A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE ADJUSTMENT TO EMPLOYMENT OF A SAMPLE OF SECONDARY MODERN SCHOOL LEAVERS IN AN INDUSTRIAL CITY

by

Michael Percy Carter

Volume I

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
University of Edinburgh, 1969
PREFACE

I wish to record my thanks to the Social Science Research Council for the award of a grant which made possible the field work upon which this study is based. I am most grateful to the following, who assisted with the interviewing:—Miss E.V. Gowman (now Mrs. Davis); Miss Caroline Paulin; Mr. N. Atkinson; Mr. M.B. Jedrez and Mr. (now Dr.) A. Robertson. Mrs. Florence A. Cellar was indefatigably cheerful in doing the typing, and I express my gratitude to her. I wish also to thank my Supervisors, Professor K.L. Little and Mr. Denis McMahon for their encouragement and, not least, their patience.

M.P. Carter.
### LIST OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART I. General Introduction to the Study</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction to the Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. The Occupational Structure and Factors Making for Changes in it</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. The Process of Adjustment to Employment: Pre-Work Influences</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART II. Outline of Research Procedure and Analysis of Occupations and Job Changes</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Research Method and Procedure</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Analysis of Occupations</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. The Nature and Conditions of Work and Reactions to it</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Trade Union Participation and Attitudes Towards the Unions</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. Industrial Training and Further Education</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Analysis of Job Changing</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. Future Jobs—Intentions, Hopes, and Possibilities</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XII.</td>
<td>Marriage and Courting</td>
<td>586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII.</td>
<td>Attitudes Towards School and Views on Education</td>
<td>654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV.</td>
<td>Views on the School Leaving Age</td>
<td>685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV.</td>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI.</td>
<td>&quot;Mods&quot; and &quot;Rockers&quot;, the &quot;Younger Generation&quot; and a Consideration of &quot;Youth Culture&quot;</td>
<td>810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII.</td>
<td>Social Class</td>
<td>860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII.</td>
<td>Social Class and Political Affiliation</td>
<td>914</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PART IV  "Images" of Society, Social Stratification and the Adjustment to Employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XIX.</td>
<td>&quot;Images&quot; of Society and Social Class</td>
<td>941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX.</td>
<td>The Socio-Economic Structure, Images of Society and the Adjustment to Employment</td>
<td>1002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Interview Schedule</td>
<td>1029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Postal Questionnaire for Main Sample Respondents Who Were not Interviewed</td>
<td>1036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Questionnaire for Postal Sample</td>
<td>1038</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>Books</td>
<td>1040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>Articles and Reports</td>
<td>1046</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The thesis is based upon a "follow-up" study of a sample of 86 youths and 84 girls who left secondary modern schools in Sheffield, England, in 1959, at the age of fifteen. The respondents were interviewed in the initial phase on three occasions—during their last term at school, at three months after starting work and at one year after starting work. This phase has been reported previously in a book by the present author, Home, School and Work, published by Pergamon Press in 1962.

The follow-up study consisted of interviews held five years after the respondents had started work, when they had reached the age of twenty years. The thesis is divided into four parts. Part I represents a general introduction to the area of study and provides a context for the field-work. Specifically, an analysis is made of the occupational structure and of factors making for changes in it; and a detailed survey is made of pre-work factors affecting the process of adjustment to employment.
Part II consists of an analysis and discussion of the experiences of the respondents during their first five years in employment. Occupations are analysed in terms of a range of socio-economic and individual factors, including home and neighbourhood background and measured intelligence. The nature and conditions of work, and reactions to work are then considered, and the elements of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are traced. A discussion of trade union involvement is followed by an analysis of industrial training and further education. There is then a detailed consideration of job changes and future plans: it is suggested that previous theories about the adjustment to employment are inadequate because they have failed to accord sufficient importance to "non-work" factors.

Whilst the study takes the adjustment to employment as its central theme, it is not restricted to narrow categories of activity or involvement. On the contrary, the attempt is made to relate work and "non-work", and to establish configurations embracing the various social institutions of education, marriage and the family, peer groups (the concept of a youth culture is explored), leisure, politics and social class. Part III is concerned with particular aspects of these non-work factors.

In Part IV, the attempt is made to draw together the various threads by analysing the process of adjustment in terms of the young workers' perceptions of society and of their position.
within the system of social stratification. It is argued that there is an interplay between the individual and the social structure such that the individual formulates an image of society and his place in it and acts in accordance with this interpretation: the image is capable of attunement to shifts in emphasis within society in terms of the distribution of power, prestige and, specifically, of occupational opportunities. At the same time, the individual—because he interprets his experience rather than being merely a passive agent—may himself contribute, through allying himself with others whom he deems to be located in a similar position and to have similar aims and interests, to the change which is intrinsic to society, thereby affecting in some measure the direction which such change takes.
PART I

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The concern of this study is with the adjustment to employment of secondary modern school children in a large industrial city in northern England. The aim is to trace in detail the process of transition from school to work, and to seek explanations for such patterns as can be discerned. The term "adjustment" is used in a non-evaluative sense, to signify the fact that, in leaving school and starting work, the young person in a modern industrial society necessarily has to accommodate to new values, norms, roles, relationships and attitudes. It is not intended to suggest that there is a state of "perfect adjustment" towards which all young people necessarily move—it is not argued that the process of adjustment represents the slotting of individuals into particular niches in accordance with some functional imperatives such as are posited by certain sociologists as being implicit in the nature of society.
Whilst the study takes the adjustment to employment as its central theme, it is not restricted to narrow categories of activity or involvement. On the contrary, the attempt is made to relate work and 'non-work', and to establish configurations embracing the various social institutions of education, employment, marriage and the family, leisure, politics and social class. The transition from school to work—discussed here on the basis of the first five years in employment—is viewed, then, as a broad process of adaptation to adult society. The data, and the discussion, accordingly range widely.

The study is based mainly upon a series of four interviews held with 86 youths and 84 girls, all of whom left secondary modern schools in Sheffield in 1959, when they were fifteen years of age. Because of the smallness of the sample, and the complexity of the problems considered, the research is to be regarded as exploratory and suggestive in its approach. It seeks rather to formulate hypotheses for further research than to establish theories. It does, however, cover ground that has been largely untouched hitherto in sociological research in Britain. The respondents were first interviewed during their last term at school. Subsequently they were interviewed at three months after leaving school, and again at one year after leaving school. The analysis of this first stage of the research has been
published in *Home, School and Work.* The final stage, consisting of the fourth, 'follow-up', interview was conducted in the summer of 1964, five years after the respondents had left school, and when they had reached the age of twenty years. In addition, a certain amount of data was derived from a postal survey of a 1 in 6 sample of all secondary modern children who left Sheffield schools in 1959 at the age of fifteen. The response rate for this survey, which was also conducted in 1964, was low, however—approximately 40 per cent. The data is therefore used tentatively and for purposes of illustration, rather than as a basis for argument.

The focus of the study is upon the world of work as experienced by and perceived by these young men and women, and upon the ways in which they became involved in the adult world, and reacted to it. The respondents were, predominantly, from working class homes: the sons and daughters of manual workers. And, as will be seen, most of them, in turn, entered working class occupations—the the boys taking skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled jobs, and the girls becoming manual or minor clerical workers. Before proceeding, in Part II, to the detailed analysis of the attitudes and behaviour

---


2 There is a further discussion of the research method in Chap.IV below. The original sample consisted of 100 boys and 100 girls, but some of these could not be traced five years after they had left school, whilst others refused to be interviewed at this stage.
of the respondents during their first five years in employment, however, it is proposed to sketch in the broader context of the study: the remainder of Part I is devoted to this task. Firstly, the overall occupational structure is discussed, and factors making for changes in it are considered. And, secondly, a summary is given of pre-work influences affecting the process of transition from school to work.
CHAPTER II

THE OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE, AND FACTORS MAKING FOR CHANGES IN IT

The Occupational structure of an advanced industrial society is constantly undergoing change.¹ The general pattern of occupations entered by a country's school-leavers is a reflection of the overall industrial and commercial framework of that society, in terms of the actual situation at a given time and of expected trends in the future—expected, that is, by employers and school-leavers, and by those advising these two parties to the employment contract. There is an interplay of various factors which shapes employment opportunities—in terms of demography, for example, and of technological innovation, social policies in regard to education and age for employment or retirement, dominant norms and practices in regard to women and work, and the world economic climate. Each

country, accordingly, presents a particular profile in regard to occupational opportunities at a given time, and each country has an idiosyncratic complexion in regard to the present and likely future composition of its labour force, in terms of level of skill and professional or managerial qualifications.¹

A useful starting point for the discussion of changes in the occupational structure of modern industrial societies is provided by the debate as to whether such societies may be said to be susceptible to social pressures which make for 'convergence' in regard to their economic organisation, and, by extension, to their entire social organisation. Much of Raymond Aron's work has been concerned with the question as to whether industrial societies, regardless of ideological differences, necessarily or factually are moving towards a uniformity of type. Arguments in this field hinge around the importance to be attributed to features of technology and of economic organisation as determinants of political and general social organisation.² Aron is concerned with the question, "To what extent a particular economic and technological condition produces a distinctive type of society, egalitarian or inegalitarian and hierarchical"? Specifically, he concludes, although tentatively


and with many reservations, that there are grounds for the convergence hypothesis, namely, that "The Soviet and Western societies are gradually drawing together and are tending to converge towards a mixed form."¹

It is not the purpose here to rehearse the arguments for and against the convergence thesis. The object, rather, is to point in general terms to the sorts of factors which influence the occupational structure and, specifically, which affect opportunities in the lower levels of the occupational hierarchy—the sector, that is, which is entered by secondary modern school-leavers. A convenient vehicle for this exercise is provided by Goldthorpe's discussion of "Social Stratification in Industrial Society,"² in which the concern is to confute the convergence thesis—although this concern is not the main interest here.

According to the convergence thesis, then, technological and concomitant factors of economic organisation so permeate industrial societies as to make for common systems of stratification in them, regardless of such ideological differences which obtain in them or may have obtained in the past: "Once countries enter into the advanced stages of industrialisation, they tend to become increasingly

¹Eighteen Lectures on Industrial Society, op.cit.

comparable in their major institutional arrangements and in their social systems generally.¹ The main changes which are claimed to be inherent in the process of convergence have been summarised by Goldthorpe under three headings—social differentiation, status consistency and social mobility. These aspects will be considered in turn.

With regard to social differentiation, the argument to support the convergence thesis is that this decreases as industrial societies mature—gaps in the social scale, measured by reference to wealth and income, formal and informal status, and political power, are reduced. The consequence is that a high proportion of the population falls into the middle ranges of the hierarchy of stratification, which becomes analogous in shape to a diamond rather than a pyramid. This trend is attributed mainly to the increased demand, imposed by technological development, for educated and skilled manpower, and the complementary decrease in the demand for uneducated and unskilled labour. One study which illustrates the effects that technological change may have upon the system of stratification is that of Faunce and Clelland, who conducted their research in a small American town. Approximately one half of the labour force (the total population of the town was 25,000) were employed by a large chemical processing company. The effects of the introduction of automation into the plant upon

¹John H. Goldthorpe, op.cit.
social relations within and it were assessed, and the conclusions were in line with the convergence thesis proposition in regard to differentiation: namely, that the classes were brought closer together, whilst achievement rather than wealth became the main determinant of status—"It is not our contention that automation has eliminated class differences. Social classes in the sense of political and economic interest groups having different styles of life are still very much in evidence in this community. It does appear, however, that the social distance between classes, the amount of class conflict, and the importance of class identification are not so great as in communities at earlier stages in the industrialisation process." Faunce and Clelland argue that their findings can reasonably be extended to all industrial societies, since the technological developments which they see as the determining factor are in process of extension throughout at least the dominant industries whilst, more generally, the proportions of 'professionals' and technicians in national labour forces are on the increase.¹ Goldthorpe, however, contends that

¹William A. Faunce and Donald A. Clelland, "The Professional Society", New Society, No.58, 7th November 1963, and "Professionalisation and Stratification Patterns", The American Journal of Sociology, Vol.72, No.4, January 1967. A further example is provided by a study of the impact of technological change upon steelworkers in France; this showed a trend toward more egalitarian social relationships at work, as a consequence of hierarchically organised work teams being superseded by individual involvement in particular processes. J. Dofny, et al; Les Ouvriers et le Progrès Technique, Armand Colin, Paris, 1960.
the trend towards a decrease in social differentiation, if such there be in all industrial societies, is by no means as marked as is posited by the convergence hypothesis, and he cites various studies to this effect. With regard to income and wealth, the work of R.M. Titmuss is particularly salient. Titmuss has demonstrated that the redistribution of wealth and income in post-war Britain has not been of such an emphatic order as to make for a marked reduction in inequality in these terms: he argues, indeed, that "We should be much more hesitant in suggesting that any equalising forces at work in Britain since 1938 can be promoted to the status of a law and projected into the future......There are other forces deeply rooted in the social structure and fed by many complex institutional factors inherent in large-scale economies, operating in adverse directions." Specifically in regard to occupational opportunities, however, the signs of a trend towards lesser differentiation are not to be dismissed easily: indeed, it is at once an assumption and a basic tenet affecting much policy-making in the fields of education and industrial training currently that the working population of the future will be preponderantly highly skilled, in contrast with the present situation. Calculations made by the Cambridge University Department of Applied Statistics in the early 1960s, for example, indicated that a 4 percent growth rate in the economy would require a reduction in the

---

labour force of over one-and-a-third million unskilled men by 1970, and an increase in skilled manpower of a like number. An emphatic shift from unskilled to skilled manpower has, indeed, been a feature of the United States economy in the last few decades. One estimate suggests that by 1975 the U.S.A. will require 65 per cent more professional and technical workers than in 1960, and 51 per cent more service workers— but no addition in unskilled workers and labourers, and an increase of only 18 per cent in operatives.¹ A manifestation of the tendency towards a more highly skilled labour force is the increasing importance, evident in all industrial societies, attached to formal qualifications as against qualifications which result from practical experience only and/or length of service in a job.² Even a cautious appraisal suggests that the trend in industrial societies towards a higher proportion of skilled and professional workers is a significant one: as F.W. Musgrove argues, "Statistical analyses of the skills required in the occupations of industrialised countries are difficult to interpret, but are clear on at least one issue: the diminishing scope for unskilled labour."³


The likelihood of there being an expanding proportion of jobs in the middle ranges of the occupational hierarchy does not refute Goldthorpe's contention that the decrease in social differentiation is less marked than the convergence thesis postulates—that is not the point at issue here. What can be said, however, specifically in regard to the occupational opportunities open to secondary modern school-leavers in contemporary Britain, is that there remain a high proportion of semi-skilled and unskilled manual jobs to be filled, whilst the degree of skill actually required in occupations which are labelled 'skilled' is often minimal: these points will be substantiated in detail below, with particular reference to the respondents in the present study. For the meanwhile, it is sufficient to point out that in 1959, the year in which the respondents left school, only 32.4 per cent of the 236,000 boys who left school in Britain at the age of fifteen in 1959 were classified as apprentices or learners to skilled crafts including pre-apprenticeship training: in the same year, 7.2 per cent of the 224,000 girl school-leavers became apprentices or learners. It should be said that since that time the proportion of boys entering apprenticeships has risen to approximately 40 per cent, and the proportion of girls has also increased, although only slightly. But the substantive point is that the majority of

---


boys and girls who leave school at the age of fifteen enter semi-
and unskilled occupations. It may well be, of course, that there
will be a substantial acceleration in the increase in the demand
for skilled and professional manpower in Britain over the course
of the next few decades, and an accompanying decline in the demand
for semi- and unskilled labour. In this event, an appreciable pro-
portion of the respondents in the present study, and of young
workers like them, may find themselves unemployed and, possibly,
unemployable; for, to anticipate a later discussion in this study,
relatively few young workers are continuing in further education,
and only a small proportion are participating in industrial
training schemes which could equip them with the adaptability
requisite if they are to be competent to transfer in due course
to more demanding occupations than they presently pursue. On the
other hand, opportunities for school-leavers in the future would
offer a significantly higher proportion of skilled jobs.

