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

by

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"NON-WORK" PERSPECTIVES—MARRIAGE, EDUCATION
THE YOUNGER GENERATION, LEISURE, SOCIAL CLASS
CHAPTER XII
MARRIAGE AND COURTING

Grizelda Rowntree's studies of marriage in Britain have led to the conclusion that a "twentieth century trend towards earlier marriage, which is occurring in all advanced countries, has meant that an increasing proportion of brides marry before their twentieth birthdays. In Britain it has risen from ten per cent in the 1930s, to twenty per cent in the 1950s. The rise in the number of teenage grooms, although less substantial, is equally notable—from two per cent in the 1930s, to four per cent in the 1950s. A high proportion of these teenage brides and grooms, though by no means all, are from working class homes, many of them having fathers in unskilled occupations, and having themselves received an unselected secondary education.

The marriage patterns obtaining for the respondents in the present study fit in with this general trend, a high proportion of the girls being married by the time of Interview No. 4, that is at or before the age of nineteen (31/84), and a much smaller, but nevertheless substantial proportion of the youths (11/86). In addition, 25 girls and 13 youths were engaged to be married and whilst most expected to marry within the next year or eighteen months, for some of them the marriage was imminent. Probably some of the respondents who were engaged (and some of the 8 girls and 9 youths who were "going steady") would marry earlier than intended because of the pregnancy of the girl—several of those marriages which had already occurred were hastened (or took place) because of pregnancy. (In the Postal Survey, of a total of 235 youths and 208 girls there were also high proportions of married, engaged and "going steady" respondents—married, 30 youths and 66 girls; engaged, 66 youths and 73 girls; "going steady", 62 youths and 34 girls; single 77 youths and 35 girls). Marriage and courtship is, then, obviously a matter of concern for a high proportion of young workers, especially by the time they have reached the age of twenty. In this Chapter the intention is to examine respondents in terms of occupation, family background, and so on, and to discuss some of the implications of marriage and courtship amongst young workers, especially in regard to their adjustment to employment and to adult life. In the discussion, I have drawn upon the experiences of the respondents themselves and
upon the experiences of their spouses. Table 75 analyses the age of the respondents at the time of their marriage.

**Table 75**

**AGE UPON MARRIAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Youths</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 years or less</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four of the youths had children (one child in each case) and sixteen of the girls had children (9 of the girls had one child; 3 of the girls had 2 children and 4 of the girls had 3 children). (Table 81 refers.)

As far as could be assessed, none of the youths "had" to get married because of his wife's pregnancy—and one in particular was at great pains to demonstrate that this was not the case. On the other hand, 7 of the girls were pregnant at time of marriage—this was disclosed from data on date of marriage and age of first child, and was affirmed by four girls of their own will. It is unlikely that any of the remaining nine girls "had" to marry for this reason, however. Indeed, an important point which emerges is that just as important as teenage "shot-gun" marriage, and probably more important, is the wish of many young people to conform—to settle down, but to abide by established norms and not have sexual intercourse (or at least not have it imprudently) before marriage. Early marriages can be seen on this basis to represent compliance.
Characteristics of Married Respondents

Of the 11 married youths, 2 were apprentices, 8 were semi-skilled workers and 1 was unskilled. Table 76 shows the overall position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Totals in Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-manual</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers are small, but it is notable that non-manual workers were married and only a small proportion of apprentices were married. Both of the apprentices had married fairly recently, at the age of nineteen, and neither of them had children. A variety of reasons account for occupational variations in marriage patterns. Relatively low wages discourage apprentices from marrying when young—they tend to wait until they are on full pay, after having completed their apprenticeships (or, to put it differently, relatively high wages may encourage semi-skilled workers to marry—although analysis below of take-home pay indicates that marriage is not necessarily associated with high wages). In this context, it is to be noted that both of the married apprentices were living with their parents, at a relatively low rent. Apart from the matter of wages, apprentices tended to
favour completing their training, to "get a trade behind them", before taking on domestic responsibilities. And those apprentices who were doing further education courses, especially if this involved attendance at Evening Classes, had less chance of meeting girls, or at least, less chance of getting to know them well, because of time given over to studies. Parental influence, too, tended to discourage apprentices from the more aspiring homes from getting serious with girls until they had completed their apprenticeships (although in fact the fathers of both of the married apprentices were skilled workers).

If these factors operate to minimise teenage marriage amongst apprentices, however, their influences must not be exaggerated. Many apprentices did find time for courting, and a high proportion of the engaged youths were apprentices; several apprentices, too, were "going steady". Table 77 shows the position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 77</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIPS WITH GIRLS AND LEVEL OF SKILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-manual</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fact that so many apprentices were engaged to be married reflects, at least in part, a greater tendency on their part to "plan ahead", and is related to the inclination to finish the
apprenticeship before marriage. But the point stands out that a higher proportion of apprentices than semi-skilled, unskilled or non-manual workers had some serious contact with the opposite sex. This is to be understood, to an extent, in terms of a tendency for moderately aspiring young workers to want to "settle down", a tendency which will be discussed in more detail below.

The occupations of the married girls (last occupations of those not working) are shown in Table 78.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married Working</th>
<th>Unmarried Not Working</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'A'</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'B'</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'C'</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lowest proportion of marriages occurred in Category 'A' type employment—8/29 were married, compared with approximately one-half of the girls in the other two Categories. This reflects family background and aspirations to some extent, as in the case of apprentices: it also reflects the fact that several of the girls in this Category saw themselves as "career" girls; or, at least, having spent some time in training to be a secretary, nurse or hairdresser, for example, they wanted to "make use" of their ability in their chosen occupations. An additional factor is that involvement in Category 'A' type of employment resulted in the amendment of the
norms and values to which certain girls subscribed—in a rejection of solid "working class" norms (which might have induced them to marry early) and an assumption of the middle class norms which obtained amongst colleagues in the office (norms, that is, which favoured longer courtship and later marriage). But again the point must not be pushed too far, and, again, for reasons similar to those suggested in regard to apprentices, a high proportion of Category 'A' girls were engaged or "going steady" as Table 79 shows.

**Table 79**

RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUTHS AND LEVEL OF OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Engaged</th>
<th>&quot;Going Steady&quot;</th>
<th>Remainder</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'A'</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'B'</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'C'</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A lower proportion of Category 'A' girls continued work after marriage. This was associated with the fact that a higher proportion of them had children—and it reflects a particular style of life associated with Category 'A' girls, in which it is not thought right for the wife to continue working after marriage, least of all if she has children: or, put more positively, it is thought to be proper and natural for the wife to have children and to be at home, in contrast with other married girls who work in factory or shop. There are additional factors, however; the tendency was for Category 'A' girls to marry later in the five year period rather than earlier.
and this meant that their babies were young—too young to leave, perhaps. Additionally, because Category 'A' girls tended to move on marriage away from the district in which their parents lived, there was no one nearby with whom the baby could be left. One factor which complicates the analysis is that certain girls who had previously worked in Category 'A' type employment moved, on or after marriage, to Category 'B' or 'C', as has already been noted. But the above arguments remain valid, taking this fact into account.

Table 80 compares age of marriage with occupations.

**Table 80**

AGE AT MARRIAGE AND LEVEL OF OCCUPATION—GIRLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age at Marriage</th>
<th>Category 'A'</th>
<th>Category 'B'</th>
<th>Category 'C'</th>
<th>Totals in Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 years or less</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The high proportion of Category 'A' wives with a child is seen in Table 81.

