verstehen</u> or understanding a social fact, and <u>erklärendes verstehen</u> or the understanding of social meanings. The latter is the one which proved the most problematical in my research. Any understanding is limited by the fact that the researcher can never have all the relevant facts at his or her disposal. Meanings have to be inferred. Interpretations always depend to a greater or lesser extent upon the judgement of the researcher and this is based in turn upon some degree of subjective understanding. However, as Blumer (1969) has indicated, what distinguishes the social scientist from other actors in the situation is the struggle to be objective.

17. Despite attempts to create a 'science' in sociology, verstehen always depends upon some measure of subjective understanding about which it is impossible to be fully aware. Freud's account of the unconscious motivations which inform human behaviour is pertinant in this context. (c.f. <u>The Psychopathology of Everyday Life</u>) (1901).

Footnotes to Chapter 1 (cont)

18. This mental stance is described by Rock as follows:
"Interactionism requires an innocence of mind which has often been
schooled out of the sociologist. Perversely, that innocence is
itself a highly cultured state. Its origins are to be found in a
long history of philosophical reasoning which culminated in the
shedding of philosophy. It did not arise full blown, but evolved
out of complexity. It can be reproduced only by re-creating
that complexity and the analytic structures which sustained it."
(Rock 1979, p.4)

19. The very different presentations of the self in different social
contexts are discussed by Goffman (1959).

20. Becker (1970) argues that there are three sources of information:
elicited comments, unelicited comments and observed behaviour. By
using a combination of research methods one source can be checked against
another.

21. Runciman (1983) discusses how the reporting of social life is
always selective and requires the narrator to fill in details linking
different facts together. However, he rejects the idea of any homology
between social science and literature. Williamson (1983) however,
argues that this creative element is a quality common to both:
"The telling of a story is a device to convey understanding, the aim,
in fact, of both history and literature. Narrative frames events in
time; it links events and experience into a coherent sequence and this,
I maintain, is a form of understanding." (Williamson 1983, p.14)

22. For example Sir Keith Joseph, currently Minister for Higher
Education has attacked Social Science and sociology in particular for
not being 'properly' scientific.

Footnotes to Chapter 2

1. Clarke (1978) provides a review of all the studies on the transition from school to work for the Department of Education and Science. There is also a comprehensive bibliography compiled by the MSC (1983).

2. These debates appeared in Sociological Review over a period of 20 years but have been reprinted in a volume edited by Williams (1974).

3. For instance Youthaid (1981) uses the idea of occupational choice as a sounding board for their own account of labour market structuration as does Jenkins (1981a) using a more anthropological approach.

4. The Careers Service, founded in 1909, was originally intended as a mechanism for facilitating the placement of young people in the labour market but with the growing 'professionalisation' of state services in the post-1945 period it began to concentrate more upon decision making processes and therefore used theories of occupational choice, (Jenkins 1981a). Furthermore, it is still influential in the U.S.A. as a recent article in the American Economist concludes that internal motivational factors are as important than external constraints in determining job destination and mobility:

> 'A young man who enters the labour market with external attitudes can achieve upward mobility through the development of internal attitudes' (Frantz 1982, pp.47)

5. Roberts (1968) and Youthaid (1981) both argue this on the basis of empirical studies.

6. Blau et al. (1956) Keil et al. (1966) and Musgrave (1967) all attempt to reconceptualise occupational choice in this way.

7. The first wave of educational sociologist in the post-war period emphasised the importance of parental values in determining careers at school (Jackson and Marsden 1962, Douglas 1964). Indeed this perspective was embodied in the Plowden Report(1967). The second wave emphasised the role of the peer group within the school in reproducing class values (Lacey 1970, Hargreaves 1967). Other studies have shown that comprehensive schools reproduce class relations in much the same way as selective education (Ford 1969, Ball 1981).

8. I have not included the accounts of Newton and West (1983) or Bazalgette (1975) who concentrate upon the ways in which the organization of the school effects the transition into work.

9. Carter's study was based upon a survey of 100 boys and 100 girls leaving secondary modern schools in Sheffield in 1959.

10. Liversidge (1962) also adopts this approach. This parallels the earlier approach within educational sociology in its emphasis upon parental values.

11. Ashton and Field's study was based upon Ashton's survey of 1,150 boys and girls who left school in Leicester during the 1960's.

12. These references to class differences in patterns of child rearing were based upon work undertaken during the 1950's and 1960's by Young and Willmott (1957), and others.

Footnotes to Chapter 2 (cont)

13. Another approach which stresses the role of determination by the occupational structure even more strongly is that of Roberts (1968);
    "The alternative theory (to that of 'occupational choice') that I am proposing asserts that the momentum and direction of school leaver's careers are derived from the way in which their job opportunities become cumulatively structured and young people placed in varying degrees of social proximity, with different ease of access to the different types of environment." (Roberts in Williams (ed.) 1974 p.152)

14 This analysis of the role of the sub-culture is analogous to the work of the later educational sociologists mentioned earlier.

15. Concepts of social and cultural reproduction are discussed more fully in Chapter 4.

16. Halsey, Heath and Ridge (1980) argue that the educational system has offered opportunities for upward mobility. Moreover Goldthorpe et al. (1980) have indicated that there was considerable inter-generational social mobility in the post war period.

17. The exception to this are Corrigan and Jenkins who do take unemployment into account as a factor in the transition from school to work.

18. Due to the 'wastage of talent' ideology, concentration was focussed upon working-class school students and their prospects. Middle-class children received less attention. I am describing the general welfare ideologies which were reflected in the research produced and the way in which it was interpreted. Many sociologists were, of course, critical of these ideologies.

19. On another occasion Jephcott argues that the thumping sexual rhythms and flashing lights of the dance halls were to suggestible for young minds. This perspective is also reflected in the work of Hoggart (1958). It is consistent with the paternalistic bias in Jephcott and Carter's positions means that they describe their school leaver's as 'children'.

20. These Government Reports included the Crowther Report (1959), the Albermarle Report (1960), the Newsom Report (1963), the Robbins Report (1963) and the Plowden Report (1967).

21. There were also developments within sociology over this period which resulted in a different approach to working class youth. The influence of the National Deviancy Conference and the new sociology of youth cultures led to a revaluation of the role of working-class cultures, (Hall and Jefferson 1975, Mungham and Pearson 1976). Instead of being regarded as deficient and obsolete they were accorded a new respect. The work of Corrigan (1979), Willis (1977), Humphries (1981), and others is indicative of this trend. They showed how working-class opposition was a progressive rather than a regressive response to forces of oppression and they stressed its resilience and creativity.

These shifts are also perhaps the consequence of different generations of sociologists reinterpreting their own experiences.

Footnotes to Chapter 2 (cont)

1960's educational expansion and the needs of the economy had helped
to produce a new stratum of middle class professionals with a different
orientation to youth cultures. 'Workerism' became an identifiable middle-
class student sub-culture and hedonistic expressive orientations became
associated with this 'new' middle-class. Instead of condemning these
qualities in working-class youth culture they cherished them. Consequently,
there is a 'generational' consciousness amongst accounts of the transition
from school to work which reflects the theoretical developments within
the subject, the ideological and political climates within which they
were written and the biographical experiences of sociologists in the
context of the educational system which produced them.

22. The decline in skilled training places has been documented by
Ashton and McGuire and Garland (1982) and Casey (1983). The decline in
unskilled work is documented by the Holland Report (1977), Markall and
Finn (1981). The effects of the 1960's babies boom are documented by
Holland (1979) and Steinberg (1982).

23. Allen and Smith (1975) carried out a survey of minority groups
in Bradford and Sheffield in 1971 and 1972.

24. (a) Roberts, Duggan and Noble carried out a survey of 551
     unemployed youths between the ages of 16 and 20 in Inner City
     neighbourhoods in London, Liverpool, Manchester, and Wolverhampton.
     They posted a fieldworker in each neighbourhood between 1979 and 1981.

     (b) Fuller (1980) carried out a study of a friendship group of 8
     West Indian girls in Brent in 1975.

     (c) Pryce (1979) undertook participant observation in a black
     community in Bristol between 1969 and 1974.

25. Moor's study was carried out in 1970 in Newcastle. She deliberately
chose an area with traditionally high levels of unemployment to guage
the effects of this on the transition from school to work. She followed-
up 25 per cent of her sample six months after they had been in the
labour market.

26. A full list of studies (apart from those mentioned already)
relating to the 'supply' side of the labour market in order of date of
publication are as follows:

     (a) 'Untrained, Unqualified and Unemployed'. This report
     carried out surveys of unemployed young people, vacancies,
     Careers Offices, and employers. (National Youth Employment
     Council, 1974)

     (b) OECD (1977). A report of the attitudes of employers in the
     community.

     (c) The Holland Report (1977). A survey of 1000 employers,
     3000 young people and 550 unemployed young people carried out by
     the MSC.

     (d) Ball and Ball (1979) wrote a book about their experiences of
     working with a 'Volunteer Centre' and the young people who helped
     there. They take a radical, 'de-schooling' approach to the issue
     of youth employment.

     (e) Presdee (1979): A study of 60 students leaving school in
     South Australia in 1979. Presdee argues that education should
     not self-consciously attempt to fit the needs of the capital.

Footnotes to Chapter 2 (cont)

(f) Gray, Smith and Rutter (1980) undertook a survey of 844 young people from 12 secondary schools in London who left school in 1976. This was a follow-up of Rutter's previous work in primary schools. They used school records and compared these with the employment histories of their sample.

(g) Markall (1980) assessed the careers of unqualified school leavers in Salford during the mid 1970's.

(h) Finn and Markall (1981) produced a report for the Department of the Environment based on an action research project in 'Ordsall' (probably Salford). This surveyed 110 school leavers from 'Ordsall Central High School' in 1977.

(i) Jones, Williamson, Payne and Smith (1981) undertook a survey comparing young people who entered YOP Schemes with those who did not. This involved sampling a cohort of 685 young people leaving six comprehensive schools in 1979. Of these, 565 were followed up in 1980.

(j) Regular reports of the Department of Employment sample survey of school leavers are published in the Department of Employment Gazette. These are based upon a 10 per cent sample of those registering with local Careers Officers.

(k) Casey (1983) compares England with other European countries in terms of training provided and wage levels. He concludes that in other countries, young people receive more training but have lower wages on first leaving school.

(l) Raffe and Main's work is based upon the Scottish school leavers biennial survey undertaken by the Centre for Education Sociology at Edinburgh. The results are available in the following publications:

    i. Raffe and Main (1983). A study based upon 30,000 school leavers who entered the labour market in 1978/79 and were interviewed in April 1981. In this report they conclude that a dynamic account of the transition of work and unemployment is required and the situation for those leaving school in the 1970's is very different to that in the 1980's.

    ii. Raffe (1983) used a sample of 944 boys and 1084 girls who left school in 1977/8. He concludes that job instability is related to the nature of the occupation rather than to the characteristics of the young person.

    iii. Raffe, (1984, forthcoming) using a sample of 6949 school leavers in 1975/6, 633 in 1977/8, 4000 in 1979/80 and 4874 in 1981/2, argues that youth unemployment is recession-induced rather than structural.

(m) Jenkin's work (1981a and 1983) was based upon his experience as a youth worker in Northern Ireland between 1976 and 1977. This and a later survey carried out between 1978 and 1979 became the basis for his Ph.D Thesis and book. Brown's (1984) work is based upon a survey of 176 boys and girls in Swansea. These data were supplemented by participant observation and a postal follow-up questionnaire.

Footnotes to Chapter 2 (cont)

27. Ball and Ball (1979) observed that whilst non-scholastic young people were alienated from academic goals, they rapidly learned literacy and numeracy skills where they could apply these to a 'useful' task - such as fixing a car. They therefore conclude that these more general skills should perhaps be included in school curricula.

28. Jahoda's observations are based upon the classic study of Marienthal in 1933 that she conducted in conjunction with others and upon a more recent study of unemployment based upon her work at the Science Policy Research Unit at the University of Sussex during the 1970's. She is therefore will placed to compare the two eras.

29. The studies of labour market 'demand' and employer's recruitment strategies can be summaried as follows:

(a) Brannen (1975) assesses the long term trends in the labour market, the decline of certain jobs and the changes in skill requirements for the Department of Employment.

(b) Holland (1977) op. cit.

(c) Ashton, McGuire and Garland (1982) and Ashton and McGuire (1980, 1981, 1982 and 1983) undertook a study of employers recruitment strategies in three different labour markets. They interviewed 155 employers in Leicester, 126 in Sunderland and 69 in St. Albans.

(d) Williams (1982) makes a study of employer's recruitment strategies based upon a random sample of 300 vacancies advertised in 1979.

(e) Jenkins (1982b) interviewed 14 personnel specialists in firms in the Midlands and analysed their formal and informal recruiting procedures for evidence of racial discrimination in 1980-1. Some of this work was published in association with Troyna (1982).

(f) Livock (1983) in a Department of Employment Research Paper examined screening procedures amongst 321 employers for the 16 to 25 age group between 1979 and 1980.

(g) Casey (1983) op. cit.

30. Ashton and McGuire (1981, 1982, 1983) identify five recruitment strategies used by employers at different levels of job entry. Strategy 1 makes maximum use of academic qualifications and relates to the highest levels of the labour market: candidates are not even interviewed unless they have the requisite number of qualifications. Strategy 2 used academic qualifications as a means of selection or screening but also judged candidates by their aptitudes as expressed in interviews. This was used for the recruitment of managers, professionals and technicians. Strategy 3 used academic qualifications as a 'focusing' function for selecting candidates but used mainly non-academic criteria in actually recruiting them and this was the method adopted for the recruitment of skilled workers, clerical and sales staff. Strategies 4 and 5 placed the total emphasis on non-academic criteria and these were used for recruiting unskilled workers and operatives.

Footnotes to Chapter 2 (cont)

31. Holland (1977 and 1979) and Heller (1982) for example argue that
qualifications are more important in the context of the present recession
and therefore claim that education plays an increasingly important role
in preparation for work. Ashton and McGuire (1981) on the other hand
argue that education only becomes more important for a few jobs. For
others, educational qualifications are less important - or indeed a
disadvantage . They argue that schooling therefore fails to fulfil
both the needs of industry and the needs of young people.

32. The role of the Manpower Services Commission and of State intervention
in general is extensively discussed in volumes by Rees and Atkinson
(eds.) (1982) and by Gleeson (ed.) (1983).

33. The separation between 'education' and 'training' is discussed by
Finn (1982).

34. Salter and Tapper (1981) discuss the importance of the competition
between the DES and the MSC as a factor serving to intensify the
emphasis placed upon vocational preparation.

35. The New Training Initiative (1983) included vocational preparation
in schools and colleges of Further Education under special schemes.
Vocational Training was also introduced into the school syllabus through
Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), and through the
Certificate in Pre-Vocational Education (CPVE). These latter two
initiatives came form the DES.

36. Atkinson, Shone, Rees and Williamson (1982) discuss the role of
social and life skills as a form of 'compensatory education'. Moreover
Youthaid as a pressure group have consistently critised MSC initiatives.

37. This was first proposed in the White Paper 'A New Training
Initiative' (1981) CMND. 8455.

38. Changes in the analysis of youth reflect changes in the research
community itself. The Robbins Report (1963) resulted in the expansion
of Higher Education and a new climate of debate. Since the late 1970's,
the decline in independent research funding, and the retrenchment
within Higher Education have resulted in a greater preoccupation with
policy considerations. This trend is discernible for example, within
the ESRC (Rose 1981).

Footnotes to Chapter 3

1. Casey (1983), for instance, argues that youth unemployment is caused by high wages. Friend and Metcalf (1981) and Jordan (1982) argue that youth unemployment is caused by the crisis of capitalism. Casson (1979) provides both historical and cross-national comparisons in his analysis of youth unemployment whilst Makeham (1980) tests different theories as to the causes of youth unemployment upon employment trends. He concludes that youth enemployment is an amplified version of adult unemployment, based upon the Scottish School Leavers biennial survey.

2. Ashton and McGuire (1983) argues that youth unemployment is structural in nature whilst Raffe (forthcoming) takes issue with them, arguing that it is recession-induced.

3. From Youthaid Bulletin 13 December 1983, and Department of Employment Gazette.

4. Brenner's notion of the incubation period has been challenged by others. This is discussed in Jahoda (1982) and Stokes (1981) who also discuss the strengths and limitations of these kinds of data.

5. Donnovan and Oddy (1982) use the following tests: The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ), The Leeds Depression and Anxiety Scale, the Present Life Satisfaction Scale and the Rotter Scale.

6. See Hakim's (1982) review of the methods used in investigating the effects of unemployment.

7. The MRC/SSRC Research Unit at Sheffield has produced the following surveys which are referred to throughout this chapter (in order of publication):

a. Banks and Jackson (1982) compared 1542 school leavers in 1978 and 2321 school leavers in 1979 in a longitudinal study using the General Health Queationnaire.

b. Warr and Parry (1982) reviewed all the psychological studies of women and unemployment.

c. Warr (1982) compares 2149 men and 1206 women and a sample of 16-17 year olds in 1981 in terms of their commitment to the work ethic. He found no decline in the work ethic as a result of unemployment.

d. Stafford (1982) compared the psychological well-being of young people on and off YOP's schemes by interviewing a sample of 647 boys and girls who left school in 1978 on three occasions after they left school in 1978. She used the General Health Questionnaire and concludes that YOP could alleviate the psychological effects of unemployment in the same way as real employment could.

e. Jackson and Warr (1983) compared a sample of 954 unemployed men in terms of duration of unemployment and age. They used the GHQ.

f. Warr (1983) provides a general overview of the studies about the psychological effects of unemployment.

g. Jackson, Stafford and Banks and Warr (1983) interviewed 647 young people leaving school in 1978 and followed them until 1981. They also followed up 1096 school leavers in 1979. Using the GHQ,

Footnotes to Chapter 3 (cont)

they found that there was more psychological distress amongst the unemployed but that this depended upon their commitment to employment in general.

8.   Bloxham (1983) interviewed 56 young people 6 months after they left school and Breakwell et. al. (1982 and 1983) interviewed young people both on MSC schemes and elsewhere. Despite using different methods to the MRC/SSRC research unit, these two researchers produce very similar results and conclusions.

9.   Hayes and Nutman (1981) base their study upon both other people's research findings complemented by interviews with a small sample of their own.

10. Fryer (1983) defines this as a 'deficit model' and discusses the implications of this.

11. Miles (1983) accuses Jaboda of a mechanistic Freudianism. However, the later works of Freud could be interpreted as coming to the opposite conclusion. In Beyond the Pleasure Principle, (1970) he argues that it was conformity to social norms which were the source of neurosis.

12. In order to test an alternative thesis, Fryer and Payne (n.d) undertook a survey of a selected sample of those who coped with unemployment. They termed these the 'pro active'.

13. Jahoda (1982) takes these criticisms into account although other social psychologists do not. Sedgwick (1974) criticizes the political perspective implicit in social psychology research.

14. It is interesting to note that the results of these surveys are used to 'legitimate' the role of the MSC by showing that the schemes have positive effects upon young people psychologically.

15. Those who have studied the adaptational approach to youth unemployment are listed below (in order of publication):

   a. Phillips (1973) a study of youth unemployment amongst school leavers in Salford funded by the William Temple Foundation.

   b. Markall (1980) from the same project as Phillips above.

   c. Roberts, Duggan and Noble op. cit.

   d. Hendry and Raymond (1983) undertook a study of 388. young people at school and in work and out of work.

   e. Willis'(1984) articles are based upon a survey of unemployed youth in Birmingham.

   f. Walsgrove (1984) has studied unemployed youth in Kidderminster using participant observation.

   g. Cashmore (1984) interviewed unemployed black and white youth in the Midlands.

16. Those who regard it as positive include Pryce (1979), Roberts et.al. op. cit. and Cashmore (1984). Those who regard it as negative include Seabrook (1981), Willis (1984) and Markall (1980)

Footnotes to Chapter 3 (cont)

17. The first survey of this kind to have been carried out was that of Phillips (1973) although Markall (1980) and Markall and Finn (1981) later confirmed her conclusions, based upon studies undertaken for the William Temple Foundation in Salford.

18. Jones et al op. cit. carried out a large survey of young people leaving school in 1979 in Birmingham. The survey was carried out for the MSC and designed to compare those who entered YOP's schemes with those who did not.

19. Jenkins (1983) found that many of his 'lads' would have prefered apprenticeships ideally.

20. Surveys of the unregistered unemployed were carried out by Roberts and associates (1981) and Youthaid (1982). Youthaid conclude that there were 100,000 unregistered men and 160,000 unregistered women in 1979. 33 per cent of men and 25 per cent of women were in the 16-24 year old age group.

21. Willis is presently conducting a more systematic survey of the young unemployed in Birmingham.

22. In this respect, the work of Roberts and associates in the 1980's would appear to produce a rather different model from that of Roberts in the 1960's

23. Carter (1975) describes this process in relation to the careers of working class boys in Sheffield and Parker (1976) comes to similar conclusions in describing the deviant careers of boys in Liverpool.

Footnotes to Chapter 4

1. Social Reproduction in this context has been used to refer to the way in which the State through the educational system provides an appropriately socialised workforce. In other words, the reproduction of the relations of production (Willis 1981). 'Reproduction' is also used in a number of other senses. It is used for example, to refer to the unrewarded, unrecorded and largely unrecognised sphere of domestic labour within the home: the physical and biological reproduction of clothed, fed and ablebodied units of labour. 'Reproduction' is therefore a concept which occurs frequently in feminist discourse linking the economy with the home, and the social relations of production with the domestic division of labour. These different meanings of 'reproduction' are discussed by Edholm, Harris and Young (1977).

2. Willis (1981) has elaborated the distinctions between social production and reproduction, and between cultural production and reproduction. He subsumes the latter set of categories under the former. In this essay Willis insists that his own ideas of 'resistance' should not be regarded as in any sense an alternative to more golbal theories, but as a contribution to these theories.

3. Hickox (1982), for instance, claims that it is the most ambitious attempt to 'prove' the marxist thesis. He does not, however, mention the work of Bourdieu and Passeron which is equally comprehensive in scope.

4. The marxist revisionist historians centred around the work of Johnson and the CCCS, emerge from a 'culturalist' perspective which could be viewed as different to that of Bowles and Gintis. In fact the thesis that Johnson produces in the essay reviewed here seems in many respects to be similar to that of Bowles and Gintis: that schooling reflects the needs of the economy by inculcating appropriate work disciplines.

5. Arnot and Whittey (1980) argue that a fully marxist sociology of schooling must account for non-reproduction practices too.

6. Hargreaves (1980) and Browne (1982) for example, argue that schooling is actually inefficient in reproducing the social relations, and only minimally reproduces the division between mental and manual labour.

7. This auto-critique can be found in Gintis and Bowles (1980). Cole (1983) in assessing this argues that they fail to take into account the role of ideology, and of relations of oppression (such as racism and sexism) which are reproduced directly through the school curriculum. Apple (1978) gives his own account of his conversion to resistence theory from an American perspective.

8. Hargreaves (1980), for instance, argues that Willis' model confirms the correspondence theory, whilst Hickox (1982) and Cole (1982) argue that it refutes or modifies it.

9. Here I am referring to the essay: 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus' in Lenin and Philosophy and other Essays (1971).

Footnotes to Chapter 4 (cont)

Politically, Althusser's approach was rejected by many of the new left because of his 'Stalinist' support of the P.C.F. during May 1968.

10. A critique of Althusserian conceptions of culture and ideology is provided in Clarke er al.(1980).

11. This metaphor of the 'machine' is derived from E.P. Thompson's (1978) criticism of Althusser in the Poverty of Theory and it is clearly a potent one.

12. This conception of 'interpellation' is derived from Lacanian psycho-analysis which argues that identity is constructed through 'reflections' from other people and from social institutions or ISA's. Identity is not therefore a 'given' but is artificially constructed through language and neurosis.

13. Bourdieu began as anthropologist, a disciple of Levi-Strauss and did research into the kinship structure in Algeria. Garham and Williams (1980) argue that he traces a direct descent from Durkheim in his intellectual preoccupations.

14. Bourdieu's latest book 'La Distinction' analyses French culture more closely. In this, Bourdieu gives some indication of the 'arbitrariness' of bourgois culture by citing the example of Duchamp's urinal. However, it could also be argued that cultural symbols and artefacts are not simply 'arbitrary': they have historical meaning and continuity. Excerpts of this were translated in Culture, Media and Society (1980)

15. Hence, one fraction of the middle class might elevate one set of cultural symbols (such as the music on Mozart) and another fraction might elevate others (such as the music of Schoenberg). Despite these disparities, in content there are similarities insofar as certain cultural artefacts become elevated as the property of the elite.

16. Bourdieu and Passeron's work (1977), for example, begins with a ritualistic philosophical form of presentation. Much of the prose is obscure and opaque.

17. Sulkunen (1982) also praises Bourdieu's work, arguing that he has made the latent structural and cultural forms of modern society visible.

18. Hargreaves (1980) critises this notion of 'relative autonomy' in relation to education.

19. Hargreaves (1982), classifies this group of writers together as a distinct genre when assessing the recent contributions of American scholars to the field. I have also added the work of Corrigan and Humphries to this school.

20. Indeed, according to Williams and Garnham (1980), Bordieu had helped to introduce this work, and that of the English marxist in general, into France.

21. The CCCS provided us with detailed analyses of thier own positions and intellectual heritage. In this section I am referring mainly to their account of their work as described in Resistance through Ritual (1975), Working Class Culture (1979), and writing by Stuart Hall (1980).

Footnotes to Chapter 4 (cont)

22. In particular, E.P. Thompson's work The Making of the English Working Class (1963), and Raymond Williams' The Long Revolution (1961)

23. For example, they review the 'community studies' literature in Clarke et al. (1979).

24. Gramsci's work in fact pre-dates Althusser's, having been written before the Second World War.

25. This movement into semiology represents a shift in the CCCS position. At the time of writing Resistence through Rituals they were more concerned with youth cultures as expressions of material changes in the class structure.