The second change which the convergence thesis posits is a move
towards greater consistency in social status. The reasoning as
expounded by Goldthorpe is that, "In industrial society....the
distribution of both economic rewards and prestige must come into
a close relationship with occupational performance since this type
of society in fact presupposes an over-riding emphasis upon achieve-
ment, as opposed to ascription, as the basis of social position—
and specifically upon achievement in the sphere of production."
So that, "Inevitably, in modern societies, the various determinants
of an individual's placing in the overall stratification hierarchy
come to form a tight nexus, and that in this nexus occupation can be regarded as the central element—providing, as it does, the main link between the 'objective' and the 'subjective' aspects of social inequality."¹ This perspective can be considered very briefly at this stage. Goldthorpe's main point in repudiating, or at least questioning, its validity is that, given a paucity of empirical data, such evidence as there is does not indicate any obvious crystallization of status in reference to the various dimensions of stratification, at any rate not in the British setting. Drawing upon the Cambridge study of the affluent worker and the "new working class",² he stresses that "The appreciable gains in income and in general living standards recently achieved by certain sections of the manual labour force have not for the most part been accompanied by changes in their life styles of such a kind that their status position has been enhanced commensurately with their economic position." Furthermore, "One might suggest that the increasing consistency argument is flawed because it fails to take into account, first, that occupational roles with similar economic rewards may in some instances be quite differently related to the exercise of authority: and, secondly, that relatively high income may serve as recompense for work of

otherwise high disutility to the operative as well as for work involving expertise and responsibility". It may of course be argued that whilst status consistency might not result from the affluence consequent upon involvement in semi-and unskilled employment, as in Goldthorpe's example, it could well derive from the increasing skill which forecasters envisage for a higher proportion of the working population of the future. The inadequacy of available data make for a particularly problematic situation to analyse. But with reference to the present research, the main relevance of the status consistency argument is that it is suggestive of certain strands of enquiry which will, indeed, be examined in detail below—specifically in discussions of the relationships between the occupations of respondents and their attitudes and behaviour in regard to education, marriage, leisure, and social class and political affiliation. The evidence will be seen to support the general conclusion that, despite relatively high economic rewards in certain occupations, considerable status disparity persists in regard to various categories of young workers. It may be that in due course, as the process of convergence—if such there be—continues, the disparities will be ironed out and status consistency will obtain. All that is being said at present is that, with regard to the young workers in this study, there remain powerful limitations upon achievement,


- 15 -
and the basis of social position can be said in large measure to
remain that of ascription to the working class.

The final aspect of the convergence theory to be considered
here is that of social mobility. The argument is that accompany-
ing the trends towards a decrease in social differentiation and
increases in status consistency there is a high rate of social
mobility. The educational system is the agent of social mobility,
allocating people to occupations which are commensurate with their
abilities: for "The industrial society is an open community encour-
aging occupational and geographic mobility and social mobility.
In this sense, industrialising must be flexible and competitive;
it is against tradition and status based upon family, class,
religion, race or caste." The convergence thesis, then, posits
a high rate of social mobility consequent upon the expansion of
the middle ranges of the occupational structure, and associated
with the substitution of achievement for ascription as the mode
of attaining status. Such evidence as there is in regard to
contemporary Britain does not, however, suggest that there is
a particularly high rate of social mobility—although changes
consequent upon post-war educational reforms and an accellerated
demand for the qualified man-power could radically affect the
picture over the course of the next few decades. Of special

1 Clark Kerr, et al., Industrialism and Industrial Man.
2 See D.V. Glass, (ed.), Social Mobility in Britain,
reference to the present study in this connection is the point that an increase in inter-generational mobility is likely to be accompanied by a limitation in intra-generational mobility: for, as Goldthorpe says, "To the extent that education becomes a key determinant of occupational achievement the chances of getting ahead for those who start in a lowly position are inevitably diminished."¹ In addition, it may be said that with an increasing predominance of large-scale industrial organisations, there is a reduction in the opportunity for the "little man" to set up in business on his own.² So that, in sum, "For that large proportion of the population, at least, with rank-and-file jobs and ordinary educational qualifications industrial society appears to be growing significantly less open than it once was."² The question as to whether the overall trend in industrial societies is towards significantly reduced opportunities for upward mobility is not at issue in the present study—the judgement as to whether a society is becoming more or less 'open' in this sense is, in any case, scarcely meaningful without reference to a specified time-scale. And it has already been indicated, indeed, that occupational opportunities in the middle sectors of the hierarchy could well increase rapidly in consequence of technological change. This said, it is the case that relatively few of the respondents in

¹"Social Stratification in Industrial Society, op.cit., p.108.  
²Ibid.
this research could be said to be upwardly mobile, and those youths and girls who did move up socially or occupationally (compared, that is, with their families of orientation), with few exceptions moved only marginally and seemed unlikely to progress further up the social scale subsequently. A central conclusion of this study, in fact, is that those respondents who are upwardly mobile even to a very limited extent are exceptional in that they possess particular attributes which distinguish them from the majority of young workers, or in that they are subject to a particular set of circumstances which are conducive to an amendment of their aspirations in the direction of upward social movement. It is appropriate at this point, then, to make the important distinction between the presence or absence of opportunities for occupational and social mobility at a given time, and the perception of opportunities by individuals. Whatever the actual, or 'objective', opportunities may be, young school-leavers may not be aware of them, and may not be either motivated or equipped to take advantage of them. These points will be examined in detail below.

The convergence thesis has been used here as a device for considering aspects of the contemporary occupational structure and its relationship to broader perspectives of social stratification. Goldthorpe's general conclusion is that there is no necessary convergence as between industrial societies on the total scale implicit in the theory—and that, on the contrary, differing patterns of social stratification are quite compatible with similarities of
technology and economic organisation; such differences may be associated with varying political orientations and may derive from political decisions. The main concern here has been of a more limited order, namely that of making some assessment of the relevance of the convergence thesis for the understanding of the nature and meaning of the world of work which school-leavers in Britain enter in the middle of the twentieth century. And in this connection, the conclusion is that whether or not the trend in Britain is in accordance with the convergence postulated, the present situation differs markedly in important respects from that envisaged by the thesis in regard to the three dimensions of differentiation, consistency and mobility.

The paucity of the empirical data and the complexity of the issues make for a speculative tendency in the consideration of grand-scale changes in industrial societies. What is clear is that there is an interplay between the various factors affecting the occupational structure. In recent years, there has been a growing tendency for governments to attempt to manipulate certain parameters of the employment scene, as a matter of deliberate public policy. It is pertinent, therefore, to draw attention at this point to the effects which such intervention—notably in the fields of manpower planning and of education—may have upon the occupational structure. As a complement to this, it is necessary to indicate the seemingly imponderable factors which impose limitations upon planning.
That there are relationships between the educational system and the occupational structure of a society—and, indeed, the system of social stratification—is obvious. However, these relationships are not straightforward and simple; and they are subject to constant amendment. Increased emphasis upon productivity in industrial societies in recent years has led to the more concentrated study of the economic return upon education, regarded as an investment. The extent to which and the 'efficiency' with which educated manpower is used in industry is the subject matter of one recent study in Britain, for example. More generally, in regard to the U.S.A., it has been assessed that 23 per cent of American economic growth between 1929 and 1959 is directly attributable to improvements in education and educational opportunity. It has been argued by analogy that the raising of the school-leaving age to sixteen in Britain, by virtue of the consequential


2 See M.Blaug, et al., The Utilization of Educated Manpower in Industry, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1968. (The British electrical engineering industry provides the focus for this study).

improvement in school-leavers' qualifications, is an essential
element in the regeneration of the British economy. Increasingly,
educational policies in Britain are being formulated by direct
reference to economic and technological objectives—and this re-
presents a form of planning for the occupational structure of the
future. Ironically, manpower forecasting runs the risk of being
self-defeating. If forecasts pointed to a growth in a particular
type of occupation, for example, they might cause a clamour to
qualify for this sort of work and in consequence lead to a supply
of labour in marked excess of the actual demand. There are,
indeed, many problems associated with manpower forecasts and
planning, and with their effects upon educational policies. The
whole question as to the relative proportions of Arts, Science,
Applied Science and Social Science students that there 'should'
be in Britain can be looked at from this perspective, as can the
concern to amend syllabuses so as to induce a greater interest in
the Sciences amongst students inclined to Arts subjects.

A recent study by P.W. Musgrave of the growth of the iron and
steel industries in Britain and Germany over the past century
provides a good illustration of the inter-connectedness of

---

1 See Manpower—The Pattern of the Future, London, H.M.S.O.;
For a discussion of the problems inherent in manpower fore-
casting, see also C.A. Moser and P.R.G. Layard, Paper read
to the Royal Statistical Society, reported in The Times
Educational Supplement, 29th May, 1964; and see Forecasting

2 For a further discussion see Into Work, op.cit., Chapter 1.
technical innovation, economic change and the educational system. Musgrave's analysis leads him to a series of general conclusions which are pertinent to planning policy within this industry and which could possibly be extended to other spheres—the most important implications for education, for example, would appear to derive from "Sudden particular technical change" and from a "General gradual change of an economic rather than a technical nature". There is some ambivalence in Musgrave's conclusions as to the ways in which an educational system can best maintain a labour force appropriate to the particular needs of the iron and steel industry, but he suggests that "A broad general education, including some sciences" facilitates economic growth: so far as adaptability of the labour force as a whole is concerned, it could be that "In Britain we take for granted much that the educational system achieves in forming the nature of the labour force, especially in such matters as social discipline."

Although it may be possible to outline, and even to determine in broad terms, the likely future shape of the occupational structure of a country for a period of decades ahead, the terms are likely to be very broad indeed—this reservation holds good whether forecasts and planning are based upon postulated technological change, upon the presumed 'logic' of the convergence

---


2 For further discussion, see Into Work, op.cit., p.36 et seq.
thesis, or something akin to it, or by reference to some other criterion. Forecasts are likely to take the form of overall profiles of the occupational structure of a country, or of particular industries within it. There are special difficulties in taking account of regional variations, for example.\footnote{A major criticism of the Ministry of Labour Research Units' first Report (\textit{Manpower—the Pattern of the Future}, \textit{op.cit.}) was that it failed to take such variations into account.} The precise nature and extent of the processes of occupational and social mobility that will occur in consequence of forecasts and planning policies are not susceptible to adumbration in detail, then. Within general overall tendencies there are likely to be aberrations and inconsistencies deriving from a whole range of special features which shape particular situations and circumstances.

Reference was made above to the need to complement a summary of the possible effects of manpower forecasts and planning by drawing attention to some of the more imponderable factors affecting the occupational structure. In this respect, it should be said that there are certain socio-economic factors which have a quasi-independent influence upon the social and economic structure of a society. Demographic trends, for example, may be said to have a 'logic' of their own in this context, in so far as they affect the demand for particular types of goods and services, and hence the demand for labour to produce them—and in so far as they indirectly affect the quality and quantity of the supply of...
labour. A good example is provided by the 'bulge' in the numbers of children reaching school-leaving age in Britain—it was this bulge that focused attention upon problems of juvenile employment in the late 1950s. In the post-war years the numbers of school-leavers remained fairly constant at between six and seven hundred thousand annually. But the rise in the birth-rate towards the end of the war and in the early post-war years resulted in the number of school-leavers rising to over seven hundred thousand in 1958. There will be a peak of over eight hundred thousand in 1972, and in 1978 there will be another peak of over nine hundred thousand reaching the age of sixteen, which will probably then be the minimum school-leaving age.\footnote{cf. The Work of the Youth Employment Service: 1962-65. Central Youth Employment Executive, H.M.S.O., 1965.} Whether or not changes in the educational system, in employment opportunities, or in parents' and childrens' motivations and aspirations will result in a high proportion of these children remaining at school beyond the statutory leaving age it is not possible to foresee with accuracy, although sophisticated guesses may be possible. The point here is that such fluctuations in population complicate the process of transition from school to work through the effects that they have upon the equation between the supply of and the demand for labour. As a consequence of the bulge in the early sixties, for example, many boys and girls entered jobs to which they did not aspire and which were not good enough in terms of the children's abilities and the
prospects for training and progress in a career which the jobs held out. In particular, many boys who were worthy of apprenticeships had to enter semi-or unskilled work.¹

Demographic factors affect employment opportunities in many other ways. The effects of war provide a further example—war may remove from the labour force a whole segment of men in a particular age group, through death or serious injury. Their places in the occupational structure may be taken by people who have not previously been involved in the labour force or who have been involved in very different capacities—married women, perhaps. Changes in family structure—such as number of children, age at which parents have their first children and the number of years over which the children are spread—also have repercussions, direct or indirect, upon the supply of and the demand for labour: such changes may be on a societal scale or confined to particular socio-economic sectors of the population. There is evidence to suggest that there is a trend in industrial societies towards a four-generation family, for example:² such a trend could have numerous consequences in regard to such matters as the timing and length of full-time education, the age of retirement, and the demand for labour in 'service' industries. There are signs, too,

¹See Into Work, op.cit., pp.34-35.
that middle and upper class families in Britain are becoming larger again. The 1961 General Census provided some evidence for this in regard to families of professional men—the average size increased by 0.26 in the decade 1951-61, and "The average number of children that the highest social groups now have is very nearly equal to that in the lowest ones." Furthermore, it could be that the increased efficacy and extended use of birth control techniques will result in more rapid fluctuations in the birth-rate than occurred when such techniques were less efficient and not so wide-spread: "From now on, with birth control methods reaching 100 per cent reliability, average family size may rise or fall more rapidly than it has", and, "There may be, at any one time, a consensus of opinion on the 'proper' number of children to have." Predictions in regard to fertility rates are subject to many limitations, of course, but the concern here is to demonstrate the relevance of demographic factors for the occupational structure rather than to assess the validity of particular predictions.

A variety of other factors exert influences upon the occupational structure of a society at a given time. Changes in taste

---


and fashion, for example, are not to be regarded merely as automatic responses to the subliminal probings or subversive advertising of the consumer society—they do not, that is, merely represent a response to supply but also constitute a demand for particular goods and services in their own right, as it were. Political decisions, too, may transform the occupational structure of a particular country, or of a region within it: the obvious example is provided by Britain's application to enter the European Common Market. If successful, this is likely to lead to considerable modifications in commercial, industrial and agricultural enterprises, with consequent amendments of employment opportunities. In addition, there would presumably be a freer flow of labour between Britain and other Common Market countries (this has been the pattern in the present member-countries—a flow which, in Britain's case, at least, could be augmented by the existing and probably continuing entry into the labour force of Commonwealth immigrants).

Changes in attitudes, motivations and values of sections of the population in response to developments in the socio-economic and political scenes are also likely to exert an influence upon the complexion of the occupational structure which it is difficult to foresee. Such changes may be manifested through organised pressure groups—trades unions, for example, have the power to accelerate or to impede organisational and technological changes by reference to the supposed wishes and interests of their members.
Or the influence may be less sharply defined, and consist of a general mood of lethargy or activism in the population. William Taylor has commented on such factors in the context of a discussion of the implications of secondary school reorganisation; "The attitudes of workers towards innovation and change, their understanding of the working of the economic system of which they form part, along with the possession of appropriate training and a higher level of general education, are likely to be much more significant in raising productivity than a generalised willingness to work hard however important this may have been at an earlier stage of industrial development." Taylor makes the further point that "From the point of view of workers in some industries, unemployment is more to be feared today as the result of an excess of zeal, leading to hastened redundancy and obsolescence, than by any lack of effort."

Climates of opinion may, then, change in response to working and general social conditions, but in turn react upon them—-with consequent effects, amongst other things, upon the occupational structure and the employment opportunities that it provides.

Reference was made above to the current tendency to attach considerable importance to the place of technology in society:

1"Secondary Reorganisation and the Transition from School to Work", Aspects of Education, No.5, op.cit., p.96
the implications of this preoccupation for educational, cultural and social policies are considerable. Specifically, within the schools—at least the secondary modern schools and others which cater for fifteen year old leavers—and within the further education and training colleges for young workers, there is a trend for curricula to be formulated with reference to forecasts of the future occupational 'needs' of the country as computed on the basis of anticipated changes in technology: there is considerable emphasis, in particular, upon the need for adaptability—schools, it is argued, should produce children who will be susceptible to the succession of occupational changes which the rapidity of technological development will require them to undergo during the course of their working lives. None of the respondents in the present study could be said to be in occupations of a highly technical order—although a substantial proportion of the boys were employed in the steel industry, and some of these were aware of the significant impact upon labour requirements that the introduction of automation into certain processes was having, or was likely to have in the future. The consequence of technological innovation for the future working lives of the respondents some decades hence is likely to be a matter for conjecture, however.