**Table 81**

NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND LEVEL OF OCCUPATION—GIRLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has 1 child</th>
<th>Category 'A'</th>
<th>Category 'B'</th>
<th>Category 'C'</th>
<th>Totals in Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+ children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is to be noted from this table, also, that the girls with large families are or were in employment in Category 'B' and 'C'. Only
three of the married girls with children were working at the time of Interview No.4, one in each occupational category.

An analysis of marriage in terms of number of jobs held is of little value in the case of youths because of the small number involved. It does show, however, that a high proportion (5/11) have had four or more jobs since leaving school, as compared with 19/86 overall—this is an indication of the fact that some jobchanging made necessary by increased financial burdens consequent upon or in anticipation of marriage, and of the fact that some changing was thought sensible in order to obtain secure employment so that recently assumed hire purchase payments could be kept up, for example, when freed from the risk of seasonal unemployment or short-time (of the 4 married youths with babies, two had had four jobs since leaving school, one had had five jobs and one had had two—several of the changes had been made, explicitly or by inference, in connection with marriage and starting a family).

An analysis of the number of job changes amongst married girls suggests a similar connection between job changing and marriage. It reflects, too, the occupational pattern: a small proportion of married girls had one job only and a high proportion of them (reflecting the higher proportion of Category 'B' and 'C' girls who were married) had a high rate of job changing. Table 82 analyses the position.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>I.Q. Grade</th>
<th>I.Q. Grade</th>
<th>I.Q. Grade</th>
<th>I.Q. Grade</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All apprentices</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is seen that married youths came to a decisively disproportionate extent from the lower I.Q. Grades: both of the married apprentices were of a low I.Q. Grade. It is not easy to come to conclusions or to make explanations in regard to such connections between marriage and I.Q. Various factors are involved, including family and social background, educational experience, patterns of leisure activity (including likelihood of meeting girls), and so on. The less intelligent youths are, of course, less likely to be in occupations which would require further education and training, or would offer long term prospects which might be conducive to thinking and planning...
ahead, in non-work as in work activities. The analysis in regard to girls shows a less clear-cut, but broadly similar, picture.

**TABLE 84**

MARITALAGE, I.Q., AND LEVEL OF OCCUPATION—GIRLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>I.Q. Grade 1</th>
<th>I.Q. Grade 2</th>
<th>I.Q. Grade 3</th>
<th>I.Q. Grade 4</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'A'</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'B'</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'C'</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Category 'A'</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All respondents</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An analysis in terms of schools attended is not particularly helpful, because of the small numbers involved and because of the complexity of the factors making for early marriage—the school, whether as an index of education received, or as amalgamated with leisure and social background, is too crude for present purposes. Table 85 shows the position.

**TABLE 85**

MARRIAGE AND SCHOOL ATTENDED—YOUGTHS AND GIRLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Married Youths</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>Married Girls</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of Spouses

It is a commonplace that most marriages occur between persons of similar social background and experience; the present research exemplifies this fact but also points to the social mobility—albeit often modest and within the grand-scale social class categories normally used in mobility studies—which occurs through marriage. In this Section certain of the similarities and some of the differences as between respondents and their spouses are traced.

The married youths had wives of the same age or just a little younger—except that one respondent aged twenty had recently married a girl of seventeen, in a runaway marriage to Gretna Green. All of the girls married men of the same age or a year or two older, with the exception of one Category 'A' girl who married a school teacher aged 27 at the time of Interview No.4, and one Category 'C' girl whose husband was a divorcee aged 28.

Ten of the 11 wives of respondents were born and bred in Sheffield, in most cases in the same neighbourhood as the husband or in a nearby and similar area. In the one exception, the wife had been met when the respondent was serving in the Forces, away from Sheffield.

Twenty-six of the girls married Sheffield men, and 2 others married men from the Sheffield region. Some husbands were from the same neighbourhood, but many were from other parts of the city, and had been met at dance hall or cinema in the city centre.
Certainly 10 and possibly all 11 of the youths' wives left school at the age of fifteen, as did certainly 26 of the girls' husbands, and possibly more (two of the husbands were definitely over the age of fifteen when they left). This may be taken, broadly, as an indication of similarity in type of school attended and in educational experience.

All of the youths married girls who worked within the secondary modern range of employment, as Table 86 shows.

**TABLE 86**

MARRIAGE AND SPOUSES' OCCUPATIONS—YOUTHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>'A'</th>
<th>'B'</th>
<th>'C'</th>
<th>Totals in Cat.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The expected pattern is also seen in regard to girls (Table 87).

**TABLE 87**

MARRIAGE AND SPOUSES' OCCUPATIONS—GIRLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Skilled</th>
<th>Semi-skilled</th>
<th>Unskilled</th>
<th>Non-Manual</th>
<th>Totals in Cat.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'A'</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'B'</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'C'</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The analysis for Postal Respondents is as follows: Youths—1 non-manual worker had a wife in Category 'A'; 13 apprentices had wives in Category 'A'; 1 semi-skilled worker had a wife in Category 'A', 6 had wives in Category 'B' and 1 had a wife in Category 'C'; of the
unskilled workers 1 had a wife in Category 'A', 1 had a wife in Category 'B' and 4 had wives in Category 'C'. In the case of the girls, 10 in Category 'A' were married to non-manual workers, 13 to apprentices, 14 to semi-skilled workers and 2 to unskilled workers; of those in Category 'B' 1 was married to a non-manual worker, 1 to an apprentice, 13 to semi-skilled workers and 1 to an unskilled worker; in Category 'C' 1 was married to an apprentice, 8 were married to semi-skilled workers and 4 were married to unskilled workers).

Marriage, then, tends to consolidate respondents at the particular level of society in which they have grown up. In this regard, occupational similarity is an index, or an indication, of a broader complex of similarity, in regard to educational experience, aspirations, and family and neighbourhood experience. It was, indeed, such similarity which led to the couples meeting each other in the first place and subsequently led to their marriage. It is seen that within the broad category of "working class" there are distinctive sub-categories which tend to perpetuate themselves through marriage—although there is, of course, a substantial amount of marriage between persons in different sub-categories. A further point is that certain respondents, as will be seen, whilst having similar hopes, aspirations and activities to each other, were both different from their parents; especially was this so in regard to respondents who aspired to, or had already achieved, a small measure of upward mobility.
One outcome of this "fit" between husbands' and wives' occupations was that there was little dissatisfaction in the one partner about the other's job. No youths and four girls only were dissatisfied with their spouses' jobs. In the case of one of the girls, the dissatisfaction arose because her husband had had to give up an apprenticeship and enter semi-skilled work because of the need for more money. The other three girls were concerned about aspects of the particular job—dirty work, shift work, long travelling time—rather than about the level of occupation as such. Similarly, only 3 of the eleven wives of the married respondents were dissatisfied with their husbands' work, and this had to do with adverse aspects of the particular job rather than with the level of the work. The husbands of four girl respondents were dissatisfied with their wives' occupations. In one case it was a matter of particular conditions at work, but in three cases skilled husbands thought that their Wives' occupations were "not good enough". One of them said that factory work, for a woman, was "degrading", and that the "sooner my wife gets out of it, the better"—for people at work ("that sort of people") made his wife bad tempered. The wife had previously been a shop assistant, but found factory work more convenient now that she was married, because she finished earlier in the evenings and did not have to work at all on Saturdays. Another skilled worker did not like his wife doing factory work for similar reasons—and she, in her turn, had changed to such work from an office job for similar reasons to those of the respondent just cited.
And a third skilled husband disliked his wife doing warehouse work, and also considered that she was not accorded the status and financial rewards which would be commensurate with her responsibilities in the job that she had.