26. Hence, Willis' account of the 'penetrations' and 'partial penetrations' embodied in the lads' culture.

27. The emergence of the 'new' sociology of youth is extensively reviewed by Brake (1980).

28. Examples of this are to be found in volumes edited by Hall and Jefferson (1975), Mungham and Pearson (1976), and in Brake (1980), all of whom produce nearly identical analyses of youth culture

29. These are described by Smith (1980) as the 'new sociology of youth'.

30. At this point, the different terms applied to culture become confusing. There is sub-culture, counter-culture, parent culture, dominant culture...... A summary of these different usages is provided by Roberts (1983).

31. The 'new' sociology of education is well documented by Woods (1980) Woods and Hammersley (1977), and Bates (1980). It traces its origins to the volume edited by Young (1971) Knowledge and Control.

32. This 'imaginary' world of working class solidarity is shared as much by the left intellegensia as some members of the working class. This imaginative identification with aspects of working class culture is mentioned in McRobbie's (1980) criticisms of Willis.

33. I have argued elsewhere that the working-class community is in fact riven with conflicts of status. This was based upon a comparative study of two communities (Wallace 1984).

34. Saunders (1982) for example argues that class is 'fractured' by different forms of tenure. He argues that working class home owners have a different kind of 'consciousness' from working class tenants.

35. Green (1980) criticises Corrigan for producing a mechanistic and reductionist marxist account.

Footnotes to Chapter 4 (cont)

36.   Interactionsm too, is surely a 'Weberian' perspective in origin.

37.   It is ironic in this context that most marxists, including Marx himself, rejected any attempt to recruit the lumpen proletariat to the socialist banner.   Indeed they reserve their most contemptous comments for this strata.

38.   The development of the middle-class culture of expressive romanticism is analysed by Martin (1983) from a non-materialist perspective.

Footnotes to Chapter 5

1.   For example, those who have studied youth cultures have rarely
included girls, as contributions to the Hall and Jefferson (1975)
and Mungham and Pearson (1976) volumes illustrate. Willis (1977) and
Corrigan (1979) have also concentrated upon boys in the transition from
school to work. MacDonald (1980) criticizes the androcentric bias in
Althusser's and Bowles and Gintis' work.

2.   It is necessary to clarify some of these terms. Feminism is a
perspective which also implies a political position. Women researchers
are not necessarily feminist whilst some male researchers, such as
Brake, adopt a feminist perspective. Androcentricism means male-bias.
Male researchers have often been androcentric, - even those who adopt
a 'feminist' position - without necessarily being 'sexist'. (Willis'
work is an example of this).

3.   Studies of Government policy in relation to girls' education are
provided by Deem (1978), Wolpe (1976), Lavigeur (1980) and Marks (1980).

4.   Contributions to the McRobbie and McCabe volume (1981) suggest
that teachers and teenagers alike felt uncomfortable about the roles
they were expected to conform to.

5.   Analyses of 'Jackie' magazine are nearly as popular amongst feminist
researchers as reading it is amongst working-class girls. McRobbie
(1981) and Sarsby (1983) have made studies of the ideology which it
embodies. However, these have been accounts of the contents rather
than how the contents are received.

6.   McRobbie (1980) displays her own intellectual integrity in this
article by including reference to her own biographical interest in
this material. She argues that this analysis of personal interests in
intellectual problems is a feature of a feminist approach. McRobbie
and Garber (1975) also indicate the most obviously class-biased
statements about working-class girls attractiveness in other (male)
researchers accounts. They are therefore very aware of this issue.

7.   McRobbie and McCabe (1981) give an account of semi-feminist
sixth form bohemianism in their introduction to Feminism for Girls.
They discuss the lower-middle-class roots of this in relation to their
own biographies and are clearly sympathetically inclined although they
regard it as 'false consciousness'. Sharpe (1978), on the other hand,
describes the more androgynous jeans-and-jumpered behaviour of girls
taking 'A' levels at Technical college in contrast to the painted nails
and stiletto heels of the working-class girls taking typing courses.
I would suggest that this could be interpreted as her own sympathy for
more middle-class forms of feminine behaviour.

8.   As a result of this concentration upon domestic labour, there
have been few studies of women's unemployment as such (Marshall 1984).
However, F. Evans at the University of Kent is currently completing a
doctoral thesis on this issue.

9.   One form of informal work which some girls were able to resort
to was that of casual prostitution (Pahl and Wallace 1980, Roberts
et al. 1981).

Footnotes to Chapter 5   (cont)

10. Pahl (1978) has shown that female school leavers perceive their future roles in terms on employment and family life - but so do boys!

11. Warr and Parry (1982) do examine the effects of unemployment upon women at different stages of the life cycle. However, they do not distinguish by age. Thus, adolescent girls are not a distinct group in this account.

12. Carter (1975) suggests that this happens amongst boys in Sheffield, and Parker (1976) has shown that this happens amongst deviant boys. Moreover Pahl (1978) indicates that future family roles were important in boys' projections of their lives.

Footnotes to Chapter 7

1. (i)   N.H. Buck, 1981, An Admiralty Dockyard in Sheerness in the
    Mid-Nineteenth Century. Aspects of the Social and Economic History
    of Sheerness. Final Report to the ESRC, Grant No. HR/6939/1.

    (ii)   R.E.Pahl with J.H. Dennett, Industry and Employment on the
    Isle of Sheppey, Interim Report to the ESRC, 1981.

    (iii) C.Wallace with R.E. Pahl and J.H. Dennett, Housing and
    Residential areas on the Isle of Sheppey. Interim Report to the
    ESRC, 1981.

    (iv)   R.E. Pahl and P. Wilson, A Statistical Portrait of the Isle
    of Sheppey, Final Report to the ESRC, Appendix 1, 1984, Grant No.
    G/00/23/0036.

    (v)   Gill Courtenay, The Isle of Sheppey Technical Report, 1982,
    Social and Community Planning Research.

    (vi)   C.D. Wallace, Informal Work in two Sheppey Neighbourhoods,
    1984. Final Report to the ESRC, Appendix 11, Grant No. G/00/23/0036.

2. A rather propagandist history of ancient Sheppey was written by
Augustus A. Dayl in 1904. He was hired by a local estate company who
were trying to popularise the Island in order to sell the land. He
manages to place this small patch of malarial mud (as it was for many
years) at the epi-centre of English History.

    "That portion of Kent, in particular, with which the present
    chronicle is about to deal, viz. The Isle of Sheppey, or as it
    is called today, Minister-on-Sea (the name given it by the Estate
    Company) possesses an intensely interesting history, inasmuch as
    some of the greatest actors and factors in the making of English
    history have lived there" (Daly 1904, p.5)

3. From the 1981 Census.

4. In January, 1977, this part of Sheerness was declared a 'Housing
Action Area' and it later became a 'General Improvement Area'. Under
these two schemes, applicants could apply for grants under favourable
terms. A more detailed analysis is provided in Wallace with Pahl and
Dennett (1981).

5. From the Chief Constable's Report for Kent 1982 and Kent County
Constabulary Statistics.

6. This distinctive pattern of housebuilding was undertaken by some
seven per cent of all households on Sheppey and was the subject of
special investigation, (Wallace with Pahl and Dennett, 1981, op. cit.).

7. From Kent County Constabulary Statistics.

8. The history of the naval dockyard and its relationship to the
town, based upon detailed analysis of the 1851, 1861, and 1871 Census,
was carried out by N.H. Buck (1981 op. cit.). The quotations from
dockyard workers are all taken from his report.

9. The precise numbers entering the dockyard are difficult to ascertain.
(Buck 1984, personal communication).

Footnotes to Chapter 7 (cont)

10.   From the *Sheerness Times Guardian* 19 February 1965.

11.   For example, some of the teachers at the new comprehensive school and the Educational Welfare Officer were products of this system. They were recognised to have an 'old school' disciplinarian attitude to education which was opposed to the new liberal organisation of the new comprehensive.

12.   Information for this period was derived from a survey of attitudes to comprehensivisation carried out by C. Rodd at the University of Kent between 1967 and 1969. It was supplemented by newspaper cuttings collected and filed by the school and interviews with local councillors, school governors, and teachers who were present at the time of re-organisation.

13.   This Labour Councillor, Reg Davie, converted a number of other influential local people to the idea of comprehensivisation. An indication of his personal influence on the Island is given by the fact that a number of local landmarks were named after him.

14.   Due to this general atmosphere of suspicion teachers refused to co-operate as in Rodd's own survey and the report was never published. Rodd describes the teachers as having a 'village' mentality. One quarter of the teachers were born on the Island and 80 per cent lived there.

15.   From the *Sheerness Times Guardian* 27th January 1965.

16.   Cyril Poster was a disciple of Henry Morris who pioneered the Village College in Cambridgeshire. Poster also cites examples of such schools in Bristol, Southampton and Cumberland which were succesful in fulfilling community school principles.

17.   This rumour was published in the local newspaper and nationally in the *Daily Mail* . According to local teachers it was entirely false.

18.   This influx of young mobile professionals was also assisted by the opening of a Chemical Plant in the 1960's. These people were very different from the locally born and often Dockyard trained teachers of the previous education system, only 11 per cent of whom held degrees according to Rodd's survey.

19.   One story along these lines was that there were contraceptive machines in the children's lavatories. Despite the fact that this story was entirely untrue it was still remembered in 1979.

20.   From the K.E.C. lists of senior pupil (secondary school) rolls in Kent 1979.

21.   The fifth year subjects taken in 1979 were as follows: Maths, Humanities, Language and Communication, Design, Home Economics, Science and Technology, Environmental Studies, English Language and Literature, European Studies, Drama, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Music, Dance, Geography, Commerce, Economics, Economic History, History, Religious Education, Local Studies, Sociology, Statistics, Computer Studies, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Food Science, Nuffield Science, General Science, Physical Science, Science of Living, Rural Science, Technical Drawing, Design Technology, Metal Work, Woodwork, Building Craft, Geometric Drawing, Art, Embroidery, Dress, Food and Nutrition, Needlework, Child Care, Engineering Studies, Development Studies, Civics, Latin, Family

Footnotes to Chapter 7 (cont)

Centerd Studies, Principles of Accountancy, British Constitution, Commerce, Nutrition, History of Art.

22. Sheppey School published statistics 1982.

23. Sheppey school had initiated these links with local industry before they were encouraged to do so by Government directives. The 1984 White Paper 'Training for Jobs' (cmnd.9135) and subsequent circular 4/84 emphasises the importance of vocational preparation in schools and calls for closer co-operation between schools and local employers:

> "There should be continued systematic improvement, within the available resources, of full-time education as a preparation for working life, with increasingly close co-operation between the education service and employers"
> (HMSO 1984, p.15)

Footnotes to Chapter 8

1.   Blackburn and Mann (1979) have indicated that although there may
be little objective choice for workers in the labour market, they
nevertheless perceived of themselves as choosing.

2.   Ashton and McGuire adopt a model of dual labour markets based upon
Doeringer and Piore's (1971) distinction between primary and secondary
sectors.   They argue that young people are excluded from 50 per cent
of all vacancies, but in 20 - 30 per cent of them they are recruited by
preference.   In the rest they compete with adult workers.   Jenkins (1983)
produces a rather different model of labour market segmentation, showing
that degrees of 'roughness' and respectability' operated in selection
procedures for jobs.

3.   Ashton and McGuire (1980) identify five recruitment strategies
which are related to different labour market segments.

4.   I have adapted classifications used in 1979 to fit those in the
1950's

5.   This reflects the fact that internal careers were available for
males in the 1950's but not for females.

6.   According to Pahl and Dennett, 51 firms established themselves during
this period and 18 closed

7.   The Pahl and Dennett report documents the fact that the six largest
firms employ a large proportion of the workforce on the Island   (Table
3, p. 15)

8.   Precise figures are unavailable but one employer admitted to
having some 600 out-workers on their books (Pahl and Dennett 1981).
The rates for this homework were well below that of standard factory
employment, paying as little as 72 pence for an evening's work in some
cases.   Women sub-contracted this work to friends and family so that
even those who were registered were a gross under-estimate of the numbers
undertaking this kind of work.

9.   The 1974 lists provide us with what is described as an 'approximate
average intake', so there must have been a fairly stable pattern of
recruitment.   The 1979 lists, however, only record the precise numbers
recruited by each employer in that year, so I am not comparing strictly
the same data.

10.   The Careers Office kept records of the first employment of all school
leavers.   I was able to supplement or correct these records through
using my own survey in which I had followed-up a percentage of the 1979
school leavers.

11.   The tertiary sector is even smaller than this table implies.   Two
of the girls travelled up to London for white collar work.

12.   The garment manufacturing firms had very high rates of job turnover,
for the work was difficult to learn, despite being described as 'semi-
skilled'.

Footnotes to Chapter 8 (cont)

13. I did not recognise all of these small employers, but the ones which I did recognise were all locally based.

14. According to the SSLS the majority of those who joined the Armed Forces straight from school became ordinary soldiers/sailors.

15. Large companies and State monopolies included firms such as British Gas, Chatham Dockyard, Marconi Avionics, PSI and so on.

16. The Job Creation Programme was not a great success on the Island. A JCP worker was assigned to cover the Swale area and attempted to hold classes for the unemployed one afternoon a week at the County Youth Club: she could find only ten people interested. She also held similar sessions with young people on probation with whom there was more success but this was presumably because attendance was compulsory. A report of the project in 1978 states: "The project as a whole cannot be held up as something remarkable and startling" (Kent County Council report of the Youth and Community Service 1978, p.7).

17. These have all now been replaced by the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) with Mode A taking the place of the former WEP schemes and Mode B covering the rest. All of them have been extended to one year and include a statutory amount of 'Social and Life Skills' training.

18. These Short Industrial Courses included : Retail and Distribution, Construction, Office Skills, Engineering and Work Introduction Schemes.

19. For example, it was estimated by one Local Government Officer that a WEP scheme using employers premises cost only two-thirds of the price per trainnee of a Youth and Community Scheme.

20. Tescos for example, made a large number of staff redundant in 1980 and rapidly recruited a large number of WEEP trainnees soon afterwards.

21. Altogether, 113 employers participated in setting up the SWIM scheme.

22. The Careers Service also continued to provide an occupational counselling service for those leaving school.

Footnotes to Chapter 9

1.   'Household Class' was intended to provide an index of the social backgrounds of the entire household. Occupations were classified as follows:

Managerial/professional	6
White collar/clerical	5
Small businesspeople	4
Skilled manual/foreman/supervisor	3
Un - and semi-skilled work - retail	2
Un - and semi-skilled work - factory	1

The individual scores for mothers and fathers were added together to produce a 12 point scale (if the mother was not working then the father's score was doubled). If parents or siblings had been upwardly mobile, then the score was raised by one or two points. The scale was then collapsed into three household classes for purposes of cross tabulation.

2.   These would fit Ashton and Field's (1976) category of those seeking 'short term careers' who were 'instrumentally' oriented to education.

3.   I recorded only examinations taken rather than examinations passed because most of the sample had not recieved their results at the time that I conducted the survey. However, examinations sat can give an adequate indication of educational orientations overall.

4.   Brown (1984) described the different degrees of instrumentality and conformism in school leavers attitudes to education. He indicates that some accepted the ultimate legitemacy of education but did not conform to the school itself. Such responses were evident in this sample of young people on Sheppey as well.

5.   This included two who wanted to join the Police Force but would need to wait until they were older before applying.

6.   This is similar to the results of Roberts and associates' studies but they attribute this to the fact that West Indians were over-qualified for the jobs available.

7.   As described by Ashton and McGuire (1981).

8.   In addition, some mentioned training for jobs such as lorry driving, or jobs in the Merchant Navy. By far the most popular 'short term manual careers' however, were in craft occupations.

9.   'Cowboys' refers to self employed artisans who do not necessarily have the training and qualifications for the jobs which they undertook. Being a 'cowboy' was a well recognised status on Sheppey and regarded as slightly illegitimate, for these men were also likely tc circumvent legal restrictions and cheat their customers. It could therefore be used as a term of abuse.

10.   I included waitressing with shop work, as many of the attributes discussed here applied to both occupations.

11.   In a joint paper I have argued that women were employed in different informal sectors to men and that the nature of their rewards were likewise different. In general this division reflected those of the labour market as a whole: women were less well paid and concentrated in particular sectors - mainly casual agricultural work and factory home assembly (Wallace and Pahl 1984).

Footnotes to Chapter 9 (cont)

12. By the same criteria, school leavers distinguished between jobs within factories. Being a storeman, for example, was preferable to working on a machine.

13. Most school leavers had a careers interview before they left school and the Careers Office would telephone them at home if a suitable vacancy became available. However, the Careers Office had far more applicants than vacancies and sometimes no vacancies at all were notified to the Careers Service. The Careers Officers therefore concentrated upon counselling individuals rather than supplying them with jobs.

14. This has been covered in an article I wrote in 1979 and included in Appendix III.

15. I have used the expression 'job departure' rather than 'job changing' because in Sheppey young people did not necessarily find another job straight away.

16. There have been a number of competing ways of accounting for job changing. Maizels (1970) argued that job changing was associated with a decline in levels of skill sought by the individual. Baxter (1975) examines the 'chronic' job changers and argues that the problem is not a very widespread one, for only 3 per cent of school leavers came into this category. Cherry (1976) like Baxter concludes that job changing leads to less well rewarded jobs but argues that it could be a rational strategy for those with no qualifications and few prospects. Newton and West (1983) use a model of 'exchange theory' to show that what a school leaver looses in leaving a job can be compensated for in other social-psychological ways.

17. I have not counted YOP schemes as 'jobs' in this classification.

18. Maizels (1970) for example found that over half of job changes were voluntary, and Roberts et al. (1982b) argue that some two-thirds of job changes were voluntary. Raffe (1983) however argues that the rate of job changing has declined since the rise in unemployment during the 1980's.

19. This would appear to fit Newton and West's (1983) model of job departure as a form of exchange. However, they apply this model universal istically and not in the context of different conditions of employment suffered by different groups within the labour market.

20. For example, the introduction of TVEI, Pre-Vocational Education and the YTS, have all been methods for introducing work experience and work preparation into schools.

21. Clearly, this is a rather wider definition of informal work to that adopted by others. These kinds of jobs could not be described as formal employment as they were not full-time permanant jobs and did not always require the employee to be registered. They were not necessarily illegal jobs either.

22. Many complained that it was small employers who failed to register employees, thus putting their employees at risk of prosecution. It was claimed that more employers had resorted to this in recent years as a means of reducing costs.

Footnotes to Chapter 9 (cont)

23. These have been defined as the '103 Core Skills' which are classified under 13 Occupational Training Families. These core skills are intended to be ones which can be taught outside the work place and are transferable between jobs. However, this very generalised definition of skills leads to some absurdities in classification. For example:

"15.1. Find out what portion measures are laid down for unfamiliar food/drink.

15.2. Find out what portion measures are laid down in an unfamiliar workplace" (From Training for Skills Ownership in the Youth Training Scheme. User's Guide MSC 1983).

As in Blackburn and Mann's (1979) study, one could hypothesise that most school leavers used more skill in finding their way to school than they learned on vocational training programmes.

24. This is bo rne out in other research into patterns of informal work. Considerable skills was exercised by households, for example, in the care and maintenance of their homes (Pahl and Wallace 1984).

Footnotes to Chapter 10

1. This account is supplemented by field notes written whilst I was living as a lodger with an unemployed family in 1979.

2. Derived from Jahoda's work op. cit., and described under hypothesis 3.

3. Young people could not really be described as 'unemployed' during the first six weeks after leaving school. Many regarded this as a 'holiday' or period of extended job search. By the end of the summer of 1979, the majority had either found jobs or been recruited onto YOP schemes. Therefore, I have classified 'unemployment' as periods of longer than six weeks without employment after leaving school or any period subsequent to that.

4. National Youth Employment Council op. cit.

5. A term used by Roberts et al. (1982a, 1982b).

6. The idea of the 'natural' rhythm is highly questionable. The rhythms of pre-industrial life were dictated by social calenders as well as by the exigencies of subsistence.

7. Bloxham (1983), Stokes (1981), Jahoda (1982).

8. The CND became a flourishing movement on the Island. Its main impetus stemmed from the involvement of unemployed punks who described themselves as 'anarchists'.

9. Bloxham (1983), Stokes (1981).

10. A similar point is made by Roberts et al. (1982a, 1982b). See Chapter 3.

11. This supports arguments by Roberts et al. and Pryce op. cit.

12. Corrigan (1979) describes the importance of 'doing nothing' as an activity in itself.

13. Corrigan (1979) argues that deviant behaviour could often be attributed to the need to create incidents in this way.

14. Mother s also felt guilty about charging more than a nominal 'keep'. This was associated with the phenomenon of 'spoiling' (Leonard 1980).

15. Hendry and Raymond (1983, 1984).

16. These comments about expectations of gender identities were all extracted from discussions on the subject which I held with three different groups of young people whilst they were still at school. The first group were boys and girls taking CSE Home Economics; the second group were girls taking Childcare; the third were a group of school truants.

Footnotes to Chapter 10 (cont)

17. Missiakoulis, S., Pahl, R.E. and Taylor Gooby, P. (1984) and in Pahl (1984).

18. McRobbie and Garber (1975) suggest that girls' adolescent culture is also bounded by age sets. However, it would appear that this applies only to pre-school leaving girls.

19. This concept is derived from Campbell's study of the Sarakatsani, a transhumant peoples in Greece. He defines honour as:

"... a sign of the recognition or excellence or worth of a person... From the point of view of the receiver, it is whatever raises him up in the eyes of another and gives him reason for pride... More specifically it refers to the sexual virtue of a woman." (Campbell 1964, p.268).

20. Wilson (1978) describes how deviant girls adopted these codes of romantic love as a strategy to legitimise their participation in gangs.

21. The qualities of 'manliness' described by Campbell among the Sarakatsani would also be recognised by young men in Sheppey:

"In general, the qualities of manliness are obvious and familiar. 'To be a man' the individual must show himself to be courageous and fearless. He must be strong in body and spirit. But there is also a nuance of meaning peculiar to a community where values are agonistic and social reputation is frequently at risk... Manliness implies not only the condition of being courageous but the ability of a man to do something efficient and effective about the problems and dangers which surround him." (Campbell 1964, p.269).

22. Parker (1976), and Corrigan (1979), describe this cycle of deviant behaviour amongst adolescent boys, which peaks during the mid-teens, and wanes when they find themselves with family responsibilities.

23. Most people liked to believe that it was possible to 'get one over on the Social' but in practice this was difficult to achieve. Many of the households whom I interviewed were not even receiving their full entitlements.

24. Our own survey of the Island indicated that less than 4 per cent of services were performed informally for cash, and even these were more likely to be done by those in work (Wallace and Pahl 1984). This conclusion is substantiated by a more comprehensive survey carried out nationally by the Economist Intelligence Unit (1982), and by the work of Miles (1983).

I also interviewed staff in the local DHSS and Unemployment Benefits Offices who informed me that violent incidents were rare.

25. I interviewed the local tattooist who claimed that unemployed teenagers were more likely to come to him to be tattooed, particularly in winter, as it was a way of passing time.

26. This is Jenkins' (1983) expression.

Footnotes to Chapter 10 (cont)

27. This supports the conclusions of Jones et al.'s survey (1981).
Rebel girl school leavers were both more likely to become unemployed
and more likely to be pregnant a year after leaving school.

28. Rubin (1976), Leonard (1980), and Jenkins (1983), have all
argued that in their studies there was an obligation to marry girls
who became pregnant.

29. This is a growing national trend. For example, between 1980 and
1981, 11 per cent of all non-married women aged between 18 and 49
were cohabiting (Social Trends 13, HMSO 1983). However, it would appear
that the rates of cohabitation amongst young people in Sheppey were
higher than this.

30. This resembles patterns of family structure amongst urban blacks.
Stacks (1974), for example, attributes this form of matrifocalitly
to the unstable employment of black men.

31. As soon as a girl became pregnant extended family and neighbours
rallied round with items of equipment and gifts. Older women became
involved in the process of preparation by knitting baby garments. There
was considerable ritual in the amassing of the right equip ment and
clothing. Hence, even a 'precipitous' pregnancy put into motion a
train of preparations in which a large number of people were involved.

32. Cashmore (1984) describes the importance of punk as a form of
'dole queue rock'.

Footnotes to Chapter 11

1. I am aware that in Chapter 10 and in the conclusions I have perhaps over-emphasised the experiences of the most disaffected young people. This is because data about the sub-cultural life of the young unemployed were collected through participant observation which was the most suitable medium for exploring these kinds of experiences from the 'inside'. I have endeavoured to compensate for this by concentrating more specifically upon 'respectable' youth in my present round of fieldwork (August 1984).

2. Murdock and McCron op. cit., Mannheim op. cit.

3. This includes those who were joining the army in order to leave home. Some young people left home to live with other relatives, whilst others left to live in bedsits. Welfare counsellors at the Unemployment Centre in Sheerness claimed that there was an unprecedented growth in the numbers of single young people living in bedsits, squats and shared houses. Private landlords began to subdivide some of the older terraced housing in Sheerness for this purpose, reclaiming most of their money from the DHSS, as rents were exorbitantly high and few young people could have afforded to pay them out of the average teenage wage. For example, some respondents were paying up to £25 per week in rent at a time when teenagers wages were mostly between £20 and £35 per week.

4. Iniechen (1981) indicates the association between different strategies of family formation and the housing market. Those who deferred marriage and parenthood were more likely to become owner occupiers, whilst those pursuing the 'precipitous' method were more likely to become tenants. He argues that in this way the reproduction of the family serves to reinforce class polarisation.

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SSLS Questionnaire 1979

Part 1 Basic Information

NAME: NO.