Man's reaction to the machine throughout the ages is well documented: the eager proponents of rapid technological change have always been matched by those who fear the consequences, and anticipate the subjugation of man to the machine. Contemporary
reactions to the probability of the extension of automotive processes throughout industry have complied with this established pattern. Whilst some commentators bemoan the allegedly dehumanizing effects of the introduction of such processes, and foresee an Orwellian future, others, like latter-day Hobhouses seeking to assist in the forward march of progress, or like Marxist activists latching on to the necessary processes of history, commit themselves to the task of facilitating the supposedly inexorable trend towards the technological society. Sociologists who have concerned themselves with the impact of modern technology upon society have been preoccupied—following in the tradition of Tönnies, Durkheim, Marx and Max Weber—with the interplay between technological processes, the character of the social bond, and the nature of social relationships in general. The work of Pierre Naville is especially relevant in this context, since he has written upon the impact of technological change upon the work-life

1 See, for example, Sir Leon Bagrit, The Age of Automation, B.B.C., London, 1964, (the 1964 Reith Lectures); for comment and criticism, see M.P. Carter, Into Work, op.cit., pp.229-232.


of young people. Naville maintains that modern industrial technology gives rise to a "New way of life....A whole world which enhances not only ways of production, but also ways of feeling, behaving, of consuming....It is a whole sphere which I would call a "second nature", a nature which is added to that which was traditionally called 'nature'. And it is with this second nature that the young person of today has to learn to get by, at the risk of losing his footing. This global conception of the creation of a technical universe by modern industry finally (will spread) over the whole of the world. The evolution, to embrace all forms of life, does not apply to the practical and productive activity alone of the young workers. It affects their whole life, not just as producers but as consumers, too, or quite simply, as human beings and parents."¹ Naville envisages, then, that technological change, specifically automation and computer techniques, will bring about all-embracing changes in the nature of social relationships. He is concerned with the "logic" which technological apparatus and processes in advanced industrial societies may impose upon social organisation itself—and he raises the question as to the extent to which, through a recognition of this logic, man may adapt it

appropriately to his needs, rather than succumb to it uncompre-
hendingly.

It is not proposed here to dwell upon Naville's analysis. That substantial changes of a qualitative order may occur in social relationships as a result of technological innovation is to be expected. But Naville's work, like that of others who seek to portray the society of the future, is in large measure specu-
lative, notwithstanding its erudition. The substantial point here, however, is that whether or not Naville has correctly dis-
cerned the direction and import of changes in society, the situation which he depicts has not yet arrived. In particular, there is no uniformity in the processes in which young workers are engaged in their employment such that Naville foreshadows. On the contrary, vast differences persist within the world of work which young workers enter. The new social order which Naville perceives does not, then, provide the clue to the understanding of young workers in contemporary Britain. In fact, as will be suggested below, the experiences of young workers, and their responses to these experi-
ences, can best be understood by reference to their continued involvement in traditional social institutions, and their on-going participation, in work and in leisure, in well-established social processes and patterns.

The object of this introductory chapter has been to set the general scene for the detailed study of the adjustment to employ-
ment. Particular attention has accordingly been given to the
factors which affect the occupational structure, to the relationships between the occupational structure and the wider social structure, and, in general terms, to the nature and extent of changes occurring within these structures. It is now necessary to narrow the focus, and in the following chapter a detailed summary and analysis is given of pre-work influences upon the process of adjustment of young people to employment.
CHAPTER III
THE PROCESS OF ADJUSTMENT TO EMPLOYMENT: PRE-WORK INFLUENCES

It was emphasised above that, because of the complexity of the factors affecting the occupational structure, each country is likely to present an idiosyncratic profile—notwithstanding such broad tendencies towards convergence as there may be. Further to this, it may be expected that the pattern of job aspirations which children display, resultant as it is upon the various influences operating within their particular environment, will vary from one society to another. Research evidence on this subject is sparse, but the work of de Maupeou, Stephenson, Veness and Lazarsfield has been cited as supporting the conclusion that groups of children coming from similar socio-economic backgrounds but from different countries in Europe and from America manifest national differences in regard to their job aspirations—for example, "Among children of broadly working class origin, in France wishes incline towards handicrafts and small farming, in the United States they tend to
reflect mobility aspirations, in (Britain), Germany and parts of Poland they are directed towards a skilled trade...." Scepticism as to the validity of generalised conclusions drawn from small-scale studies made at different times and in different places and circumstances is justifiable. But the main contention, that there are likely to be certain societal differences, is valid.

The link between actual employment opportunities and aspirations engendered for particular types of jobs is not clear-cut, however, as will be seen. The important point to make at this stage, then, is that not only are there national differences in regard to occupational opportunities, but that within the overall occupational structure of a particular country there are likely to be variations in opportunity from one region to another and from one city to another. Sheffield, the town in which the present research was conducted, provides a good illustration of this point. Whilst there is a diversity of industry in Sheffield, iron and steel

---


predominate, and cutlery manufacture is also very important. The Sheffield research suggests, indeed, that not only the structure of opportunities but also the complexion of job aspirations or expectations vary by neighbourhoods within the city: certainly many boys whose homes were in close proximity to the iron and steel works had never envisaged entering any occupation other than in this industry. Nonetheless, it is important to note that even though a particular industry may predominate, there is always a range of occupations in the urban society demanding various kinds and degrees of ability, interest, qualifications and attitudes. Given this diversity of opportunity, there is the question as to which particular school-leavers enter which particular jobs. It is this issue which underlies a good deal of the subsequent discussion. In the present Chapter, the concern is to explore the pre-work influences upon the formulation of aspirations and the development of abilities. The influences are considered under the headings of (a) the home and the social background, (b) the neighbourhood, (c) the school, (d) the Youth Employment Service, and (e) "other influences".

(a) The Home and the Social Background.

The earlier Sheffield study of the factors determining which particular children entered jobs of various sorts led to the conclusion that "the home is fundamental: its general atmosphere
orientates children towards certain levels of employment, and the school-leaver's attitude towards work is affected by the outlook of other people at home who are employed.\(^1\) It is proposed here to examine this proposition in more detail, and to substantiate its various facets by reference to the Sheffield research and to other studies.

The home can be viewed as being embedded in a socio-economic setting, the particular nature of which is dependent largely upon the occupation of the head of the family, but also upon a range of other factors, including the education of both parents and the type and area of residence. The relationships between socio-economic class and education—and hence, type, and level, of employment entered—are complex. Nonetheless, the broad connections between a working class background, a secondary modern school education and manual employment (or, for some girls) minor clerical work, are well established. Social class factors, then, imply certain "life chances" and these are complemented by distinctive "life styles" which influence a child's knowledge of the range of employment open to him, his competence to obtain a particular sort of job and to perform adequately in it, his aspirations and motivations in regard to work and, in general, his perception of the adult society into which he is to move on leaving school. The research of J.W.B. Douglas, based on a national sample in Britain,

\(^1\) Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.88
has demonstrated well the inter-connectedness between home, social background and schooling—and by extension, employment—in terms of life chances, whilst Bernstein's work on the different modes of bringing up children in working class homes compared with those in middle class homes provides a good example of the way in which life styles and life chances are entwined. A useful summary of the effects of social class upon educational and occupational attainment is given by Glen H. Elder in a paper and Floud, Halsey and Anderson devote a section of their Reader to the consideration of social factors in educational achievement. The general conclusion that emerges from the various studies may be summed up in the words used by Hollingshead in regard to American youths, namely, "The jobs the adolescents have and their ideas about desirable jobs reflect significantly their family's position in the class structure." With regard to "lower class" youngsters, specifically, Hollingshead argues that, whether consciously or unconsciously,

they limit themselves to their class horizons and regard it as natural they will move on to the same occupational level as their parents. It is fairly obvious that differences in knowledge about work, aspirations and attainment must be expected between such broad categories as middle class and working class. More important for present purposes, however, are the differences within the working class. I have attempted, on the basis of my earlier research and my reading of other relevant studies, to construct a typology of working class families in Britain. The components of this typology are as follows:—(a) home-centred aspiring (which is sub-divided into traditional respectable and newly affluent); (b) solid working class, and (c) the "rough" and "deprived". I have discussed these types at some length elsewhere.1 In the final chapter of the present study I amend and refine the typology with special reference to school-leavers' images of society. It is not necessary at this point, therefore, to do more than outline the main attributes of each type.

In the home-centred aspiring category, traditional respectable families tend to be small, and concerned with "appearances", independence, privacy and respectability. The emphasis is upon the family as a unit. The husbands tend to be skilled, or possibly clerical, and/or hold positions of responsibility at work, such as foreman. Before marriage, most of the wives worked in offices

---

1 Into Work, op. cit., pp. 40-60

- 39 -
or as shop assistants—their parents would have deprecated factory work. Concern with maintaining "standards" manifests itself in support for the school and for organisations such as the Church, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. The newly affluent differ in significant ways—they put more emphasis upon material possessions in the home, for example. Parents tend to be of a younger generation, furthermore—and middle class material standards are sought on the basis not of skill (many of the husbands are semi- or unskilled) but in return for long hours of overtime, and for full or part-time employment of the wives. These families are alive to "modern" trends, and this is reflected in their possessions—transistor radios, small motor cars, washing machines etc.: it is also apparent in their knowledge of birth control techniques and their readiness to apply them, and, as a result, families tend to be small. In both traditional respectable and newly affluent families, the level of aspirations for children is set high within the overall working class spectrum. The concern is for children, boys particularly, to secure jobs which will enable them in turn to maintain, or possibly improve somewhat, the standard of living and the style of life which the family presently enjoys. Clerical work and apprenticeships are accordingly valued highly for boys, clerical work, hairdressing or nursing, with certain kinds of shop assistant jobs as a possibility, for the girls. There is an awareness in these families, however unformulated, of the key position which occupation has in the determination of life-styles. And
there is often a readiness to make use of such "official" agencies, such as the school and the Youth Employment Service, to obtain information about various occupations and assistance in placing a child in employment. The education and, subsequently, the employment of the children is regarded as a family matter of importance, and as a joint responsibility of husband and wife.

The solid working class families may be said to "Accept, more or less, many of the standards upheld in the wider society—as reflected in the law and by the schools—but... (they) are rather easy-going and inclined to take life as it comes. They do not, in fact, expect a lot out of life, and they take their pleasures, as their sorrows, with some equanimity. They do not think in terms of rising up the social scale significantly (or at all). They are rather more concerned not to sink in the scale, however—at any rate, there are certain standards, of cleanliness without fussiness, of personal appearances and of honesty in dealings with others, that they are intent to maintain."¹ Most of the fathers in these households are semi- or unskilled manual workers and, often, they have had a succession of jobs, at least earlier in their work-life, consequent upon redundancy, dismissal, or their own decision to seek a change—through boredom, for a higher wage or for some other reason.

¹ Into Work, op.cit., p.50
The families tend to be larger, and function as units less than is the case with home-centred aspiring families. Mother and father have their separate tasks, and go their own ways. Mother has the responsibility for "anything to do with the kids" and it is she, indeed, who could be said to "hold the home together". Neither the parents nor the children take a special interest in education—school, up to the age of fourteen or fifteen is considered necessary, perhaps even useful in its way. But no great hopes are held out in regard to the performances of children—it is not a matter for particular concern if they are in the "B" or "C" stream rather than the "A" stream: for children to be in lower streams is thought to be "normal". The main thing is "for the kids to be happy", not unduly pressed by school, but complying with its requirements in terms of attendance and reasonable behaviour. Translated into the work sphere, this sort of orientation implies that the parents' knowledge of work is very limited. So far as aspirations are concerned, the particular sort of work which their children enter is not a matter of great importance to parents—there may be a dislike of certain occupations (e.g. coal-mining because it is "too dangerous" or building because "you are out in all weathers") but, in principle, the decision is thought to rest appropriately with the child—"it's his life"—and the child, usually, is left to find a job for himself, although he may receive help from parents, brothers or sisters, or other relations.
The "roughs" care little for the conventional codes of behaviour that the other three types adhere to, more or less rigidly. They live very much for the present. Most of the men are in semi- or unskilled jobs, and it is quite common for the wives to go out to work, either as cleaners or as factory or warehouse workers. Members of the family do not have much to do with each other—in leisure time husbands, wives, and children go their separate ways: even when children are very young they are expected to make their own pleasures in street, garden or rear-yard and "stand on their own feet". These families repudiate the values which the schools, at any rate ostensibly, seek to substantiate. Truancy is practised not infrequently and children are kept home for any or no special reason. Parents take little interest in the jobs which their children enter: the main criteria are that the wage be reasonable, so that the child can make a useful contribution to his keep ("at last") and that the occupation does not cause a lot of inconvenience to other members of the household through, for example, shift work, or dirty clothes to be washed. This approach to life, education and employment "is embedded in a pattern of values, beliefs, prejudices and predilections.....It is not to be easily erased by the minimal contact that there is with the school, and it will be changed but slowly."^3

---

1 Into Work, op. cit., p.56.
2 See M.P. Carter and Pearl Jephcott, The Social Background of Delinquency, University of Nottingham, 1954.
3 Into Work, op. cit., p.60.
To be distinguished from the above types are those families which are deprived or under-privileged in consequence of some special factor—for example, bereavement, divorce or separation of parents, imprisonment or ill-health of a parent, illegitimacy or eviction of the family from its home. Recent studies suggest that these may constitute a significant proportion of the population in Britain,¹ and one survey indicates that there are as many as four hundred thousand children in this country who are deprived in this sense²—there are obvious implications in terms of work aspirations and motivation, and of ability to secure such work as is aimed at.

This brief outline is sketchy indeed, the object here being merely to illustrate the fact that within the working class, there are significant differences in family types, and to suggest that these differences have important consequences in regard to children's knowledge about work and their attitudes towards, and perceptions of, educational and employment opportunities, and to life in general. It is not, then, intended to defend the typology in any detail at this point. Rather should it be stressed that there are other

²Tragedies of Affluence, published by the Salvation Army, 1965.
typologies which could well be incorporated in that which has been described, or which might appropriately amend it. Approached from the angle of attitudes towards work in the broad sense, for example, Lockwood’s analysis of variations in working class images of society is pertinent here. Lockwood writes that "On the basis of existing research it is possible to delineate at least three different types of workers and to infer that the work and community relationships by which they are differentiated from one another may also generate very different forms of social consciousness. The three types are as follows: first, the traditional worker of the 'proletarian' variety—whose image of society will take the form of a power model; secondly, the other variety of traditional worker, the 'deferential', whose perception of social inequality will be one of status hierarchy; and, thirdly, the 'privatised' worker, whose social consciousness will most nearly approximate what may be called a 'pecuniary' model of society".¹ Lockwood’s analysis will be considered in more detail below.²


Although broad categories can be differentiated within the working class, more specific influences (which to some extent cut across the intra-class types) have been identified as having special relevance to children's work expectations and attainments. Father's skill, for example, whilst having a close relationship with the various types which were elucidated above, nonetheless transverses the boundaries of the types to a significant extent. And it could be that this factor of skill is particularly relevant in determining whether or not a child will, in turn, aim at a skilled job: relevant, that is, independently of the particular family type to which the child otherwise conforms. Lipset and Bendix, in arguing that "perhaps the most important variable connecting the requirements of occupational roles with the distribution of people available for them is the differential distribution of opportunities for formal training, especially in the school system", have pointed out that "sons of skilled workers are more likely to know about apprenticeship programs and to be able to enter them than sons of men in other occupational groups."

They also argue that "The sons of men in high-status occupations are not only more likely to be financially able to embark on long training programs, but are also more likely to get more moral support from their family." There is some evidence from a British

---

study that sons of non-manual workers take a longer time in making decisions about work than do sons of manual workers.  

Personality differences can also cut across types. Leslie Paul has suggested in this connection that there may be differences in family attitudes, flowing mainly from the father's disposition or personality, which have crucial implications for children's work aspirations. Paul distinguishes various "Attitudes": the "Silent Attitude", when work is never discussed at home and children, albeit unconsciously, veer away from the sort of occupation about which their father is so reticent; the "Resentful Attitude", where the father's dissatisfaction with his work is only too clear, and is seen to spill over into the home life, making it unhappy and insecure; the "Participating Attitude", where the father's enthusiasm inspires his son to seek the same enjoyment through the same work, or, at any rate, induces in him a generally favourable attitude towards work; and, finally, the "Candid Attitude" where work is discussed on a serious plane, advantages and disadvantages of particular occupations (in so far as they are known) talked over and, in consequence, children "develop a generous proprietorial interest in what follows school and are prepared or eager for all sides of it." 