An analysis of places where the married respondents met their spouses shows the importance of neighbourhood and work place and also of similarity of leisure interests, which results in contact at dance hall, for example, or at a club or cinema (often, of course, these places were frequented precisely because of the hope of meeting someone of the opposite sex, rather than because of the programme which they offered).¹

Information is available for only 7 of the 11 boys, unfortunately. The influence of place of work is seen in 3 cases—an N.C.O. in the R.A.F. who married a girl serving on the same station, and two van drivers who married assistants from shops where they delivered goods. In the other 4 cases, the combined influences of neighbourhood and leisure activities was evident—in one case the couple met at a local dance hall; in another at the local youth club; one couple met in the queue outside the local cinema; and in the final case, in the youth's words, "We fell over one another in the doorway of a friend's house, where we both used to go to listen to records."

¹This pattern for meeting members of the opposite sex was already fairly clear at the end of the first year at work—see Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.309 et seq.
Similar data was obtained for 24 of the 31 married girls. The importance of location was clear in 12 cases—two couples were at the same school together (in one case the friendship continued unbroken from school-days, in the other it was resumed after a break). Another couple met whilst delivering newspapers for a local news-agent—the boy lived "just up the road" from the respondent. One couple lived next door to each other, and two others met at the local cinema. Girl friends in the neighbourhood were responsible for two of the four "blind-date" meetings—and the respondent's family was responsible for another of these (it was arranged by the respective brother and sister, who were at that time going out together—the respondent said, "We met by the post box on our corner.") Family and neighbourhood were also important with a respondent who met her husband at her sister-in-law's house, where she used to baby-sit (the husband was a neighbour of the sister-in-law). Two respondents met their husbands in local Working Men's Clubs and another met hers in a local public house—"just after giving up another boy friend I was out with a girl friend, and we said to each other, 'Come on, let's be daring and go into a pub'. A neighbour's friends was in there, and we got talking, and I was introduced to my husband". (The girl was concerned to make it clear that she was introduced, saying, "it wasn't a pick-up"). Six girls met their husbands through work, four were employed by the same firm, a warehouse girl met her husband when he delivered goods to the firm, and a factory girl met her husband through a "blind date" arranged by a
friend at work. Four girls met their husbands at dance halls in the city centre. Finally, two girls met their future husbands at parties in private houses. It is interesting that both of these cases represent a measure of upward mobility on the part of the girls, who were both office works. This supports the thesis that office girls (or, more generally, girls in Category 'A' type employment) are more likely to have their horizons broadened, or their norms, values and aspirations amended, than girls in other occupations—they are more likely to mix with a wider range of people than those of the neighbourhood or of the work scene.

In one case, a shorthand typist (the daughter of a skilled worker) married a graduate school teacher (who was, however, also of working class background); that there was an appreciation of a change in social class was indicated in the girl's reply to a later question,

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\text{cf. D. Lockwood, The Black-coated Worker, op. cit., p.116, where it is suggested that clerical work is an avenue of upward mobility for the working class girl. cf. also, E.M. Scott, R. Illsley and A.M. Thomson, "A Psychological Investigation of Primigravidae", II "Maternal Social Class Age, Physique and Intelligence", The Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the British Empire, 63, 1956, p.340—this reports from a study in Aberdeen that "A greater proportion of the women who move up the scale at marriage receive higher intelligence test scores than those who marry within their class, who, in turn, tend to be more intelligent than those who marry down the social scale at marriage."

Presumably factors such as "looks" (granted that beauty is in the eye of the beholder) and personality have a lot to do with female upward mobility through marriage, but I have not found any research data on this theme.\]
that she and her husband "belong to the great new class of technocrats". In the other case the daughter of a lower middle class manager of a small firm married a medical student, who was the son of a wealthy factory owner. There was one other clear-cut case of "marrying-up"—the daughter of a skilled man marrying a postgraduate trainee in industry. More substantiation for the argument that clerical (or Category 'A' type) employment is an avenue for upward mobility of working class girls would probably have been forthcoming had it been possible to continue the research into a later stage—it has been noted that Category 'A' type girls tend to marry at a later age than girls in other types of employment; the fiancé's and boy friends of several girls in Category 'A' employment were non-manual and professional workers.

One girl "married down"—previously in Category 'A' work, she had turned to shop assistants work after an argument with her employer. Her parents died, leaving their middle class house and a sum of money to the girl (her father had been a professional man). The girl soon married a youth who drove a delivery van which served the shop where she worked. The couple now had plans for establishing a business.

None of the youths married up in the sense of crossing class boundaries. (One respondent obtained a job as a car salesman through the girl with whom he was "going steady", and whose father owned the garage. But this youth was from a middle class family and had done non-manual work previously).
There were, then, a number of cases of upward mobility, either actual through marriage or potential through engagement. Movement from manual to non-manual level (or, more generally, from working class to middle class) is not however common amongst fifteen-year-old secondary modern leavers, whether through marriage or for any other reason. What does appear to occur rather more is moderate mobility within the working class (or manual) level—both upward and downward. And although apparently modest, the move is significant for the individuals concerned. The conclusions from the present study are necessarily tentative because of small numbers, but also because of major problems of definition and measurement—it has been noted in another context, for example, that the "apprenticeship" category covers a fairly wide range of respondents in terms of skill, further education and attitudes towards work. But there is nonetheless some justification provided by the analysis of respondents' occupations in comparison with their spouses' for the suggestion that there is upward and downward mobility within the working class through marriage—a factory girl marrying "up" to the apprenticeship level, for example, or an office worker marrying down to the semi-skilled level. And it is important to stress the point that objectively "slight" moves may, subjectively, be very important to the individuals concerned. The move from a back-to-back to a council house can be a major step within the working class, not just because of the increased amenities (garden, bathroom, etc.) but also because of the superiority which is
attached to living on an estate in terms of style of life. Similarly, for a shop girl or a factory girl to marry a skilled man may be regarded as a step-up by some parents and girls alike.

Another facet of this moderate degree of upward movement has reference to inter-generational mobility—and this was seen most clearly in regard to several respondents who viewed their marriage and accompanying house purchase and plans for the future, as a breaking away from the way of life of their parents. These young people were consciously aiming at, and in some measure already succeeding in, moving away from their parents' level in terms of physical standards (type, size and location of house, particularly), and in terms of style of life and associated aspirations and beliefs. This matter is best discussed in terms of examples and these will be given below. Table 88 shows the accommodation of the married respondents at the time of Interview No.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 88</th>
<th>ACCOMMODATION OF MARRIED RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YOUTHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives with parents</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lives with in-laws</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented flat/rooms</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented house</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented caravan</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House being purchased</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caravan being purchased</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated from wife (lives with parents)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is not always the case, of course; many of the respondents in the present study had no wish to leave the "community" of their slum area for the "isolation" of a council estate. And see M. Young and P. Willmot, Family and Kinship in East London, Rev. Ed., Pelican Books, London, 1962.
Half of the youths (5/11) and one-third of the girls (11/31) lived with their parents or "in-laws"—in most cases, the mother, or mother-in-law was responsible for all or most of the domestic chores. Four of the youths had taken their wives to their own homes, the other going to live with his wife's parents; and six of the eleven girls went to their husbands' homes on marriage. This is contrary to the tendency amongst young working class couples in Bethnal Green as reported by Young and Willmott: there it is more usual for the youth to go to his wife's home. Several points emerge.