DATE OF BIRTH: M F

ADDRESS: MONTH OF
                                               LEAVING SCHOOL

FIRST JOB

Employer...

Starting when...

Nature of work..

Pay expected..

Know people working there...

....

How found job...

Why job chosen..

Employer..

Starting when...

Nature of work..

Pay expected..

Know people working there...

....

How found job...

Why job chosen..

LONG TERM EMPLOYMENT GOAL

Employer..

Starting when...

Nature of work..

Pay expected..

Know people working there...

....

How found job...

Why job chosen..

PAST JOBS

Pt/Ft	Employer	Dates	Occupation	Pay
......	......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......	......

FAMILY'S JOBS

Relation to ego	Pt/Ft	Employer	Occupation
......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......

Younger siblings...

THESE WITH NO FULL TIME JOB ARRANGED

Are you going to claim SB?...

Do you mind being unemployed?..
....

Do you intend going on a Government training programme?................
....

Are you looking for work?..

How?...

Are you waiting for work arranged?.....................................

How long do you think you will be unemployed?..........................
....

Are you doing part time or casual work?................................

Pt/Ft	Employer	Occupation	How often	Pay
......	......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......	......
......	......	......	......	......

SSLS QUESTIONNAIRE 1979

Part 2 Open Ended Questions

a) Present Employment

1. How long do you expect to remain with your first employer?

2. If you change jobs would you change:

                (a) in order to find something better

                (b) for better pay

                (c) due to boredom

                (d) in order to seek self employment

3. What do you consider most important in a job:
    pay/conditions/mates/job satisfaction/career prospects? (probe)

4. What do you think of your first job?
    (e.g. advantages/disadvantages).

5. Do you think it is difficult to find a job?

6. Is it as difficult as you expected?

7. What do you think of the pay? What do you think is the minimum wage
    you would accept? What do you think is a reasonable wage for a
    school leaver?

8. Is there any job you would not do?

9. Have you ever considered becoming self employed?
    Why?   (Probe formal/informal)

b) The Island

1. Are your family from the Island? How long have they been here?

2. Do you like the Island?

3. Do you want to stay here all your life? If not, when do you expect
    you might leave?

c)   Unemployment

1. What would your family think if you were on the dole?

2. Do you think you get enough money on Supplementary Benefit?

3. Would you go on Supplementary Benefit if:

                (a) you were waiting for a suitable job

                (b) You got the same money working

                (c) If no suitable job were available (eg. name kind of
    work they said they would not do)

d) Past Jobs

1. What did you think of the pay/people/conditions in the jobs you have had in the past?

2. How did you discover them?

3. Do you think it was useful experience?

4. Why did you do work in the past?

e) School

1. What did you think of school?

2. Did you have any problems or difficulties in your school career?

3. Do you ever play truant? When? Why?

4. When did you start to lose interest?

5. Do you think qualifications are important?

6. Would your parents stop you skiving?

7. What do your parents think of school?

f) Leisure

1. What do you do in your spare time?

2. Where do you go?

3. Who with?

4. What pastimes do you have?

5. How do you manage for pocket money? (probe, sources)

6. What do you do with it?

g) Friends and Family

1. Who are your main friends and what are they going to do when they leave school?

2. How old are they?

3. Where do you usually meet them?

4. Do you have a boyfriend/girlfriend? How old are they? What does he/she do? How long have you been together?

5. Do you talk much about jobs with your friends?

6. Do you ask your friends about job vacancies? Has anyone asked you?

7. Do you ever talk about work with your parents?

8. Has anyone in your family tried to find jobs for you?

9. What do your parents want you to do?

10. Did you find the Careers Service helpful?

FUS Questionnaire 1980

a) Work History (ask all)

1. What has happened to you since you left school?
2. Describe the jobs, and how you found out about them.
3. What did you like / dislike about them?
4. Why did you leave?
5. How did you get on with the supervisors and foremen?
6. What other sources of finance do you have apart from your main job?
7. What did you want to do when you left school? Why have you changed your mind? What would you really like to do now?
8. Have any of your friends or family asked you to help them get a job?

b) Unemployment (ask only those who have been unemployed)

1. What did you / do you do with your time whilst you are / were unemployed?
2. What is / was the worst thing about being unemployed?
3. Does it / did it get you down at all?
4. How are you / were you looking for jobs? How? How often?
5. Do your / did your parents encourage you?
    Do they / did they find work for you?
6. Are most of your friends working or not working?
    Has it / did it make any difference to the people you go around with?
7. Does it / did it make you feel awkward, or embarassed if you go out and someone asks you 'what are you doing'?
8. Do you / did you go out to the same places as when you were working?
    Do you / did you go as often?
9. Do you / did you miss the money?
10. (If unemployed at present) If I told you there were jobs going at ....(name a factory), at the moment would you go for them?

c) Family Background

1. Are your dad and mum still working at the same places as last year?
2. Have you lived here all the time?
    Are you planning to move out?
3. Do your parents treat you differently since you left school?

d) Leisure (ask all)

1. Are you still going around with the same people as you did when you were at school?
2. Do you go around with any people from work?
3. Where do you meet your friends?
4. Are you married/courting/engaged?
5. How do you spend your spare time? (Probe: pub, club, disco, etc.)
6. Have you any pastimes?
7. Do you go out more or less often than when you were at school?

e) Attitudes (ask all)

a) To Work

1. What is your idea of a good boss?
2. If you went in the Job Centre now, what sort of jobs would you look for?
3. What sort of things would you want to know about the job?
4. Have you ever considered being self employed? Why?
5. What sort of jobs would you not do?
6. If you were offered the chance to be a supervisor would you take it?
7. If they offered you training would you take it?
8. Attitudes to authority:
   a. If they told you to ...(name menial job) what would you do?
   b. If they told you to cut your hair / change your clothes what would you do?
   c. Would you have done that at school?
9. Would you join a Trade Union?
   Do you think there are any advantages in that?
10. Do you prefer to work with other people or do you prefer to work on your own?

b) Unemployment

1. If you were made unemployed, would you claim Supplementary Benefit or dole money?
2. Would you go to work if it paid the same as Supplementary Benefit or dole money?
3. Would you go to work if the only job available was.....(name the job they would not do)?
4. Do you think the dole money is enough?
5. If you were made redundant tommorrow, what would you do?

c) Other

1. What do you think you will be doing in 5 years time?
2. What do you think you will be doing next year?
3. Who do you know that you would want to be like?
4. Who do you know that you would not want to be like?
5. Do you ever get bored? (Probe)
6. Looking back at school, what do you think of it now?
7. How do you sqend your money at the moment?

Appendix 11   Further Ethnography

The quotations used as illustrative material in Chapters 9 and
10 were all derived from more extended interviews or social context
in which I was a participant. They should therefore be situated
within both the individual narrative framework and the interactive
circumstances of the interview itself. In using only truncated
excerpts, many of the complexities, ambi guities and shifts of
meaning during the interview were lost. In order to compensate
for this and to provide ethnographic depth to the analysis presented
in the thesis, I describe five interviews at length. Although
these were written some four years after the interview first took
place, I use the ethnographic present in o der to reconstruct the
situation.

Two of the case studies - those of Jenny and Ada - are derived from
interviews undertaken for the Department of Employment in February
1980 as extensive transcripts were available for these. The
remainder, - Sally, Gary and Steve - constituted part of the FUS
sample interviewed in the summer of the same year. They are
neither statistically nor typologically representative, but
represent a range of different responses to the same questions.

1) Jenny

Jenny is an unemployed punk aged 18. In order to find her I first
make a visit to the pub where most of the punks congregate and there
I am given an address in Sheerness. After walking along one of the
older nineteenth century terraced streets in Marine Town I finally
stop before a narrow, shabby house in a mid-terrace which fits the
description given to me at the pub and rattle a rickety door (there
is no knocker). There is a long wait, although I can sense movement
within: I am being inspected from behind a curtain in the room
adjacent to the door. Will they answer? Eventually, the door
is opened suspiciously by a girl in leopard-spotted slacks and
similar hair. It is Jenny's unemployed house mate and she leads
me upstairs. The room is dingy with one dusty sash window over-
looking walled back yards and a bleak parade of grey brick houses.
It is dull winters day, and Jenny's room is bitterly cold. We both
sit huddled in overcoats - Jenny on an unmade bed and I on the

kitchen chair - as she explains that she has no money today to buy paraffin for the heater.

Jenny comes from a 'respectable' affluent working-class family, and her parents live some miles away in Minster. She has lived for one year in this house contributing £5 per week towards the rent. Until recently, the DHSS gave her £7, although they have now raised this to £11 per week, but this still leaves little surplus.

Lying around on the floor are a number of books on psychology borrowed from the school library, where she recently worked on a Work Experience Programme. They include titles such as 'Adolescent Breakdown' and 'Depression and Breakdown'; R.D. Laing rubs covers with 'Brighton Rock' and the poems of Leonard Cohen. There are also a number of exercise books full of poems which she has written herself. A lightbulb hangs from the center of the ceiling illuminating the tangle of clothes and books on the floor. On the wall is a cutting from a newspaper and a photo of her and a number of the others at the 'Hoppit Club' in Holland.

Jenny is normally to be seen at night time cutting a rather dramatic pose at the local pub. On these occasions, her hair, dyed black at the front is sharpened into fine needles, the shards of which rain down across her cheeks, whilst the rest is back-combed and lacquered so that it sticks out from her head in a kind of petrified helmet, like a parody of a 1960's beehive. On these occasions, all the punks have white, mask-like faces and black circled eyes in carefully crafted expressions of frozen horror. For a while they also wore red kilts and black trousers.

Today however, her demeanour is muted by a head cold which adds to her natural pallor, blunts her voice, and causes her speech to be punctuated by frequent sniffs. Her eyes are mistrustful beneath a shaggy fringe. She compensates for this comparatively mild appearance by wearing her black sweatshirt inside out as a gesture towards inconoclasm. This makes life 'less boring', she explains. She tells me that she has not yet had time to decorate the room but eventually intends to paint it black too. Her disposition towards nihilism attracted her to the punk movement but she now feels that it has now become too dandified, losing some of its original impetus:

Jenny: Yer. You've got to wear your leather jacket and your
          such-and-such trousers and have your hair like this,
          then you're alright. If you're different to them,
          they don't like it. Can't be, can't be you

C.W: Do you think you are you now then?

Jenny: No, because now I'm just sort of being like this because
          I don't want to be the same as they are, 'cos if I'm
          the same as they are then I'm labelled just the same
          as everybody else, but when I'm like this I'm bored
          being like this. Want to be something different, but
          you can't - if you wear this, you're this, you're a
          such-and-such, if you wear that you are a such-and-such
          you just can't be you sort of thing, you've got to have
          a label - you just sort of wear boring clothes.

This determined non-conformity also leads her to reject conventional
images of femininity:

C.W: Would you prefer to work with blokes or with girls?

Jenny: Depends what sort of girls they were - there's a lot
          of girls I wouldn't like to work with - some girls - ugh!

C.W: What the disco crowd?

Jenny: The sort of typical, 'Oh I want to go out and what can
          I do?' 'My boyfriend said this to me', or 'I want to
          get engaged'. I can't stick girls like that. 'What
          can I wear to the disco?' 'Oh I've got to get my hair
          cut and don't know how to get it cut'. 'Oh, what do you
          think of my new make-up?' 'Look at my new nail varnish'.
          'Oh I've got to get some new curtains for my bedroom'.
          I can't stand people like that. So I'd rather work with
          blokes. But some girls are alright.

Jenny's rejection of respectable conformity is extended into a general
antipathy towards regular work, submission to authority and polite
language. At times it is also extended into a refusal to co-operate
with the interview. Jenny responds to my questions with occasional
bursts of exposition, but at other times she withdraws, becoming
unresponsive or surly. Consequently, I often find myself in
uncomfortable situations against which my normal codes of behaviour
are no defence. This becomes particularly acute when Kevin, a
friend drops round briefly and takes over the interview.

Kevin is a tall, stooping, prickly man in his early twenties, who
is even more remorselessly caustic than Jenny. He has been unemployed
for a number of years and his hunched figure in a battered
dufflecoat is a familiar one in the nearby pubs and streets. He
sits on the floor for a while, mocks my questions, makes blistering
attacks upon the disco frequenters and the London tourists, and

then abruptly strides out again.

Jenny has developed her own rhythms of life. Her days are spent
in bed and she prefers to be up at night, perhaps in order to be
consistent with her general inversion of conventional norms. She
has also contemplated becoming a professional writer or a poet, which
would fit with the times she chooses to keep, but is reluctant
to show me any work:

Jenny: If I've got nothing at all planned and nothing to do.
         I get up about twelve. Otherwise, I get up, well, it
         depends on what I've got to do, or if I've got any money.

C.W: You stay in bed if you've got no money?

Jenny: Yes. If I've got no money I stay in bed 'till twelve,
         one.

C.W: What do you do, just read?

Jenny: No, well, I don't, I can't sleep at night, so usually
         I get to sleep about, well, I might fall asleep about
         two, three, well it depends what time I get to bed.
         Say I get to bed about twelve, I sort of drop off for
         an hour or so, then I wake up. Then I probably fall
         asleep about seven, and wake up about half eleven. And
         just lay there, and I get up and do something.

Her weeks lurch from peaks to troughs depending upon the availability
of money and of 'events' which might happen. If someone has some
money, then they can all go round to the pub and have a good time,
otherwise it means staying in and finding cheaper diversions such
as reading and sleeping. In general, however, pleasure takes
precedence over subsistence:

Jenny: See, it depends, it depends how much money we get and
         whether we decide what to spend it on sort of thing.
         It's either buy food, stay in and be bored, or go down
         the pub, get pissed and starve.

Like many of the young unemployed, she is concerned to get her kicks
when she can, and this involves immediately spending any money which
any of them manage to acquire. In this way none of them have any
money for very long before it is dissipated, but everyone is able
to share in the good fortune of others, knowing that their turn will
come another day. Jenny can always scrounge money from the landlord
of the local pub or from her mother if necessary.

Jenny is very critical of the unskilled, low status employment
available locally and has so far only managed to find temporary
work on Youth Opportunities Schemes. Jenny thinks of herself as an

intelligent person. At school she was considered promising until she was dropped from most of the 'O'level groups through bad behaviour. She nevertheless left with one 'O' level. Towards the time of leaving, school seemed to become more and more irrelevant.

Jenny: I just didn't like it. I just hated it, hated the teachers, everything. They just don't teach you what you want to know at school. They just pump stuff into you and if you ask questions you're just told to shut up. Couldn't do anything you want - they don't teach you anything you need to know about life I don't think.

The best thing about school, she recalls, were the opportunities to 'lark about' and challenge the rules. Doing this on the dole is less interesting because there is no-one to offend.

On leaving school she was unemployed for some six months, and then she joined a Youth Opportunities Scheme, helping at a home for the mentally handicapped. Although she despised the ladies whom she worked with, she enjoyed the work to some extent. After being unemployed for a further eleven months she joined a second Youth Opportunities Scheme working in the school library, but left after a week arguing that it did not offer a real job:

C.W: Was it the money?

Jenny: No, it's not that, it's a lot of things. You see it's a rip-off really. The money you got. There should be proper terms for everybody, shouldn't there? You shouldn't have to make up something...it's pathetic.

Furthermore, she felt that what she was being taught was irrelevant and presented in a patronising manner.

C.W: What sort of things did you used to talk about on those Friday afternoons?

Jenny: Well, just sort of petty things, silly things like what can you do with that sheet - you was there weren't you? - Give us that sheet with things you need to survive if you were stranded on the moon and you had to walk so many miles to get to this spaceship - what you'd need, you had to put them in listed order what you'd need. As if I'm going to go to the bloody moon. What good's that going to do me!...And here I am stranded in Sheerness for hours on end. It's so silly. It's all out of perspective, isn't it?

Her Supplementary Benefits were suspended for six weeks as a result of leaving the scheme. Whilst unemployed, Jenny applied for a number of jobs with her friend, at a cafe and a bingo hall, but none of them really aroused her interest, and she rejected the jobs before employers

had an opportunity to reject her:

Jenny: Oh yes. What else did I do then? Oh yes, quite a few
          forms I sent in. I got a thing for Tesco's 'cos they
          said could I work at Tesco's. Gives me one of them big
          thick questionnaires about four pages - this got so
          personal, I thought 'Sod it, I'm not filling that in.
          I'm not telling them all what they want to know'. They
          wanted to know everything - so I thought 'Well, it's
          not worth it'. Everything about your family and criminal
          record - everything - you know, really things they didn't
          need to know.

Jenny draws an equation between the amount of humiliation she is
prepared to suffer and the amount of financial reward which the job
offers. Most jobs, she concludes, would have to be very well rewarded
before she would consider them, and even then, she would only endure
them temporarily:

C.W: What job would you do for a long time?

Jenny: Depends, I'd hope to sort of do it and find out what
          I thought of it, but I know I couldn't stick to a
          factory for long ... It would have to be something I
          really enjoyed doing and I was really committed to,
          otherwise I'd just think, "Oh, just stay in bed
          today", and wouldn't get up...

Jenny refuses to modify her apperance or behaviour to fit employers
expectations: her pride is more important than a steady job. This
has lead her to reject life with her family as well, for even before
she left school, she had begun to stay out later and later, sometimes
walking around all night, sometimes sleeping out on the beach, and
sometimes spending time at a friend's house. After leaving school,
this pattern was simply extended.

However, in spite of her rejection of employment and of conventional
life styles, Jenny did not find being unemployed a particularly
rewarding experience. Hence, most of her time was spent 'doing
nothing', or waiting around for 'sometning' to happen.

When 'something' fails to happen, Jenny and her friends go down the
pub and scrounge drinks.

C.W: Would you go round the pub then if you had no money?

Jenny: I do.

C.W: What, other people buy you drinks? And you buy them
          drinks when you've got some - is that the way it works?

Jenny: Well, it depends - if they've got money. But say if
           I had fifty pence I'd go down the pub and buy them some
           drinks - well I mean, it depends who it is. Some
           people buy you drinks, some don't - I mean, it's
           usually you go out with a lot of money and everyone
           buys you drinks, and you go out with nothing and no-
           one will buy you one. They only buy you one when you
           don't need them sort of thing.

C.W: If you have a lot of money though, do you buy other
           people drinks?

Jenny: People who buy me them. Yes. I don't just buy anyone
           a drink. If someone buys me drinks, I buy them one.

C.W: So, on balance you get the drinks back that you buy
           other people, or do you get more back?

Jenny: Well, it depends how many foreigners are about!
           (laughter)

C.W: What, they buy you a lot of drinks do they?

Jenny: Well, the past couple of nights they have had a few.

C.W: I've noticed that - if they come off the boats they
           buy everyone a drink, don't they?

Jenny: Yes. It's alright if that's all they want.

Jenny did not lack for company for it was an advantage of her
present life style that friends could be easily accommodated.
Indeed, for a while their house had become one of the local teenage
'doss houses': a place where anyone could sleep for the night on the
run from parents, school or trouble of any kind, the sort of house
Jenny had taken advantage of at one time:

Jenny: Yes. Various people come and crash out on the floor.
           Not any more. It used to be quite a busy houseful.
           It's pretty boring in here nowadays.

C.W: Why?

Jenny: I don't know. Well, it used to be all - we used to go
           around with all the kids, it used to be housefuls all
           the time but there's only a few people who come round
           now at the moment.

C.W: Why did that stop then?

Jenny: What, all that lot?

C.W: Yes

Jenny: 'Cos we didn't want them here. We just got into -
           we've had ever such a lot of trouble over this house
           and the noise and everything, a lot of them coming in
           all hours of the day and night and climbing in the
           windows and things that, well, we just stopped going
           round with them 'cos well, we just didn't want to go

> around with them and they just sort of stopped
> coming round after a while. I can't stand them.

Jenny's personal ideology was mainly based upon reacting against,
or inverting, conventional expectations, and in this she had the
support of the local punk sub-culture. Being in and out of work
amounted to a life-style amongst this group.

Appendix 11 (cont)

2) Ada

Ada, like Jenny is an eighteen-year-old punk. He expresses similar
sentiments as Jenny, but in a more pessinistic tone.

Ada spends most of his days wandering the streets despite the
winter drizzle and the bitter cold, for he has been driven out of
his home by a deteriorating relationship with his parents. I
scour all his usual haunts for him: the pub, the clock tower
corner, the local cafes and the High Street. Several people have
sighted him, but I have to wait around for the best part of the
afternoon until he appears. Eventually he arrives at a cafe.
Although he insists that he has nothing of interest to say, he
agrees to be interviewed at the home of a mutual friend nearby, as
he would find it too uncomfortable in his own home.

We occupy one of the bedrooms of the host family, and Ada eats his
way ravenously through a plate of meat pie, roast potatoes and gravy
which they have provided for him. Ada adopts a confrontational identity
but also complains of the abuse which this provokes:

C.W: When did you start going down the Tavern?

Ada: Er, 'bout three years. I used to be a fat little
             paranoid walking down the street, and I always used
             to dress like this before the punk thing started -
             about four of five years ago. And people, you know,
             used to think I was a fat little scruff, going around
             with ripped 'T' shirts on. They used to take me for
             a punk and beat me up. And then it got to a stage where
             I didn't care. I just used to bowl out. I just used
             to go out anyway. That must have been two or three
             years ago.

Ada tramps the hard February pavements wearing only a thin, torn
shirt which is open at the neck. The dirty and unkempt state
of his clothes is reflected in his rather puffy, grey complexion.
Ada has deepset hollow eyes, dulled with disappointment and heavily
underscored with shadows. His tawny, tigerishly-dyed hair, belies
the rather gentle and reflective way in which he speaks. Jenny, by
contrast, is far more consistently aggressive.

Ada confides that he felt more and more alienated from school
during his final year, partly because it was becoming to have less
apparant relevance to his aspirations and life style, and partly
because he felt rejected by the institution and this lead him to reject

it in turn. As a result, he began to play truant:

C.W: What was it like in the school?

Ada: It was alright. But I didn't go half the time, so then it
           was alright. It wasn't personal or nothing. You just couldn't
           really get on with the teachers, because it is so big up
           there. And if you didn't do nothing, then they wouldn't
           concern thenselves with you. You know, they just give up
           on you after a time, just give up and let you get on with
           what you want to do.

Ada fears that like at school, people at work will make fun of him,
particularly the older woman and for this reason he often acts the
part of the buffoon in order to amuse them. However, this has also
lead him into trouble:

Ada: It was me own fault really. It was me attitude - I could
           have done better if I wanted, but I just wouldn't, sort of
           thing.

C.W: What were your reasons for that?

Ada: I just wouldn't creep round the management and that - it was
           other people influencing me. I used to take the mickey out
           of the manager and that and it used to get me into more and
           more trouble ... so I was easily lead, sort of thing. And
           I was a sort of fool, going round doing silly things and that,
           I didn't take no notice of the management, sort of thing,
           nor nothing.

Whilst at school, Ada did a part-time cleaning job which his mother
found for him. On leaving school, he was unemployed for several months,
and was then recruited onto a Work Experience Programme at a local
chemical factory which he found intolerably monotonous. He describes
how his initial optimism about working life withered in the harsh
conditions of the factory:

Ada: When I left school I wanted a decent factory job, working.
           Get some decent wages. I thought, you don't need qualifications
           for that, to get on. I was quite content with a factory
           job, 'till I left school and realised what a factory job was.
           How tedious and boring it was.

Nevertheless, Ada endured the scheme for its full duration, but by
that time he had misbehaved too much to be taken on permanently.
Recalling his experiences, he particularly resented the attitudes of
his co-workers which he regarded as being typified by a hypocritical
and slavish prostration before authority. He also felt uneasy about
the terms of the Scheme and consequently did not regard it as meriting
his full committment:

Ada: You get personnel coming along and saying: 'It's your
           general attitude.' 'It isn't what it should be'. 'You
           could do more' And that, but I didn't see why I should

> have to. I was only getting paid £18 a week for it, doing a full man's work. And the factory, they benefitted all round. They got an extra man to do a full day's work, and they got paid for employing me. And they didn't pay me wages nor nothing. So I thought, that was a bit of a cheek. So I didn't go much on it there.

After leaving this, Ada found a job as an assistant store keeper at another local factory. He enjoyed this work because he was given respect and responsibility. However, he felt that he ruined his prospects there by irresponsible horseplay which he now regrets. In addition, he also caused further friction by refusing to conform to accepted standards of dress, coming to work in his punk gear.

Ada left this factory after a complicated dispute in which he felt he was not being properly rewarded for his work. Although his case was taken up by the union, he did not get the rise in pay to which he thought he was entitled. This soured his attitude and he failed his forklift truck examination through lack of concentration.

Although at the moment he says he would take any job which would get him out of the house, he is explicit in rejecting a number of factory jobs, either because the pay was not high enough, or because the working conditions were known to be poor. Nor is he prepared to undertake another Works Experience Scheme, and he does not want any job that might prevent him from pursuing his social life.

Inspite of these demands, he claims he is not ambitious, but is resigned to doing any kind of manual work:

Ada: No. I got an idea into me head and I used to be stubborn. I'd say that I didn't need qualifications for working in a factory job. I didn't go in for qualifications.

C.W: So you don't think they'd have helped you?

Ada: Well, I wouldn't have minded them. But I don't think they're worth it.

C.W: What, not worth the hassle?

Ada: No, not worth the hassle. I don't want to be a brain surgeon or nothing like that - nuclear physicist, or nothing.

And yet it is clear that he also felt disappointed by his experiences of employment. Ada contrasts his own behaviour with the orientations of his father, who he describes as a 'loyal worker':

Ada: He's .. um .. he's a toolsetter I think. I don't know exactly what his job title is. He's a toolsetter or

foreman or something down there. He's worked there for the past twenty-odd years now. Every so often he gets a presentation watch. This year it was his presentation gold pen. Never has a day off work hardly, he's never late.

C.W: Does he get at you then?