---


Another perspective is suggested by Thelma Veness, who has adapted Riesman's conceptualisation to distinguish motivation in regard to work by reference to "tradition directed", "inner directed" and "other directed" orientations. Tradition directed choice of work "Refers to a situation in which the choice is predetermined by a family or neighbourhood tradition because no other choice would be thinkable to the person"; inner directed choice is made "With reference chiefly to the chooser's own talents and interests"; whilst other directed choice is made "With primary reference to outside sources of information, or to consideration of the chooser's position in the general social order".

There would seem to be an implication in Veness' categorisation that all children are fairly clear-cut in their motivations, and that they set about finding employment in accordance with their predilections. There is substantial evidence to refute this, however, and to indicate that, on the contrary, an outstanding feature of the transition from school to work in regard to secondary modern leavers is the lack of clarity about job aims, and about appropriate means of finding employment. But the main purpose in citing Veness' analysis here is to indicate a further

---

1 School-leavers: their Aspirations and Expectations, op.cit., p.69.
2 David Riesman, et al., The Lonely Crowd, op.cit.
3 For a fuller summary of Veness' theme, see Into Work, op.cit., pp.63-65.
dimension in the complex factors affecting children's knowledge and decisions about work.

Within the family, in industrial society generally, the father is the key figure—it is in reference to his education and occupation that the socio-economic class and status of the family is determined. So far as the influence of the father's education upon children's aspirations and achievements are concerned, the main point to be made is that this registers itself, generally, through the occupation which he entered as a consequence of his education. It may be noted, however, that in certain cases, where a father's occupation is not in conformity with the normal pattern having regard to the education he received, the influence upon the child's attitudes to work may well be best understood by reference to the education as such, rather than the occupation. The argument will be illustrated by extreme examples, involving upward and downward inter-class mobility. A father who has been born into a middle class family and who undergoes a secondary education at grammar school or public school may retain aspirations for his children, and knowledge about employment opportunities, even though he has been downwardly mobile in consequence of, for example, "bad luck", ill-health, failure in business, criminal behaviour, or some other factor, whilst a father from a working class background who has been upwardly mobile, through business acumen or success in sport, for example, may remain uninformed in regard to the range of jobs normally associated with his income level and the new style of
life which he assumes, and is therefore poorly equipped to guide his children in matters of employment. But the general principle holds—that the influence of the father's education upon a child's career tends to operate through the connection between that education and the father's employment. And here it may be noted that in addition to levels of skill, already referred to as important, level of responsibility (in terms of whether or not a father is a manager, foreman, chargehand or ganger) is a relevant factor. This clear connection between father's occupational status and the level of occupation entered by his sons has been indicated in the study by Glass and Hall on inter-generational change in status.¹ The general position has been summed up as follows:—

"Although there is not an absolute relationship between the occupational status of fathers and sons, there is an association, stronger in some groups than others. And even where there are changes in occupation level between father and son, the sons tend to be fairly close to their father's level in the occupational hierarchy".² One special facet of the relationship between a father's occupation and that which his son enters is the extent to which there is a tendency for sons to "follow in father's footsteps." The fact that this expression enjoys wide currency in Britain could, of itself, be taken as some indication that there was

¹D. Glass and J. Hall, "Social Mobility in Britain: A Study of Inter-generation Change in Status", in D. Glass (ed.), Social Mobility in Britain, op. cit., p. 177.
such a process—as an idea and/or as a fact—in former years.¹

An increasing rate of technological change, resulting in the more rapid obsolescence of certain occupations and the growth of new ones, is clearly likely to have affected the position today. In so far as small businesses are squeezed out as a result of economic trends, furthermore, the scope for sons to follow fathers in family businesses is decreasing. One recent American study has led to the conclusion that there may be a strong tie between father-son occupations arising from genetic factors, however: these factors it is inferred, affect particular aptitudes which may pre-dispose children towards a particular type of occupation. But the evidence is difficult to assess and patterns of disposition are likely to be related to the home environment in addition to genetic composition.²

The earlier Sheffield study showed that 11 boys (out of 100) wished to do similar work to their fathers’. They were better


2 S.G. Vanderberg and R.E. Stafford, Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol.51, No.1. The authors sought to isolate the environmental factor by comparing pairs of fraternal twins with pairs of identical twins (the latter are born from one fertilised egg and hence have the same genetic endowment). But it has been commented that "The result which is taken by the authors to support their hypothesis could also be considered to reflect the more homogenous environment surrounding twins of the same sex", cf. New Society, 3rd August, 1967, No.253, p.161.
informed about work than were boys as a whole—this was a con-
sequence of discussion with their fathers, and also reflected a 
more positive interest in work than the majority of boys displayed. 
Of the remaining boys, 18 were strongly opposed to doing the same 
work as their fathers—in a few cases because they had a strong 
inclination to some other specified occupation, but mainly as a 
reaction against the relatively poor pay, poor conditions or modest 
prospects associated with their fathers' work. It could have been 
expected that a distinctly higher proportion of these boys would 
have wished to enter the same sort of occupation as their fathers, 
since Sheffield is a city in which, by repute, boys have followed 
their fathers into the steel industry for several generations. In 
fact, the fathers of only 6 of the 11 boys who wished to do the 
same work were employed in steel or engineering, whilst fathers 
of 14 of the 18 boys who definitely did not wish to do the same 
work were in that industry. In the event, 32 of the boys (or 
approximately one-third) did enter work, in their first jobs, 
which was broadly in the same category as their fathers' occupa-
tions, and the great majority of these were steel and engineering 
workers. This indicates the predominance of steel and engineering 
which ensures that a high proportion of boys do enter the industry, 
regardless of their inclinations, and which implies, therefore, 
that many sons do follow their fathers, whether or not they can 
be said to want to do so.
The analysis of the attitudes of the Sheffield boys who definitely did want to follow the same occupation as their fathers can be regarded as giving some substantiation for aspects of the typology which was outlined above, reflecting parental aspirations and concern for the maintenance of certain standards and of certain styles of life: the relevance of Veness' "tradition directed" category and of Paul's "Participatory Attitude" may also be noted—to quote from the report of the earlier study, "Several boys thought that it was 'natural' to follow their fathers, especially if—as was often the case—other relations, friends and neighbours were in the same industry. It seemed the obvious thing to do. Some families were proud of their association, however humble, with firms of high repute, 'known all over the world', and were keen for their sons to carry on the tradition. Usually it was the skilled man with a position of responsibility who urged his son to enter the same occupation. Such men had done well at their jobs and enjoyed them, and wanted their sons to do the same. Some boys hero-worshipped their fathers, and wanted to emulate them. Important, too, was the ability of fathers to use influence to get jobs at the firms where they worked—fathers were pleased to be able to ensure a good job, whilst sons were reinforced in their desire to do the work by the knowledge that a job could be arranged". ¹

¹Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.97.
The processes by which sons come to aspire to the same occupation as their fathers are complex, however. The fact that there is a family tradition may lead to satiation rather than continued eagerness for a particular occupation—this was the case with one boy, whose father had spent thirty-seven years in the steel industry and whose grandfather had done the same work for fifty years. The boy's father, trying to understand his son's rejection, interpreted it as a reaction to the way in which the work pervaded the family life. Several of the fathers in the Sheffield study referred to disadvantages of a son working for the same firm as his father—fathers tend to "expect too much" of their sons, by way of performance and interest, lest the father be "let down": it is unfair to the boys, too, in that other workers may deem them to be especially favoured: it was argued, also, that sons should be given the opportunity to "stand on their own feet".

An important element that can be isolated in the relationships between a child's occupation and that of the father is the occupational history of the father in terms of his job mobility (and possibly associated social mobility). This affects the number and range of jobs of which a father has direct knowledge, and also may be expected both to reflect and to induce certain attitudes towards work as such: life-long involvement in one particular occupation and, more so, in one job, presumably makes for and is indicative of a different sort of evaluation of work than constant meandering between a number of occupations. A study of parental aspirations
within a small number of families in a Scottish town led Molly Harrington to the conclusion that, "First, the father had in most cases the crucial rôle in the family in determining the educational and career goals of the children. Second, the most important determining factor in the father's attitude here was the degree of career mobility which he had achieved rather than the actual status. And third, the men with the greatest career mobility had an absence in early home life both of the intellectual stimulus and the parental encouragement commonly assumed to be so important to success". Harrington went on to identify "a group of families least likely to produce career mobility"—namely, "a job frustrated group with the focus of aspiration on the children"—these were men in whom career movement is either still proceeding at a slow rate or has blocked at a certain level (with) prospects limited or nil....and a felt frustration either because of the struggle or because the job made insufficient demands."

The finding in regard to relationships between parental aspirations and children's attainments is confirmation of the validity of Josephine Klein's argument that a child does not necessarily aim high because his parents urge him to do so: "It must not be assumed that the inculcation of achievement motivation can be simply equated with parental encouragement of the child, or exhortations to do well....parents who push their children hardest do not thereby

---

necessarily create the right conditions for the child to develop in the desired direction. It should be noted, however, that evidence on this theme from various studies conducted in differing contexts is inconclusive and, indeed, Lipset and Bendix conclude, for example, that "There can be little doubt that directly urging children to achieve plays a determining rôle" in inducing motivation to achieve. Motivation is to be distinguished from attainment, of course.

With regard to the influence of the mother upon job choice and attainment, the point has already been made that, whilst in home-centred aspiring families matters connected with the children are a joint responsibility, in other types of working class homes the mother normally takes the lead in regard to education and, often, in regard also to the child's entry to employment. The Sheffield study showed that most mothers were, nonetheless, ill-equipped to advise about choice of work and were uninformed about the measures open to them and to their children in seeking a job. There is some evidence to suggest that in families in which the husband is in a manual occupation but wives have had a selective education at

1 *Samples From English Culture, op.cit.*

2 *Social Mobility in Industrial Society, op.cit., p.237*

3 *cf. Home, School and Work, op.cit., especially Chapters 5 and 7.*
the secondary stage and/or have been or are employed in "white collar" level jobs, the aspirations of children are significantly towards jobs at a higher level than is the case where wives are not thus qualified. Elizabeth Cohen, for example, has demonstrated from an American study that the chances of a boy being upwardly mobile are significantly affected by the fact of his mother having or having had a white collar job.¹ The importance of the mother's educational and occupational experience is under-lined in the work of Bernstein, who argues that this is so significant that families in which the mother has had extensive or selective education should be classified with middle class families defined in terms of the father's education and occupation. Thus, Bernstein suggests that: "The basic requirements for the group termed 'middle class and associative levels' will be a family where the father is more likely to have received grammar school education or some form of further education or certificated training for a skill, or one in which the mother is more likely to have received something more than elementary schooling or before marriage followed an occupation superior to that of the father, or a non-manual occupation. Such a family may be found among certain wage-earning manual workers. Middle class and associative levels include the occupational

hierarchy above this base line". This base line, in Bernstein's view, serves to distinguish different modes of perception, and hence the abilities and consequent aspirations of children. Himmelweit, too, has suggested that exposure to middle class values in the family is likely to promote upward mobility in the child from a working class home: such exposure could derive from the educational and/or occupational experience of the mother.

Indeed, the exposure of a child to middle class values may be associated with relations further removed than parents—a study conducted by Irving Krauss in the United States indicates the influence in this respect not just of the father and mother, but of a grandfather who has had a white collar job. Krauss shows that the influence operates through the inculcation of certain values and is also a consequence of knowledge about the necessary steps and qualifications for obtaining admission to a college.

Another factor which, although related in a general way to socio-economic class, is by no means in direct correlation with it, is size of family. A middle class family with a large number of children relative to the middle class "norm" may have difficulty


in ensuring that all of the children receive the education and subsequently enter the type of employment which would be deemed proper; especially could this be the case if one or more of the children are of low intelligence—and hence in need of special attention if the appropriate type of career is to be attained. Independently of social class factors, however, size of family can be expected to affect educational and occupational motivation and achievement. The "only" child, for example, is likely to have more attention paid to him than the child in a family of three, four or more, apart from the fact that the smaller financial commitment may enable the parents in a small family to allow or encourage their children to remain at school beyond the statutory leaving age and to enter an occupation—for example, an apprenticeship—in which the initial wage is comparatively low. In addition to family size, family position would also seem to be important. From a review of the literature, Elder concludes that "Parental interest in scholastic progress and a favourable educative environment appear to be most common in those families of working class status which are small; in these families first-born children tend to enter grammar school in disproportionate numbers as compared with the later-born".\(^1\) J.W.B. Douglas' findings are also

relevant here—"The eldest children...receive a stimulus which the younger children lack and which spurs them on to do well in the secondary selection examinations. And it seems that this stimulus is the presence of a younger child in the family, rather than the fact of being the first-born". The effects of family size and position upon educational achievement can reasonably be projected and regarded as having similar effects upon the nature and level of the occupation entered subsequent to the completion of full-time education. Position in family is an important variable, too, in that the eldest child in a large family may be required to leave school at the earliest opportunity, because his wages are required to help the household expenses. Conversely, the youngest child may be enabled to continue at school because the family has by now entered a relatively prosperous period, with older children at work and bringing in an income, or being perhaps married and living away from home: with fewer household chores, the child's mother may now be able to take a part-time or even a full-time job, thereby being able to help support the child's continued education.

Not just the size of family and position in family are important; the sex of the child is equally so. There is, throughout most of the working class, at least, a 'feeling' that the education

---

1 The Home and the School, op.cit., p.90. Douglas found, on the other hand, "No evidence at all to support the view that in working class families the youngest child has a better chance of going to a grammar school."
and employment of girls is unimportant, or at any rate less important than that of boys since the latter will become "bread-winners", whilst girls are destined to become wives and mothers (this matter will be taken up again below). The strength and pervasiveness of this attitude is such that boys and girls could be said to be socialised to this appraisal of what is appropriate, educatively and occupationally, for sons and daughters and tend to adopt aspirations in accordance with it. The values in this regard, which are manifest and implicit in the home, are reinforced in the neighbourhood and, indeed, receive confirmation (though some contradiction) through the mass media: they are reinforced too, in many schools, sometimes tacitly but not infrequently as a result of explicit policy.

The number of brothers and sisters, and their ages relative to a particular child, is another relevant factor: an older brother or sister already at work can give advice (which may or may not be 'good' advice). And from the sheer fact of living with them a child will infer, consciously or unconsciously, certain values in regard to work and will apprehend attributes of particular kinds of jobs—in terms of the type of clothes worn, cleanliness or dirtiness of particular jobs, fatigue induced, hours worked, and the demeanour which appears to be consequent upon involvement in that particular kind of employment, and in work in general. Such impressions presumably exercise an influence, and in some cases probably a decisive influence, on a child's own decisions in
regard to work. Indirect influences of this sort could be of much more importance than any direct influences, for the Sheffield research showed that whilst 40 of the 100 boys, and the same number of girls, lived in homes in which at least one brother or sister was at work full-time and several others had siblings at work who had left home but who paid visits frequently, less than half of these had "talked about" work with their sisters or brothers prior to the Research Interview held during their last term at school. This was in keeping with the general lack of discussion at home, but, in addition, the fact is that brothers and sisters often have little in common in their early teens. Even children of the same sex, separated by no more than a year or two, tend not to mix much, either at home or in their leisure pursuits.¹

The above influences of family size, ages of children and position in family, illustrate the importance which the stage in the domestic cycle may have in regard to educational and occupational opportunity and motivation. A further dimension worthy of consideration is age of parents: this can be pertinent in a number of ways since their knowledge and experience of work is clearly affected by the number of years they have been in employment, and their attitudes correspondingly affected. The effects of the domestic cycle upon household "prosperity" has

¹cf. Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.100.
already been referred to—in terms, that is, of the number of dependent children at various stages. The general orientation towards work, and the approach to life itself is also likely to vary generationally, in accordance with differences of experience of parents in their childhood, adolescence and early adulthood (the influence of war service upon a father's knowledge, attitudes and aspirations is an example): and appraisals of what are deemed to be "modern trends"—whether in regard to occupational opportunities or to possible life styles—may also differ significantly as between the sixty-year-old father of a school-leaver and, say, the father who is himself under thirty-five years of age.1

It was not possible in the earlier Sheffield research to make a detailed study of all of these factors affecting the extent of parents' knowledge about employment opportunities for their children, and parental attitudes in this connection. The sample was too small for a definitive analysis of all the dimensions. In any case, a primary object of the Sheffield study was to discern the nature of the factors which did obtain, rather than to delineate precisely their extent, in a research area which had previously been largely unexplored. Certain of the conclusions which did emerge from the Sheffield study have already been referred to, and it is appropriate here to summarise the other relevant data.