The decision to live with parents—whether the youth's or the girl's—derived basically from the inability to obtain other accommodation at a price which could be afforded, whether rented or through house purchase (which required a deposit, of course, as well as weekly or monthly repayments of a mortgage). The ensuing decision as to whether to go to the husband's home or the wife's home was in the majority of cases resolved by reference to convenience and practicability rather than to any strong bond as between mother and daughter—a spare room being available in the one home whilst the other was already over-crowded, for example. In two cases, however, residence at the youth's home was consequent upon the girls being disclaimed by their parents because of objections to the marriage. But financial difficulties and housing shortages were not the only reasons for staying with parents or "in-laws"—when both of the married

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1 Family and Kinship in East London, op. cit., Chapter 2

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couples went out to work, there was convenience in having a mother or mother-in-law at home to do the domestic chores and prepare meals—and, in some cases, to look after the children (although there were several instances of the arrival of children putting such a strain upon household space, or personal relationships, consequent upon the demands and inconveniences of the child, that the couple had to move out with their baby). Whilst some married couples "mucked in" with the parental household—sharing all expenses and all facilities including the sitting room, and having only a bedroom to themselves—others maintained a fairly independent existence, cooking their own meals, and having a bed sitting room or a flatlet to themselves. And in by no means all cases were relationships between the young couple and the parents or "in-laws" harmonious. One youth said that what he disliked most about the neighbourhood was his mother-in-law, with whom he lived (his own parents were separated). And several couples were explicit that their stay with relations was a short-term measure, to enable them to save for a deposit on a house or for furniture—the wives were impatient to leave, to set up their own homes and fulfil properly their role of housewife. We have already noted that, for such girls, work was a subsidiary activity to marriage, a device for acquiring more money with the end in view of assuming fully the new status of married

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1 The matter is discussed further below, in the section on marriage and children.
woman. The same trait was visible, though less generally and less prominently, in husbands, who wanted to set up on their own, to be evidently married men, with responsibilities. Some of the married respondents who were now living in their own accommodation had previously stayed with parents or "in-laws" for a spell, whilst saving up, and/or before a child arrived.

The preferability of "being on your own" was stressed by some respondents and implied by most others. One girl, living in a deteriorating five-roomed house costing 15/5½d a week to rent was not satisfied with either the house or the neighbourhood; she explained "We wanted to get a place on our own, though we will move out of here as soon as possible. I think it is very important for a young couple to be on their own and, especially, not to be with in-laws." For to have a place of your own means that you have, and can feel yourself to have, the status and independence which marriage is deemed rightfully to confer: that is a positive aspect. But very important, too, is the recognition of the dangers of interference—"trouble", and, possibly, enstrangement. Such dangers are real ones in the working class, and respondents were well aware of them having direct experience with older brothers and sisters who brought their

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1 Young and Willmott, too, found that "the couples who choose to live with parents are the exceptions. Most people do not want to live with them, but near them". (op.cit., p.35). In the present study, as will be seen, there were also those who wanted to live at some distance—and even at some great distance—from their parents and/or in-laws.
wives or husbands home, or having heard about such troubles at work
or from friends in the neighbourhood.

On the other hand, bonds between married couples and their parents
remained strong in most cases—4/11 youths and 20/31 girls saw both
parents and in-laws regularly and fairly frequently; 2 youths and
2 girls saw parents regularly and 1 youth and 3 girls saw in-laws
regularly (the above figures include those living with parents and/or
in-laws). So that only 4 youths and 6 girls saw neither parents nor
in-laws regularly, or not at all (in one case, the girl’s parents
were dead; in another the youth and his wife lived away from Sheffield).

Often there were regular visits—to have tea on Sunday, or supper one
evening in the week, for example. One girl said they had decided to
take their present house because it was close to both sets of parents.
Another girl was more typical in her attitude: she explained that she
and her husband were "just a nice distance from my parents"—20 minutes
travelling time, "near enough to get to", but "far enough to prevent
them popping in continuously".

There were several examples of strained relationships between the
young couple and parents or "in-laws". In the cases of two youths,
a break had been made with their own parents, and the break was
directly connected with the marriage in both cases. One of the
youths seized upon the opportunity afforded by marriage to leave
home and start a new way of life. And the other youth had a dis-
agreement with his parents because they argued that, at nineteen,
he was too young to marry—his wife’s step-father and mother were

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equally displeased with her. Another youth, and his wife, were estranged from the girl's parents because of their disapproval of the marriage. Two girl respondents, also, had broken from their parents on marriage. In one case the father had disowned his daughter, who maintained, however, some tenuous links with the mother; the objection was that the daughter was too young to marry, at eighteen. In the second case, the step-father and the mother of the girl disowned her because she "had" to get married. In four of these five cases of estrangement with parents and/or in-laws, the age of the bride or groom was an important factor—the youth of 19 and the girl of 18 have been mentioned; in addition, there were two brides of sixteen.

It has been noted that 4 of the 11 married youths had children and that 16 married girls had children. In the case of 7 girls, pregnancy hastened or led to marriage. The fact of the "shot-gun" or "forced" weddings obviously loomed large amongst many of the married respondents. The 4 girls who stated that they were "forced" to marry all showed some defiance mixed with defence—and the most defiant girl was the most defensive one. She announced early in the Research Interview that she "had" to get married, and her attitude was that "you might as well know now"—get the matter over and done with, as it were, rather than embark upon a process of insinuatory prodding as to dates and ages. For, in any case, she explained, she was "not ashamed"—it is "a fact of life". Respondents felt that some comment was called for on this point, however—even though
the questioning did not have the matter as a special concern, by any means, and Interviewers made no special effort to ascertain such information. The sheer fact of raising the subject of marriage and children triggered off in respondents a train of thought which called, in their minds, for a statement of their own position in regard to pregnancy at marriage. Thus one youth, already referred to as being especially pre-occupied with the matter, demanded exactness with regard to day, month, and year of marriage and of his child’s birth. This felt compulsion was probably more emphatic amongst the present respondents who recognise that they have married "early"—compared with most—than it would be amongst those who married later.

At least two other married girls, who so far had no children, were pregnant at the time of Interview No.4, and several others were hopeful, as one put it, "that something will happen soon". Others had longer term plans for children—after having got their own homes and furniture, or saved up enough to "give them a good home" and to "do everything properly" for the babies. Four girls were looking ahead as much as three or more years to the time of their first child. The attitudes towards and plans for having babies provide a clear illustration of the norms and values to which the young married couples subscribed or sought to subscribe. The wish to do things properly, and to provide a good home in some cases represented only a concern to adhere to the standards of their own parents. But in several instances it was the mark or touch-stone of an inspiration to do "something better", and represented, clearly,
a departure from parental norms and values, or, at least, parental performance. Thus, one girl, with a son of eighteen months, said that she did not want more children yet—"Not until Peter is at school: for we had to scrape and scrimp to get things together for the first baby. We want everything nice for the next." With high mortgage and other household expenses, it would be a long time before they could do things as they wished and intended for a new baby. The concern, then, was to keep the family at a manageable size and to "space" the children in such a way that it would be possible to provide a "decent" home life for children and parents alike. Respondents tended to talk in terms of "we"—for example, "we don't want more, two is enough"; and this is indicative that, in many cases, the size of family was a matter of policy and planning, with criteria derived from a style of life to which the couple aspired. As one girl, with a child due shortly, said, "We only want two children altogether: to have more would not be fair on the children—they wouldn't have a chance to be brought up properly". This respondent had in mind particularly the experience of an aunt who had "just had her ninth—and her eldest is only fourteen": for her aunt's "lot" were "not looked after properly". And in other cases, too, the decision in regard to family size had not just the positive element of striving after a new style of life, but the negative one of avoiding in their own married lives the discomforts and troubles of a large family, living in over-crowded conditions, which they had experienced themselves as children. But other girls had no
such thoughts and aspirations; some were already launched on the road to large families, overcrowded homes, and years of drudgery—and one, at least, had already arrived, though aged but twenty years, at this unwanted destination.