Ada: Well, he used to. Used to say, you know: 'Why don't you get out of the house'. 'Cos of the way I dressed and that. He's very conservative, goes out every day in a suit, all the time. Goes up the Conservative Club and that, knows everybody up there. He had a go at me, he won't see me in the street. He crosses over and generally avoids me. Won't talk to me at home now.

On the other hand, Ada does appreciate certain positive elements in his work. For instance, he enjoyed the assistant store keeper's job, and he regrets leaving it.

C.W: What sort of job would you really like to do then?

Ada: One I had before, in the stores. Got a little bit of responsibility and doing something, using me brain, doing the stock figures and that.

C.W: So you would like to have done that, would you?

Ada: Yes. It was interesting. Got the responsibility there. It's not a boring repetitive job where you're just staying in one place all the time. You move around all the time and everything. I would have liked that.

Ada had abandoned the hope of getting an apprenticeship because he had passed the age threshold, although he had entertained the thought of doing one. He could conceive of doing community work if he thought it was genuinely helping people and not just 'cheap labour for the government'. After some deliberation, he admits that he would do factory work temporarily, but only if the rewards were high enough. However, in general, he sees no hope of getting a permanent job:

Ada has been unemployed for some six months, but during this time he has inherited some money from his grandfather. He put some of this money into the Building Society and gave some £500 tc his punk friends to cut a record. The rest, he says regretfully, he 'blew' on gambling, trips to Holland and drinking:

Ada: Fruit machines ... crap tables ... and pontoon tables and boats and that. Gave a thousand and something to me mother. Gave a hundred quid to me old man to buy a new suit. Fifty quid to me sister. Couple of thousand just to spend. Didn't buy any more clothes or anything. Bought a pair of boots - I swapped them for a pair of

old shoes - bought these jeans, a pair of braces and
a shirt, and that was it. Two thousand, quick work,
I just blew it all.

Now he spends his time on the streets 'doing nothing' as he describes
it, and getting bored. Ada has developed a life style which involves
existing from hand to mouth by selling his belongings and scrounging
whatever he can:

Ada: Er, sold all, virtually all me belongings to second
          hand shops and that. Push bike, er things. I sell
          me records, stuff like that. I don't buy no records
          now, but I used to be always buying records. I just
          go out and blow all me money. I don't know the value
          of money. All my belongings. No, I've got no value
          for it, 'cos if I want some money, I just sell things.

Since being on the dole, Ada has grown accustomed to spending
money whenever any is available, or otherwise scrounging whatever
he can:

C.W: What do you usually do in the mornings?

Ada: Get up; go downstairs, look for butts in the ashtrays.

C.W: Do you?

Ada: Yes. I might be lucky and have some roll papers on
          me and I used to collect them all and make roll-ups
          out of them. But usually I just have to make do with
          the butts. Me old man, before he goes out in the morning,
          or whatever shift he's on, 'es sometimes very kind to
          me and leaves an extra long butt in the ashtray, but
          that's only now and then.

C.W: What, for you?

Ada: Yer, terrific. Have a wash, doss about and then its
          afternoon.

C.W: What do you do in the afternoon?

Ada: Nothing really. Just drink and then go round the pub
          or have a walk about town. Go indoors, listen to some
          records and watch telly. Then its evening by then.

C.W: Then what do you do?

Ada: If I've got the money go out down the pub. But usually
          I just sit in there, watch the telly and talk to me
          sister, generally.

Having money, however, which usually seems to come in unexpected
windfalls, means that a good time can be had by 'blowing' it all
on booze, drugs and frenetic pleasure seeking.

Ada lived for one year at his grandfather's whilst at school, and
then for a while with a friend's family where he said he liked
it because there was 'a real family atmosphere'. Whilst his

mother tries to help him find jobs, he is in continual conflict
with his father who resents his life style and behaviour. Ada
complains that his father makes life as difficult as possible
for him, by not allowing him to use the bath, consume any
electricity or do any washing. Consequently, he feels uncomfortable
at home and spends as little time there as possible.

Ada's social life revolves around two punk bands; 'The Naked' and
'The Commited'. Having been with them from the beginning he is
able to give me a lengthy explanation of their occasional trips to
Holland, where they go to the 'Hoppit Club' and perform, or just
parade themselves:

Ada: Well, they used to like the punks, they used to be
           alright. Treat you like a king sometimes when you was
           over there. You know, an English punk. Yer, treat
           you good sometimes, but then they don't know what its
           all about, if you know what I mean.

For Ada, it appears that punk provides more than a source of
identity. He says that the punk music and lyrics express something
important about his life, as well as providing a source of excitement
and activity.

Ada is full of rather weakly formulated escapist plans which
seldom come to fruition. He tells me that he made friends with
a family from Manchester whilst on a Butlins holiday, and that they
invited him to go and stay with them. He envisages starting a new
life there, but says that when he got as far as the airport and as
the planes were cancelled, he abandoned his trip. This rather
implausible story was perhaps intended as a gesture: it showed that
he could conceive of imaginary alternatives.

When asked about his plans for the future, Ada could not imagine
getting married or starting a household on the dole, because he
saw 'settling down' in terms of a form of material accum ulation
which was not possible without a job. Nevertheless, Ada did have
some rather modest and unprepossessing hopes for the future which
contrasted with his rather ferocious appearance and hedonistic
life-style at present:

C.W: What do you see yourself doing in ten years time?

Ada: Usual thing. In a council house, settled down with me
           wife and kids. Just having a rest sort of thing, with
           a nice steady job.

It is evident that Ada's fantasy world is counterposed to the real one. His dreams of escape and search for excitment contrasted with a wistful yearning for more mundane forms of security. Bouts of wild hedonism also provided a means of escape for Ada, as for others in similar positions. Though amphetemines or barbiturates washed down with alcohol, the real and the fantasy worlds merged at least for a short period. This self-immolation was described with a combination of remorse and inverted pride.

Ada presented himself as a disappointed individual. His ideals in life were unfulfilled and perhaps unfulfillable. Although he only wanted to do manual work, he felt that it ought to be more rewarding. He wants jobs to be interesting, work mates to be genuine and parents to be supportive and tolerant, none of which happened in practice. Ada adopts an identity as a rebel, but also expects to be respected for this - despite the fact that a punk identity was deliberately opposed to conventional norms.

The role changes and identity shifts which took place in the course of this interview - from a self-styled rebel to a born loser, from a short-term hedonism to long-term dreams and so on - imply that Ada's sense of identity was uncertain.

Appendix 11 (cont)

3) Gary

Gary lives with his parents in a three-storied, salmon pink
terrace in Marine Town. Once a salubrious row of guest houses but
now dilapidated and often sub-let several times over, they gaze
blankly at a concrete sea wall where they used to command a view
beyond the promenade to the sea. Gary's house has the number painted
on the wall with a paint brush in lop-sided digits and it is shared
by a grandmother, a grown-up sister, a younger brother and both
parents. Gary however is not at home. He is usually to be found
together with a group of youths who are everlastingly overhauling
their motor-bikes. I walk round the block and find them working
on the pavement outside his mate's house. Their tools and the
dismantled parts of motorbike spill over the road in a tangle of
twisted metal. There are about six lads of various ages gathered
around the dismembered bikes. Those who do not own motorbikes
lean against their push-bikes and pass comment, listen, or lend
a hand where they can.

Gary is a keen adherent of 'heavy metal' music and styles. Permed
and bleached curls tumble over his shoulders in a manner intended to
resemble heavy metal heroes. He wears a black torn 'T' shirt, with
a faded skull and crossbones motif discernable on the front. His
jeans are blackened and greasy from working on the bikes and his
leather jacket is tossed carelessly into the side of the road.

I interview him sitting on the pavement. Whilst the lads turn
over pieces of equipment in a desultory manner, for the object
of dismantling the bikes seems less to mend them than to provide
a rallying point.

After leaving school, Gary was unemployed for the duration of
the summer until joining a Youth Opportunities Programme for two
months. He left to start a labouring job, rebuilding the sea
wall but left after only a month because of the bad weather
conditions and low pay. After this, he was unemployed for another
period before finding his present job in a building firm through
his father, telling them that he was twenty-five. Gary sports a
fresh tattoo on his forearm.

When Gary first left school, he wanted to become a builder's labourer as he thought that this would provide both a useful trade and the opportunity to eventually become self employed. Fortunately, his experience and his contacts were an advantage. He had already worked with his father, who was himself a self-employed builder.

Gary truanted for most of his final year at school, for he did not think he had any talent for academic work, and found the curriculum increasingly irrelevant to his life plans.

His parents have been consistently supportive towards him, helping him to find jobs by activating their networks and preferring to use positive reinforcement as a tactic to keep him straight. His father helped him to find his present position and bought him a new motorbike and music centre which he will withdraw if Gary does not keep the job.

The Youth Opportunities Scheme on which he was involved provided a 10-week training course at a local college, which he found of limited use as he had already gained extensive experience of building from helping his father. Since Gary disliked school for what he perceived to be its artificially abstract content, and since he chose to do building precisely because of its concrete qualities, he resented the college course. Indeed he feels sceptical about the Youth Opportunities Programme in general:

Gary: I reckon the careers palmed me off with that college
         course in the end. Someone told me that there were seven
         or eight courses you could take, specialising in one
         thing, which would have been much better, but I didn't
         know about them, and they didn't mention them to me. I
         have got a feeling that they wanted to get rid of me.
         They probably thought to themselves: 'Oh, that Gary
         More's a nuisance, let's get him out of the way'.

Gary's main problem whilst being unemployed was boredom, although his circle of 'heavy metal' and motorbike friends helped to ease this. He observed himself slipping into a frame of mind whereby employment seemed both less important and more remote. His leisure activities stretched to fill the entire day.

However, Gary is keen to emphasise that he is not a scrounger, and thinks that scroungers deserve little sympathy. He intends, very firmly, to do manual work. He justifies this by his lack of achievement at school, but he also regards manual work as both more

generally useful to society and requiring more skill than non-manual work, and for this reason he rejects the authority of those who, although employed, do no useful work:

Gary: I wouldn't be a foreman, because I don't want to end
            like a cabbage. Not doing any work. Foremen generally
            don't do any. I've no ambition to make my way up to
            the top and be in charge of everything. That doesn't
            interest me. If people want to be at the top, then
            that's up to them.

Indeed the mental/manual division features strongly in Gary's cosmology:

C.W: What would you really like to be then?

Gary: (Long silence, sighs)... a painter. That's what I would
            like to be. If I was offered an apprenticeship in that,
            I would take it. I've always liked art, and I used to
            be good at it in school. I'm always drawing at home.
            I used to want to be a commercial artist, but then I found
            out you have to have lots of 'O' levels and things for
            that. I'm not brainy enough. Most people who are good
            with their hands, haven't got it up top. There again, I
            suppose, brains are nothing to do with drawing. (He pauses
            to think...). For instance, being a drummer. I suppose I
            got on alright at school.

            (I question him more closely)

Gary: It's difficult to know if it is just laziness really
            or whether I didn't really want to do it at school. I
            had a good education, but I don't want to do anything
            spectacular, just earn a living. They don't seem to
            teach you what you want to learn at school. I mean,
            we had music and that, but it was Beethoven and that,
            and rock music isn't really like that, so it was
            irrelevant.

Gary has some difficulty in specifying a precise trade which he would like to do, but he is certain about the kind of trades he would consider within a given range.

Gary: I have always wanted to be a builder's labourer. You
            can watch and learn what everyone is doing (on a
            building site), that way, and then you get an idea of
            what you want to do. I would only want to specialise
            afterwards.

C.W: What trade would you be interested in, then?

Gary: I would like plastering, but that is a real art, and I
            don't think I would be able to do that. I wouldn't
            mind it, but I don't fancy it, if you see what I mean.
            I like concreting, but that isn't really a trade. I
            don't know if I would prefer a trade really. (He
            hesitates). It is always best to have a trade,
            because then you can always get work anywhere. I
            would like a trade but I don't really fancy it.

Hence Gary prefers some form of informal training, as it does not involve going to college. In general he feels that there are more advantages in being able to turn your hand to a number of tasks on the building site rather than specialising in just one. Gary contrasts the advantages of labouring with the disadvantages of factory work:

Gary: I wouldn't like to work inside, I just like it out in the open and I don't mind the weather. I couldn't stand being locked in all day, doing the same job all the time. In building you can do different jobs all the time, so its interesting, you can talk to people at the same time. You have a good laugh when you're working.

Gary feels that it is important that he is treated with respect and courtesy at work:

Gary: I don't mind if someone asks to do something. It's the way they treat you that's important. Like this foreman at the moment, he doesn't ask: 'Can you do something? , but: You will'. That brings out the negative in me. I'll do it, but they won't get the best out of me. I'll be too narked to concentrate.

He also has a keen awareness of potential exploitation:

Gary: I'm a builder's labourer, but I do all the proper jobs. I'm cheap labour for them really, because they only pay me a labourer's rate and then they don't have to pay a tradesmen.

Nevertheless, he works hard. leaving at 6 o'clock in the morning and returning only at 6 o'clock in the evening. Even his social life has had to be sacrificed to these long and exhausting hours, for he is aware that under the present circumstances it would be difficult to find another job.

His real ambition however, is to become self employed. Rather than regarding this as insecure and casual work "on the lump" Gary sees it as proving a very positive status. Becoming self employed would enable him to earn a living without being tied down to an employer and therefore subject to petty restrictions and an externally imposed timetable. Moreover, he thinks he can also earn more money   or work on the side if necessary:

Gary: I would like to be self employed, working with this bloke the chippy. You get jobs through other builders. You are hired out when you are self employed. You do price work, or you get a basic day's pay. There's no messing about, putting it in the books and that, and you earn a lot more. You get more work, and more free

> time and you are not sacked for taking a day off, like
> you are at B & S (his present firm). I run the risk
> of being sacked every time I go for a job. At this
> place you have to work at one job until it's finished and
> they are all very big jobs, so I get bored. I would
> rather do something for two weeks and then do something
> else at another place, that way, there's more variety.

Therefore, by being self employed, he can avoid monotonous routines, being able to come and go as he pleases. In this way he could adapt his working hours to his social life.

Whilst he seems generally contented with life, Gary's main problems is how to cope with boredom. Whilst school was boring, so was playing truant. Unemployment was occasionally boring but no as boring as working in a factory subject to machines. Some of his tasks at work at present are boring because they seem repetitive and purposeless.

The things in life which are not boring however, are those which are actively chosen and engage his creative capacities. Playing in a heavy metal band is one such activity. Gary was a member of a band called 'Torture' and he talks enthusiastically about it. Since starting his present job, however, he has not been able to practice as much as whilst he was unemployed, and consequently, he was ejected from the band, forcing him to join an inferior one:

Gary: There at least twenty young musicians on the island and
         there is nowhere for them to go. The hall (where they
         have been practising and caused complaints) is so old
         that all the sound escapes. There are two punk bands
         and two heavy metal bands. All the other kids are getting
         drunk and having fights, smashing the place up, and we
         have an interest, but we don't want to end up on the
         streets, and there's not much alternative.

Gary's future plans encompass a range of goals, including leisure pursuits, housing and employment. These objectives complement one another insofar as they lead towards being a self determining and independent life style:

C.W: What do you see yourself doing in ten years time?

Gary: Playing at Hammersmith Odeon, I hope! I won't be on
         the Heath. I want to buy some land and build my own
         house and have another house somewhere else which is
         nearer London. I'm determined to go on with one band or
         another. I'm a drummer. The group I am in now is not
         so good, but I feel I ought to stay with them, and
         anyway, I got chucked out of the other group for not
         practising enough. I will advertise all around the Medway

area and get a really good band together. I might
be working in building, I suppose, but I don't know
what at.

Appendix 11 (cont)

4) Sally

I remembered Sally from the previous year as a warm-hearted,
vivacious, and irrespressibly mischevious girl. This year she is
unemployed and I call round for her at a 1930's council house
in Queenborough. The garden contains an overgrown vegetable patch,
and old pram and a child's tricycle. Its circumference is marked
by a chicken wire fence which serves to keep a dog inside and
stray children out. I walk round the side of the house, and the
dog barks noisily, hurling itself against the half-pan elled door.
A shadow moves behind the frosted glass, hushes the dog, and opens
the door a crack - simultaneously inspecting the caller and restraining
the dog. I explain my purpose and I am admitted.

Inside, the house is dingy, with little on the walls to conceal
the stained and yellowing wallpaper. We sit around a dining table
in a cramped living room, trapped between the kitchen and the
hallway. A scratched, wooden sideboard on one side displays a
collection of small ornaments such as a spanish dancer and some
souvenir mugs. Lying on the floor between two armchairs are some
piles of 'Klippons' homework: little brown plastic units which are
assembled into larger brown plastic units like three dimensional jigsaws,
the purpose of which is ultimately obscure.

Sally, by contrast, is immaculately made-up and coiffured. She
seems fresh and wholesome amidst the generally drab worn furnishings.
She wears a tight, clinging skirt, a light blouse and strappy,
high-heeled sandals. Sally models herself upon her sisters - all
factory girls - who spend their money on clothes, discos, drinking
and generally having a 'good time'.

Her mother is present throughout the interview and hovers around
interrupting or even taking over the conversation altogether. She
is a slight, gnarled woman who looks much older than her fifty-odd
years. Her wrinkled white hair is stained yellow at the front
by tobacco. She draws frequently on a No. 10 miniature cigarette,
sucking in her cheeks, as if to drain the last drop of solace
from each drag. Sally takes one occasionally too, flicking it
nervously, compulsively, into the pub ashtray in the centre of
the table.

The interview is awkward and embarrassing, for it is evident that Sally's mother is using it as an opportunity to upbraid Sally for her past misdemeanors. She holds Sally as an example of failure before her brothers and sisters, because she has not found employment. Sally worked at a local factory for some six months after leaving school, but she was made redundant at Christmas. It is now June, and she has been unable to find work since that time, despite prodigious efforts. During the course of the interview, Sally's attitude changes. Under a ceaseless tirade from her mother, she sinks from being lively and voluble at the beginning to becoming faltering and resigned by the end. Sally gives the impression that everyone is pressurising her. Being eager to please, she is confused as to how to satisfy these demands, for as well as enduring scolding from her mother, she is frequently summoned for interviews by the Job Centre:

Sally: I've been all round all the factories all the time,
         and I've got my name down at all of them, but there is
         never anything going. I haven't been to see the careers
         officer yet, because the phone is out of order. I've
         been going up the Job Centre and I've got to see Mr.
         Chandler again tomorrow 'cos he wrote me another letter.
         I go up there every week when I sign on, but I can't
         'phone up because we haven't got a 'phone, and the
         kids have got to the one on the corner. I'm embarrassed
         to go to the careers officer now, I wouldn't know what
         to say to him. That's the third time I've gone to
         see Mr. Chandler. He always asks me: 'Have you been
         anywhere?'. I have been everywhere. I tried the
         Bottleworks canteen today, but there were no jobs there.
         I went down Wasso's and down the shirt factory. I
         don't know where else to go. They are standing
         people off everywhere, now, there is no work. All
         the factories are on half time. And its getting worse
         as well. Tudor Glass made the whole night shift
         redundant. Me dad was on that ... He won't get
         another job now because he's nearly sixty.

Sally frequently played truant from school. She belonged to a group of girls for whom 'bunking off' provided far better entertainment than sitting in a classroom and there is a slight gleam in Sally's eye, as she tells me:

Sally: Yer. I truanted a lot. I used to go down the cafes,
         in the churchyard, anywhere. In the caravan classrooms.
         Used to have a laugh. But I used to dread coming home
         in case my dad found out. My dad wouldn't let me
         stay at home. They used to put me on the bus. Mr.
         Lawton (the Educational Welfare Officer) said they
         should take me to school, but I'd just get off the
         bus again or sneak out.

As a result of this, Sally's parents were prosecuted and Sally's mother is still angry at what she perceives to be Sally's flippant attitude towards schooling. She feels that Sally is now suffering unemployment as a punishment:

Mother: Yer. She cost me a lot money that one - in fines.

Sally: I just didn't like the school. It's a big school, and its a job finding your way around. There's all different lessons and by the time you'd found the lesson, it had finished.

Mother: (Interrupting..). She cost her father a lot of money with not going to school, and you see what happens.

Sally: (Petutantly..). I was alright at Lady Anne School!

Mother: (Continuing..). Yer, and I say to the others: ' if you don't go to school and learn properly, you'll end up like Sally, and look at her!'

The mother's somewhat censorious attitude is due to her own worries about the financial situation of the family. Her husband and son have just been made redundant from a local factory, and another son is on short time:

Mother: I just don't know how to make the money go round any more. I've got three of them out of work, and the little one's still at school.

Since being unemployed, Sally has stayed at home most of the time, and is put to work by the rest of the family:

Sally: I've not been doing nothing. Just sitting indoors or going down the club occasionally and having a game of pool with me mum and dad. It's a very boring life. Just going shopping with me mum. And I do for me mum. I do people's hair as well sometimes. Set and wash it, roll it and that, I like doing that. I do it just to help them out. I always tong me sister's hair back for her.

Sally's parents are able to prevent her from seeing her previous friends socially and consequently she has become very isolated.

Mother: It's just as well she's not seeing that lot anymore. She was lead astray by them. They weren't going to school, so she didn't go either. They were a bad influence on her.

Sally's social life has been severely curtailed by her lack of income. She is forced to take her recreation with the family - which she accepts unenthusiastically-or rely upon the charity of her friend's boyfriend.

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Sally:      I stay at home mostly.  Sometimes I go out with Debby
            and her John, and she gets him to get me drinks.  I've
            got no money.  I get £25.90 for two weeks from the
            dole.  I give £5 to me mum and what I've got left after
            I've paid me mum goes on fags and clothes.

Mother:     And it's not enough.  She smokes all mine an' all.

Sally:      I used to go out more than that when I was at school.
            I used to go out every night then.
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Apart from going out somewhere, Sally's main pleasure is derived
from buying clothes, and this expenditure too has been restricted due
to lack of money.

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Sally:      Oh, I buy fags and that.  Sometimes I buy a top if I
            see one I like.  I'm mad on clothes.  My father used
            to buy me things now and then and give them to me,
            but he can't afford it now.
```

Sally desperatly wants to find a job. She would prefer to do
factory work, partly because she feels she could not cope with
other kinds of work, and partly because her sisters all work in
factories. The advantage of factory work is that it offers
opportunities for companionship and 'having a laugh'. Sally's
sisters found her the job at Twinlocks and provided support for
her while she was there. Consequently, this is the factory where
she would most like to work.

```
Sally:      It was alright at Twinlocks.  I liked the work, but
            they kept moving me round all the time.  As soon as I
            got used to a job, I was moved to something else, so I
            never settled down really.  I had to know how to do
            everything in case they got a rush job on.  Three of
            me sisters work there.  There is one in the office.
            I told Mr. Chandler:  'Where else have I got to go.
            That's where all me sisters work, so if I can't get
            in there, what chance do I stand anywhere else?'
```

Sally also enjoys hairdressing but could not imagine working
professionally as a hairdresser, as this would involve going to
college, which would be too similar to school:

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Sally:      I wouldn't have minded being a hairdresser, but I
            wouldn't have gone to college, so I didn't apply.  I
            wouldn't have liked it in a shop either, not standing
            in front of everyone else, and I am no good at
            reckoning up and that.  I don't like standing around
            all the time either.
```

Sally is more circumspect about accepting work at other factories,
especially those which were notorious for bad conditions and low
pay, but at the mement she will accept any job just to get out of
the house.

She regrets not having worked harder at school:

Sally: If I had learned to read more, it would have been
           useful. I would make my children go so they wouldn't
           turn out like me.

But she feels that at least she has 'turned out' better than some
of her friends:

Sally: Some of the girls I used to go school with, they've
           got kids now and they're not married. Norma Daley,
           she's on the boats already (i.e. she is a casual
           prostitute), and Joanne Smith she's all tarty, and
           they are all my age as well.

Evidently, sexual honour is worth more than easy money, and Sally
prides herself on remaining 'respectable' through all her tribulations.

It would appear that Sally feels oppressed by her dependence upon
her family and this is compounded by the fact that her family are in
deprived financial circumstances. Clearly, her activities are
controlled to a greater extent than those of male youths. Due to
their financial position, her family are unable to subsidise her
life style to the same extent as previously. Pubs, discos and
activities which her parents do not approve of are now out of
reach.

Appendix 11 (cont)

5) Steve

I have arranged to see Steve in the evening after he has finished
work and eaten his supper. His family have recently moved into
a 1920's semi-detached property which they are in the process of
refurbishing. Steve belongs to a very close-knit family and they
are all involved in the interview. They usher me inside, hand me
a cup of tea, and are generally very solicitous about my comfort.
They remember all the details of the interview the previous year,
for they are proud of their son and happy to talk about his prospects.
I am also introduced to Steve's sixteen-year-old sister who is
taking 'O' levels at school. She is plucked from her homework
upstairs and pushed into the room to say hello'to the lady who
is doing a survey'. The parents seem disappointed that I do not
want to interview her as well.

The family insisted that I make an appointment to see Steve, so
that they could prepare themselves in advance. They show me
enthusiastically around the house which is warm and comfortably
decorated. We sit in a kitchen-diner with french windows opening
out into a neat, orderly garden. They describe how they knocked
down a wall to turn it into an open-plan area and how Steve helped
his father to put up the wooden pannelling. On the wall are some
framed pictures of ships at sea painted by Steve's father, and
Steve's handiwork is also displayed in the form of geometric
designs made out of strands of coloured cotton and mounted on
wooden plaques. Steve's father is keen to show me more of their
art work, but I manage to postpone this.

The room smells of fresh baking. Steve's mum bustles about at the
far end of the room in the kitchen section keeping half an ear
on the conversation and occasionally interjecting comments. Steve's
father sits on the other side of Steve and does much of the talking,
for Steve is rather shy. Steve sits in a chair, sipping his tea.
He is a sharp featured, slightly built lad, with short, neat hair,
pressed jeans and a clean,checked shirt. Every so often he has to
cut short his garrulous father in order to answer questions in
his own way. 'He's a good little worker ', his mother calls from
the kitchen.