1The point is discussed with special reference to knowledge of parents about work in Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.68
Parents' knowledge of the range of occupations open to their sons and daughters, and about the nature of the work involved in, and the conditions attaching to, particular occupations was, on the whole, very limited indeed. Furthermore, parents tended to remain ignorant of the part such agencies as the school and the Youth Employment Service could play in advising them and their children. This finding is confirmatory of the conclusion which Jackson and Marsden came to in their study of grammar school children of working class origin—namely, that many parents had not the knowledge, equipment or the skills (in terms of vocabulary and conceptualisation) which would enable them to advise their children in regard to matters of education and careers. The Sheffield study showed, also, that there were very strong barriers to communication between parents and children: what little knowledge the parents did have about work was rarely used to the benefit of children in their job decisions. Some barriers were of a straightforward and obvious kind—in most cases discussion was thwarted by many voices in an over-crowded room all sounding at the same time on varied topics, with radio, television, or record player on full blast either there, next door or across the street. Apart from these difficulties were those arising from the fact that parents were often out in the evenings, at a public house, cinema, bingo hall or else gossiping with neighbours in the

shared yard. Other powerful obstacles were of a more subtle nature—parents did not attempt to draw together the threads of their experience and they had no habit of reasoning things out, so that rational discussion was unusual. In its place there were sporadic exchanges of entrenched ideas, prejudices, predilections and misconceptions. On a matter admittedly difficult to gauge, the conclusion reached was that in only one-third of the homes of the children could discussion about future work be said to have been frequent, as assessed during the children's last term at school—and in only a few of these cases was constructive advice given by parents to children. The other parents tended merely to concentrate upon urging their children to think about the matter, and to make a choice of occupation, rather than providing suggestions or information. Such advice as was given, then, was on the whole vague and general and made without an appraisal of the particular abilities of the child concerned: the most forceful advice given by parents tended, indeed, to be negative—namely, to avoid a particular occupation because of danger, insecurity or a low wage. In sum, "parents' value judgements took the place of systematic thought.....(whilst) truth, half-truth and falsity were often combined in a single piece of advice which ended in a conclusion which was not contained within the premises".¹

¹Home, School and Work, op.cit., pp.96-97.
The typology of family types which was outlined above is consonant with—indeed was to a substantial extent derived from—the earlier Sheffield research. One further point that emerged from the earlier study and which requires much emphasis is the tendency, apparent to a marked extent in the "solid working class" families as well as in the "rough" families, to allow free-will to children in choice of work. There were various reasons for this, but the main reasons were as follows. Firstly, the positive wish not to influence children unduly—this was often associated with a feeling on the part of parents that they had themselves been unfairly influenced towards a particular occupation when younger, and it extended as far as permitting a child to take a job which the parents personally disapproved of. Secondly, there was a belief that boys and girls of this age, in modern times, will do what they want irrespective of parents' wishes, so that the position might as well be accepted. Thirdly, parents who felt uncertain or inadequate were enabled to avoid a difficult situation by leaving decisions to their children. And, finally, some parents thought that it was unjust that they should be expected to add to their worries by spending time and energy on a grown-up child's affairs—it was for the child to assume that responsibility. Underlying the apparent unconcern and lack of interest of many parents was a cynicism about work life, and the lot of the manual worker in Britain today—parents did not care particularly which jobs their children entered because "one job...
is much like the next, so the children might just as well do what they want. Life is such a 'chancy' business, furthermore...the ordinary man can do nothing in this world...so it is best for the child to 'make his own mistakes'\(^1\).

The conclusion from the earlier study, then, was that a high proportion of secondary modern school-leavers receive very little guidance about work from their parents, or from brothers, sisters or other relations; but that the influence of the home, operating as it does in varied and complex ways, is extremely powerful in shaping attitudes towards work and in setting levels of aspiration.

(b) The Influence of the Neighbourhood

It was stated above that the predominance of the steel and engineering industry in Sheffield implies that a high proportion of school-leavers enter such work, and, further to this, that in particular neighbourhoods within Sheffield it is regarded as "normal" that boys will become steel-workers and that, in addition, many of the girls will work in engineering factories as operators, packers or clerks. In a direct sense the occupational structure is all pervasive in such neighbourhoods, shrouded as they are by

\(^1\)Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.93.
the smoke from the factories and with the rhythm of the day-and-night-shifts pulsating through the streets. The various services—small shops, hairdressers, post office, launderette, plumber, and so on—extend the range of local employment opportunities by providing alternative work for a number of school-leavers, but iron and steel predominate and set the scene. Various studies in Britain have illustrated the ways in which locality, family life and occupation may be inter-twined as, for example, amongst the coal miners of Yorkshire,¹ the dock workers of Liverpool, fishermen from Hull,² and, indeed, the car workers of Luton.³ Although often in less clear-cut or explicit ways than in the above examples, connections between occupation and locality are well established and have, indeed, constituted a central interest for urban sociology since Max Weber's exploration of the nature of the city,⁴ and through the work of the Chicago school,⁵ until today's concern with patterns of residence and mobility.

Particular norms and values obtain in particular neighbourhoods, then, and varying styles of life are associated with social class differences, which in turn are related in some cases very directly and uniformly with specific occupations, in other cases with a general level of occupations. The strength of these prevailing styles of life is such that the non-conformer may be ostracised, or even "pushed out"—whilst boundaries between adjacent areas of different social complexion are liable to be strictly adhered to and maintained, especially by persons of a presumed higher status who deem themselves to be under threat of infiltration, and who consider their values to be in danger of dilution through contact with social inferiors. Within localities, there are strong reinforcements of norms and values, then, which are conducive to the inculcation of particular kinds of aspirations, motivations and attitudes in regard to school and to work. The pressure upon the individual to conform is illustrated in Peter Willmott's study of the working class estate of Dagenham: one example which Willmott cites is of a man who had previously lived in Hendon, but who much preferred Dagenham—"Hendon was very nice but, realizing that I'm a working man, I'm happier here—I always come home dirty from work. At Hendon people looked down

---

on you if you had dirty clothes on, but here they take you for granted". It is important to recognise this point, that the strength of identity which is associated with particular styles of life and areas of residence do not exist merely in reference to broad socio-economic classes, such as working class and middle class. Within the classes are strongly sustained differentiations: council house tenants may regard themselves as being altogether different from and superior to the residents of back-to-back terraced houses in the industrial parts of a town, whilst within particular estates there are differences which are clearly perceived or postulated by the inhabitants of one set of streets, "closes" or avenues in regard to another set. These differing perceptions affect individual self-esteem and the appraisal of a family's status: they also govern the attitudes and the actions of parents in relation to their readiness to allow their children to mix with children from other (perhaps more disdained) areas within a particular locality. The whole question of the interplay between the design of neighbourhoods, in town-planning and architectural terms, and the values and norms which are originally

---


2. The point is considered specifically with regard to aspects of education and employment in relation to delinquent behaviour in Pearl Jephcott and M.P. Carter, The Social Background of Delinquency, op.cit., and it is developed at some length below, in Part IV of this study.
introduced by, or develop in consequence of, the socio-economic characteristics of the residents, is complicated, and cannot be further discussed here: it may merely be noted as a specific point that an article of current educational policy in regard to culturally deprived areas is that a lead in changing parental and neighbourhood attitudes and actions in regard to children's welfare should be given by the school.¹ This viewpoint is in accord with the thesis put forward with reference to the American context by Frank Reissman, who argues that educators are out of tune with the interests, predilections and abilities of working class children, and hence fail in their task.²

The ways in which the Sheffield occupational structure stamps its pattern upon the employment entered by school-leavers differentially in accordance with area of residence within the city was analysed in some detail in the earlier study, and reported in Home, School and Work.³ It is convenient here to draw attention to the main conclusions. The respondents for the research were selected at random from five of the city's thirty-two secondary modern schools, deliberately chosen to give variety in regard to the type of area which they served, their facilities in terms of building and equipment, and the policies which were pursued by the staff.

¹cf. for example Half Our Future, H.M.S.O., 1963. ("The Newsom Report").

- 71 -
It is not easy to separate these various strands with regard to the nature and extent of their influences upon children's employment aspirations and achievements—there is, indeed, a constant inter-play between the strands. The further point must be made that the populations served by the five schools displayed some heterogeneity in regard to their socio-economic composition. Nonetheless, there were distinguishable certain predominant social characteristics in each one, and it is therefore possible to suggest connections between the schools, their areas, and the employment entered by school-leavers. The position was stated in the earlier study as follows: "Schools, directly and indirectly, influence children in their job aspirations, and differences in social backgrounds imply differences in jobs aims and in attitudes to work. The employment scene in the immediate locality exerts an influence upon children—attracting them towards the steel-works down the road or repelling them from it, familiarising them with certain sorts of occupations and leaving them vague about or ignorant of others, enabling them to work nearby or making it necessary for them to travel to areas in which there are more jobs. It might be thus presumed that there would be distinctive patterns relating to the employment taken up by the children from the five schools. The ways in which the various social forces inter-act with each other and act upon the children are, however, complex and the areas served by the schools were not homogeneous. All of the schools were secondary modern, furthermore, and all of the
areas, being situated in Sheffield, were subject to the imprint of the industrial structure of the city. Whilst each school presented characteristics which distinguished it from the others, therefore, there were many things common to them, and there were variations within each area as well as between areas. The relationships between jobs obtained and school, social background and local employment opportunities are accordingly not straightforward. Nevertheless, the impact of the factors peculiar to each school and area upon jobs taken up can be demonstrated. An analysis was made of the five schools and areas in terms of the type of work first entered by respondents, and, on the basis of Youth Employment Service records (which, it should be said, were not entirely reliable for the purpose in hand, having been collected for reasons other than this), in terms of jobs entered by all leavers from these schools in the five years prior to the research, that is, from 1954-59. Clear patterns were revealed in regard to entry to the iron and steel industry for boys, and to the level of occupation for boys and girls (that is, apprenticeships or otherwise for boys, clerical work, shop assistant and factory employment for girls); and these patterns were consonant with the socio-economic backgrounds of the pupils in the various areas, and in accord with the orientations of the schools concerned.¹

¹See Home, School and Work, op.cit., pp. 31-34, Tables 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13.
A further dimension of the influence exerted in the neighbourhood upon children's employment aspirations and achievements is the part played by peer groups. A major issue here is whether or not there exists a social phenomenon which may usefully be described as a youth culture, and, if so, the ways in which the culture manifests itself in the various socio-economic sections of the population. This matter is given some consideration below, and the issue will not be dwelt upon at this point. But regardless of whether there is a youth culture, with an influence pervasive throughout the wider society, it is obvious that peers exercise some influence upon a child's aspirations and actions, whether through providing a "model" or through discussions and joint activities or, indeed, by repudiation of a mode of behaviour which is inferred to be associated with a particular sort of boy—so that, in terms of occupational aspirations, a working class boy might reject a clerical job because he connects that sort of employment with the style of life practised by a boy in a higher stream at school who comes from a middle class background, or with that of a boy from a "stand-offish" family who lives around the corner.

The aspects of the peer group which have special relevance for choice of work are the educational, occupational and general social experiences and attitudes of peers who are known directly, by repute, or by observation (in the latter two cases, the "images" provided by mass media may serve as a reference point, rather than
actual individuals). Particularly salient is the age of peers with whom there is contact. Also very important is the range of socio-economic backgrounds from which they come. Homogeneity, in these terms, is likely to obtain in certain neighbourhoods, as was suggested above. Access to and attitudes towards youth organisations is likely to be an important variable in this connection. A child from a "solid working class" family may, through membership of an organisation such as the Boy Scouts, become involved with boys who are predominantly from home-centred, aspiring families, and gradually become a subscriber to the norms and values in regard to education and employment which characterise such boys. Youth organisations of this order may thus constitute agencies for upward mobility. Or a young person may model himself upon an older person with whom a friendship has been struck up. The earlier Sheffield study provided some examples of this, a brother-in-law or a sister-in-law from a higher socio-economic level, for example, serving as a reference point in a re-formulation of aspirations.

The main conclusion in this regard, emerging from the Sheffield study, however, was that the range of friendships of both boys and girls during their last term at school tended to be limited with regard to numbers and, for the most part, confined to the same immediate locality. The bulk of the boys and the girls either had no firm friends at all or had only one or two friends with whom they spent a substantial amount of time outside of school hours.
Approximately two-fifths of the boys (44) and rather fewer of the girls (37) attended a youth club or organisation fairly regularly at this stage, but, with few exceptions, the clubs were located in or near the children's own neighbourhoods and frequented by children of the same socio-economic backgrounds, and with similar attitudes towards education and employment. The overall impact of contact with peers was thus towards reinforcing aspirations and motivations rather than towards amending them. These conclusions are echoed in Willmott's study of adolescent boys of East London, which showed that a high proportion of fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds spent most of their leisure time in or around their own locality and that friendship groups tended to be small.\(^1\) Willmott's conclusion, nonetheless, is that the peer group and the local community in which it is embedded, are of fundamental importance— in contrast with "education" which has "so little influence".

"The study shows that there are two crucial influences in the boys' lives. The first is the peer group, which rises in importance and then falls off as the altar begins to beckon. The second is the local community, which stays important to the great majority of boys and becomes even more so as they move into adulthood."\(^2\) The point, evident in Willmott's study as in


\(^2\) Ibid., p.176.
the Sheffield research, is that even though the number of firm friends tends to be small, the attitudes, aspirations, and perceptions and general orientations of peers tend to be in the same mould, a mould which may be viewed as a particular locality brand of the working class milieu.

(c) The Influence of the School

Reference has already been made in various contexts to the part played by the school in inducing, sustaining and amending attitudes towards, and knowledge about, employment. In particular, it has been stressed that there is an interplay between home, school, and work. There are, indeed, certain factors at school which may be identified as exerting special influences upon pupils' decisions in regard to job choice—teachers may or may not give information formally or informally, or with a greater or lesser degree of accuracy; the curriculum may be orientated as a matter of policy towards vocational matters, in a general or in more specific ways. In some schools, too, careers teachers play an important part in guiding leavers into employment, although the evidence is that, generally, the influence of careers teachers is very limited: guidance in choice of career is also arranged in some schools through works visits, careers conferences, and a careers section in the library. I have reviewed elsewhere the overall position
in secondary modern schools in regard to the part played in careers guidance, and the conclusion which seems clear is that "With important exceptions and qualifications, on the whole secondary modern children do not receive much help in choice of career. There are several reasons. The attitudes of many children and their parents are such that attempts by the school to help are rebutted. A considerable number of schools do not give much attention to careers matters, either because they have other objectives which they consider to be their proper concern or—more usually—because it simply has not occurred to the teachers that careers guidance could be an important aspect of the work of the school. And finally, even with the best of intentions, schools lack the staff, the time, the equipment and the buildings to do careers work properly."¹ This conclusion is supported by Willmott's study in Bethnal Green, referred to above.

The direct influence of the school upon choice of occupation, however, is but one aspect of the overall part played by the school in the orientation of a child towards certain perceptions of the world of work, and in the shaping of motivations and attitudes in regard to it. In general terms, it can be argued that the various types of schools in Britain represent agencies for the perpetuation and reinforcement of social class differences, although they permit,

¹Into Work, op.cit., p.82
through a process of sponsorship,\(^1\) the upward mobility of a limited proportion of children in response to the "needs" of the society. Support for this argument is provided by various studies. J.B. Mays, for example, has maintained that the structure of secondary education tends "To reproduce two main social groups with different cultures and life, classes who confront one another in mutual incomprehension and distaste."\(^2\) Following from this, there may be a deadening of any aspirations for "improvement" which a child from the lower socio-economic level may have—in Friedenberg's words, "The most tragic thing that happens to lower-status youngsters in school is that they learn to accept the prevailing judgement of their worth. They accept and internalize the social verdict on themselves."\(^3\) If it is an exaggeration to regard it as a direct agent for the perpetuation of social class differences, the school, as it at present functions, can at least be said to be an ineffective means for amending such differences significantly. The situation in Britain today would seem to fit the analysis made in regard to the U.S.A. a quarter of a century ago, namely that "The school offers some opposition to home and neigh-

---


bourhood training in the case of the lower-class children but usually fights a losing battle over them. It supports and supplements the home and neighbourhood training of middle-class children....the school can thus be observed as a social system which operates to preserve for the child the status level achieved by the parents and to help some children to climb higher within the status system.  