A special aspect of respondents' attitudes and practices in regard to children is the relationships with their own parents in this regard. On the whole, the evidence is that the respondents' mothers or mother-in-law, did not play a leading part in the arrangements for the births of the babies or in subsequent care during their early years. Nor, would it seem, did girl respondents, or the wives of youth respondents, consult with mothers about such things as number and spacing of children. None of the married youths with babies lived either with parents or with in-laws; and only 5 of the 16 girls with babies lived with their parents or in-laws. Of these 5, only 2 were still working. These two girls had direct assistance from their mothers, who looked after the babies whilst they were at work. And in another instance, a girl left her babies with her mother-in-law, who lived nearby. Otherwise, the married respondents with children made their own way. Indeed, 13 of the 16 married girls with children did not work—nor did any of the 4 wives of respondents who had children. In part, as has been seen, this independence from parents or in-laws was associated with the necessity for respondents to find other accommodation when a baby was due—the parental home not being large enough to cope with a child. But more important in most cases was the deliberate decision of respondents to be
independent so far as children were concerned as in other things, and to have the number of children they wanted, when and how they wanted. On the one hand there were those who were in conflict with parents because they "had" to get married, and, on the other hand, *those* and more numerous, there were *who* were not in conflict but who had "different" ideas from their mothers, and who were more sophisticated in birth planning techniques, more attuned to "modern" child rearing practices, and, in some cases, determined to bring up their children in a "better" way than had been their experience, to give the family as a whole a "decent life". Of course, it must be remembered that the married respondents now under discussion comprised the "early marriages", and it is possible, if not probable, that they contain a higher proportion than would be the case in the sample as a whole of young persons who break with their parents (or whose parents break with them) and, possibly, too, a higher proportion of youths and girls who were determined to improve upon their parents' standard of life, who aspired to something rather "better".

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1 The conclusions thus differ substantially, at least in emphasis, from those of Young and Willmott, who stress the importance of "services" and advice, from mother to daughter, when children are born. cf. Family and Kinship in East London, op.cit., pp.50 et seq.
Work After Marriage

It was noted above that girls whilst still at school envisaged marriage, sooner or later—and expected to settle down as housewives and mothers. Most of them envisaged continuing work after marriage for a few years and most, too, favoured this (55/84): 24 girls were opposed to working after marriage even for a year or two, whilst 5 were undecided on the matter. The main arguments in favour of a girl continuing work after marriage were two-fold—

the need to save for a home, and the desirability of keeping the mind occupied (only one girl thought that a woman might positively enjoy her work). In the event, 10 out of 16 married girls who, whilst at school, thought it a good plan to continue work after marriage were not working at the time of Interview No. 4—and whilst several of the 10 had worked for a while after marriage in most cases it was for a brief time only. 7 out of the 10 girls had babies and this was the main reason why they were not adhering to their previously expressed view that it is sensible for a girl to continue work after marriage. Of 5 girls who, whilst at school, were definitely opposed to women continuing work after marriage, only one was working at the time of Interview No. 4. In general, the conclusion to be derived from respondents' comments and behaviour is that working, or not doing so, after marriage is in many cases less a matter of "belief" or "view-point" as to the rights and wrongs or the advantages and disadvantages, than of the need to accommodate certain factors—having a baby to care for, or needing money from the extra wage, for example. But some decisions in regard to a wife not working after marriage were based primarily upon an attitude as to what is "right" and
"proper" for the woman in the married state—even though financial sacrifice, which could ill be afforded, was involved. Some husbands were very firm on this matter—as one respondent said, "No wife of mine is going out to work."

The opposition amongst youths to women going out to work was, indeed, quite widespread. Additional evidence to this effect was provided by answers to a question on whether men and women doing the same work should receive equal pay. Most respondents stressed that there were few jobs in which women could do the same job as men—even in work such as 'bus conducting, the argument was that men were more efficient at it, less likely to take time off, and more able to work overtime. But the main point here is that some respondents thought that it was wrong for a woman to be in such a situation that the question of equal pay could arise—she ought to be at home "looking after the house and the kids" and, as one youth put it, "it would be bad for a man's morale"—if a married woman was getting as much as her husband, she would get a bit above herself. A woman should work just to assist with the household. The youth's words were echoed by a girl, who said, "It is unfair that the girl should earn as much as the man as it makes the man look little".

For detailed information relating to married women at work in Britain in 1964, see the Appendix to Report for 1964-65 of the Trades Union Congress Women's Advisory Committee. This shows that 35.9 per cent of the work force was comprised of women. In 1963, 53 per cent of women at work were married.
Some Aspects and Examples of Married Life

The housing accommodation of the married respondents was very varied. Some who lived with their parents or in-laws had space and comfort. Others were severely overcrowded and decidedly uncomfortable. Of those who were not living with relations, the homes ranged from a newly built, semi-detached, privately owned house to a rented "two-up and two-down" at thirteen shillings a week, which was due for demolition the following year. Several respondents were living in single rooms with shared facilities—small and bare, and expensive (for example, £2/15s a week for one room and use of kitchen and bathroom). The difficulty in obtaining accommodation had been resolved in the cases of three couples by the renting or purchase of caravans—"the only way of getting more-or-less permanent accommodation", one respondent, with a child of twenty months, said. Another couple rented half a house from a brother-in-law—the girl explained, "we wanted to get married and they were in financial difficulties, they could help us and we could help them, so it seemed a good idea". The importance of accommodation to young people at a time of housing shortage and high rents is such that not only are marriages delayed because of inability to obtain accommodation, or in order to save for the high cost of purchase, but some marriages are expedited, the marriage
taking place much earlier than intended, because, as in this example, accommodation becomes available. A somewhat unusual menage was that of a girl respondent who shared a house, together with her husband, with her married brother, his wife and her brother's baby. The respondent did not go out to work, but looked after the household (including minding the baby) whilst the rest went out to work. Her brother and her husband each gave her £7 a week, from which she paid the housekeeping, rates and rent, saving anything left over "for the men".

Reliable and detailed data was obtained on the wages of the husbands of girl respondents in only a few instances. With the exception of the three professional concerned, the pattern is unlikely to differ significantly from that obtaining from the male respondents, however, except that the husbands of girl respondents tended to be a year or two older than the male respondents, and would therefore be on the "top", or full men's pay, whilst some of the youths had not yet reached that point. But it is clear from the girls' comments that in many cases it was a struggle, financially, to keep the family going, and that those who hoped to save for a house deposit had to economise drastically in other directions. This certainly was the position in regard to the married youths: their weekly take-home pay is shown in Table 89.
**TABLE 89**

**TAKE-HOME PAY OF MARRIED YOUTHS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Apprentices</th>
<th>Semi-skilled</th>
<th>Unskilled</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£5-9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£10-12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£13-15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£15-16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two apprentices did overtime regularly, in order to increase their income somewhat. But the amounts earned are included in the above analysis, which shows that they, like three other respondents, had a maximum take-home wage of £9. The three youths with take-home pay of over £10 also did regular overtime. One of the youths with take-home pay of £10 did a part-time job to raise additional income—he earned an extra £3 a week as a barman in a local Working Men's Club: he was separated from his wife and "needed the money for the maintenance".