He tells me he is not interested in punks 'or any of that stuff. Going round dressed up like a load of nutters,' but he still sees his friends from school. His friends are similarly respectable, quiet and hardworking, although some of them have suffered unemployment in the last year. Everyone agrees that they did not deserve this because they 'do their best'. They tell me about one of his friends who refused to claim supplementary benefit and does all kinds of casual jobs in order to support his widowed mother.

Steve and his father were determined that Steve should undertake an apprenticeship on leaving school because:

Father: It's a trade and with a trade you can't go wrong, can yer? It's always something under your belt, and then even if you are unemployed, you can always make a bit of extra. Nah, nah, they can't take that away from you. You see, look at me ... I mean, I didn't get a trade but I did learn sign writing when I first started. I don't do that now, but it is always useful to have a trade behind you. You don't see many tradesmen out of work, do you?

Steve and his father both tell me that they get considerable satisfaction from working with their hands, and point to the evidence around their home. Steve worked hard at school and although not a high achiever, was well liked by his teachers. He attended regularly, and worked steadfastly at his five CSE's in woodwork, metalwork, maths, technical drawing, and computer studies. These were all good, practical subjects, and he had hoped that they would help him to obtain the apprenticeship place which he desired. When he believed he had secured an apprenticeship place he left school immediately, before having actually taken his examinations. He had enjoyed school well enough, but mostly for the opportunities for companionship which it offered. His main complaint was:

Steve: There was not enough discipline. I don't think. They should have made you work more. And the other kids, some of 'em they were always mucking about in class and that. They (the teachers) didn't bother with them, but they put you off what you were doing.

Whilst not being scholastically committed, Steve has an instrumental orientation towards education, and was 'respectably' conformist.

He had originally wanted to become a carpenter, as he had thought that this was a trade which he could apply at home or informally for others, but was happy to do some other kind of apprenticeship

if that was not possible. Evidently, a 'tradesman' had a
particularly revered status in the eyes of this family, for this
indicated a possessor of useful knowledge who could do a job
well. Steve and his father saw manual work in terms of a career
leading to a particular goal. Steve was not therefore interested
in doing unskilled work for it was thought to lead nowhere:

Steve: I wouldn't like to be like Mick (a friend). He's not
           getting anywhere at that job (working in a timber yard).
           I would get another job if I was him, but he thinks
           only of today and tomorrow ... He's not looking ahead.

This lead Steve to reject many kinds of manual work as 'dead end'
jobs and insufferably boring. He regarded the people doing those
jobs as lacking in ambition and intelligence. However, he is
prepared to endure unsatisying work with little money, if he
thought it might lead to an apprenticeship. Steve had considered
applying for a formal apprenticeship place at Maconi Avionics and
Chatham Naval Dockyard (both of which have now closed down), but
he thought that the competition,with seventy applications for
each place, might be too fierce.

Steve's father, however, ' put a word in ' for him at a firm where
he used to work and where he remained on good terms with one of
the foremen. This was a small furniture manufacturing business and
they recruited Steve immediately on leaving school by promising
him an apprenticeship if he performed well. As he had found a job,
Steve ceased to put any great effort into his school work, and now
regrets not having any examinations to enable him to apply for
an apprenticeship place with one of the larger employers. Had
he not found his present job he might have even considered staying
at school to improve his grades, but at the time he felt
confident that as a sturdy, intelligent and capable boy he would
be able to find something. Besides, it was well known that in these
matters 'who you know is better than what you know' and it was more
useful to have contacts and a reputation as a reliable worker than
to have good examination grades. Therefore, Steve joined his
present firm a year ago on the understanding that he would be
signed-up for a formal apprenticeship. He began by working hard
and enthusiastically, coming in early in the morning, leaving late
and always being available for extra duties and errands. He
made himself the personal assistant of the foreman. In this way

he demostrated his enthusiasm, even though the work itself was
not very interesting as it resembled routine assembly work:

Steve: I started at the bottom making drawers, and I've worked
            me way through chests and cabinets until I was on
            wardrobes. It's like assembly work, but the bloke who
            owns it (the firm) calls it cabinet making. It's not
            really, though, because the blokes down at the mill
            just cut all the wood to the right size and I just
            slip it together.

From this he moved on to machining wood, but found this equally
undemanding.

After one year of this work, he has not yet been offered a formal
training place or asked to sign indentures. Steve and his father
feel very anxious about this, since he is rapidly approaching the
legal age limit. His employers have not mentioned the apprenticeship
since he first began work, nor is there any indication that they
intend to send him away to college, as they have made no provision
for his absence:

Steve: When I started, I believed that I would be doing an
            apprenticeship, but instead they put me on the machines.
            I got a bit fed up with that, so I went up to the office
            in January to have a word with them and they put me up
            to wait until the work picks up before they can train
            me, but because when its a bit slack, there's not much
            to do up that end, so they can't train me.

Steve's father is perturbed about the situation and has been to
see his friend, Steve's foreman, to 'have a word' and he intends
to see him again shortly. He felt reassured after this meeting
because he feels that Steve is at least being given informal
training, even if he has not signed formal indentures:

Steve: He's a good bloke, he's teaching me everything he knows.

Father: Yer, and he's well pleased with him

Steve: He just can't control when I go to college 'cos he
            says it depends on the situation.

Father: Yer, well you go and remind him, because you're nearly
            eighteen soon.

It is possible that as this is a small firm and there is a slump in
demand at present, Steve will not be trained as a formal apprentice
at all. If that is the case then both he and his father will be
disappointed. The father had hoped that his son would acheive better
things in life than he had managed, himself because he had more
years of schooling.

However, if that failed to materialise, Steve would have to adjust to the 'dead end' manual work of which he is critical.

In his spare time, Steve goes out with a regular group of friends whom he has know for many years. They play tennis together, go to the 'pictures' and on Friday and Saturday evenings they might go down to one of the local pubs for a drink or attend one of the local discotheques. His mother thinks that Steve should have a regular girlfirend, an eligible 'nice girl', and asks me jokingly if I know of one. Steve says he prefers to go fishing.

Steve's earnings are all accounted for in planned progressional projects. He has purchased a half share in a car with his father from his Christmas bonus and is learning to drive it. Most of his money is controlled in various ways by his family:

Steve: At the moment it goes on me car, partly petrol, road tax, insurance. I give £11 to me mum, then £2 for clubs and catalogues from me mum. £2 per week life insurance and endowments, (I inquire about these)... There's two policies, one with the United Friendly and one with the Peral, I think - one for ten years and one for fifteen. I don't know, really, I do that through me mum, because she knows about all that. And then I spend some drinking with me mates, and some to keep my ferrets alive.

All his projects are long-term and his confidence in them is due to the fact that he feels certain that he will be in regular employment. He says he wants to 'build something up'! 'I am careful with my money. I don't waste it all on the machines, and stupid things like that, and yet I still enjoy myself'. One reason for this financial confidence is that Steve would never leave his job, no matter how unsatisfactory it was, unless he had another one to go to.

Steve's ambition is to become a self-employed craftsman when he has learned his trade, as this would give him more independence and responsibility. If he does not achieve this goal, then a position as foreman would also be acceptable:

C.W: What do you think you will be doing in ten years time?

Steve: I'd like to be a craftsman, self employed preferably. I'd just like to work for myself. Like Eddy Seager, someone I know, - he's self employed joiner. He seems happy enough, working for himself. He's got his own house.

Mother: You see, now he's been at work this length of time he

knows what he wants to do.

Steve: Yer. It's independence, I want not the money.

Mother: He's a good little worker.

<u>Appendix 111</u>

Copies of articles and reports

REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT

17-19 and Unemployed
on the
Isle of Sheppey

by

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28th February, 1980.

Acknowledgements

This Report and the fieldwork on which
it is based has been accomplished in
less than six weeks. Such a sustained
effort would not have been possible
without the support of our social net-
works. We are very grateful.

On the Isle of Sheppey we were fort-
unate to have had friendly and most
valuable support from the Divisional
Careers Officer, Mr. A.A. Turner and
his staff. But above all we acknow-
ledge the willing and unassuming
cooperation of the eight youngsters
who are the main subjects of this
Report. We hope we have not laboured
in vain.

<div align="right">

R.E.P. and C.W.
28.ii.80

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CONTENTS

1.0   INTRODUCTION, OUTLINE SUMMARY AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

1.1   We were asked in our commissioning letter of 21st January 1980
       to report on the social and psychological effects of unemployment
       on 17-19 year olds who had been in employment for at least three
       months. We had barely six weeks to find respondents, interview
       them and write this Report. In practice, because of other commit-
       ments, we had much less time. We recognise that because of this
       severe pressure of time this Report is not as full nor as polished
       as we would like.

1.2   The data upon which we draw is essentially eight extended interviews
       with four unemployed youngsters of each sex [1]. We each did four
       interviews and each of these lasted between one and two hours. They
       were tape-recorded and followed a similar pattern. The check list
       of the questions we asked is given in Appendix III. We also draw on
       our individual research projects in the area: that of R.E.P. is on
       the Informal Economy and that of C.W. is on School to Work Transition
       (a brief summary statement about this project appears in Appendix I).

1.3   We began with the assumption that young people who were unemployed
       would suffer from various difficulties caused by their lack of money
       and perhaps lack of social contact. We already knew from our previous
       work that the family was very important as a means of finding employ-
       ment and we therefore expected the unemployed youngsters to be even
       more dependent on their parents.

1.4   Our main conclusions, in the event, surprised us. We set these out here
       in summary form for the convenience of the reader who may not wish
       to read the full Report:

            i.   The youngsters we interviewed were more affected by their
                 experiences of harsh, boring and alienating employment
                 than by the putative social and psychological effects of
                 unemployment.

            ii. Community support means, in practice, family support, so
                 that a crucial distinction appeared between those supp-
                 orted by and those estranged from their families.

            iii. A further crucial distinction appeared between those who
                 were seeking skilled work and those who were prepared to
                 take any job that was offered.

1.5   We hesitate to draw any detailed policy implications from our work
       but three areas to which attention should, in our view, be directed
       stand out. We are unable to do more than present these in summary
       form:

            i.   The Careers' Service should show a greater concern about
                 the actual tasks which youngsters are given by their
                 first employers. If the actual work is physically too
                 demanding or undermines the self-respect of the new
                 worker then the result may be job-induced unemployment.

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1. The way these eight were selected is described below. This was done in
consultation with Mrs. Pauline Carroll of the Department of Employment.

ii.   A special policy should encourage employers of new workers to pay particular regard to the maintenance of health and safety regulations and to ensure that new workers are supervised fairly and sensitively.

iii.   Unemployed, single youngsters who have been rejected by their families need support. They need to know their rights in relation to Social Security Benefits and they need to be recognised as legitimate candidates for local authority housing. The conversion of more properties to single-person flats would be very helpful.

2.0 THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE LOCAL LABOUR MARKET [1]

2.1 Unemployment is experienced in a particular locality with its own distinctive character and culture. We now present the essential context for the detailed interview material which follows.

2.2 The Isle of Sheppey is now part of Swale District Council; from 1968 - 1974 the three previous L.A. areas of Sheerness U.D., Queenborough M.B. and Sheppey R.D. had been amalgamated into one Queenborough-in-Sheppey M.B.. In 1971 the population of the island was 31,590. The town of Sheerness, which is the main focus of this report, had about a third of that total and Queenborough about a tenth. These are the main centres of employment: Sheerness is dominated, physically, by the steel mill and the docks, both established in the early 1970s. Smaller factories are clustered near the railway at Sheerness and, to a larger extent, at Queenborough.

2.3 This three-mile stretch at the mouth of the Medway is a curious combination of industrial wasteland and attractive coastline. From the industrial estate at Queenborough the refineries on the Isle of Grain are as close, as the crow flies, as is Sheerness dockyard. The horizon is dominated by the murky pall of pollution over the steel mill and the flares from the refinery chimneys. But water softens landscapes and the variations of the reflected light, the many small craft and the frequently dramatic cloud formations at sunset when looking away from the Island can be almost romantic. Yet one turns to see derelict wasteland, muddy and badly pot-holed roads, bridges collapsing with the weight of lorries weighed down with containers or steel rods from the mill, and acre upon acre of Japanese cars waiting to be driven away. Perhaps the best-landscaped environment at this end of the island is the huge barbed-wire fence enclosed grounds of Abbotts Laboratories which provides the highest class of employment on the Island. More typical are the small and rather run-down little factories making glue, glass or lavatory pans. In 1971 out of 4,318 employees in manufacturing in the Sheerness EEA 1,601 were producing bricks, pottery, glass and cement and 877 were in chemicals and allied manufacturing.

2.4 Apart from this industrial belt there is little other employment on the Island. Minster, in the centre, is largely a residential suburb of owner-occupied housing and is the site of the small hospital now threatened with closure. Moving eastwards, Eastchurch has an Open Prison and, at the far east end of the Island, Leysdown and Warden Bay provide some seasonal employment in the pubs, clubs and amusement arcades. For most of the all-year-round residents, however, it is another kind of open prison. The acres of chalets and caravans in this part of the Island are particularly depressing and tawdry in winter, yet substantial wealth does come through in the summer. Many school leavers get their first experience of employment in this world of rip-off prices and rampant fleecing: established as a centre for cheap holidays for East Enders, who would own or rent a chalet, many who come now have plenty of money to spend in one or two weeks. The beer is 70p a pint and the owner of the amusement arcade drives a Rolls Royce.

1 In the Socio-Economic Classification of Local Authority Areas by Richard Webber and John Craig (OPCS 1978), this area is classed in 'small town manufacturing areas' along with places like Bury, Barrow-in-Furness, Ipswich, Northampton and Worcester (see p. 49).

2.5 The south of the Island is good quality but low-lying agricultural land. The old islands of Harty and Elmley are now joined to the Island but they are still remote and curiously desolate. However, they are a good source of game - rabbit and duck. This coupled with the fish in the sea provides an alternative activity and source of food for truants, the unemployed and even legitimate sportsmen. Beyond this agricultural belt lies the Swale, the stretch of water which lies between Sheppey and the Mainland. At its narrowest point this is bridged but there is no other link. Some people are said to have been born and bred on the Island and to have never left it. Certainly the employment opportunities at Kemsley or Sittingbourne, 8 - 10 miles from Sheerness, seem relatively remote, particularly to a youngster leaving school. There <u>are</u> jobs on the mainland, but without private transport these are completely inaccessible from most of the Island. True, commuting is increasing: in the 1966 sample census 75 per cent of the residents worked on the Island and only 7 per cent worked in Sittingbourne or other parts of Swale R.D.. More recently evidence from the School Careers Centre suggests that many more youngsters are looking to Sittingbourne and other places on the mainland for work. This is a relatively recent development which we are seeking to document. It is possible that youngsters with a long journey to work to their first job may be more ready to leave it when one closer to home becomes available.

2.6 We face a problem in characterising the distribution of employment on the Island very precisely. However, it may be useful to list the numbers employed by certain main employers:

Sheerness Steel	1000
Medway Ports Authority	703
Abbotts Laboratories	600
Klippons Electricals	350
Royal Doulton	300
Twinlocks	300
Canning Town Glass Works	300
Tudor Safety Glass	150
Medway Dry Dock	100
Arthur Miller	80
Sheerness Shirt	80

(<u>Note</u>. These data are approximate figures. Accurate data are held by KCC but are not available to us. They may be also obtained on the open market for £110, a sum for which we did not cost.)

2.7 Undoubtedly the stevedores in the docks and those on shift work in the steel mill constitute, by the wages they receive, something of a labour aristocracy. They can earn two or three times the wages of an ordinary factory worker. These jobs are very difficult to get and are anyway too hard and demanding for youngsters. There are very few jobs in offices and in retailing so that by and large the main sources of employment when leaving school are the local factories and shops who take in school leavers. In 1978 there were 24 apprenticeships for about 400 school leavers, that is 6 per cent. In 1979 the proportion rose to about 8 per cent (33) but of these a half were off the Island. More recently there has been a tendency for school leavers to find work off the Island. Whilst the general level of unemployment has fluctuated between 10 and 13 per cent (the highest level in the South East of England) for youngsters under 18 the rate can be as high as 30 per cent in July.

2.8 Since the main employment opportunities are restricted to routine tasks

in shop or factory it is not surprising that most young people find it difficult to see why they need any of the conventional credentials. In 1979, of the 300 school leavers whose first employment is known, 22 per cent went into skilled work or the Forces. Of the 232 unskilled workers, 47 per cent went straight into unskilled factory work, 25 per cent went to work in shops and 21 per cent went into catering, building and other unskilled seasonal work. (Calculated from the Sheppey School Careers' Service Records.)

2.9 The Careers' Service made an analysis of employment opportunities for school leavers in 1974. In this they were able to list all the employees on the Island, the number of under 18 year olds they employed, the nature of the jobs that were offered to them, and the qualifications required. We would like to have added the total number of employees for each employer as well and to have done the analysis for a more recent year. In practice we do know a considerable amount about the local labour market for school leavers from the C.W. Survey (see Appendix I). However, we regret that we are unable to provide the statistical support for some of the generalizations we make. We are confident, however, that our generalizations about the lack of opportunity in the local labour market for youngsters are true and could be documented precisely. We hope to gather this information from employers ourselves if our work gets the funds to allow it to continue.

2.10 From the statistical analysis we have been able to do, two main facts stand out. First, in relation to Britain as a whole there is a higher proportion of the workforce on the Isle of Sheppey engaged in manufacturing. Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, the population of the Island is markedly less skilled than the population of the country as a whole. Thus, for Britain in 1971, semi and unskilled manual workers accounted for just under a quarter of all economically active heads of households. In Sheppey, however, the figure is as high as 37 per cent.

3.0   THE COMMUNITY CULTURE OF SHEERNESS

3.1   The town of Sheerness is the focal point of the Island and the place
where all but one of our respondents lived. It was mostly built in
the mid-nineteenth century and has a high proportion of owner-occupied
but rather poor housing. On the Island as a whole, 59 per cent of all
dwellings were owner-occupied and only 25 per cent rented from the local
authority in 1971. This gives substantial scope for small builders and
enterprising DIY enthusiasts who have done much to make the older houses
more comfortable. A small part of Marine Town, a district of Sheerness,
is a Housing Action Area, enabling local residents to claim substantial
grants and many have taken advantage of this. However, the general
impression of the area is of shabby poverty. This is partly due to the
age of the inhabitants: in more than half of the occupied houses in the
Marine Town area the owner or tenant has no earned income. A survey of
this area in November 1976 showed that 64 per cent of the heads of house-
holds received £40 or less a week.

3.2   The social life of Sheerness centres round the Clubs and pubs of which
there are many. The Victoria Working Men's Club celebrated its 108th
Anniversary in January and its officers claim that with 3500 members it
is the biggest in turnover and membership in the South of England. There
are seven other working men's clubs on the Island. Every pub has one or
two darts teams and often has pool and soccer teams too. Inter-pub
matches in the local league frequently turn week-day evenings into
private parties. Visitors get offered sandwiches and sausage rolls
as there is generally some left over after the teams have been served. Sing
songs on Fridays and Saturdays with live music of various sorts help to
create a jolly atmosphere. Quantities of beer are drunk. Local brewers
at Faversham testify to the substantial sales on the Island - especially
in summer. At that time there is even more public life: there's a fair,
amusement arcades and beach cafés. Sleeping out on the beach in the
summer is a pleasure for some youngsters and a necessity for others.
The dances, discos and live entertainment flourish all over the Island,
although in winter the east end tends to close down.

3.3   The port is a source of passing trade and smuggling and an encouragement
to local prostitutes. Sailors from Holland, Germany and the West Indies
and elsewhere bring in money, dope and disease. Certain pubs have
distinctive characters which are well known to the Islanders - the
punks go to one, the drug crowd to another and the prostitutes to a
third. The young professionals, often graduate teachers, social workers
and chemists working at Abbotts Laboratories congregate in one, and
just down the road a few old regulars re-create a real life Coronation
Street (although in Sheerness it is called Coronation Road!). Each
pub or club has a distinctive and all-enveloping culture which provides
support and satisfaction. Lack of money never prevents those who are
known from having a drink. They may get support from their mates or a
loan from behind the bar but they won't feel lonely or left out what-
ever their situation.

3.4   When the pubs shut the take-away food shops and fish and chip shops will
still be open. During the day a number of cafés provide a warm and
friendly hideaway for truants or the unemployed. Quite a lot of food
and hot tea can be had for 70 or 80p. The proprietor will also probably
lend money or provide a few weeks' work for those who need it. Corner
shops are open long hours and stock a range of goods for those who pay
higher prices to buy smaller quantities of various commodities.

3.5 The town is riddled with alley ways behind the houses and most
people walk everywhere. The stevedores come home for lunch and this
has long been a tradition on the Island since people remember the stream
of men on bicycles coming out of the naval dockyard. The High Street
of Sheerness is not long and everyone seems to see a familiar face -
whether relative or workmate - whenever they go there. There is said
to be substantial intermarriage; we have not yet checked this system-
atically but certainly there are many families who seem to have been
exceptionally fertile and who have married and remarried on the island.
It is quite common for someone to have parents who each come from
families with 10 or more siblings. This familial solidarity is supported
by the isolation and moral solidarity of simply being "an Islander".

3.6 It is the family that dominates in the local culture. It provides
a range of homes which can serve as supports if not refuges. A range
of Aunts, Nans or siblings' families make demands and provide resources.
However it is primarily the natal family which supports the single
unemployed. Jobs are overwhelmingly found through the family: mum or
dad speaks for their daughter or son. Of the 53 in C.W.'s survey who
left school at Easter 1979, 36 went directly into employment: 50 per
cent of these found their jobs through their family and 25 per cent
found them through their friends. Social life is bound up with familial
obligations: a married daughter has to take her mother shopping every
day; a son has to decorate his uncle's house; a mother has to look after
her employed daughter's children while she's at work; and so on. Those
playing truant from school are seen by relatives in the High St; whole
families spend an evening together at a pub or entertainment in the pub.

3.7 Parallel with the family as a further source of support and perhaps in
some respects undermining it, is the peer group. The men typically
drink together and play together; women's darts teams may be as much
an example of defiance as of liberated independence. "Going off with
me mates" is the familiar and acceptable excuse. Outings, excursions
and various events are arranged which add colour, interest and excite-
ment to the drab world of factory and terrace house. The culture smacks
of what liberal intellectuals brought up on Richard Hoggart's Uses of
Literacy and Alan Sillitoe's Saturday Night and Sunday Morning roman-
tically see as traditional working class culture. But it is a closed
world. Family and mates constrain and inhibit as much as they support
and encourage. Many youngsters admit they are easily led and need the
discipline of work to keep them straight. Of particular interest is
their expressed willingness to work on their own, to be free from the
distraction of mates or from oppressively authoritarian bosses.

3.8 We have dwelt in some detail on the community context because we
believe that it is essential that the young unemployed people should
be seen in that background. What we have said is sketchy and largely
impressionistic: this is partly due to the pressure of time and space
but we are also severely handicapped by the lack of firm evidence on
the socio-economic characteristics of the local labour force. We do
not have systematic data on earnings, skills and labour turnover. We
do not know what the views of employers are, although this is on our
research agenda. Apparently much of this crucial labour market data
is not available: the local planners were equally baffled and equally
reliant on gossip and the conventional wisdom. We stress that the
experience of unemployment can only be properly understood in the full
and detailed knowledge of the local labour market. Whilst it is true
that knowledge may not be shared by those who enter it there is need
for some more precise way of measuring the match between myth and
reality. We hope that this is a matter on which we and the Department
can make some fruitful progress.

4.0 INTRODUCING OUR RESPONDENTS

4.1   We were able to find a range of informants far more quickly and effectively than would normally be the case, because one of us (C.W.) had lived on the Island from February - September 1979. She was thus well placed to approach formal and informal contacts for help in finding youngsters with the appropriate characteristics. The Careers Service at the Sheppey School was particularly helpful in giving us information about those whom C.W. had previously interviewed but who were now unemployed, as well as others who were out of work. Theresa, Ray and George were selected in this way. We would like to acknowledge here the consistently friendly and helpful support we have received from all members of the Careers' Service office. We are most grateful and it has made our research much easier.

4.2   The other five informants were selected through informal networks and contacts. C.W. had lived in the same house as Mandy for a while and knew Denise and Mike from her fieldwork experience. Alan and Karen were found by making a positive search: without putting too fine a point on it, one is a punk and the other is in danger of becoming a prostitute. There are well-known places where one may expect to find such youngsters. The suggestion that we should interview an unregistered male was followed up but of the two we located one was unobtainable when we wanted to conduct the interview, and the other refused to
(cooperate.

4.3   We now present a brief portrait of each of our respondents in an attempt to capture something of their distinctive characters. We systematise some of this information in the pull-out chart at the end of the report. We indicate with our initials who interviewed each youngster. Whilst we have made every effort in the time available to listen to each other's material, it is inevitable that individually we know more about the four that we interviewed; the full process of splicing our respective understandings together has not yet been completed.

4.4   <u>Denise</u> (interviewed by C.W.)
Denise is just 18 and was a punk until last year when she felt the force of the movement was lost and had become too conformist. She left home last June, although her sister who is also unemployed, still lives there. She now lives in a rented house with a 20 year old girl friend (unemployed), where she pays £5.00 per week in rent. The Social Security used to give her £7.00 per week, which was then increased to £11.00 per week, so she is struggling to survive. She was unemployed for 6 months after leaving school until taken on to a Youth Opportunities Programme in February 1979. She worked for a few months in a home for mentally handicapped children and then she was unemployed again. After some months on Social Security she was unable to find work so she took another Youth Opportunities Programme, this time working in a school library, but she had left this two days before we interviewed her. She spends her time writing poetry and prose or reading books. Otherwise she strives hard to be original and authentic in her tastes and appearance. She meets her friends at the pub or in their homes, and most of them are also unemployed. Denise has obvious intellectual capacity and clearly articulated and caustic opinions on most subjects. She is very bitter about her present situation and in the absence of any positive alternatives

she resorts to a form of nihilistic anarchism as a philosophy.