The precise effects of attendance at a particular kind of school upon job aspirations are not easy to establish. There is some evidence that "Placement in modern or grammar schools has a greater effect on the vocational outlook of youth than does their position in the class structure." This is Elder's conclusion—what is meant is that for middle class children placed in modern schools and working class children in grammar schools, the school may exercise a stronger influence in regard to vocational matters than does class position. But the majority of children do not "deviate" in this way of course, and it is with the majority that we are at this point primarily concerned. What does seem clear, then, is that it is no easy matter for a school to amend norms and values which are deeply inlaid, and sustained by the strong forces of home and neighbourhood outside of school hours, and which continue

---

to operate to some extent during the time at school itself, by virtue of the social composition of the school population and the necessary reactions of the school staff, whether consciously or unconsciously, to it. So far from complementing each other, indeed, home and neighbourhood on the one hand may be in open or latent conflict with school on the other. Many of the Sheffield respondents and their families regarded school as, at best, an irrelevance.¹ As a complement to this, many teachers tend to fight shy of the homes from which their pupils come, and to reject or ignore the values obtaining in them—they make no attempt to break down barriers between home and school. Thus J.B. Mays has written that "The distrust and timidity which at present characterize the attitudes of many teachers towards collaboration with the home are major obstacles in the way of progress."² In regard to "culturally deprived" children, indeed, the attitude and qualifications of the teacher may be crucial—thus Pederson has argued that "In general, the less socially or academically advantageous the background characteristics of the high school student (a) the more likely he is to modify his academic self-concept to accord with what he perceives to be his teachers' evaluation of his ability to do school work, (b) the more likely he is to be influenced in his college plans by

¹ For further evidence to substantiate this analysis more generally in Britain, see Glen H. Elder, ibid, p.189-190.

his academic self-concept; and (c) the more likely he is to be influenced in his level of educational aspiration by what he believes the teacher thinks about his scholastic ability. This seems especially likely in cases where the perceived evaluation and self-evaluation are positive or supportive in "nature". Pederson indicates that it is not just faulty intentions or attitudes which may operate against appropriate co-operation as between teacher and pupils, but a lack of knowledge in the former as to the processes at work in the teaching situation—"It is unlikely that many teachers are aware, either of the kinds of evaluations concerning students' abilities that they convey to students, or of the impact that such evaluations have on the college plans of their charges." The pupil-teacher relationship as discussed by Pederson could be viewed from the perspective of organisation theory, and in this context may be compared with work done by R.W. Revans. Previous research in hospitals had suggested to Revans that "The attitudes of the ward sister towards the student nurse reflected the perception that the ward sister held of those in authority above her." Subsequent research into the teaching process within the classroom setting prompted the thought

---

that the situation there might be analogous—"Might not the attitudes of the children towards their class teachers, in any particular school, reflect the views that these class teachers hold of their heads or even of their local education authorities?"

Revens' conclusion is that there is, indeed, "An association between the system of school authority as perceived by the class teachers and the judgement passed by the children upon their teachers, both as persons and as professionals. In other words, where teachers feel either that they have a hand in the internal running of the school, or that its outside directors are aware of their internal problems, they tend to be both liked by their pupils and to be seen as effective teachers. If the teachers see their supervisors as remote or dictatorial, they, in their turn, are seen by their pupils as unfriendly and ineffective." Revans goes on to discuss the question. "Is this result not perhaps an illustration of a more general law, that institutions in which individuals feel free to ask questions of their superiors are those that adapt best?"

And he implies answers to this question by posing others—"....what is the education of the average child but its adaptation to the constraints of an organised world, manifest by a system of authority that flows from the 1944 Education Act? And, moreover, if that system of authority, personified by his own school, does not encourage him to learn because it gives him a poor opinion of his teachers, may he not come to revolt against authority as such?" The rejection or resentment of authority may, in Revans'
analysis, become consolidated to such an extent that the ability to learn by working with authority is gradually extinguished in the child who is burgeoning into an adult.\(^1\) It is necessary, I think, to qualify or extend Revans' analysis in certain respects. It is to be expected that the perception by the teacher of the attitudes and dispositions of those in authority over him will be affected by the teacher's own personality and, more importantly here, by his socio-economic origins and his own educational experience—and not merely, that is, be a direct response to the organisational structure of the school in which he teaches. The social class complexion of members of the teaching profession is a pertinent consideration in this context.\(^2\) Apart from Revans' research, some work reported by M.K. Bacchus has suggested relationships between (a) social class origin, (b) age of teachers, (c) the type of training which they have had and (d) their perception of children's ability.\(^3\) A recent study of infant teachers in London, conducted by June Goodacre, led to the conclusion that some teachers may unconsciously discriminate against working class children by equating the "good home" with middle class values.

---


\(^2\) For an analysis, see Jean Floud and W. Scott, "Recruitment to Teaching in England and Wales", Chapter 37 *in* (eds.) A.H. Halsey *et al.*, *Education, Economy and Society*, op.cit.

especially welcoming the sophisticated language of children from middle class homes and repudiating the "simple language" of working class children. This finding is similar to that of Bernstein, referred to above, but here the emphasis is upon the evaluation rather than the mental barriers to communication. Goodacre's study also revealed differences in attitudes in accordance with the social class origin of the teacher—teachers from working class backgrounds are more likely to be understanding of financial problems in children's homes, for example, and more tolerant of requests from a working class parent for the loan of school text books to a child.\footnote{1} Hewan Craig's investigation of "reality shock" for teachers on first entering a classroom after teacher training, consequent upon the contradiction between what their training college suggested "went on" in a classroom and what actually happened, is also relevant here— the reality shock could conceivably affect attitudes of teachers for a prolonged period.\footnote{2} But just as a teacher's perception of those in authority over him is likely to be coloured by his approaches and predilections, and, more broadly, by the particular character of his own process of socialisation into adult society—consequent amongst other things upon his social class background—so, too, is the child's perception of the teacher likely to be affected by the social environment from which he comes, rather than being a response

\footnote{1}{Teachers and their Pupils' Home Background, N.F.E.R., London, 1968.}

\footnote{2}{"The Beginning Teacher in the Junior Secondary School", Unpublished Manuscript, University of Edinburgh.}
simply to the social organisation of the school which he attends, and to the values and norms which are predominant there.

It is interesting to juxtapose Revans' "conflict" analysis with Talcott Parsons' functionalist view of the school class as a social system—for Parsons, following the Durkheimian approach, the school is a central agent in the process of socialisation, and "Functions to internalize in its pupils both the commitments and capacities for the successful performance of their future adult roles, and (also)....functions to allocate these human resources within the role structure of adult society." This functionalist analysis can be viewed, perhaps cynically, in terms of the schools allocating so-called "ordinary", "average" and "below average" children from working class backgrounds to the semi- and unskilled jobs at the lower levels of the occupational hierarchy. Possibly Revans' suggestion could to some extent be accommodated in this analysis: but Revans goes further, arguing that the school may operate to induce opposition to authority—"A school that coerces without encouraging questions may.....exhibit other pathological symptoms (other, that is, than the revolt against authority as such, referred to already above) such as delinquency. And this condition may be regenerative. Once lack of opportunity to ask questions has engendered resentment to authority, its coercive responses can only deny that lack more strongly, for the capacity

to learn by working with authority has died.¹ This discussion is broadening the framework of reference overmuch for present purposes, however. It suffices here to emphasise the part which the school may play in shaping and/or reinforcing attitudes towards the wider society and the consequent behaviour of pupils after they have left school.²

To narrow the focus again, the point may be reiterated that at the local level the school, as an organisation, imposes certain direct and indirect influences upon children's aspirations and actions in regard to employment as to life in general. The precise nature of the influences is less obvious than the factors which, it can be deduced, are likely to exert pressure of one sort or another. One factor which seems to be a particularly important one is the policy which obtains with regard to streaming. The effects of streaming upon educational aspirations and achievement have been studied by J.W.B. Douglas³ and by Brian Jackson,⁴


² A helpful discussion of the part played by schools in sustaining or amending the social class and social status system is given by Howard S. Becker in "Schools and Systems of Stratification", op.cit.; Becker's analysis is relevant to developing societies and also to modern industrial societies.

³ The Home and the School, op.cit.

amongst others. The general conclusion that emerges is that streaming within schools operates in a similar way and with similar effects to the separation and selection implicit in the tripartite system of secondary education—the various levels within the school induce differential expectations, attitudes, motivations and achievements just as do the various levels between schools. Jackson, for example, argues that "Streaming reflects social background, privilege, accident and handicap"—in schools which practise streaming (the bulk of schools in Britain do) inequalities of opportunity are reinforced and perpetuated: streaming gives more educationally to those who have and takes more away from those whose opportunities are already restricted, or, at least, confirms them at their lowly level. The study of working class grammar school children which Jackson did with Marsden,¹ and Veness,² study of school leavers support this general theme.³ D.H. Hargreaves' research into social relationships in a secondary modern school is suggestive of further aspects of streaming which are relevant to aspirations in regard to employment. Hargreaves describes the differing orientations of "bright" academic stream pupils compared with "delinquent" low stream children—the differentiation is sustained

¹ *Education and the Working Class*, op.cit.
² *School Leavers: their Aspirations and Expectations*, op.cit.
³ For a summary see Glen H. Elder, "Life, Opportunity and Personality: Some Consequences of Stratified Education in Great Britain", *op.cit.*
by the nature of the "formal" relationships in the school (revolving around pedagogic assumptions as to the teaching process and presumed differences in children in regard to what and how much they are able to learn) and it is bolstered by "informal" factors, in particular the friendship patterns and status systems of the pupils. The outcome is the growth of two distinct and opposed subcultures—firstly, the academic one which is in line with the school's objectives and, secondly, one which comprises the "failures" and which may be said to be in conflict with the asserted and attempted objectives of the school.¹ Hargreaves' study stresses the social processes at work within the school, and particularly important in this connection is the pressure upon a child's attitudes and actions that is exerted by the peer group. This factor, already referred to above in regard to neighbourhood influences, has been emphasised in various studies. Coleman has suggested the importance of informal social groupings in the American school in this context.² A study by Webb of an English secondary modern school led to a similar conclusion to that of Hargreaves, namely, that informal co-operation amongst children is induced by the classroom setting, and that the children's groups that arise may

² J.S. Coleman, The Adolescent Society, The Free Press, New York, 1961. There are, however, certain reservations to be made about Coleman's analysis: the matter is discussed further, below.
engender or emphasise values in conflict with those of the teachers.\(^1\) One specific outcome in terms of career aspirations of such informal groupings at school is the development amongst children of what Jafhoda has called a "climate of opinion",\(^2\) such that boys and girls sustain amongst themselves job aims which are self-engendered and which bear little or no relationship to individual abilities. The Sheffield study confirmed the salience of such climates of opinion — headmasters identified "crazes" for particular occupations, consequent upon one boy stating his interest and then being emulated tenaciously and unreasoningly to the particular job "choice". The informal groupings amongst pupils at school do not necessarily follow social class lines, of course, but there would seem to be a likelihood of them doing so. And the systems of streaming provide a framework for such informal groupings as occur, in that they place certain individuals in a setting in which they are in constant daily contact. There is some evidence that even without rigid streaming as such, techniques of formal grouping and "segregation" for particular subjects in accordance with presumed ability, or ability as assessed at a given point early in a child's school life, may have a

---


similarly strong and lasting effect upon aspirations and achievements as that associated with streaming. Work is at present being done at the University of Kent, at Canterbury, on the specific question of the effects of comprehensive education upon job aspirations, the hypothesis being that this sort of schooling is conducive to a broadening of horizons. Preliminary findings suggest that where comprehensive schools are streamed—this may be in a disguised way—a narrowing of occupational aspirations occurs, each stream of children being orientated towards a particular band in the occupational structure open to fifteen-year-old secondary school leavers. W. Taylor has cited work by Hickerson in this connection—"Hickerson has... alleged that in the non-selective American school system, grouping on the basis of reading ability in the first grade (age six to seven) precipitates the academic success or failure of millions of children. The process of segregating and differentiating pupils into a variety of separate fast and slow, academic and non-academic tracks or streams begins as early as the fourth or fifth grades, and an accumulation of standardised test scores provides the foundation for subsequent guidance and counselling work in the comprehensive high schools." Taylor himself argues that...
the anticipated introduction of comprehensive schooling on a large scale in Britain will not necessarily lead to the elimination of the differentials in life chances, perceptions and aspirations which the tripartite system and streaming involve; for "...given the survival of sufficient rigidities in course and lesson planning, and the failure of teachers to revise many of their traditional assumptions, the premature structuring of expectation and aspiration which the tripartite system has encouraged could well continue".¹ Taylor makes the further point that comprehensive schools are unlikely to amend radically and speedily the attitudes which children from working class homes have towards education, and certainly will not do so automatically. As Taylor puts it: "to understand and to motivate the child from the lower status home is a much more complex business than has sometimes been assumed. Some of the success that certain grammar schools have had in providing those boys and girls from under-privileged homes who obtained entry to them with the wherewithal for social mobility may have arisen from the very separation of these schools from the values of the neighbourhood and peer group. We have yet to see whether a national system of comprehensive schools can be more successful in this respect".² The point is, he goes on, that "in attempting to raise aspirations and levels of attainment, and in easing the transition from school to the type of work situation that will be

¹Op. cit., p.92

²Ibid, p.93
typical of future decades, the social environment of the school needs to be considered as a whole: the attitudes of peer groups, as well as those of individual pupils, require re-education. Thus, the argument returns to the importance of the interplay of various factors in home, neighbourhood and school. The Sheffield data demonstrates the ways in which orientations in schools are related to—arise out of and play back upon—the predominating attitudes and perceptions which characterise the populations which they serve. Schools may be regarded as having "goals", towards which their organisation is oriented with a greater or lesser degree of clarity and efficiency. Cotgrove has suggested that there are three main goals to be identified—"The functions of education are the development of personal qualities including the inculcation of values and norms and the transmission of knowledge. These are two primary goals which society expects the schools to achieve. They constitute the charter of the educational system. To these must be added a third. Attendance at school is compulsory up to the statutory school-leaving age. The schools have therefore to ensure attendance and to perform a custodial function. Schools may attach

---

1 Op.cit. Taylor, here, cites work by W.B.Brookover, et al., in "Self-Concepts of Ability and School Achievement", Education Research Series, No.31, College of Education, Michigan State University, October, 1965 (mimeo.), which shows that "Counsellors and outside experts working with groups of pupils failed to enhance either self-concepts or academic performance, while intensive work with parents of a matched group did produce certain significant improvements in both these respects."
varying degrees of importance to these goals. In other words, the school as being predominantly 'academic', 'missionary' or 'custodial', according to the emphasis it places on academic achievement, developing the personal qualities of the child (child-centred) or simply maintaining order and discipline. The culture of the school will reflect not only the expectations of a society but will also be influenced by its interaction with its environment.¹ Cotgrove suggests that the schools which were studied in the Sheffield research and analysed in *Home, School and Work* can be fitted into these categories, and I think that this is a reasonable appraisal. There are a few points which I would add by way of qualification and commentary, however. The first is that the orientation which a school assumes is rarely clear-cut, and is likely to incorporate elements in varying degrees of all three "goals" as formulated by Cotgrove. Indeed, the precise nature of the knowledge which a school seeks to transmit necessarily embraces certain values and so, of course, does the custodial function. The orientation of a particular school is to be seen as the outcome of the resolution of various, and perhaps conflicting forces—including the head teacher's views upon the nature of his task (which in itself reflects, variously, his training, his teaching experience, and the policy of the local authority that employs him); the training, predilections and

attitudes of his staff; staff-pupil ratios and the turnover of teachers; the quality of buildings, equipment and other amenities and, indeed, the local environment and the social background of the pupils. The "goals" which Cotgrove enunciates cover wide spectrums of actual practice in secondary modern type schools, furthermore; the academic goal encompasses the inculcation of the "3 Rs" to unwilling and not very able children as well as the teaching of academic subjects geared to external examinations. The "academic" goal may also encourage new approaches to art, literature and science, designed with the aim of breaking out of traditional scholastic straight jackets and associated with a philosophy which propounds the value of "education for its own sake". The "missionary" goal also covers a range of objectives, some of which have to do with "social" or "citizen" training while others dwell more upon religious factors. What is important here, however, is to recognise that in addition to the ostensible or manifest values and norms with which the school is concerned, there are values and norms implicit in the school which may well not be recognised by teachers, pupils or parents: this point has been dwelt upon at some length above. In regard to the "custodial" goal at this point, it suffices to remark that the way in which this is pursued may vary considerably from one school to another—from obvious and declared authoritarianism to carefully nurtured co-operation and self-help. The outcome in terms of children's orientations to society in general, and attitudes to work in
particular, may be expected to be substantially affected in consequence. There is a case for introducing to Cotgrove's typology an additional "goal", namely, the "vocational" objective, which predominates in certain schools and which may assume increasing importance as a consequence of currently declared educational policy. The "vocational" could be regarded as a special blend of two goals specified by Cotgrove—the inculcation of norms and values, and the transmission of knowledge (or in this case, special skills). But the point need not detain us here, where the main objects are to point to the utility of a conceptualisation in terms of goals for the understanding of the "culture" of a school, and to draw attention to the implications for children's attitudes, motivations and achievements in regard to work.