Life was very difficult for some of the married respondents. The youth just cited, who was separated from his wife, had married at the age of eighteen and parted with his wife when he was just twenty. The one child of the marriage was in the care of his wife. He now lived again with his elderly parents and numerous brothers and sisters, in a house of squalor. Several of the girls, too, although not separated from their husbands, found that the romance had already gone: husbands were unreliable in their jobs or in the hours they kept; children couldn't be coped with, and there was not enough money to "make ends meet". Life seemed to be over, for these girls, almost before it had started.
There were several examples of girls who, on marriage, assigned all responsibilities to their husbands, viewing themselves as the centre-piece of the home, as it were, to be admired, looked after and protected. They left "everything" to their husbands—legal matters to do with the house, payment of bills, ordering of coal, and so on. There were other cases in which girls renounced all interest in matters outside the home. They saw their function as being to bear children and to do the housework. They regarded it as odd that they might be thought to have views on, or be knowledgeable about, such matters as education, politics or employment. Such matters, if the concern of anyone, were the concern of the man. The tasks of bearing children and keeping the home together were not easy ones, however—the amount of physical and moral stamina required when money was short and accommodation was poor was considerable. So that girls, especially young mothers, tended to be very depressed, and seemed to have given up all hope. A respondent with a son of eighteen months and a newly-born daughter complained bitterly of the difficulties of bringing up children in the slum area in which she lived (and in which she had been brought up herself). Her husband paid £1 a week in rent for a dingy, dirty, small house. She said that she liked "nothing at all" about the neighbourhood, and spoke of the smoke that "got on her nerves", "the bad air for the kids" and "the gossiping neighbours". Her ambition—which she expected would never be fulfilled—was to be able to move to an "Estate" house—that is, one on a Corporation estate; she saw,
there, the prospect of better house, better air, and a "better class of folk to live with". She was perpetually worried over money, too, and had an undependable husband who was "just a labourer, really", working on building sites. He was, she said, "easily led astray—he just does the job for the money, and if he doesn't like it, he walks out": he had been in and out of his present job twice that year already, for example. And it was a "terrible" job in which he got "filthy": he needed a clean vest and shirt each day, and it was "difficult to keep clean, us not having a bath". The girl was exhausted with life, and saw no prospect of improvement. Her relations lived close by, but so far from being a help were regarded as a positive nuisance—"they are always interfering; it's never your own home". They caused trouble with her husband, and hence between her husband and herself. Whatever the girls from the slums felt before marriage, once they started to have children they tended to want to move out—"all you breathe is muck here, it's not healthy for a kid", said one, and another respondent said, "It's alright for working in, but no one should be expected to live in it". There was an urge to move out, then, "to give the kids a better chance". These were not "status-seekers"—the possibility did not enter their heads of being other than "ordinary working class". But they wanted to be free from the dirt and smoke. It was an irony, indeed, that several of these young couples had come together so early, it would seem, because of a desire to escape from crowded and perhaps squalid homes, homes in which tempers were bad and everyone got on every
one else's nerves. Two young people, they decided to make a better life for themselves—but the shortage of housing, the lack of money and the coming of a child confirmed them in their squalid circumstances, rather than relieving them, either in the same neighbourhood or in a similar one elsewhere, and with less hope of escaping than they might have had if still single.

Of course, not all respondents felt the urge to move away: the feeling was most evident amongst those youths and girls who complained of interference from relations or neighbours. Others were keen to remain in the same neighbourhood precisely because they wanted to be "near to relations and friends"—"all my friends are here", "we've grown up together", and "the people are good" (that is, down to earth, with no pretensions), were the explanations offered by girls. Youths were able to think of other advantages—"the boozer's handy" said one, in front of an uncomplaining wife. But youths, too, tended on marriage to want to move out of the slum area: now that they were responsible for a wife, and had or were expecting children, they saw their old areas in a different light. Youths who had previously been quite content with their neighbourhoods—"where all your mates are"—looked with a different eye upon their surroundings; for "mates" were no longer of importance. These youths now looked inwardly to the family, and many of them did not like the circumstances in which they found themselves. One youth, living in one room with his wife and baby, referred to the "filthy air of the district, with the smoke from the engineering works": he said,
"If people went out into the hills and saw from there what Sheffield really looks like, with layers of smoke all over it, they'd move. There's no reason why people should have to live in such filth." Another respondent, a steel worker, who was married but as yet had no children, said that he would like to move—

"Anywhere: anywhere away from factories and chimneys. Somewhere where there is some clean grass, and some trees."

There were several instances, too, of respondents who had moved away on marriage from the area in which they were brought up, and who now would like to return—a nurse longed to go back to a corporation estate, being unable to "stand" the people in her present neighbourhood, who were "nasty and small-minded, people who have never been outside of Sheffield, and don't know anything better". Difficulty of accommodation was the key problem in this girl's case, as in others. Respondents from the older areas could often rent a house or room nearby—even though, as we have seen, some were far from satisfied with this; but they were, at least, in a familiar setting. But youths and girls from corporation estates found that there were few chances of accommodation to be had there, unless they stayed with parents or "in-laws". Several of these respondents found themselves in the older areas, hemmed in as never before—and they hated it. One girl, for example, after spending almost all of her years on a spacious post-war housing estate on the fringe of the city, now lived in a small, dark house, frowned on by a high factory wall and shadowed by a tall factory chimney. She

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"hated" the place, and complained that she "never sees life" and "just can't get used to life in the back-to-backs". Whatever the camaraderie of the older inhabitants, newcomers, she asserted, were subject to ostracism—"they don't ever acknowledge you in the streets—they look right through you".

The adjustment to married life was, then, accompanied by problems of how to "get on with" neighbours as well as relations, and involved aspects of "status" and associated styles of life which at least some respondents found it difficult to deal with—especially those who found themselves living in an area which, and amongst people whom, they considered to be "beneath" them. In such circumstances, the response was either to despair or to renew efforts to save—perhaps change to a more highly paid job, or the girl remaining at work rather than starting a family, in the effort to move out as soon as possible.

One example of dissatisfaction resulting from moving to a different area related to an ex-office girl whose family lived on an inter-war housing estate. She and her husband now lived in rented rooms in a zone of deterioration near to the city centre. The rooms were at the rear of a shop, and cost 26/2d a week for a sitting room and two bedrooms—and a toilet in the yard that was one of a row of six. She "missed terribly" not having a bath in the house—especially with two children to look after. As with several respondents who had moved "down" in this way ("down", that is, in terms of district) the girl was outspokenly critical of her new neighbours—
there were some "dirty people", "people who didn't know how to behave decently". And, as with other respondents in similar circumstances, coloured immigrants were the subject of special comment, though with a disclaimer as to prejudice—"I have no objection to coloured people in general", this girl said, "but some of the coloured people in this district are really filthy". It was as if coloured people in this district were a symbol of the deterioration in her own material circumstances, a deterioration that was consequent upon marriage and having children, but which had to be explained in other terms. The coloured neighbours became the scape-goat. Similarly, a youth who had moved from a council estate to an older area, and who felt that he had "gone down", said that he thought that the area where he now lived had "fallen, now that coloured people had come to live there"—and a girl, too, said of the people in her new neighbourhood that they were "noisy and scruffy—there is nothing I like about them; there are too many niggers—everywhere you go, you bump into them". By a device, then, these respondents were enabled to shift their attention from the main facts of their conditions—shortage of accommodation, dank and dark rooms and streets, and a lack of money to move elsewhere—and "blame" the local "blacks".