4.5   <u>Karen</u> (interviewed by R.E.P.)
Karen is nearly 18 and has been out of school for 20 months. She
started work in a heavy-duty clothing factory but left after two weeks.
Her longest job was seven months making palletts and she has done a
variety of other jobs often for just a day or so at a time. She left
home when she was 16 after an argument about not doing the housework.
At first she lived with her girl friend and then she moved to Sitting-
bourne to live with her boyfriend. Later she moved to Tilbury where
she has spent most of her time since leaving school. As a result of
a row with her current boy friend, and wanting to be nearer to her
parents and friends, she came back to Sheerness two months ago. She
now lives with another woman, who is also unemployed. Most of her
waking hours are spent drinking in one of the pubs popular with
sailors who come looking for girls to take back to the boats. Karen
eventually accepted one invitation but wouldn't "stay on". Now she
admits that she does "go with blokes she likes" and sometimes takes
more than her taxi-fare home. One night she got £63. She is a
friendly, sociable girl who knows she is on a slippery downward path
and needs a job to keep her straight. Drinking eleven pints of beer
regularly every night is not doing her figure much good. She is not
registered as unemployed and feels that when she returns to Tilbury
she will have little trouble in finding a job. She says that poverty
forced her to go with sailors as her shoes had worn out. She would
rather work than do anything - she'd do a full time job for £20 a week.
She was pressed hard on this which, on the face of it, seems hard to
believe. It is probably correct: her problem is that she is rather too
easily led and lacks stable emotional moorings. It is her friendly and
easy going nature which is leading her astray. She looks forward to
marriage and a family - but not for another five years at least.

4.6   <u>Theresa</u> (interviewed by R.E.P.)
Theresa is only just 17 having left school when she was $16\frac{1}{2}$. Her
first job was in Liptons and she enjoyed doing all aspects of shop
work until she was made redundant a couple of weeks ago. This was
due to Tesco's opening a large and lavish supermarket just up the
street. Theresa found that her time unemployed was very busy. She
acted as a nanny to her sister's children just round the corner and
went off vigorously looking for a job. Happily she has now found a
a W.E.P. placement at a large department store in Sittingbourne through
the help of the School Careers' Service. She found them very helpful
and clearly fits their image of a good, clean, respectable girl. Both
her parents have full time jobs and she is the only one in the family
still at home. So there is no shortage of money. This financial
security has not diminshed her determination to find employment: on
the contrary it may even add to it. She could be very useful to many
members of her family who live round about and who, for various
reasons, are heavily pressed. She, unlike all the others we spoke
to, goes to work to avoid family work which she would not always choose
to do. Her boyfriend is in a successful pop group which earned £1000
a week in a middle eastern hotel. She does not complain about her wage
of less then £30 a week, nor of the long working hours which travelling
to Sittingbourne entails.

4.7   Mandy (interviewed by C.W.)
        Mandy is just 18. She is a very attractive, sultry looking girl who
        usually wears fashion jeans which have got gradually shabbier over the
        time she has been unemployed. She borrows her only skirt from her
        sister in which to go to interviews, but this has not helped her to
        find work. She lives at home with her mother and step-father at the
        moment, with whom she has a rather uneasy relationship. When she left
        school, she had a row with her mother, and was thrown out of home, so
        she moved in with a girl friend, a 23 year old housewife, for whom she
        used to babysit. Later she lived with her boyfriend (who is also
        unemployed) in a rented flat for 6 months. When she left school she
        worked for one year at a fruit packing factory 25 miles away for £30.00
        per week, but the heavy work damaged her wrist and she was sacked after
        taking more than one week's sick leave. At the moment she has been
        unemployed for 6 months although she had a part time job as a waitress
        for a few weeks, which she left because it paid only 60 pence per hour,
        and she was unable to support herself on it. She will take any job
        paying more than £25.00 per week and she urgently needs to find work
        at the moment since she has few clothes left and gets bored and
        apathetic whilst she is unemployed. The consequent shortage of money
        limits her to going to the pub with her friends. When she had the money
        she led a more varied social life, travelling to discotheques around
        the country, and dancing.

4.8   Alan (interviewed by R.E.P.)
        Alan was born in November 1960 and left school in May 1977. He has been
        unemployed for three months now. He is an intelligent lad: he got an
        'O' Level in Metal-work and a Grade 1 CSE in Technical Drawing. He
        became voluntarily redundant in the Autumn of 1979. He had been
        enjoying his work casting moulds in the pottery works but as part of its
        cutting back programme he had been put on to floor sweeping. The sheer
        boredom of this drove him out. Now his chief interest is playing as
        lead guitarist in a punk group. Alan does the music to a friend's
        lyrics; an activity that began, as he says, as a kind of social protest
        is now a kind of personal therapy during his unemployment. He wears
        short hair, neat, clean jeans and big black boots. This serviceable
        clothing, very suitable for manual work, which is what he wants to do,
        is a disadvantage to him when he goes to interviews. He is very keen
        to find work but has been badly bruised by the shocking work conditions
        at a rubber moulders where he worked for a short time. He claims that
        the dirty and dangerous conditions frightened him (although he is
        clearly a very tough lad). There was, for example, no First Aid equip-
        ment in the plant. Had he been in the Union he feels he could have
        forced the place to close. Watching him at rehearsal for a forthcoming
        punk concert in memory of Sid Vicious I was struck by his capacity to
        concentrate in a positive and creative way. His mother is still proud
        of him, although his relatives, of whom he has many on the Island,
        generally disapprove of him.

4.9   George (interviewed by C.W.)
        George is 17½ and left school last year with 2 CSEs. He is a smart,
        expensively dressed lad of very fashionable appearance and his main
        interests are in discotheques and horses. He likes soul music and
        dancing and tours the country at weekends going to various discotheques
        with his fiancée who is a typist. He worked for 2 days in a double
        glazing firm on leaving school, but left complaining of bad conditions
        and low pay. At the end of July he got a job for one month painting
        and decorating a newly opened factory, but was laid off afterwards.
        Then in September he found another temporary job working in a bakery

until Christmas, but found this rather gruelling (he showed me the burn scars still on his arms). At the moment has has applied for a job as a blacksmith which he is very keen to do, but hopes that his sister's boyfriend's father will be able to find room for him in his demolition firm in London. He lives at home and is generously supp- orted by his parents, who must give him about £30.00 a week to support his life style. At weekends he lives with his girl friend's family. He appears to have no financial difficulties - his father works in a construction firm and his mother is also employed as a forecourt attendant in a garage - but is nevertheless keen to find work. George hates being idle. He gets up at 7.00 a.m. every morning and grooms and schools his horse for a few hours. He then does some work about the house or garden and goes to the Careers Centre or Job Centre to look for work most afternoons. He gets bored because he does not have enough to do in the afternoons, so he spends some time with his friend who is also unemployed and owns 2 horses. He meets the rest of his friends at the pub where he goes most evenings.

4.10   Mike (interviewed by C.W.)
Mike is a sensitive lad of $18\frac{1}{2}$ and his clothes are very torn and dirty because he cannot replace them after being unemployed for 6 months. He was unemployed when he left school but worked for a few months on a Work Experience scheme in a chemical factory. He was unemployed again for a few months after that, then he found a job as an assistant stores manager at a factory where he worked for one year. He enjoyed this job where he was often put in sole charge of stores and supplies and his supervisors gave him every encouragement. How- ever he left because of an unfortunate coincidence of circumstances. He failed a test for fork lift driving, and he thought he might never be promoted but his real grievance was that they refused to pay him a full adult wage on reaching 18. His cause was taken up by the Unions but they had no success. He now wishes he had not left so precipitately because he has been unemployed ever since. Last September he inherited several thousand pounds from his grandfather which he lived on until December when he went back to Social Security. He gave much of his money to his mother, and invested the rest in a Building Society, but he also put some money into a punk band and is waiting for a record to be released. Whilst at school he lived with his grandfather for one year, and then moved in with his friend's family as a lodger when he left school. At the moment he lives at home, but is not financially supported by his parents who will not allow him to use any domestic facilities, and condemn him for being out of work. His main companion is his sister who is also unemployed and lives at home. He spends much of his time at the moment drinking and gambling, just in order to get out of the house, but this is making him morose, since he would prefer to have something useful to do. He desperately wants a job himself to get himself out of this cycle of dissipation and because he is in financial difficulties. Mike gets depressed being unemployed because he feels himself to be a failure in front of his family and friends, and because he feels he is wasting his life like this.

4.11   Ray (interviewed by R.E.P.)
Ray is just 18 and has been unemployed for over a year. His first job on leaving school in May 1978 was handling timber for less than £25.00 a week. His CSE in woodwork was his "qualification" but the work with wood he was asked to do was heavy labouring, so he left. He had a further very unpleasant experience of work in a bakery.

Basically he is a mechanic and is repairing a mini **he** bought for
£10 to make it roadworthy. He claims he is doing this more for
pleasure than to make money on its eventual sale. Ray helps his
father who is a lorry driver, but gets no money. "It keeps me in
trim for when I do get a job." He has been doing this for the past
11 years (school seemed to make little difference). He doesn't smoke;
he doesn't drink, but he loves disco dancing. But he's not happy –
"I <u>wanna</u> job – I can't get one." All the places where he might get
employment insist on more credentials than he has – or feels he needs.
Apart from his mechanical aptitudes he can do any kind of internal
decorating, including plastering (but not, he insisted, wall papering)
and he has put up various shelves and cupboards about the house. His
mother has also taught him to cook. He enjoys being good at what he
does: he aspires to do complicated plaster work, moulding ceilings and
the like, and he soon lost his interviewer in the technicalities of
repairing engines. He is up at 5.00 a.m. most mornings to help his
dad to rope up the lorry.

5.0   HOW THEY SPEND THEIR DAYS

5.1   There are a number of popular views about what energetic young people
between 17 and 19 can do all day without what is called 'the discipline
of employment'. The tough-minded position imagines trouble, mischief
and petty crime; the more tender minded imagine bored and listless
youngsters somnolently trapped in front of the flickering screen.
Those who have read accounts of unemployment in the thirties will fear
moral corruption or political perversion. Certainly one account in
Memoirs of the Unemployed (edited by H.L. Beales and R.S. Lambert,
Gollancz 1934) describes a young lad, nearly 18, suffering "fits of
depression and morbidness" also went on to say "The knowledge of the
state of the unemployment which I have gathered from many visits to
unemployed clubs and centres, together with my own experiences, has
led me to take a great interest in Communism......."

5.2   We found no evidence of a focused political awareness amongst the
unemployed youngsters we spoke to although there is articulate and
deeply-felt resentment. This is not the place to explore in detail
the differences between unemployment in the 1980s and that of fifty
years ago. However, one striking and important difference is that
the houses of ordinary manual workers are, by and large, warmer, and
the ubiquitous television provides a new source of diversion which is
not entirely meretricious trivia. The fundamental difference in
experience which divides those we interviewed was between those who
were living in a supportive and relatively affluent home and those who
were not. Alan, Ray, Theresa and George were relatively well off
owing to the support of their parents. Alan was munching a bacon
sandwich at 10.30 a.m., having just got up, and his mother hovered
around with cups of coffee. His parents also possessed the shed at
the bottom of the garden where the punk group rehearsed. When we
first met George he was riding a horse bare-back just across from his
home with a gay and relaxed nonchalence which was anything but morbid.
Both he and Ray go to discos regularly and their parents give them
money. Theresa's home was clear evidence of a working class family
at the peak of its affluence with two good wage earners and few family
responsibilities. She, like the others, gets clothes from her parents
"like we went to Chatham yesterday and if I see something I want me
Mum buys it". Her family is more short of time than money: hence
Theresa's short period of unemployment was filled with family work
of one sort or another. She was pushed back into work to escape the
burden of running her home for her parents and being a nanny to her
nieces round the corner.

5.3   Not only the family provides support: Alan, for example, has his mates
in punk groups both on the Island and more broadly in the region; he
has the friends his father introduces him to both from his father's
work and at his Coop Club where he plays darts with them - most of
his mates are older than he is and are in employment. The pub to which
he goes is the centre of the Punks and their camp followers and the
proprietor of one of the cafés will lend him money and fags. He also
has a very supportive brother and a girl friend who is still at school,
training to be a secretary. Alan's mates support him with money, drinks
and physical defence, but he prefers not to borrow money and is
scrupulous in paying off his debts. Whilst some of his closest mates
are in prison at the moment, he sees no danger of falling into trouble
himself.

5.4   However, this is only half the story. The other four youngsters we
interviewed did not have this strong material and emotional support

to their lives. We certainly did not plan it in any way, but the contrast between the four firmly in their families and the four who were independent or estranged from their families could not be greater. Whilst it may be convenient to remember one half, it is the other half that deserves the greater attention. Mandy, Denise and Karen have all lived away from home, and are all, in varying degrees, in poverty. They spend much of their time sleeping. These three could be said to be sharing in a culture of poverty. Karen was encouraged to sleep with sailors because her shoes were falling apart and she needed money to repair them, Denise is living in a house without heating and has no money to buy paraffin and Mandy seemed very short of warm clothes. These three spend hours in pubs. Karen drinks 11 pints a day regularly - all bought for her by others. They all spend a lot of time in bed. Denise claims she has never slept at night - even when at school. She prefers to sleep in the morning, getting up about midday. Eating is an erratic business: in Denise's graphic style "it's either buy food, stay in and be bored or go down the pub, get pissed and starve". Like Karen, she never wants for a drink - pints of beer flow towards her from men, often foreigners, who want to buy companionship. One particular pub is "open all day" (given that the day doesn't begin till 12 noon, that simply means that afternoon closing is lax).

5.5   Denise gets £11 a week unemployment benefit from which she has to spend £6 in rent. As she says "I used to spend about £5 on food but I don't buy food no more". She can still call round to her mother to get food and she also gets given clothes. Mandy has an Aunt who has no spare money but with whom she can stay. Karen is staying with an older woman, who is also unemployed. The case of Mike is rather different. He is still at home but is rejected by his parents who won't talk to him but still demand £6 a week for rent. He does not get his food or his laundry for this and he has all the disadvantages of being a lodger without the freedom and independence that that would ordinarily give him. His rejection by his parents adds to the burden of unemployment so that Mike, alone among our respondents, did seem to be suffering from the deep depression which others have observed amongst the unemployed. His commitment to an individual identity as a punk provides him with a sense of personal autonomy but it is this very autonomy which is most under attack from his parents. He, too, is driven into the pubs for social support, but, unlike the girls, he has more difficulty in getting free drinks.

5.6   It might be thought that the four outside the family who spend so many of their waking hours in pubs were being socialized into a lumpen proletariat of the unemployable. We hope that this is not so. Mandy is thinking of going back to night school to study Maths; Karen is planning to return to her job at Tilbury. Both Denise and Mike have enjoyed being employed in the past but resent the need to alter their appearance in order to fit conventional patterns. In some ways these four are more independent, more willing to stand on their own feet, more willing to accept responsibility in their own lives, than George riding on the horse paid for by his mother, or Alan sitting back comfortably in his carefully pressed jeans. However, whether in practice they will overcome all the hurdles between them and the jobs they can do and are seeking is very uncertain. They could become apathetic and aggressive: a more long-term monitoring of their experiences over the next few years would be a very valuable research strategy.

6.0   THEIR EXPERIENCE OF WORK AND THEIR HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

6.1   EXPERIENCES OF WORK
The impact of work upon these young people's lives had been mainly a
negative one. They left school keen to work and with a realistic
knowledge of the scope of local opportunities, but their experiences
in employment had not been encouraging. The following questions appear
to us to be central but are not always seen to be so by those whose
job it is to help new workers.

6.2   Is the employment secure?
Teenagers appeared to constitute a marginal or reserve workforce with
very limited prospects and excluded from the more secure and highly
paid employment sector until at least 18 or perhaps 21 years of age
(and in the case of girls probably excluded altogether). The readiness
with which they are sucked into the employment market during times of
expansion and are the first to be shed when there is a fluctuation in
demand is well documented in the employment histories of these youngsters
and their friends. All our informants had known multiple redundancy
either themselves, or amongst their friends and family. Mandy, Theresa,
Alan and Mike had all been made redundant from their first jobs and
George had been laid off twice since leaving school last summer which
was only 9 months ago. It is difficult for young people to build
positive long-term commitment to work or to develop a secure work
identity under these circumstances.

6.3   Is the work undemanding and low paid in bad conditions?
Not only was the work done by teenagers insecure but it also tended
to be of a kind that was intrinsically alienating, often carried out
in bad conditions with low pay. Therefore all of these young people
had experienced bad employment; they were used as cheap expendable
labour and this was partly responsible for their often turbulent careers,
and frequent job changing. Their marginal position to both unions and
employers and the ready supply of labour meant that their only way of
protesting against their work was by leaving it. Here are some examples -

            George's first job was working for a double glazing firm.
            There he was expected to handle plate glass with no protective
            gloves so that he claimed his hands were torn to pieces. He
            received only £25.00 per week for this, and so he quit.

            Both Alan and Ray have also been bruised by their experience of
            employment. Ray had to carry wood which he described as
            nearly breaking his back, or roll out pastry in an isolated
            position day in and day out. Alan had to work in dirty and
            dangerous conditions at a rubber moulders. He believes that
            the factory should be shut down for its lack of safety
            measures. Greasy, slippery floors, dangerous machines, no
            first aid, no unions and twelve hour shifts of days and nights
            on alternative weeks made it appear the unacceptable face of
            capitalism.

            Alan had enjoyed working at pottery moulding but was demoted to
            sweeping floors. He found the latter job so boring that when
            his employers warned him that he would be made redundant
            within a few months, he took the opportunity to declare himself
            voluntarily redundant. It was not work he objected to but
            the lack of meaningful tasks and the boring mindlessness of
            sweeping floors.

Mike's first experience of work on a Work Experience Scheme in a chemical factory left him demoralised. He felt that this scheme was opportunistic profiteering by the company at tax payers' expense. He nevertheless worked there for the full duration of the scheme and told us "I was quite content to just leave school and do a factory job and earn some money. I didn't need qualifications for that, but then I realised what a factory job meant and how tedious and boring it was."

Mandy willingly endured long hours and heavy work at a fruit packing plant for one year. However, when she damaged her wrist through lifting 40lb crates all day she was summarily dismissed.

6.3.i   All of these young people cited above had suffered harsh and degrading conditions of employment which had caused them to leave. They were nevertheless forced to subject themselves to this because there were no alternatives. Consequently, their only way of introducing some variety into dull and routine work was by changing jobs.

6.4   Are employers being fair?
Another factor which contributed towards disillusionment with work was the sometimes severe and abusive treatment young people received from employers. This was perhaps because of their age status and their lack of protection and experience. As Ray put it, the foreman was a "big fat 'orrible bloke who expected too much of yer. I'd say what I thought and he didn't like it. You'd walk away and 'e'd chuck the bleedin' bit of wood at yer. Someone wouldn't do what 'e said. 'E walked away and 'e chucked the wood and nearly broke 'is leg. No one could say anything 'cos he was the foreman. 'E said 'e fell over a bit of wood 'cos he didn't want to lose his job."

6.4.i   They sometimes felt themselves to be prejudged by employers according to unfair and irrelevant standards. For instance, when Mandy went for an interview at a supermarket, she was instructed to go home and change out of her footless tights. She was extremely irate about this, since she was under the impression that she was to be employed in the stores room which was not in the public eye, so her leg wear was irrelevant. Similarly Alan went for jobs wearing his punk gear. As he also remarked, the work was dirty and rough, why should what he wore at his interview affect the way he would do the work?

6.5   A fair day's pay for a fair day's work?
Perhaps because of the scarcity of jobs there is a feeling that teenage wages are artificially depressed in this area. There is often a background suspicion that they are being swindled or not properly rewarded for their labour. It is impossible to ascertain on our present evidence whether or not this is a correct assumption but the wages each received as set out in Appendix V.

6.5.i   When pressed, they all admitted that they would take £30 or even £20 per week rather than be unemployed but that they found it demoralising to do repetitive and tiring work for little more than they would otherwise receive from Social Security Benefits. They all possessed a strong sense of natural justice, whereby they felt that the more dirty and unsatisfying a job was, the more they should be rewarded for it. However, this balance was rarely reflected in their own jobs which were exhausting, repetitive and badly rewarded. Denise had the strongest objections to this:

"There's Tesco's, the Shirt factory and shit like that.
Boring and repetitive jobs, sewing jeans and stacking
shelves. I wouldn't do a lot of factory work unless I
was really desperate because I would think it a waste of
my life. In a factory....doing the same thing all day.
You need an awful lot of money to be able to stand that."

Mike had left his job as a trainee stores manager which he
found interesting, partly out of a sense of grievance because
the firm refused to give him adult pay on reaching 18. The
Union fought his case but had no success.

Mandy, too, had found a job as a part time waitress in a local
café for 60 pence an hour, but she felt that cooking and
serving on her feet all day for a wage on which she was
unable to support herself was an unacceptable level of
exploitation.

6.5.ii The nature of the local labour market meant that teenagers inevitably
tended to be in the non-unionised and unprotected sector such as the
retail trade and catering. Intermittent work due to arbitrary redundancy,
dismissal, or because they had left, was therefore a common experience
of all these young people.

6.5.iii Therefore these young people were often bitter and cynical about local
employment opportunities and were often pushed into unemployment by
by harsh work with no prospects. They were seeking satisfaction and
security in employment, and instead had been forced into oppressively
alienating work subjected to humiliating terms and standards, bad
conditions, poor rewards and sudden redundancies. In short they were,
to repeat a relevant phrase, "a reserve army of workers". It was not
an experience which school or the Careers' Service had prepared them
for, so it is not surprising when some are dissatisfied and turn from
work. Their only way of expressing this dissatisfaction was to leave
their jobs, which, because this is a low employment area, forces them
into unemployment. In the long run this means they acquire erratic
employment records and suffer negative type-casting by employers which
further depresses their chances. This in turn breeds further dis-
illusionment. They are branded as useless and feckless failures in
the eyes of the world for what are often, to our eyes, justifiable
protests. It is difficult to construct a positive self image, or
commitment to work under these circumstances. Their major problem
therefore is not unemployment, nor work in itself but a certain kind
of oppressive and humiliating experience which some kinds of work
gave them.

6.5.iv These then are the main sources of what we call job-induced unemploy-
ment; the negative impact of work experience. But these youngsters
are certainly not "unemployable" and to assess this question we shall
now turn to their positive goals in work and employment.

6.6. Are they unemployable?
In general, we would say that these youngsters are quick witted and
capable of good, solid work. All of them were genuinely seeking work
at the time we interviewed them. As George said, "If I was out of
work a long time I might get a reputation for being lazy. I hope I'm
not lazy."

6.6.i In order to test this assumption, we asked them if they would be

prepared to do some voluntary work every week if it was made
available. <u>Seven out of eight of them were prepared to do this</u>.
Those who were fortunate,like Theresa, George and Ray, and had
work to sustain them outside employment with family, horses or
motor cars, kept themselves very busy. And the others who did not
have informal work were strongly committed to the idea of employment.

6.6.ii   However, it was apparent that employment in the area did not utilise
the real capacities and potential of these young people. Ideally, they
would have preferred work which did not tie them to machines, pro-
vided them with some interest and responsibility and with some scope
for personal autonomy. Some also wished to learn and exercise a
skill. For jobs which satisfied these criteria the remuneration was
not felt to be important, but for routine and boring work the wage
level was a relevant factor. The degree of human contact was also
important, since even routine and monotonous work was bearable if
there were opportunities for social contact with co-workers.

6.6.iii   The alienation towards work depended upon the skill levels which they
were aspiring to and upon their previous experiences of employment.
Ray, George and Alan were ideally seeking skilled work, which made
them more inclined to be selective in their search for permanent
employment. They were prepared to make considerable
sacrifices in order to learn a skill which would lead to more reward-
ing work. However, they found the somewhat irrelevant use of formal
credentials by employers a handicap. Ray had extensive proven
experience in mechanics, but no qualifications:

> "I applied to garages and that - but they'd already been
> filled in and I didn't have the qualifications..... they
> say you need 'O' Level English and things like that but I
> don't see what it's got to do with mechanics......I mean
> you ain't going to go up to a motor, are you, and start
> <u>writing</u> on top of it - and hope it's going to work....
> You've got to get down <u>into</u> it.....It's just a matter of
> having a sort of mind about you....You know, <u>think</u> what
> you can do about it, and how to take it apart, and what bits
> to get and that - You know you've got to keep it up in
> your head....."

6.6.iv   Given the fierce competition for apprenticeship places, and the
consequent certificate inflation, he would probably need a whole
sheaf full of qualifications before he was even considered for an
interview. Under the prevailing conditions in this labour market,
examined in sections 2.6 - 2.8,the very limited supply of apprentice-
ship places was far outstripped by the demand, so that there were
sometimes 200 applicants for every place, "They think that having
'O's and C.S.Es that you're going to work hard, but no one's going
to work harder than someone's got nothing". Few employers seem to
share Ray's view.

6.6.v   The rest of our respondents were prepared to undertake any work, but
their degree of selectiveness varied with their age and the nature
of their experience in the labour market. The older ones tended to
be more cynical about opportunities and to apply more exacting
standards which implies that their disaffection hardens with time.
It was notable that George and Theresa, who were the youngest, were
also the most optimistic and uncritical. If they are not unemploy-
able now, they are in danger of becoming so. As they are increasingly

rejected by the labour market, they may in turn start to reject **it**.