The five schools in Sheffield were all secondary modern but they differed significantly, as has been indicated already, in regard to age, the quality of their buildings and amenities, the qualifications and interests of their staffs, and the social composition of their pupils. One school was built at the turn of the century and was situated in a slum area: it placed considerable emphasis upon "social training" in terms of the importance to the community of lawful behaviour, hygiene, hard work, etc. Much of its work was viewed by

---

1 For a fuller discussion of the issues referred to here, see Home, School and Work, op.cit., Chapter 1, "Introduction".

2 For a detailed account, see Home, School and Work, op.cit., Chapter 3.
the teachers as an attempt at a "saving operation" in an area in which boys could easily relapse into crime and girls fall into unwanted pregnancy. Confronted with parental inadequacy, indifference and suspicion, the school saw its task as that of extending the children's limited horizons and at the same time encouraging them towards "social responsibility", and making them aware of standards other than those which they experienced daily in street and home. In such a setting, there was relatively little scope for emphasis upon academic objectives.

The second school was built in the inter-war years, and located in a "zone of deterioration" not far from the city-centre. Many of its children were from derelict and near-derelict slum property. It had rather more amenities to offer than the first school, however. Specifically, for the boys there were facilities for woodwork and metalwork, and this, together with the belief that the gearing of school-work to future employment prospects could harness the interest of boys where more esoteric or academic objectives would probably fail, resulted in a vocational bias being given to the curriculum—a bias which led to boys who otherwise would have drifted into "any old job" becoming motivated towards, and better equipped to apply for, apprenticeships. In the girls' department, a strong-willed, no-nonsense headmistress imposed a pattern upon the school, insisting upon the priority that should be given to good manners, clean living and duty to God, as against intellectual pretensions. Particularly sharp girls from "good" homes were picked out for
special encouragement in applying for the "better sort" of clerical employment. The rest were urged to recognise their place in society, to bear in mind constantly that the proper place of a woman was in the home as a wife and mother, and to take pride in such work as they found on leaving school, regardless of its "level," in shop, factory or warehouse. "It was driven into the girls and their parents that, contrary to the view of many of them, the job which a girl took was important, not a matter of indifference. It was not so much the intrinsic satisfaction which the job might afford, but the tone which it gave to the life of the girl. The place of employment was more important than the type of work—for it was that which could continue the training of the school, or which could alternatively reduce its good influence to nought."¹

The third school, built in the 1930s, was on a large, straggling inter-war council housing estate of dreary uniformity: the whole area was drab and lacking in cohesion. It had an air of purposelessness, with few amenities, either private or public. The environment provided little positive stimulation to the solid working class families who predominated there. And the school was faced with an uphill fight, trying to inject enthusiasm where boredom prevailed. The teachers kept plugging away, not expecting quick results, but hoping to lift the pupils out of their rut—but it was a prolonged struggle, and whilst sporadic successes were

¹Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.47.
registered in launching children into higher academic planes and
opening up new employment opportunities, more noticeable was the
effort that had to be put into the routine objectives of inducing
some interest in boys and girls who were largely sceptical, scornful,
or even slightly amused at the attempt of the school to "sell itself"
to unwilling customers.

The remaining two schools were post-war. One, on a post-war
housing estate, was set in its own spacious grounds and was well
provided for in buildings, staff and amenities. The keynote of
this school and the area which it served was newness—parents
tended to be uniformly youngish, with comparatively small families.
This was a dormitory area, and whilst the bulk of the fathers were
manual workers, there was a wide variety of occupations—the area
itself, being free from industry and commerce, did not impose a
specific occupational atmosphere. All was new in this area, then:
the school, shops, houses, and streets. The school consciously set
out to give a lead, and, in the process of building itself up, to
build up the community around it. In giving the lead, the school
necessarily took cognisance of the attitudes of parents and pupils—
they were all working class, and by no means all were aspirants
towards a higher status. In response the school was moderately
ambitious, aiming high within realistic limits—"It did not expect
too much, but hoped to achieve the best that the children were
capable of, that their parents could accept and that the school
could offer.... The school.... made its mark upon the area, and
succeeded in raising the job aspirations of many of its pupils as well as ensuring that they were qualified for the jobs at which they aimed. It was not all plain sailing; and the school could be said to have been defeated by some homes, and to have made only a marginal impression upon the children from others, but in many cases the lead given by the school was welcomed.¹

The fifth school, similarly well-endowed with regard to site, amenities and staff, was situated in a middle class residential area on the fringes of the city. But it served a segment of the city which penetrated to the centre and incorporated a cross-section of socio-economic classes. A minority of boys and girls were from wealthier middle class homes (most of the children from the area attended selective or public schools). Many pupils were from lower middle class and working class, home-centred and aspiring families. At the other extreme there were children from slum homes, and a smattering of boys from a local remand centre. The orientation of the school was very much of a middle class order, the head teacher and staff finding a ready response to, and indeed demand for, the sort of academic education which their own values and experience commended. In consequence, much emphasis was placed upon G.C.E and R.S.A. examinations and special encouragement was given to children to remain at school beyond the statutory leaving age. The keenness of parents to give their children "a good start

¹Ibid., pp.39-40
in life" was met by this eagerness of staff to mould the school in academic directions. Home and school worked together to fix education and employment horizons at the desired level, then, in the majority of cases. The "tone" thereby established meant that certain of the pupils, from less salubrious and less highly aspiring backgrounds, were something of an embarrassment to the school and felt themselves to be misfits in it. But, overall, the school's orientation was in harmony with the outlook of the parents, and an ally to them in their concern for their children to "do well".

The brevity of this description of the five schools necessarily results in a degree of caricature and in the omission of many reservations, qualifications and exceptions. Sufficient detail has been given here to make the point, however, that the influence of the school upon educational and occupational aspirations and attainment is a two-way process. The school responds to the home and the local environment but also rebounds upon them to amend, re-cast and, in the case of a few children, to transform the norms and values to which they subscribe.

---

1 The full analysis is given in Home, School and Work, Chapter 3
(d) The Youth Employment Service

The Youth Employment Service has four main tasks: to disseminate information about jobs, to give vocational guidance; to help place school leavers in suitable employment; and to keep in touch with young workers until they reach the age of eighteen, in order to give further guidance and help in finding employment as necessary. Several studies of the efficiency of various aspects of the Service's work have been made in recent years, and the general conclusion is in accordance with that deriving from the earlier Sheffield research, namely, that the Service as at present organised is unable to fulfil these tasks. Whilst having some success in regard to a minority of school leavers, it leaves the majority, to all intents and purposes, untouched. I have documented the shortcomings elsewhere,¹ and I do not propose to consider them in detail here. It suffices to say that the inability of the Youth Employment Service to perform the functions designated for it result chiefly from two factors. The first is the inadequate allocation of resources, which means that there are insufficient staff, and notably insufficient staff who are qualified to give vocational guidance. And the second is analogous to the problem already discussed in regard to the barriers that exist between schools and pupils—Youth Employment Officers tend, like teachers, to be regarded by large sections of secondary modern school leavers as irrelevant, if not malevolent, agents of

"them" concerned only to "palm you off" with routine jobs which you have no inclination to do.

There are a number of general issues which may conveniently be discussed here, however, and which have to do with the role of a guidance service in a modern industrial society. Of fundamental importance is the point emphasised by Pierre Naville in a study entitled *Théorie de l'Orientation Professionnelle.* Naville argues that there is a tendency to view vocational guidance in an oversimplified way—in terms only of the individual child and the particular sorts of occupations for which he may be deemed to be fitted. This approach fails to take note of the overall occupational structure and changes in it which are consequent

---

1 Librairie Gallimard, Paris, 1945.

2 The concern here is with sociological aspects of vocational guidance—the considerable amount of valuable work which has been done and is being done by psychologists—concerning such matters as the best timing for vocational guidance and the identifying of the elements of interests, satisfactions, and the ability relevant to appropriate placement in employment—are outwith the scope of the present study. Nor do I propose to spend time on the ethico-philosophical aspects of vocational guidance—specifically the view that the widespread use of vocational tests may be harmful: this view is put forward by Liam Hudson, for example, who states "My anxiety, briefly, is that the use of such tests on a wide scale will tend to reduce children's sense of responsibility for their own decisions. Most boys seem to choose their careers intuitively, without much conscious reflection. It may be that the very act of asking an expert for advice on this matter is a symptom of a more general anxiety. By offering to give such children advice, the aptitude tester may exacerbate their 'intellectual hypochondria' rather than abate it." cf. *Contrary Imaginations,* Pelican Books, London, 1967, p.29.
upon or associated with, the economic system, and with general social and technological trends——"Par nature, l'orientation professionnelle se préoccupe de l'avenir de l'être humain, c'est-à-dire aussi de la race, avenir de la société, avenir du peuple."¹

Whilst Naville's analysis may be readily accepted, the point that what he advocates is easier to call for than to put into effect need scarcely be made——Naville is more sanguine about the possibility of forecasting the future industrial structure than would seem to be justified, as was argued in Chapter II above. But the fact remains that much of what goes under the name of vocational guidance in Britain is limited not just to the narrow relationship between an individual and a job, but also to a decidedly static view of the occupational structure. The increasing pace of technological and economic change is leading to a re-appraisal, and there are now signs of a wider understanding of the need for counsellors to take note, insofar as they can, of likely future changes in occupational opportunities. It is in this context that Wolfbein has argued that a re-definition of the objectives of vocational guidance is needed——that, now, guidance should be regarded as having as its aim to "Help the individual withstand the onslaughts and, in fact take advantage of the inevitable changes which occur in the world of work."² This savours of a view of the world of work

---

as one in which the concern is to command a job of some sort—of any sort at all—rather than a world in which positive satisfaction from work is possible, and in which certain jobs are more likely than others to provide such satisfaction for particular individuals. Perhaps this is the direction towards which industrial societies are moving. But the substantial point here is that which was made in another context above, namely, that adaptability is likely to be required of individuals in their work-lives to a much greater extent in the future than in the past. The argument, then, is that vocational guidance should be informed by this fact.

Co-operation—or the lack of it—between schools and the Youth Employment Service is an issue which is currently causing concern, and which has done so for some years. Whilst in some schools, careers masters and Youth Employment Officers work closely together, in the majority, the evidence suggests, the Youth Employment Officer is a casual appendage, making what from the school’s point of view appear to be merely routine visits, and disrupting lessons in the process. In the minority of schools which take a strong interest in vocational matters, furthermore, there may be rivalry between the teacher and the Youth Employment Officer, each regarding the other as usurping his function: a possible solution to this potential conflict is the institution of full-time vocational counsellors as members of school staffs.
The rôle of the Youth Employment Officer is such that he is liable to encounter difficulties in the performance of his tasks. In an analysis of the rôle of the teacher, B.R. Wilson has grouped the "conflicts" and "insecurities" inherent in the occupation as follows:—those resulting from diverse obligations; those which derive from the diverse expectations of those whose activities impinge on the rôle; those arising from circumstances in which the rôle is marginal; those arising from the circumstances in which the rôle is inadequately supported by the institutional framework in which it is performed; those arising from conflict between commitments to the rôle and commitments to the career-line; and, finally, those arising from divergent value-commitments of the rôle and of the wider society. ¹ The Youth Employment Officer is no less subject to such conflicts and insecurities than the school teacher. Indeed, it could be argued that given the obligations which he has towards, and the relationships in which he is involved with, employers—in addition, that is, to children, parents and superiors—he is more subject to rôle conflict and rôle strain than is the teacher. I have considered some of the problems which confront the Youth Employment Officer elsewhere, and will therefore not deal with them here. It suffices merely to remark that the Youth Employment Officer cannot be expected to resolve easily the diversity of expectations

in regard to employment as between child, parent, teacher and employer. It is to be noted, then, that the efficiency or otherwise of the Youth Employment Service must be viewed not just as a function of the amount of resources afforded to it or of the "quality" of its staff, but as a consequence, also, of the conflicts and contradictions which are built into the role of the Youth Employment Officer.

The ethical problems implicit in vocational guidance were referred to above. It is not proposed to pursue this aspect here, but it is pertinent to point out that there is evidence to suggest that first jobs entered exercise a lasting influence upon a person's subsequent occupational history—the first job entered thus represents a crucial step. This has led Lipset and Malm to argue that "Educators, especially, should consider how they may help students to plan realistically while in school or college for the jobs available in the labor market, to seek out the jobs best suited to their capacities and, if possible, to weigh carefully the choice among alternative job opportunities." In the British context, this programme is at present far from being fulfilled.


(e) Other Influences Upon Job Aspirations and Attainment.

There are other social influences which play a part in motivating children in regard to employment and which help to determine the type and level of occupation which they enter.

J. Beaussier has coined the phrase "Tiers-Milieu" to describe such influences—which represent, for him, a grand residual category. Beaussier writes: "Le 'Tiers-Milieu' peut se définir comme toutes les influences qui échappent au contrôle direct de l'école et de la famille (groupes formels et informels, mass media, etc.). Son action sans cesse accrue s'exerce, à peu près à tout moment, sous des formes anarchiques, diffusant des informations, promouvant, implicitement ou ouvertement, des valeurs qui tendent à entrer en conflit dans l'esprit même des enfants avec celles de l'école et des familles." Beaussier argues that one consequence of the fact of these varied influences playing upon the young person may be indecision and confusion:—"Il en résulte, pour l'adolescente, de graves perturbations qui viennent rendre encore plus difficile le choix des objectifs à attendre et des conduites à suivre." One of the wider social influences referred to by Beaussier is that of the mass media. And this example serves to demonstrate the complexity.

of the influences involved. If television is taken as an illustration, there is, firstly, a direct influence upon choice of work and aspirations through programmes designed specifically to assist school leavers; secondly, there is a less direct but no less real influence deriving from plays, feature programmes, discussions and news broadcasts which explicitly or implicitly contain commentaries upon specific kinds of employment and upon work in general; and, thirdly, there is a much more diffuse influence which derives from the general norms and values conveyed by television programmes, from which children infer worthwhile or satisfying objectives in life and modes of living. As Beaussier says, the "lessons" implied in the variety of programmes transmitted by the medium of television may be contradictory of each other and of "lessons" promulgated by other media—such as newspapers or magazines—and by other institutions which affect the child's attitudes towards and behaviour in regard to employment, such as the school or the local community.