The struggles of married life for the young worker are well indicated by reference to one case in particular which, whilst extreme, presents many facets which were present in the circumstances of several other couples. The girl respondent had "had" to get married,
at the age of sixteen. Because of the disgrace, her mother and step-father had thrown her out of the home. She now lived with her in-laws, where she and her husband had one room to themselves and the two children whom they had by the time of Interview No.4. The girl's mother still lived nearby, but such was the intensity of feeling that the girl said she wished her mother were "at the end of the earth": they never saw each other, or had any dealings with each other. Asked what she disliked most about her home and the area, the girl gave a list—cockroaches (the husband went down to the cellar and killed two cockroaches, to illustrate their size to the interviewer); houses that are falling down—and have no bathrooms or running hot water; the lack of privacy; small-minded people (who "acted superior because they hadn't had to get married"); colour prejudice; filthy air; small rooms; and "Rach-renting landlords". Having lived amongst the neighbours all her life, the girl retained some attachment to them, saying, "They don't allow you any privacy, but in their way they're doing good—it is just that they are old-fashioned and ignorant."

There was no escape, at work, for her husband, who said, "My workmates avoid me—because I had to marry Jennifer they think I've got black sin" (his workmates, like him, were apprentices—more prone to plan ahead, and yet resentful at the need to delay marriage and courtship). "Another reason why they don't like me," the youth said, is because I'm friendly with some of the coloured

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1 Presumably from Rachman.
workers—they call me "nigger lover". Life was certainly a struggle. Despite marriage when himself at the age of only sixteen, and despite the fact of children to support, he had decided to persist in the apprenticeship, with the full backing of his wife, because they thought that the family would benefit in the long run. His wife worked in a routine warehouse job now that the youngest child was old enough to be left in the care of a friend.

At home, sharing as they did with the girl’s in-laws, life was far from pleasant (they had not been able to talk freely for a long time—it "always ended in arguments" if they tried to discuss things together: they fell on the Interviewer, as a neutral outsider, to get things off their chests). Apart from the overcrowding at home, there was recrimination ("who are you to complain? You got yourselves into this mess"). There was also innuendo. For example, whenever they wanted to talk alone, they had to go upstairs to their bedroom, as the only place with privacy—but then, "some crude bugger comes and shouts up the stairs, 'Come on down before you start another baby!'". The parents obviously felt that they were doing the couple a good turn, by "taking the wife in"—and they were not going to let the couple forget it. Yet, the parents had been a support for over four years—very difficult years—and the respondent and her husband appreciated this. The husband stated categorically that had it not been for this support to fall back upon, he and his wife would have drifted apart long ago.
Now the couple had little expectation of happiness for themselves (though they were each aged but twenty years); their struggle had been too long and too demoralising. They both traced their difficulties back not simply to their early, forced marriage, but to their schooldays. They were very conscious of having been "dumped" in the 'B' stream of a slum school, and they knew that they could never hope to rise out of the predicament that this implied. Their hopes, now, were centred upon their two children ("we won't have more at the moment—perhaps later, if we have more security for them"). They were determined that the children would not go the same way as they—they had an intense and urgent desire to get out of their home, their neighbourhood, indeed, out of Sheffield itself; and they had tremendous ambition for their children, who were going to be pushed as far as possible. The girl was only four years old, and the boy just eighteen months; but already, and despite the difficulties over money in the household, an encyclopaedia was being bought for them (on hire purchase). Their sorrowful teenage years had aged this young couple: in the future, perhaps, vicariously, they would gain some pleasure in life, through their children.

Another example which throws light on the experiences of several young couples is that of a shop assistant, daughter of a skilled man, who married a man who was also of working class background. The girl married when she and her husband were aged eighteen. At first, they lived with the girl's parents, but when the baby arrived they had to move into a bed-sitter, because there was not room in her parents' house. They would have liked to buy a house, but since
the husband was not yet twenty-one, he was not able to sign the legal documents. They now lived in a six-apartment house (three bedrooms) on a new private housing estate, on the fringe of the city. The house cost over £1,800 and they were paying £10.19s monthly repayment of loan and interest. The expense was too much for them, however; the husband had already given up his apprenticeship to take a better paid job as a semi-skilled machine operator, but they still could not manage financially. The house was brightly decorated, very clean and well furnished. But soon they would have to sell—the expense was too great, and there were other reasons, or rationalizations, which favoured a move. They had already been offered £500 more than they had paid for the house, and were inclined to accept—the girl said she had "a bit of a guilty conscience about it" (that is, at the thought of so much profit; it really did seem a lot, in their present financial straits, and they had been in the house for less than a year). But she and her husband needed the money, and "wanted to get better off", so that her husband would not have to work so hard. At the time he was working twelve hours a day because, apart from the mortgage payments, they "needed so many things", and they "weren't ones for H.P." The husband did not complain about his work, but the girl did not like him having to do so much overtime.

Another important reason for wanting to move was a feeling of difference from their neighbours—most of whom were from middle class rather than working class backgrounds, people whose families
were used to the idea of owning one's house rather than renting it. Most of the neighbouring husbands were in salaried jobs, too, and house repayments were not such a burden to them, or did not appear to be. This feeling of difference had led to unhappiness, and to open disagreement—the girl said, "I don't really like the neighbourhood; some of the residents are better off, and brag about it—they are always bragging off, and they are catty. There are a terrible lot of rows around here, I recently had a row with a neighbour who I was terribly thick with at first—she turned a bit funny".

Married life, for this couple, had been, in the girl's words, "a hell of a struggle". In the early days there had been parents and in-laws close at hand, then the problems of a baby in a bedsitter; the lack of alternative accommodation combined with some euphoria ("dreams") in early marriage had led them to purchase a house which their income could not sustain, given their determination to have "decent furniture" without getting into debt (H.P. or otherwise). And they had found themselves, too, living amongst people whose ways were unfamiliar, and whom they could not hope properly to emulate—they had not the financial resources nor the savoir faire for such a neighbourhood. So they were planning to withdraw, to a less ambitious world, to an older house in an older area, which would "fit" more with their previous way of life—and accord more happily with their present and anticipated income. Their excursion into a different style of life was to be a brief one.
There were further cases of young couples who were trying, somewhat less ambitiously, to improve their material standard of living in comparison with that of their parents; associated with the endeavour was the wish to rise, just a rung or two, up the social ladder. Despite the cost of a house deposit, and the high interest on loans (one respondent remarked that "the government should give the younger class a chance to buy their house without such big interest charges"), eleven respondents, including one youth, were buying their own houses. They had set their sights on something "better" than the life offered by terraced street or council estate, and some of them, indeed, seemed to relish the carefulness with which they had to manage the household budget, as if seeing in each penny saved a further step forward to their new way of life. The fact of departing from the way of life of parents was sometimes implicit, sometimes quite explicit—when asked whether his home was much different from that of his parents, one respondent replied, "A lot; it is clean, for a start!" And he added, "And everything is paid for. And we don't row! The only thing that we haven't got that they have is a separate kitchen." This respondent did the redecorating in the house (it was his trade), and his wife kept the home, and their baby son, spotlessly clean. Underlying the enthusiasm that the respondent had for his new way of life (that he had set up for his family) were several factors. There was a disgust for the low standards—of cleanliness, affection and interest—of his own parental home. He referred to his parents as "a bad influence"—
his father, a labourer, "drinks" and so does his mother, a part-time cleaner. There was, too, a disgust with himself for having spent two or three wasted years of job changing, drinking and hooliganism before his marriage. Thirdly, the fact of having a wife from a somewhat more comfortable home made him determine to prove his capacity to "live a decent life". Living at present in a relatively spruce house in an old part of the city, they intended to move, when they had saved enough money for a deposit, to "a place on the outskirts, with a garden and plenty of space". (The husband stressed that he did not want a new corporation house: he had worked on them, and expected them to be slums in ten years—"jerry-built mass production, they are slobbed up").