6.6.vi   They are younger than most of the students we see at The University but they are at least as independent-minded. The students receive a grant with subsidised meals and other facilities. If **our** eight young people were studying unemployment instead of enduring it they would get nice study bedrooms, common rooms, and tutors, counsellors and supervisors to offer sympathy, support and encouragement. The contrast we see in an hour's drive from the University to Sheerness is not a fair reflection of the difference in ability in so far as we can judge it. As far as motivation is concerned, our youngsters are _more_ willing and able to work than many students are.

6.7   THEIR HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

When questioned about **their** hopes for the future, the pessimism of their present reality was overlooked, and it was clear that most of them saw themselves as basically respectable working people who would eventually settle down to a life of suitable regular work.

6.7.i   The question we asked them was "What do you see yourself doing in ten years' time?" These are their replies:

> Denise: "I don't know 'cos I never think about it - no - I don't think about next week - I think, as far as I'm concerned, I think about in terms of - in a couple of hours. Don't think about what you're going to do tomorrow, you might go out and get run over by a bus. Don't plan anything for a time. I just think, well, if I'm here, I'll see what happens. Don't sort of plan anything. You never know what's going to happen - might not be anyone here.

> Karen expects to be married by the time she's 25 and she would certainly want to carry on in employment "I wouldn't want to sit in the 'ouse and do 'ousework all day". Indeed she was not prepared to start her family until, as she put it, she'd "got me 'ouse sorted out". For her, employment is the essential component of her self-identity.

> Theresa will be married in a few years' time, but doesn't expect to have children. She dotes on her sister's children, but for herself, she feels "they spoil your life". More important, for her, is employment. That is what provides the money she wants to contribute to her marriage. So she says, "I'll be married, I'll be doing me own work instead of me mum's. I'll still be working: can't really say much more."

> Mandy "I would like to be doing something useful - not the way I am now - I wouldn't want to be on the dole, because some people have been on the dole for years and they're just the same, aren't they? I would like to get out and have a bit of money behind me and have travelled a bit by then."

> Alan wants to be a skilled worker and hopes to be trained up as a metal worker. He also has dreams of managing his own group and his financial goals are touchingly modest: he would be quite content to earn £60 as the manager of a group. Whilst he likes the varied life of a labourer, particularly if he's working out of doors, in the end it's skilled work that counts. In many ways Alan the punk was the most conventional and highly motivated of our respondents.

George: "I might have my own stables or something and breed horses.....I hope to be married (he is getting engaged at the moment).... settle down and have a family. I will probably move out to the country - Yorkshire or somewhere like that, because it is all country there."

Mike: "The usual thing: council house, settled down with wife and kids, just having a rest sort of thing. A nice steady job."

Ray said "I hope to have a really good job - to work as hard as hard as I can, get plenty of money behind me and, er, by the time I'm 23 or 24 be married and living, you know, quite happy........in Sheerness."

6.7.ii   This fantasising escapism and evasion about the future was all the more poignant when contrasted with the ethos of general despair about employment prospects which haunted all the accounts of our respondents. In the near future they were fully expecting to be in and out of work, spend some time unemployed, and if they were lucky find some dismal employment in one of the factories or supermarkets which were the main teenage employers.

6.7.iii   They all dreaded long term unemployment which threatened to undermine their rather pathetic optimism about the future.

Denise knows many of her friends have suffered from their experiences of employment and unemployment and this affects the way she responds herself to the future. She sees some of them "just rotting away". They appear to become dull, apathetic and routinized. She notices the contrast between the way people behaved and talked in the past and what they do now. Referring to one friend, Kevin, she said "He keeps saying, 'Oh this is terrible, I'm bored, I'm so fed up with my way of life - I want to do this, I want to do that' and so I say, 'well, why don't you go out and do it?' 'No I can't'. He just sort of sits and vegetates." She is frightened of following the same path.

Karen knows that Sheerness cannot provide the environment to keep her straight. Her only hope is to leave and live with her brother in Tilbury. There she expects to find work easily enough. However, there must be considerable doubt about whether she will have the strength of character to get there.

Theresa wanted to be a hairdresser when she was at school and has since learnt to be grateful for anything that can be provided under the W.E.P. scheme. When she was asked what jobs there were for teenagers on the Island she could reply with confidence "None". She had tried as hard as anyone possibly could before accepting her present job in Sittingbourne.

Mandy would not want to have a family on Supplementary Benefit because of the unhappy example of her mother's life. Her mother was deserted by her husband and left with three children to rear. Last year before she remarried she was receiving only £16.00 per week upon which to keep herself and two children who are still at home. Furthermore her activities were spied upon and recorded by a Social Security detective even

though she was not supported by any man. Mandy's conclusion was that for women with children Social Security laws are singularly harsh and prurient, and that she would not wish to have to subject herself to them.

<u>Alan</u> "I wouldn't get married if I hadn't got a job. I'd feel cheap living off me wife's work. I'd want to get a job behind me." However, he is gloomy about his chances and wishes he was in a Union. He thinks it will be easier for him to get a job when he is between 24 and 30. But will he still be as committed to work then?

<u>George</u> "I wouldn't get married if I was unemployed, because I wouldn't be able to get a house or anything, and you wouldn't have any money. You'd starve!"

<u>Mike</u> "I wouldn't get married on the dole. Where would you live? How would you get food in? You couldn't build nothing up on the dole, you're stuck with what you've got...."

<u>Ray</u> wasn't very sure whether he'd get the job for which he claimed, and indeed seemed, to have the capabilities. "I don't really know. I never plan ahead: I just take the day as it comes. A job comes up - great - you know, glad of it. But I never build me hopes up. Me Dad· taught me that: 'Never build your hopes up'. I used to do it. He says it's no use doing that. You build your hopes up; you're let down and you feel really bad for it. It's no good at all. So I don't bother."

6.8   <u>CONCLUSIONS</u>
These young people were all hard working and capable potential employees. They had capacities and skills which they were unable to utilize in the jobs available. However, they had all had brutal experiences of work and redundancy which reflected their marginal labour market position.

6.8.i   Furthermore even when unemployed we doubted whether the youngsters were claiming all the Social Security Benefits they were entitled to. We did not explore this matter in detail but it is clear that those who were living away from their parents were in permanent or intermittent poverty by any standards. And,as we have pointed out this poverty doubly-handicapped them. More than one pointed out that <u>it cost money to find work</u>. Unemployed people need resources to pay for bus and train fares and for the clothing which apparently unsympathetic employers expect them to wear for interviews. It is a common fallacy to assume that all young people are subsidized by their families and a benign State. On the contrary some of these youngsters were poor and in danger of becoming embittered.

6.8.ii   It was not work itself that they objected to, but repetitive and dehumanising work at an unacceptable level of exploitation. Their commitment to jobs was perhaps eroded by the continual redundancies which they experienced so that they were unable to build a secure occupational identity or any continuous relation with people at work. They therefore become disaffected and cynical even to the extent of creating an antagonistic self-image like Denise and Mike. These youngsters were seeking some kind of fulfilment in life which they were unlikely to find at work; but the alternative of unemployment was an empty and masochistic protest, unless, like Ray and Alan they had absorbing occupations outside employment.

6.8.iii   They were being squeezed between a future of intermittent and
           annihilating routine work on the one hand and a yawning void of
           unemployment on the other. Poverty was either a stark present
           reality or a future prospect for all of them. It is a future
           without hope and without prospects which they either refuse to
           think about or approach at a fantasy level with forlorn hopes that
           "the right job will come".

6.8.iv   The recurring tragedy of these interviews was the creative search
           for authentic identity and autonomy in spite of the bleak prospects
           both inside and outside employment. What appears to be evolving
           is a generation of cynical and disaffected young people becoming
           increasingly bored and hostile. They constitute a vast resevoir of
           untapped talent. It is hardly surprising that,given the circum-
           stances, some, like Mandy and Mike and Karen, resort to a present-
           oriented, hedonistic sub-cultural life and that others,like Denise,
           Alan and Ray had spirited protests to make. In Denise's words:

                    "Old people are prejudiced against you. You've only
                    got to be standing in the pub and the old gits come in
                    and say.....'Oh, so that's who I'm supporting is it?
                    That's where my taxes are all going?' But a lot of
                    people try to understand. I don't care what they think -
                    I just get on with what I'm doing."

7.0 JOB-INDUCED UNEMPLOYMENT

7.1   Our overwhelming conclusion is that energy and capacities are being
        wasted. There is substantial evidence to suggest that our youngsters
        had pride, intelligence, sensitivity and many other qualities which the
        employers on the Island did not seem to be able to use. What employers
        demanded was someone who could sweep the floor of a factory or stack the
        shelves of a supermarket and then disappear if paying their wages seemed
        too costly. It seems absurd to imagine that the profits of the super-
        market could not pay a wage of less than £30 for a full week's work of
        those youngsters whom they had hired to set up the business but dis-
        carded so quickly. Some, but not all, managers and foremen bullied and
        harrassed these youngsters who have a low tolerance of arbitrary
        authority. They start work with willingness and enthusiasm but the way
        they are then treated largely helps to make them what they become.

7.2   Unwilling to degrade themselves they turn to other activities to amuse
        or to absorb them - making music, making love, riding, fixing cars,
        drinking, - these and other activities outside work do more to provide
        meaning and purpose in their lives. Yet they all want to work and
        cannot yet be classified as "unemployable" : the danger is that they
        may become so.

7.3   We recognise that part of the problem of unemployment for these
        youngsters is housing. There is a case for setting up refuges for
        work-battered youngsters who have been cut off or estranged from their
        families. Their demand for an autonomous life-style should be respected:
        to be rejected by the labour market, by their families and by the
        housing market is too much for any youngster to bear. Just to add a
        poignant touch the one inadequate provision which is made, the County
        Youth Club, was axed during the period of our fieldwork. Much of
        what we have written is based on limited evidence. We have not had
        the time and resources to elicit the views of employers; we have not
        established the existence of a distinct labour market for the under
        20s and we do not know whether all that our respondents told us is
        absolutely true. This would all involve longer fieldwork and in
        greater depth. But this we would like to do. We would like to
        follow a group of youngsters over a period of time to see whether
        attitudes melt or harden. We suspect that unemployment in the 1980s
        is a distinctive experience and past studies may not be so helpful.

7.4   Is it true that all these youngsters will knuckle down in time?
        Will marriage and "responsibilities" (conserving and consuming property
        and commodities) tame the pride and provide the "discipline" to
        withstand dull, routine manual work? Or will this generation, who
        have learned to get by with other kinds of social support, turn their
        backs on the values of their fathers? This is not a new question to pose
        but it can only be answered by watching how they change.

7.5   We would like to follow a small group of youngsters as they move
        between leaving school and marriage. A longitudinal study has far
        greater value than periodic snapshots which cannot reveal the
        processes of change over time.

7.6   We have emphasized the need to see youngsters in a broad community
        context. In Sheerness the pubs provide a solid base for social
        support and for linking in to social networks. This encourages
        alcoholism and, for some girls, prostitution. The girls in particular
        find it hard to refuse the flow of free drinks which they are offered.

In this respect the culture which provides the support and the encouragement to withstand the personal blow of unemployment also has a kind of self-destruction built into it. However, marriage is something of a defence against the destructive elements in the local culture.

7.7 So, we believe that longitudinal studies should be firmly based in a particular labour market with a particular emphasis on understanding the local culture. The kind of economic anthropology which we advocate is the basis of the work we have established on the Isle of Sheppey. We hope that this pilot project will encourage the Department of Employment to support us on a more long term basis.

7.8 Our conclusions and the policy implications which flow from them are set out in 1.4 and 1.5. We do not repeat them here. However, we would like to conclude with a strong plea that the Department of Employment should recognise that so much of the problem lies with employers and that these youngsters' experience of employment need not have been so harsh and bruising as it has been. There is a tendency in some quarters "to blame the victim" and to accuse youngsters of being "workshy" or "unemployable". There may be some youngsters who fit these epithets. We did not meet any in our interviews. Neither pride nor self-respect should be seen as subversive qualities. However, they may become so if they are continually crushed.

APPENDIX I : THE CLAIRE WALLACE SAMPLE SURVEY

The interviews and information in this report were based upon research which I conducted for my Ph.D thesis at the University of Kent. This is a three year project stretching from October 1978 until October 1981, funded by the Social Science Research Council.

The research is an examination of young people leaving school in an isolated working class community when there is little and limited work for them to enter. In other words, the transition from school to employment or unemployment in a particular labour market.

Some factors being studied are the orientations of young people towards work, their strategies for finding work and their methods of surviving in an unstable employment environment. In order to ascertain the effects of school, work and unemployment upon this age cohort it was necessary to acquire an understanding of the local community context, and of social and familial support networks existing within it. Patterns of work, employment and uses of time are also being examined as these occur within this community. Young people's responses and orientation do not take place in a vacuum. They can be understood only by taking into account the values, tradition and experience of work within their neighbourhood.

In order to pursue these objectives I lived for nine months in this community in an attempt to familiarise myself with my respondents, their families and their environment. I spent time with them at school, in the Youth Clubs, in their homes and the cafés and pubs which are their main areas of acitivity.

I also conducted two surveys during this period, the first covering 53 youngsters who left school at Easter, and the second a cross section of 100 school pupils in the summer. This has provided me with more quantitative data and a controlling frame work within which to fit my qualitative observations.

At the moment my extension for a third year is awaiting approval by the Social Science Research Council to enable me to continue until September 1981.

This research would obviously benefit from being extended into a longitudinal study in order to provide more interesting and useful conclusions. At the moment there are a number of incipient trends emerging which are generated by length and nature of work and unemployment of young people. How this will develop under present economic conditions is an open question.

These new workers may be entering a world very different from that of previous generations. This is a theme I hope to explore as my work progresses.

APPENDIX II .: YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME

We were asked to include a section about young people's reactions to the measures introduced by the Manpower Services Commission to ameliorate Youth Unemployment. A number of our respondents had been involved in Youth and Community Service or in Work Experience Programmes, since this area gets special priority from the Manpower Services Commission.

Reactions to these differed according to tasks that people were given in particular jobs and their subsequent employment biographies. There was evidence of intelligent criticism from one or two young people but responses were so varied that it is difficult to draw any general conclusions based on so few cases. It would be best if we described each response in turn.

1) Theresa.
Theresa had joined a WEEP scheme at Liptons Supermarket on leaving school. She was grateful to have this opportunity and was shown a variety of tasks, so that her employers were so pleased with her that they took her on permanently. She has now joined another WEEP programme in a department store which she is determined to make the most of.

2) Mike
Mike was initially delighted to have been given the chance to work on a WEEP scheme in a chemical factory since he could find nothing else, but he was discarded at the end of it despite working consistently for three months there. The work itself was so boring and meaningless that this led him to question the whole principle of the scheme, in that he felt he was being abused by the employer.

"It was work experience, I suppose, but it just put me off.....it was really repetitive and boring.....and I didn't see why I should have to kill myself working when they were getting paid by the Government anyway. I was doing a full day's work for £18.00 (a week) and they weren't paying me."

3) Denise
Denise has worked on two Youth and Community Service shemes since leaving school. She enjoyed her work at the home for mentally handicapped children for several months. She explained that although the work was filthy, she found it intrinsically rewarding. Furthermore she liked her job as an assistant librarian at the Sheppey School because this gave her access to books. She is dissatisfied and restless on the Youth Opportunities Programme not because of the work, but because it was not a real permanent job demanding her full commitment. She is suspicious that she is being used in the creation of temporary ad-hoc jobs at a lower cost for the convenience of the authorities rather than providing full proper employment with an employment contract for the same jobs.

"You see it's a rip-off really......the money you get. There should be proper terms for everybody, shouldn't there? You shouldn't have to make something up. Oh, there was work for me to do, but it weren't sort of, it weren't a proper job....like a real job, sort of thing."

Her other major criticism was that real employment should earn you adult respect and status, but on these schemes they were given 'Social and Life Skills' Training which was not relevant to their needs. She complained that she could not be expected to take a job seriously unless she was taken seriously as well:

"It makes you feel like a kid........You do silly things....give
us a sheet with things you need to survive on if you were stranded
on the moon.........as if I'm going to the bloody moon! What
good's that going to do me! And here I am stranded in Sheerness
for hours on end; it's so silly - it's all out of perspective
isn't it?"

4) <u>George</u>
George refused the offer of a job on a Work Experience scheme at
Lipton's Supermarket, since he felt that experience of working on
tills would not help him in his search for labouring work. He
felt that he could use his time better in looking for work.

These criticisms should not be over emphasized because many young
people find useful work experience and training on Government schemes which
they would not otherwise receive. Most youngsters interviewed in C.W.s
field research found these schemes helpful, as Theresa did, especially those
who were engaged in Youth and Community Service.

They also received sympathetic understanding and guidance from
carefully chosen supervisors who did their best to place young people where
their capacities could be used advantageously. Without this help the
problems described in this report might be considerably more severe.

APPENDIX III: CHECK LIST OF QUESTIONS

When were you born?

1. **School**
   a. Did you work while you were away from school?
   b. How did you get the job/s?
   c. Why did you get the job/s?
   d. What were the job/s like, and what were the reasons for staying/leaving?
   e. By the age of 16 what jobs could you do well? (eg painting, bricklaying, hair dressing, child care, fixing things)
   f. What exams have you got (if any)?
   g. Date of leaving school?

2. **Work**
   a. Did you go to your first job directly from school?
   b. How did you get the job?
   c. What other jobs did you try for and how?
   d. Details of work actually done - describe a typical working day.
   e. Who was the boss and what was he like?
   f. Were any of the work mates your friends, and how did you get on with them?
   g. Were there any perks or fiddles?
   h. What led you to leave?
   i. If sacked, full details.
   j. How much were you paid? How were you paid - time rate/piece rate?
   k. What were your hours? What did you think of these?
   l. Did you work with anyone you knew at school (details)?

   Repeat with all subsequent jobs.

   Note: Make sure to get time sequence of jobs and unemployment

3. **Family**
   a. Occupations of parents and siblings in same household and in other dwellings.
      Details of divorce and separation.
   b. How long has your family been on the Island?
   c. Has anyone in your family been unemployed?
   d. Do you live at home all the time.
   e. Has anyone in your family ever tried to find you a job?
   f. What job does your dad want you to do the most?
   g. What job does your mum want you to do the most?
   h. What about other relatives? How often do you see them?
   i. What do you do for them ? (purpose of visits)
   j. What do they do for you? (give clothes, money, lodgings, meals etc.)

4. **Use of Time**
   a. How do you spend your time now you are unemployed?
   b. Are any of your friends unemployed?
   c. What time do you get up?
   d. Does anyone make you get up.
   e. Do you make meals yourself?
   f. Do you have to do anything round the house? Is that regular?
   g. When do you meet your mates?
   h. Where do you meet your mates?
   i. Is that every day?
   j. Where does the money come from? Can you do all that on the dole?
   k. How much do you get on the dole? Do you keep all that or give some to your mum?
   l. So what other money do you get?

m. What else does that have to buy? (eg fags, booze, coffee, fish and chips, clothes).

n. So what do you do in the mornings/afternoons/evenings?

o. Do you have a sleep during the day ever?

p. Do you watch telly regularly? When, what where?

q. What do you generally do on a Monday evening? Is that the same for Tuesday, etc.? What do you do on Saturday, Friday and Sunday? Do you spend more money on these days?

5. Friends

a. Do you have a regular boyfriend/girlfriend?

b. What does he/she do?

c. Where did you meet him/her?

d. Do you expect him/her to pay for you or do you pay for him/her? What if he/she were employed/not employed? How do you feel about that?

e. Do you ever give him/her money or presents or does she/he give any to you?

f. Where do you go with him/her?

g. How much time do you spend together?

Note: How far is relationship structured by employment or non-employment, and how does this affect norms of payment?

Repeat all questions for mates, plus who are they, how old, and how many.

h. Do you ever go off the Island with your boyfriend/girlfriend/mates? Where and when?

i. Any other things you have not yet mentioned?

6. Attitudes to School and Work

a. Did you go to school, if not, what did you do instead? Did your family know about this?

b. How did you get on with the teachers?

c. What was the most useful thing you did at school?

d. Tell me what it was like at school?

e. What plans did you have then?

f. What did you really want to do?

g. Think back to the day you left school, and tell me what you thought would happen.

h. What sort of jobs did you think there were for teenagers on the Island? Are opportunities for girls different from those for boys? Is it changing?

i. What work wouldn't you do?

j. What is a fair wage? What is the minumum wage that you would work for?

k. How many hours would you want to work in a day?

l. If you were offered a job, as above, at a minimum wage, would you take it? What if it was a good wage?

m. Would you want to work for yourself? How many hours in a day?

n. Do you have trouble filling your time when not employed?

o. Would you do voluntary work like cleaning up beaches if it was available?

p. Would you go off the Island for work?

q. What hours wouldn't you work?

r. Do you prefer to work with your mates? With males of females?

s. Do you think that social security money should be cut in order to encourage people to look for work?

t. What would be a fair amount of work if all unemployed people had to do some?

u. Would you get married if you were unemployed?

v. Do you think it creates problems between couples if one is unemployed?

w. Would you work for a wage that was less than you'd get on the dole?

7. Personal

a. Do you often feel bored? (explore)

b. If you had a personal problem who would you go to first? (What sort of problem do you mean? e.g. pregnancy, trouble with the law, if you thought you might be sacked for misbehaviour)

c. What things do you do which really give you satisfaction?

d. What do you really dislike doing?

e. How would you like to end up? In 10 years' time, if you had the chance?

f. What do you see yourself doing in 10 years' time? (prompt - family, occupation, material possessions, social relationships)

8. Family

a. Do your family mind your being unemployed?

b. Do they put any pressure on you to find work?

c. Would they throw you out if you decided not to look for work?

d. Will they carry on supporting you?

e. Would you like to leave home?

f. Would you mind or want to work in the same place as any other members of your family?

g. Are you looking for work? How? Where? Do you ever ask people? Who?

h. Do you ever talk about work with your friends/family, or do you prefer not to talk about work?

i. Does it embarrass you to go out with people who are working?

j. Do you still see any of the people you meet at work?

APPENDIX IV: STATISTICAL TABLES

1)   ISLE OF SHEPPEY EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE 1976: Males and Females

			%	No
Primary Industries	Orders	I and II	1.15	112
Manufacturing Industries	Orders	III - XIX	45.26	4405
Construction	Order	XX	3.58	349
Gas, Electricity and Water	Order	XXI	0.24	24
Distributive Trades	Order	XXIII	11.01	1151
Miscellaneous Services	Order	XXVI	11.82	446
Public Administration	Order	XXVII	4.58	2173
Other Service Industries	Orders	XXII, XXIV and XXV	22.32	1072
			99.96	9732

(Source: Department of Employment)

2)   ISLE OF SHEPPEY EMPLOYMENT STRUCTURE: Summary

	Primary	Manufacturing	Construction	Services
Isle of Sheppey				
1971	1.9	47.1	4.4	46.6
1976	1.1	45.3	3.6	50.0
Great Britain				
1971	3.4	38.3	7.3	51.0

3)   SOCIAL CLASS STRUCTURE 1971[1]

Head of Household's Social Class [4]	Isle of Sheppey %	Great Britain[2] %
I	2	4.2
II	15	17.3
III	46	42.5
IV	22	16.3) 24.6[3]
V	15	6.6)
Not classified		13.0
	100	100.0

Sources 1 OPCS 10% sample 1971 occupation by area of workplace
2 Social Trends (1% analysis of 1971 census) No 5 Table 39
3 1971 Census data retabulated by T. Noble in Modern Britain (Batsford 1975) Table 5.9
4 This tabulation is based on the aggregation of the socio-economic group of males only. It should be seen as an indication of orders of magnitude only. More detailed analysis of the OPCS 1971 Sample Census data remains to be done.

	1 Date of Birth	2 Qualifications on leaving school	3 First job	4 Wage at first job	5 Other employers
Denise 18	8 . 2 . 62	1 'O' level English language	Preston Skreens Home for Mentally Handicapped children (YOP) scheme Sheppey	£18.00 per week (MSC rates)	School library (YOP)
Karen nearly 18	? . 4 . 62	None	Arthur Miller Clothing Manufacturer (machinist)	Probably about £25	1.Freshbakes 1 day 2.Vernon Fuses 3.Combine Palletts (for 7 months) 4.P/T in Café
Mandy 18	20 . 2 . 62	None	East Kent Fruit Packers Faversham (packer)	£30.00 plus bonus (usually approx £3.00 per week) 45 hours	Small café waitress (part-time)
Theresa 17	30 . 11 . 62	None	Liptons WEP	£20.55 Rising to £29.99 when taken on staff	1.Liptons (WEP) and regular 2.Hulburds Sittingbourne (WEP)
Alan 19	20 . 11 . 60	1'O' level 1)metal-work 1CSE 2)Grade 1 Tech. Drawing	Royal Doulton Potteries (moulder)	Hourly rate £30 best in a week	1. Rubber Moulder 2.Steel mill briefly
George 17½	7 . 10 . 62	2 CSE's 1)Local studies 2)English	Homebrite Double Glazing Queenbor- ough (labourer)	£25.00 per week 40 hours	1.Spiralux painter & decorator 2.Tesco's bakery
Mike 18½	7 . 8 . 61	None	Abbotts Bros. Labs. (WEP) produc- tion line	£18.00 (MSC rates)	Wasso's factory - trainee store manager
Ray 18	27 . 2 . 62	3 CSE's 1)Woodwork 2)English 3)Art	Horace Olaf Furniture Manufacturers Queensbor- ough (labourer)	£20.25	1.Minster Holiday 2.Hop picking 3.Freshbakes

6 length of unemployment since last job	7 length of unemployment since leaving school	8 Reason for leaving last job	9 Domiciliary status
3 days	11 months	left YOP scheme voluntarily to seek <u>real</u> work	Rented House
about a month	nearly a year	left for personal and emotional reasons	living with single unemployed woman
$8\frac{1}{2}$ months	$8\frac{1}{2}$ months	wages not high enough and bad work	At home temporarily, but often estranged from parents
one week	two weeks	Made redundant when new Tesco supermarket opened	living with parents
just over a month	7 months	Bad money £46 for 50 hr week alternately 1 week-days and 1 week-nights. No bonus and no extra money for shift work. Poor work conditions-dangerous	At home with parents
2 months	$4\frac{1}{2}$ months	made redundant (temporary work only)	At home supported by parents
6 months	9 months	1) no rise in pay on reaching 18 2) failed test for promotion 3) no prospects	Lives at home temporarily but not supported by parents
About a year	About a year	Combination of health conditions and bad working conditions	At home with parents

At a time when job opportunities for school leavers have reached an all-time post-war low, many young people are having to adjust to the prospect of being without work for considerable periods. Claire Wallace, who is currently researching for a Ph.D at the University of Kent, looks at one particular community and discovers ways in which informal networks are tending to compensate for the failure of the 'formal' system to provide sufficient jobs

Claire Wallace

Adapting to Unemployment

Leaving school and entering an atrophied employment market is assumed to be a difficult and traumatic experience for the youngsters concerned. They have been prepared for the day when they can begin to earn a living in the adult world of work, and thereby gain status, identity and the magic wage packet, but instead they are brutally disappointed. Or so conventional wisdom assumes. Anthropologists write about 'rites de passage' where people pass from one social status or category into another — puberty, marriage, death, etc. But what happens when the transformation breaks down half way through? The first stage is clear — the day they leave school — but the second is vague and uncertain.