Another category of influences affecting children's aspirations and actions in regard to employment is political affiliation. Active participation by a parent in the Labour Party is likely to affect a child's attitudes towards work, for example. This may take a variety of forms—ranging from an over-riding concern with pay and conditions to a Ruskin-like pursuit of beauty in the work-setting and of nobility through the skilful use of mental and manual faculties. With regard to religious affiliation, too, it would seem
that the values implicit in such involvement spill over into or affect attitudes towards work. A study by Lenski, for example, leads to the suggestion that Jews may rank chances for advancement higher than do Protestants in assessing the attractions of a job, and Protestants in turn rank this criterion higher than do Catholics.¹ Musgrave has drawn attention to analogous evidence relating to the influence of ethnic factors such that "Various races transmit different degrees of occupational aspirations to their children."²

Of another order are those influences which affect the social grading of occupations: this is very much bound up with changes in the system of social stratification, of course. On the more general level, however, "moods" of lesser or greater duration may prevail in regard to certain categories of occupation. One American study, for example, suggests that scientific occupations have enjoyed high prestige over the last quarter of a century, in comparison with "culture orientated" occupations such as novelist or musician. Such changes as occurred over this period in the prestige of occupations seemed to reflect changes in economic status, "blue collar"

jobs improving their place as a consequence of or in harmony with realised differentials as between manual and non-manual incomes.\(^1\) Propaganda may affect young people's evaluations of various types of employment. There have been complaints in the U.S.S.R., for example, that because of the glamourisation of factory work by official propaganda, there is a shortage of girl aspirants to office and shop work. In Britain, such glamour as there is tends to be attached, for girls, to clerical work. But it is not inconceivable that a new age of technology may induce girls to change their pink cardigans and electric type-writers for white overals and plastic test-tubes—or even prefer a capstan lathe in a factory to a comptometer machine in a supermarket. There are various devices for attempting to amend people's attitudes towards particular occupations of course: the term rodent operator, it has been argued, secures more applicants than does "rat catcher" in the modern world. In 1960, members of the Bridlington Chamber of Commerce became dissatisfied with the term "shop assistant" and recommended something "more glamorous", such as "retail technician" or even "counter P.R.O." or "retail tactician". The proposed change in name appeared to derive from problems of recruitment rather than as a consequence of job enlargement. The Chamber of Commerce would seem to have recognised the truth that matters other than wages and material conditions are important to young workers. An increasing concern with the

---

"image" of a job has, indeed, been detected by one of the largest Youth Employment Services recently—it has reported that school leavers nowadays think not only about the prospects and pay offered by a post but also whether it presents an up-to-date "image" in which they would wish to be involved. The comment by the Youth Employment Officer is that these circumstances result in it becoming part of the Officer's work "To guide teenagers and their parents through the maze created by modern techniques of publicity and the glamorous impressions of jobs sometimes created in stories and plays."\(^1\)

An appreciable increase in personal or family wealth may also result in the application of different criteria in the choice of work than obtained when reference to amount of income was of primary importance—indeed, there is evidence that in Britain certain workers prefer to take an improvement in the standard of living in the form of more leisure hours rather than more money for the purchase of material or service goods. There could, with technological change leading to higher productivity and allowing of the taking over by machines of certain work now done by men, be an extension, in the future, of the trend noted by Turner in regard to American High School girls\(^2\)—such that husbands, too, choose

careers in terms of interest and prestige. It has been observed that already "Occupational choices.....often seem to be made not so much to provide the income which will support the highest standard of living—even within the purview of a particular class or status group—as to consort with a preferred style of life."\(^1\) The work of Dumazedier does, indeed, indicate the importance which a person may attach to his leisure interests in making decisions about work—considerations such as hours, shift work requirements, proximity to home, and so on, may affect the readiness to pursue a particular occupation by reference to a specific leisure interest or to general attitudes towards leisure.\(^2\) (The relationship between work and "non-work" involvement is considered at greater length in Part III below).

A further factor which requires discussion can conveniently be considered at this point—namely, the position of women in British society and the special implications that this has for the education and employment of girls and, consequently, for their aspirations in regard to work. It has already been indicated that the Sheffield parents tended, on the whole, to consider that the education and employment of girls were much less important matters than was the case in regard to boys; for girls would in time become housewives


and mothers, whereas boys were destined to have the responsibility of providing for the home. It was stressed above that many girls and many boys shared this appraisal and attitude whilst certainly some (and probably the majority) of school teachers were of the same mind. (The attitudes of the respondents when they had reached the age of twenty—by which time many of them were married and many others engaged to be married—will be discussed below). The national need for educated and skilled workers has resulted in an increasing number of women entering employment and returning to work after bringing up children, or working full-or part-time whilst the children are still young: such is the demand for labour that some firms make special provisions for shift work, and starting and finishing times, to accommodate women's domestic responsibilities.

It is clear that, generally, the position of women in modern society is undergoing change. The change takes many forms, and is a consequence of a variety of factors. One example is in regard to the legal position of women with reference to ownership of property, marital rights and obligations, and rights in regard to child-bearing. These developments can be interpreted as an outcome of diffuse factors, inter-acting in various ways and in varying degrees—factors such as the better bargaining position of women in an economy that requires their labour and, more generally, the extended power of

---

women in society consequent upon political emancipation, and upon increased educational opportunity.

In Britain, specific factors which affect the position of women include changes in the sex ratio, changes in norms and values in regard to the age of marriage—which influences the timing and the nature of the domestic cycle, and hence of the capacity and the motivation of married women in regard to employment—and the increasing efficiency, availability and willingness to use birth control methods, particularly the pill, which gives married women a command over their life chances and life styles which previously they did not possess. Women are accordingly able to plan the size and spacing of their families, a point that was made above in the discussion of demographic influences upon the occupational structure. The nature of the demand for women's labour is also changing. An increasing proportion of "service" occupations, and changes in technology which have done away with the need for hard manual labour (for which men only were deemed sufficiently strong), have resulted in wider employment opportunities for women. And although trade unions and professional associations have resisted, and still do resist, the intrusion of women, there are clear signs that barriers are being removed. Even though the application of the principle of equal pay remains limited in Britain, there is evidence to suggest that with the increasing demand for female labour equality in this regard will be attained. In strictly financial terms, too, it would seem that education for girls is likely to "pay off"—just as it
does with boys. Indeed, an American study suggests that the "pay off" for women may be greater than in the case of men—the earnings of men at the age of fifty who had left school at 16-17 were 36 per cent higher than those of men who had left at 15. For women, the earnings were 50 per cent higher. Woodhall has commented that "The tendency of many people to regard the education of men as a form of investment, but the education of women as pure consumption ignores the fact that the relation between education and earning power is no less positive for women than for men." Whilst the "trends" in regard to women and employment may, in a general way, be fairly obvious, it must be emphasised that deeply seated attitudes, norms and behaviour continue to sustain in Britain, and not least amongst working class men and women, a view that it is morally wrong and socially unjustifiable for a woman to view work in a way analogous to men. It will be seen below that opposition to women working—and more so to them thinking in terms of a career—is very strong and takes a variety of forms. Especially marked is the view that for a woman to work detracts from her "proper" status—as a wife and mother—and from her husband's status as the breadwinner. Any meddling with the position is regarded with suspicion, and looked upon as being


2 Ibid., p.22
dangerous to the stability of the family. The Sheffield research shows this clearly, and other studies suggest the same conclusion. Clark, for example, has reported on the basis of a small study in the English Midlands that men, women, boys and girls "Accept implicitly a philosophy of ours being a man's world."\(^1\) The intensity with which this view impregnates young people's thoughts was emphasised in the study of the social background of delinquency in an English mining town referred to earlier.\(^2\) This showed that many bright working class schoolgirls lost their mental vitality on leaving school, as if in resignation to the dreariness that life held in store for them as working class wives and mothers. Their expectations, like those of their less able girl contemporaries, was of a routine domestic round. It presumably seemed to them to be far better to be bereft of intellectual leanings and to succumb to the inevitable, rather than attempt to sustain interests which would necessarily be held in vain and lead only to grosser dissatisfaction. All the forces at work in the locality, the norms and values and expectations of parents, siblings, peers and boy friends, of school, church, youth club and work served to induce in the girls a repudiation of a way of life other than that appropriate to the wife and mother in a mining community.

\(^{1}\)A.S. Clark, private communication dated 26th June, 1967.

\(^{2}\)M. P. Carter and Pearl Jephcott, _The Social Background of Delinquency_. op.cit.
Veness has suggested that the expected modification of girls' attitudes to work in response to the changing social and employment scenes has already gone much further than is commonly argued: she "questions the assumption that work outside the home plays a trivial part in the lives of young women today, even of 'low stream girls',," and produces some evidence to support her case. The evidence, in my assessment, indicates the existence of a trend towards different appraisals by girls, but does not constitute a convincing argument that this is as yet far advanced. The matter will be returned to below, in the consideration of the Sheffield respondents' behaviour and attitudes in regard to work and marriage.

One aspect that should be mentioned at this point is that changing attitudes and opportunities in regard to women's employment will not necessarily result in a duplication in women of the motivations and job satisfactions—or dissatisfactions—which obtain in regard to men. An ironic outcome, indeed, could be that women—hitherto confined to the home—will in future be able to achieve at work a fulfilment and satisfaction which is denied to men, or which men deem to be a welcome bonus if forthcoming but which they expect rarely to accompany the main attributes of a "good" job—namely, as high a financial reward as possible, together with not over-many disadvantages in terms of hours or fatigue. Such a reflection is prompted by a study reported by R.H. Turner, which suggests that American High School girls expect their future husbands to satisfy their (the girls') material hopes—by getting well-paid jobs, even
at the expense of satisfaction in the work itself, whilst the girls choose careers for themselves according to the criteria of interest and prestige. These findings relating to American High School girls would seem to have little relevance to the situation in regard to secondary modern schoolgirls from working class homes in Britain. On the contrary, the comparison might be made as an exemplification of the very different life chances and life styles associated with different societies and different levels within the social hierarchy. But Turner's research does serve to underline the differences which exist between the sexes in regard to factors affecting attitudes and actions with reference to employment. Turner's analysis may, of course, be a pointer to future trends in Britain. The concern here is not with adumbration, however, but with establishing the fact that status differences in regard to men and women affect the aspirations of boys and girls: in Britain at present the effect of this would seem to be to induce in girls from working class homes the attitude that choice of work is a less serious matter for them than it is for boys.

\[1\] Ralph H. Turner, "Some Aspects of Women's Ambition", op.cit.
The concern in this Chapter has been to draw attention to the range of factors which influence school leavers' attitudes, motivations, qualifications and attainments in regard to employment. Given the diversity and complexity of these factors, it might perhaps be expected that there would be a lack of realism in regard to children's aspirations. In fact such empirical work as has been done in this field suggests that the vast majority of boys and girls are realistic in their choice of work.

In the earlier Sheffield study, a small minority of boys and girls did refer to fantasy jobs when asked about choice of work during their last term at school.\(^1\) But they recognised that these jobs were beyond their hopes of attainment, and were associated with the world of "day-dreaming". In addition, about one-third of the respondents referred to ideal jobs—these were jobs which they would have preferred to the ones which they actually aimed at, but which they did not propose to seek (at least not in the near future) because they knew that they were disqualified because of lack of ability, ill-health or age, or because they were not prepared to stand out against parental opposition. Such realism in aspirations can also be inferred from the study by E.M. and M. Eppel of the values of a sample of teenage workers in London, which showed that "A surprisingly low number modelled themselves on unrealistic or

glamorous roles in society."² Liversedge has reported similar conclusions: "The fantasy choices of (the) boys are at a distressingly mundane and realistic level; the majority rarely leave their immediate world. We had expected that in their flights of fancy they would select the more exciting occupations such as pilot, professional footballer, explorer, 'pop' singer, or even the old-fashioned engine driver. Instead we have the boy who expects to be a labourer at the brickyard choosing the very same job in fantasy, and the potential rubber moulder, who, when offered the whole world from which to choose, still wants to be a rubber moulder."² Indeed, so far from aspiring to jobs which make demands in excess of their likely attainment, the large proportion of secondary modern school leavers would seem to aim well within their capacity.³ Even in cases in which there is a certain lack of realism in choice of a particular occupation, furthermore, the tendency is for aspirations to fall within a

---

³The work of Thelma Veness also supports this conclusion; see School-leavers: their Aspirations and Expectations, op.cit.
realistic range of employment—within the segment "appropriate" to a child having regard to abilities, attitudes, attainment at school, and home and neighbourhood background.¹

It is true that children's knowledge about the nature of the work involved in the particular occupations which they aim at, and about the general conditions of employment—other, perhaps, than wages and hours—tends to be slight. And they may cherish somewhat romantic misapprehensions as to what work will be like; but, for the most part, they have no illusions as to the sector of the occupational structure open to them. Indeed, very few secondary modern leavers can be said to concern themselves with, or to have more than a vaguely construed notion of the occupational structure outside of the particular portion of it towards which their education and their social background have propelled them. In regard to many school leavers, in a sense, there is not much choice to be made. They have been brought up to expect to enter manual work, probably semi- or unskilled. Once this has been

established, it does not make a lot of odds which particular occupation is entered. It is not a question of making an appraisal of the advantages and disadvantages of an occupation, but rather a matter of going along with the inexorable processes which seemingly to the children operate in his neighbourhood for people of his background. In consequence, "Actual job selection often seems casual; it is not an assessment of the market possibilities but an apparently unthinking acceptance of the suggestions and recommendations of relatives and friends."

The influences which make for realism in job choice are well summed up by R.V. Clements, in reporting the conclusions of a study of children attending grammar, technical and secondary modern schools in the Manchester area. Clements writes: "The analysis of the jobs chosen and of those mentioned as to be avoided, suggested that these children did not choose from the whole range of occupations, though they may not have realised this—their mental endowment and their social and educational milieu have established, within broad limits, the particular segment of possible occupations in terms of which they think. It does not occur to the secondary modern boy that he might at least aspire to become a barrister, whilst the clever grammar school boy seldom entertains even the notion of becoming a semi-skilled mechanic, and positive choices

---

have been made from a restricted number of possibilities. Without considering the social desirability of this situation, but taking as given the fact of the differential advantages bestowed by different home, neighbourhood and school backgrounds, it does seem likely that the segment of the career spectrum which a particular boy has studied will be roughly appropriate to him—or at least, that the proportion of suitable jobs within that group will be greater than that of suitable ones outside it."¹

The conclusions with regard to the realism of job aspirations which derive from various studies are in accordance with the theory put forward above that the links between education and employment are to be understood by reference to the overall social structure, with social class factors exercising a fundamental mediating influence in British society. Individuals are allocated to or guided towards a particular level of employment—with associated life styles, life chances, statuses and rôles—as a consequence of undergoing socialisation, in the general sense of the term and including formal education, in accordance with the social background from which they come. Certain social institutions, embedded in and moulded by social class factors—notably the family and education—induce and support norms and values which are conducive to the formulation of "appropriate" aspirations and attitudes, having regard to the employment opportunities available. The social

¹The Choice of Careers by School-children, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1958, p.15.
structure represents a core to which the varying and various influences upon occupational choice and attainment, complex and conflicting as they are, all have reference. It is because of the basic importance of the family and of social class—with the ecological reinforcement normally obtaining because of the connections between social class and area of residence—that there is a realism so far as the work aspirations of the majority of secondary modern school leavers is concerned: the diversity of influences affecting job choice is ordered by the supremacy of these institutions. Other influences may complicate the process, but they tend not to be sufficiently strong to counter the influences of home and social class background. If, and to the extent that, the school is in opposition to the home and social background of its pupils, either it becomes largely irrelevant to them and ignored by them, or it is modified in its influence through having to come to terms with them.

The majority of children, accordingly, remain at approximately the same relative socio-economic level as their parents, or, at any rate, within the same broad band of the occupational structure—although some overall movement from one generation to another is to be expected as a consequence of changes in the occupational structure itself. There are exceptions to this general process, of course, and one aspect of the present study is the identification and explanation of exceptions. The occupational and the social structures can only accommodate a limited amount of occupational
and social mobility at a given time, however, The majority of secondary modern children in Britain accordingly proceed "normally" to their "natural" level of employment, in manual and minor clerical jobs.

It will be seen below that the experiences of school leavers during their first five years in employment confirms the validity of this conclusion. It is, indeed, now time to turn to the main subject-matter of this study. In the following Chapter the Research Method is described and subsequent Chapters are concerned with the detailed analysis of the process of adjustment to employment. This analysis includes "non-work" facets of the lives of respondents as well as features related directly to their jobs. In the final Chapters the attempt is made to draw the evidence together and to examine the process of adjustment by references to the "images" of society which are held by young workers; it is in this context that the foregoing discussion of the influence of social class factors will be taken up again and developed.