In order to investigate these and other questions, I lived for much of the last year in an isolated, predominantly working-class community where employment was based largely upon unskilled work in factories and mills. There is one large comprehensive school servicing the entire neighbourhood, and each year between 400 and 500 young people leave this school to seek work, the majority at the minimum age and with few or no qualifications. Only between one half and two thirds will find jobs. What happens to the rest?

In an attempt to discover the answers, I conducted two surveys, the first covering the majority of those who had left school at Easter with no qualifications (14% of the total) and the second taking a cross section of 100 school pupils from those who left in the Summer. I shared their last two months at school, talked with their families, accompanied them in the pubs, clubs and cafés which were their habitual haunts and even went camping with a group of 'extracted' incorrigible trouble makers at school. The initial ideas which form the basis of the following account may be modified when a detailed analysis of the results of the two surveys has been completed.

No illusions

In this community there is no danger of youngsters being misled by the glossy posters on the walls of the careers centre — they know exactly where the jobs are, how much they are worth and what they are like. If they get a job it will probably be through their mum or dad, or one of their many other relatives living in the area. There are no illusions — school leavers are quite aware of the conditions of work within industry and have a more intimate knowledge of local opportunities than their official careers 'advisors'. In a situation where **who** you know is more important than **what** you know, and for the most part qualifications are not required, official job placement is often by-passed altogether. Unemployment is widespread for all age groups (10% overall) and has been a feature of the social landscape for many years. Factories have been and gone regularly over the past 20 years, and many prefer to take only temporary workers in response to fluctuations in the economy. Consequently, security of employment cannot always be guaranteed even if you can get a job and there are very few opportunities for formal training in the local labour market.

There is no escape. Although industrial estates a few miles away may absorb some young people the financial rewards do not compensate for the expenditure of time and fares required to work in other areas. In order to work away or to pursue training, the individual must be prepared to catch the train at 7 a.m. and may not get home until 7.30 p.m. Young people are trapped within the local labour market by their material dependence upon home and the vagaries of the public transport system.

Transition into what?

There are several possible reactions to worklessness open to the young person. Firstly, he can adopt a negative reaction of retreat whereby he expects a job commensurate with his abilities to be available, and when it is not forthcoming, feel rejected and useless in the eyes of society. This is the popular tragic stereotype depicted by the media and the politicians, and it is all the more likely to occur if that person has successfully absorbed the work and achievement ethics which schooling and the careers service attempt to instil. Luckily, schooling is not normally so efficient in inculcating these values.

Secondly, the young person can respond nihilistically by resorting to delinquent activities and subcultures in a positive but self-destructive translation of his negative social status. This image is one which is often applied to unemployed West Indian youths.

Thirdly, the school leaver can reject the possibility of long term stable employment altogether and instead seek a rational and productive use of time and resources outside the wage economy. This corresponds to the growth of an informal or personalised economy based upon cash, reciprocal exchanges and diversified 'jobbing' within the informal network of relationships. It may be necessary for an individual to undertake many such transactions simultaneously in order to maintain himself above the minimal subsistence levels provided by social security.

In the light of these trends it is necessary to distinguish between **employment** in the formal sector for a wage or salary, and **work** in the informal sector, which may be for cash but can also cover a whole range of productive activity not officially classified as work. Hence, if I wash up at home, I am working, but if I wash up in a canteen for a wage then I am employed.

The informal sector

The adoption of the third perspective described above offers the possibility for individuals to pursue constructive and flexible careers in the informal sector if they have the wit, the right kind of skills and the incentives to use them. These skills are both manual and social in character and include such talents as babysitting, fixing cars, carpentry, gardening and selling goods and services. They depend upon the ability

to build up an informal network through which to market them. These skills are learned outside school and are a natural progression from part time activities whilst still at school, often through an informal apprenticeship to either a formal or an informal operator who is probably a friend or a relative. An example is that of a boy who, having succeeded in getting himself suspended from school, refused to return from the pursuit of his informal apprenticeships '. . . *unless they give me something useful to do. I'm not just going to sit around all day doing nothing.*'! He was finally lured back by being given the task of reconcreting the paths around the school building. For the most part, however, this is not an alternative encouraged by the school, the careers service or the welfare authorities, who are all more concerned with how to pressurise school leavers into a rapidly shrinking job market. Many of my respondents used the basic training provided under the Youth Opportunities Programme in order to acquire informally

applicable skills, and this may account for the popularity of certain schemes.

Widespread and complex informal networks have developed as a result of stable extended families with unstable incomes living in close proximity to one another. These networks function by providing both work and employment for their members, to such an extent that highly desirable jobs in certain factories become monopolised by kinship networks. They also provide homes for members who have suffered eviction or family disruption and they distribute a continual flow of goods. Finally, they offer assistance and services, both in normal daily routines and in times of crisis. They are therefore functional in subsidising living standards through self help in areas beset by unstable and low incomes. Also, informal networks provide a seed bed on which the informal economy can flourish, and are in turn strengthened through it. In this way they provide a moral frame-

work of family and friendship loyalty which shelters the illegal aspects of the informal economy.

In areas of traditionally high unemployment, such as in West Indian communities, the development of a culture of worklessness has been documented as a response to the lack of formal status which endows individuals with an alternative source of identity. The area in which I am interested bears evidence of a culture which is supportive to unemployment, but this is accommodated within traditional patterns of working-class life such as those of meeting in pubs and visiting relatives. Since unemployment and low income are prevailing facts of life, this need not entail any loss of status within the community and there was no differentiation among the working and non-working members.

Young people know about the work place because they have played by the factories since they were children and because their friends and relatives all work in them. For young people there is strong parental pressure to enter the labour work force and contribute towards the family budget. If the youngster himself appears hesitant or lacking in initiative his parents will 'put his name down' at the local factories and shops and mobilise informal communications channels on his behalf.

Moreover, most school leavers are prepared for work by their own extensive work experience whilst still in full time education. In a situation of informal access to vacancies and the severe limitations of training places, the shrewd and self-determining individual starts seeking employment well before leaving school. A significant proportion of unskilled leavers gained training in this manner, as their Saturday job was transmuted into an apprenticeship when they left school, or as they were employed as a trainee as a result of previous experience. The possession or otherwise of qualifications was not important in gaining a skilled training place, since once they had secured a place in this manner, young people left school at the earliest possible opportunity.

Explicit rejections of formal work ethics include such factors as the odiousness of working in order to make a profit for others, working as a subordinate under an unacceptably authoritarian system, working at boring and meaningless tasks and, finally, the necessity of working rigid and often anti-social hours. Rejection of these routines is associated with a search for autonomy and creativity in the informal sphere.

It should be emphasised that this philosophy is adopted by only a small minority, and the climate of moral

WE HAVE THE JOB FOR YOU

censure makes it a very difficult position to hold. But with rising unemployment, the depression of wages in certain sectors and disillusionment with work, it may become a growing minority. It should also be noted that this is not necessarily an example of feckleness and irresponsibility, nor does it imply a preference for idleness, but a healthy and intelligent reponse on the part of some young workers which could be usefully channelled into more socially productive areas. Even

no more jobs are created, and may even be dysfunctional if it artificially raises expectations. The alternative concept of 'education for leisure' is incompatible with the increasing competitiveness of education and is, in any case, a redundant concept in an employment vacuum, when leisure, which is defined by work, is sold to the working population as a marketable commodity.

Therefore, transition from school may not mean entry into the wage economy for an indefinite period, but

Some people may argue that young people at work, particularly those undergoing formal training, are among the relatively privileged section of the community and therefore not the most deserving case for resources. However, we must not forget that, even at a time of high unemployment among young people, there are many more in work. Although a significant proportion of these do appear to adjust to a working life with little difficulty, there are others who need support when faced with certain situations or are at various critical stages of their early working experience.

The research which formed a basis to the 'Youth into Industry' report[1] identified a number of problems which contributed to dissatisfaction at work. One of the most interesting facets of the follow-up period has been the large number of young people who have actually wanted to talk about these problems, without the formal approach occasioned by a research study. There appear to have been two contrasting reasons:
- a desire to pass on their experiences in the hope that knowledge of them will be of some general use;
- a need to talk, in confidence, without fear that what they say will be passed on to somebody in authority.

The sorts of problems which have arisen are varied, and concern many of the issues raised in 'Youth into Industry'. The most common of those raised since that study are related to the following:
- relationship with supervisor or manager;
- place of work;
- nature of jobs allocated;
- future prospects within the organisation;
- problems of timekeeping and attendance;
- questioning of job or career choice;
- financial difficulties;
- personal problems.

There are a number of problems at work which can or ought to be dealt with at workshop or office level. Those relating to methods of work, equipment, etc, can usually be discussed relatively openly. The manager, for example, is often as aware of imperfections in working practice as the person working the machinery. In addition, feelings about such factors as pay and holidays tend to be openly discussed, even if there is little the young person at work can do about them.

The problems detailed in the list above, however, are more difficult for a young person to raise with their 'boss' for two reasons:

'Evidence of a profound dissatisfaction with work'

among those who do not explicitly ascribe to these values there can be found evidence of a profound dissatisfaction with work expressed in frequent job changing, intermittent employment, and prevalence of sick leave due to mysterious and indefinable complaints which fox the medical imagination.

Conclusions

Given this background experience of the transition from school to work, it can be seen that national policies which are based on a conception of the nuclear family can only fail to make an impact on this community. The strength and immediacy of local community values mean that formal schooling fails to communicate to its pupils, and results instead in a progressive alienation **from** education. Under these circumstances it is hardly surprising that there is a rejection of educational norms in the form of truancy, which is often aided by the parents. School is irrelevant to many youngsters in such conditions, particularly if it is increasingly oriented towards examination results, because real knowledge of local opportunities directly contravenes the ideals of academic achievement encouraged at school. Therefore, it is not lack of knowledge of employment opportunities which is the problem but the dissatisfaction which results from a realistic appraisal of local opportunities, or rather, the lack of them.

There is ample evidence that unemployment is a structural problem and is becoming a permanent feature of the future, yet government schemes under the auspices of the Manpower Services Commission are designed to provide only a partial and temporary palliative. The official reaction has been to place increasing emphasis on qualifications, careers information, experience and the development of 'social and life skills'. This is futile if

it could mean 'work' in the wider sense of encompassing a whole spectrum of economic activities, some of which are not formally defined as employment. It could also mean movement in and out of formal employment according to requirement and opportunities. The high rate of casual work and intermittent employment likewise suggests not just a redefinition of work, but a re-definition of transition to extend over several years of adolescence, which is the time it may take for these patterns to establish themselves.

Leaving school is a vague and ambiguous period in these circumstances and the work that people enter cannot be taken as their point of destination. The fluid and changing period of transition after they leave school, which may involve frequent movement in and out of work, reflects a period of search for personal satisfaction and some resistance to the pressures upon them as well as a criticism of formal opportunities. Varied experience in work and employment during adolescence, both inside and outside the formal economy, could itself be an extended period of learning through which young people adapt to adult roles later in life.

By redefining the nature of 'work' and accepting the **de facto** existence of the informal sector, we can allow scope for a positive official response to unemployment and the expansion of education, careers advice and government training programmes to accommodate and encourage this rather than resulting in further alienation. Such a response should not have as its purpose the creation of non-existent jobs, nor the provision of a temporary oasis of employment in a desert of redundancy, nor the subsidising of employers' recruitment schemes at tax-payers' expense, but the harnessing of local initiatives and creativity in socially useful directions. Permanently□

SURVIVAL NOT EMPLOYMENT?

Claire Wallace considers, amongst other issues, the problems arising in many areas where the employment market is limited.

at the careers interview.

A rather scruffy youth in jeans and plimsolls walks in and sits down in the interview room. The careers officer faces him across the desk.

Careers Officer: After preliminary introductions, he asks "How do you get on at school?"

Youth: "Well, I don't like school, I want to start work."

Careers Officer: "What sort of work are you interested in?"

Youth: "I want to be a builder".

Careers Officer: "Very good, what do you know about building?"

Youth: "Well my brother, he used to work on a building site, and I helped me dad build an extension to the house, and I worked in a timber yard last summer."

Careers Officer: "Why do you want to do building".

Youth: "Well, I want to work with my hands—I'm not much good with mental stuff, like, so I thought it would be a good trade for the future".

Careers Officer: "How is your maths?"

Youth: (increduously) "Maths?! What do I need that for?"

Careers Officer: "According to the school your school work has been rather unsatisfactory."

Youth: "Well, I've just gone off school, I don't know why. What do I need to do to apply for building training then?"

Careers Officer: "Well, you need 4 good CSE's or O levels to begin with. A local company is offering apprenticeships in construction, but I warn you that for the last vacancy they had 150 applicants, so you will have to be good to impress them."

Youth: "But I'm only taking 4 CSE's!"

Careers Officer: "Well, otherwise you can apply to the Builders Training College in London (50 miles away) and study there for two years. From here you can go on to study further if you want to."

Youth: (suspiciously) It sounds like school . . . . .

Careers Officer: "With an apprenticeship you will need to go to college one day per week, and take your City and Guilds examinations . . . . . . he explains)

Youth: "I dunno about that. I just want to work really. I thought building would be a good trade."

Careers Officer: "Hmnn. Have you thought of applying to some factories and shops to do maintenance work?"

The careers officer goes on to discuss some jobs like this but receives little response from the youth.

Careers Officer: "Why not work as a labourer with a construction firm to begin with?"

Youth: (eagerly) Have you got any vacancies for that?"

Careers Officer: "Not at the moment because of the slump in construction, but you could try getting your name down at a few places. Unfortunately there is a great deal of competition for these jobs nowadays."

The above hypothetical situation is probably all too familiar for many careers officers, particularly those involved in working class areas hit by industrial decline. We are concerned here with the problems arising in many areas where the employment market is severely limited and advances in technology have replaced skilled work with largely unskilled work, so that the demand for training places vastly exceeds the supply. Under these conditions we would expect to find the intense competition for available jobs frigidifying entrance requirements, especially for craft training, as employers can afford to be more selective in whom they will admit, and thus leaving a pool of unskilled or unemployed labour. Given these conditions the young candidate in this article has little objective chance of succeeding in his ambitions. The economic background to this is well documented and it is common knowledge that it is school leavers who are most adversely effected by structural unemployment and the decrease in training places. In this article we will concentrate upon the problems which individuals have to confront in their day to day lives.

The careers officer is clearly required to be realistic in his appraisal of opportunities for the youth and pursues the laudible aims of encouraging higher levels of educational aspiration and attainment in the interests of his subject, and yet his intentions make no positive impression on the young candidate. What exactly is happening?

To begin with, let us examine the role which the careers officer assumes. Throughout the interchange the careers officer evinces a major preoccupation with the formal requirements for jobs and with school records. This is hardly surprising since he has little other background information about the subject, so these are the methods he has learned for formally assessing the youth's aptitudes, and it is necessary for him to stress the level of competition for places. The careers officer then tries to broaden the young person's scope of possibilities by suggesting some less ambitious jobs and thereby gently dissuading his from his original intention. However, this is greeted with suspicion and confusion by the youth, who is at first bewildered by the seemingly random barrage of ideas, and then increasingly silent or indignant when he preceives the drift of the interview as undermining his aspirations. The fruitlessness of the encounter must be equally demoralising for both parties. The Careers Centre is used as a job shop by young people such as our youth, and yet us unable to provide suitable placements for the majority of its clients.

The careers officer is faced with a dilemma: either he discusses careers in the knowledge that in this particular environment the subject is unlikely to achieve his chosen aim within the careers officers terms, or he can discuss alternative jobs and be greeted with gloomy resignation by the youth with his heart set on a trade. The careers officer's problems arise partly from the fact that he is trained to discuss opportunities at a general level, where potential for school leavers is no doubt wide and exciting, but he is restrcited by the exigencies of the local labour market which may offer few opportunities, and he would be doing his clients a disservice not to recognise this. The result is equally frustrating for the careers officer and his clients.

Now let us look at the youth's motivations and the effect that the career interview has upon him. In this interview the applicant is alienated further from educational meritocratic values as a means of advancement which are reflected in the formal criteria of the careers officer. The careers interview reinforces the preselective processes which have already been filtering the subject into semi- and unskilled manual work. These processes, whereby the sons and daughters of manual workers usually finish up in manual

5

SURVIVAL NOT EMPLOYMENT (CONT.)

work, are widely described in the literature of sociology. What emerges from this is that there is a correlation between class, community membership and educational underachievement, due in part, to a differences of values between the realms of school and the working class community. This can be illustrated by the orientation of this particular youth towards work and education.

The result of the careers interview is precisely the opposite of that intended by the careers officer. It actually lowers the aspirations of the applicant by convincing him that formal competitive methods of job seeking will be both useless and undesirable in his case. This youth will be less willing to risk testing his abilities in the formal competitive market as a result of the careers officer's "advice" in anticipation of failure. He would rather not take that risk in the first place. The careers service therefore inadvertantly reinforce low levels of aspiration among candidates like this one. That is by attempting to offer encouragement to the youth it makes the obstacles ahead appear so formidable that they operate as a disincentive, and thereby accelerate the drift into unskilled occupations.

In this interview the career officer misunderstands the youth's requirements and consequently there is a communications barrier between the two parties. The carrers officer is being realistic within his own frame of reference by acting on his knowledge that those most vulnerable to unemployment are the unqualified and by indicating the career opportunities available in the client's field of interest through further education. The youth, on the other hand, faces his adviser from a world of practical experience and first hand knowledge of the basis for recruitment within the local context. Consequently, there is unlikely to be many precedents of professional architects and engineers within his experience, but there are likely to be examples of self made artisans for him to follow. Many builders and contractors are not in fact formally qualified and started life much as this lad hopes to. Therefore, the subjects seeks practical experience in a craft which he can sell to employers as useful currency on the local market. This is instrumental thinking in a situation of unstable employment which renders the unskilled more vulnerable than the skilled.

For many young people leaving comprehensive and secondary modern schools the cleft between intellectual and manual labour appears oceans wide. The youth has long ago classified himself as non-scholastic but with practical ability, so that he opts to become a craftsman rather than a "pen pusher". This classification has been confirmed by his peer group, his parent community and his school history. Because of the inherently conservative way in which these values are inherited by a community he is not aware of the extent to which the competitive job market has entered the sphere of education until he actually comes to apply for a job. Therefore, further education is anathema to him and traditional trade skills represent a more relaistic and attractive option.

For this youth, school was already an irrelevent imposition, and further education even more remote from a trade where he has de facto experience. He can see no advantage in working for examinations whic he has little chance of excelling at, and he rightly suspects that 4 CSE's grade 4 are as good as no CSE's at all. Furthermore, he is disinclined to pursue them because of his already entrenched disaffection from school, and eleventh hour advice from the careers office is unlikely to reverse this. Thus it is that the careers interview operates as a disincentive to further academic efforts, because the careers officer emphasises that unless he can produce fairly impressive qualifications they are useless. If the youth lacks imagination he is only perceiving his future in terms of his personal horizons derived from his family, community and previous experience, but the careers officer equally lacks imagination by visualising only the formal requirements for employment.

But why is a trade so important to the youth? To understand this it is necessary to look at the values of his own community and how these define his choices. The advantages of a profession like building are the independence and long term security of a trade which, although subject to fluctuations, will always be in demand. Moreover, it is transferable to other work places and other regions being universally in demand, unlike more specialist trades which are dependent on certain industries (such as ship building). Building is also highly versatile and can be used for his own benefit at home, and to perform jobs for friends and neighbours privately, so that there will always be work even when the construction industry is suffering a recession. It also offers attractive opportunities for self employment. One lad explained to me: "You are not dependdent on any boss. You're yourself, and you can work when it suits you."

SURVIVAL NOT EMPLOYMENT
(CONT.)

Finally, building offers considerable financial rewards and status among the community as a craftsman. His family and local community reaffirm these beliefs because good competent lads traditionally become craftsmen, and this is commensurate with the ideals of masculinity which are part of his self image. I have chosen a builder in this example because it typifies these aspiration, but I could equally have chosen an electrician, a plumber, a mechanic, or similar professions. I is clear that these trades offer more satisfaction than other labouring work, so alternatives such as factory or retail work would not be greeted enthusiastically. A similar value system operated with girl's choices. One girl in my research was resentful of a careers officer who attempted to suggest retail work when she was committed to hairdressing.

The uncertaintly and disappointment of the youth may translate into silent resignation or surly hostility. He starts to wonder "What does this man know about me? How does he know what I want to do?" and the suspicion grows that this stranger is trying to slot him into a job which he does not want. (even if eventually he ends up doing that job through lack of alternatives.) The careers officer is confirming the low image of his prospects which he has acquired from school and the official bodies. Hence the frequent response "They (the careers office) don't treat you as a person, they keep trying to change your mind for you." The careers interview is an unfamiliar situation for lads like this and therefore rather intimidating. The course of the interview reaffirms the lad's distrust and dislike of authority and the way it treats him. There is a danger that the careers officer, in trying to create an over professional approach and by relying on professional generalities and formal criteria, has distanced himself from both the local context and from the needs of his clients. A more flexible and informal approach would have been rewarded with greater rapport.

If the youth's self confidence managed to survive the careers interview, he may persist in seeking building work through his own efforts and devices which are more familiar to him. For instance, by scanning the newspapers and newsagents windows. By "asking around" local builders, family and friends he could well secure himself a training place through personal recommendations. The small employer's intimate knowledge of local conditions will enable him to assess the youth's abilities without excessive reward for academic qualifications. They are likely to be more impressed by previous experience and his personal qualities as a "good practical lad" than by formal qualifications. These small firms may not have the resources to offer formal apprenticeships either, but they can offer the kind of general training that this lad seeks. In that case he has little to thank the careers service for.

This picture is not of course typical of every school leaver so it is necessary to locate this example within a wider typology. In my research I am examining a cross section of sixteen year olds who are leaving school under the circumstances cited at the beginning of the article. Here I find a top 15% who stay on at school and a further minority leaving with a full quote of O levels and CSEs. But the national average is CSE grade 3 and this leaves at least 50% with restricted opportunities in the formal market and similar problems to the youth in this example. In the paper chase for increasingly devalued qualifications working class children will be increasingly present in this latter category because of their inherent disadvantages in education. Some, will get the positions recommended by the careers officer, but many who used to enter skilled work will find themselves with unskilled work, and other who used to rely on unskilled work will be unemployed. Therefore, those who invested their future and indentity in the meritocratic education system by studying hard at school and thereby raising their expectations, will be most disappointed when they find themselves with useless qualifications and working alongside unqualified people. Whereas those expected nothing from school and invested their energies in their peer groups and extra-school life will be better prepared for unskilled work.

However, my research indicates, ironically, that some of the anti-school minority with no interest in qualifications, who spent their energies in finding practical work experience and developing their social lives, are at an advantage in finding training places. If they have been accustomed to the idea of relying on their own initiative for finding work and making money, and have many friends and contacts, they are in a better position to face the future than by relying on the school or careers service. Their success in this sphere will also depend upon their resourcefulness and maturity in exploiting social contacts and responding to informal opportunities. This is because small firms and contractors rely upon personal contacts and recommendations for recruitment, as to an extent do larger firms. Their success may also depend upon experience already gained whilst at school which may have detracted from their school performances. Ultimately, these people who have been building a repertoire of skills and communications networks may be better at surviving in an economy which offers them only unstable or casual employment, if any at all.

In conclusion, although my research is still in preliminary stages, there seems to be some indication that many school leavers would find it an asset if they were allowed to master a number of practical skills through direct experience rather than prolonged education. If skills such as these were officially recognised and made more universally available through government sponsored skill training courses of short duration where industry is reluctant to provide apprenticeships this would fulfil both the needs of the trainee and a vacuum in the formal economy.

Clearly, there needs to more work done on reassessing the growing numbers of those who are relegated to unskilled work or unemployment by official channels, and their adaptations to this, for in practice the situation appears more complex. Linked to this their needs to be some redefinition of the nature of "suitable work" in a society which can no longer guarantee full employment to all of its members in the future. In doing so it is necessary to distinguish between employment in the formal sense and work in a more extended sense encompassing a plethora of diverse economic activities. For many school leavers survival, not employment, will become the long term issue of their lives. They are better equipped for survival unprejudiced by an increasing unfair education system and with a number of versatile skills and flexible entrepreneurial activities available to them, rather than studying for long periods for specialist subject which may later become obsolete or redundant.