There were other aspirants to a house of their own on the outskirts, where the air would be clean and there would be room for the children to play in the open in safety—"a semi-detached house, with a bathroom, a garden and an inside toilet". Husbands and wives had pacts between them, that they would discipline themselves as to clothes, holidays, entertainments and even food, towards the end of getting "a decent place" of their own, where they "could give the children a nice upbringing". Thus one couple had been saving hard throughout several years of engagement and the early years of marriage—they hoped for a house of their own, in the suburbs, costing "£2,000 or so": they would, indeed, have had such a house already, were it not that the husband had only just attained the age of twenty-one, and could not previously sign the legal documents. Both husband and
wife worked, and they intended to have children in two or three years time, when they were established in a home of their own, and could afford them. Another respondent, with two children, worked as a petrol pump attendant, a job far beneath her ability, in part to relieve the boredom of too much home life but mainly to get money together for a house deposit. At present the family lived in a rented house, small and dingy, with no bathroom, damp walls and peeling paper.

There were clear links, then, between social mobility, albeit of a limited kind and within the same broad socio-economic class, and geographical mobility. The move "up" involved a move away from the area in which respondents were brought up. It also meant a break with parents in several cases, and in other cases an amendment of relationships with parents such that respondents were able to preserve intact their new way of life—parents visiting them, on their home ground for example, rather than them visiting the parents; or visits to parents being "formal" or "duty" calls and limited in duration. They cut themselves off, too, from old friends and neighbours, and looked inward to themselves and their homes. The signs at the stage of Interview No.4 was that this tendency to be inward looking, to their marriage and the home, was especially a characteristic of those who aspired to "better" themselves—it was not, that is, merely a reflection of the first ideal years of young marriage, when husband and wife had concern only for each other. For the tendency to spend a lot of time together in hours of leisure, and
a sharedness of interest—with the home as a focal point—whilst widespread was not universal amongst the young married respondents: and it was particularly marked amongst the aspiring couples.

Husband-Wife Activities and Relationships

The amount of leisure was affected by the necessity for many husbands to do overtime, by the need (or wish) of some wives to go out to work, and by the necessity of doing housework. The leisure activities were affected, too, by the amount of money which there was to spare: low wages, high rents and household expenses, and the wish to save for a home or for furniture severely restricted the amount left for leisure purposes in many of the young workers' families. Table 90 indicates the usual amount of spending money which youth respondents, and girl respondents' husbands had each week.

**Table 90**

**Marriage and Spending Money**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spending money up to £1- a week</th>
<th>Married Youths</th>
<th>Unmarried Youths</th>
<th>Married Girls</th>
<th>Unmarried Girls</th>
<th>Girls' Husbands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£1-2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£2-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3-4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£4-5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over £5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Amounts were taken from housekeeping when needed or available.
The data is incomplete, but sufficient to give a fair picture—the main reservations, apart from lack of comprehensiveness, are that the youths and the girls' husbands sometimes had more spending money if they had an extra bonus or overtime payment; and wives tended in practice not to make a clear-cut distinction between housekeeping money and personal expenditure (on clothes, etc.) so that the figures relating to their spending money are their estimates, in most cases. The "spending money" refers to money for leisure purposes—it does not include necessary expenditure, for example, on fares to work, or clothing.

The youths with the highest amounts of spending money were, as might be expected, those with the highest wages. The effects of marriage upon spending money are quite evident from the comparison with single youths and girls. With regard to the girl respondents, two further points emerge. The first is that those with relatively high amounts of spending money tend to be still working, and hence bringing in an income themselves—5 of the 7 girls with spending money of over £2 a week were still in employment (although only half of the girl respondents with husbands whose spending money exceeded £2 a week were still in employment—the generally higher wages of these husbands, who, as has been noted, tended to be a year or two older, may account for the higher proportion of them, as compared with the youth respondents), having high weekly spending money. Not all married girls found themselves short of spending money; an extreme example of the contrary was the respondent who was married
to a professional man and who did part-time secretarial work herself. She had £7 a week spending money which, she said, "keeps me in little luxuries which I like to have". The second point to emerge is that many of the girls with low spending money were still working—and some of their husbands, too, had a small amount of spending money only. Thus, 6 of the 12 girls with less that £2 a week spending money were in employment, as were 4 of the girls whose husbands' spending money was less than £2. This reflects the "struggle" which some of these couples had "to make ends meet"—and the self-denial practised by somewhat more affluent young couples who were determined to save for a home. With regard to leisure pursuits, the married respondents tended to be much less active than the single youths and girls—reflecting in part the lack of money for leisure purposes, but also, of course, the new style of life which was consequent upon marriage and having their own home—or, at least, living together (that is, in the case of those staying with parents and in-laws). Table 91 analyses the position and gives a comparison with single respondents.

Leisure activities will be considered in some detail below, and the concern here is mainly with the apparent effects of marriage upon activities. Adapting the terminology of Elizabeth Bott, although in a decidedly crude way, it could be said that the marriages of 6 youths and 20 girls were characterised by joint conjugal activities, whilst those of 5 youths and 11 girls were characterised
Table 91
MARRIAGE AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Youths Married</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Girls Married</th>
<th>Single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cinema 1 or more a week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a month</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less (or never)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing 1 or more a week</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a month</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less (or never)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public house or W.M.Club</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more a week</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a month</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less (or never)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Belongs to an 'interest' association and attends regularly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Youths Married</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Girls Married</th>
<th>Single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Watches T.V. "a lot"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Youths Married</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Girls Married</th>
<th>Single</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sometimes&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Very rarely&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals in Categories

by segregated conjugal activities.¹ (A very tentative hypothesis derived from the present study is that involvement in loose-knit networks may precipitate early marriage amongst young workers, and subsequently engender joint conjugal relationships; but the evidence was not present in the study to warrant more than a mention of the possibility—which does, of course, have some bearing upon the point raised just above in regard to the inward-looking character

of aspiring young couples. In concrete terms, 4 youths and the husbands of 14 girl respondents were reported to give a considerable amount of help about the house).

Amongst those who had few activities apart from those in which they participated together, a common comment was, "We don't go out separately at all". Much time was spent at home painting and decorating the house, watching T.V. or doing housework and odd jobs. If they did go out at all, it was for a ride on the husband's motorcycle, or possibly for a drink at the local pub. One girl, for example, said that her husband was "not one to go out on his own" but that they "sometimes went out for a drink on Saturdays"—if they could get a baby-sitter for their two children. Few married couples went dancing, even though they went regularly whilst courting; and not many went to the cinema now, in part because of the expense, and in part because the cinema has the latent function of providing for petting and holding of hands, which married couples can now manage without or do in the privacy of the home. One girl who said that she and her husband had no separate activities explained, "we have discussed this between ourselves and came to the conclusion that if we were going to have nights out separately with our own sets of friends, we might as well have not married".

The big "threat" to joint activities, as seen by girls, was "the pub". Several, in saying that they "did everything together", offered as a partial explanation the fact that their husbands did not drink. And, indeed, in those cases in which there were distinctly separate
activities, the predominating reason was that husbands went to the pub or the Working Mens Club, for "a night out with the boys", from time to time in some cases, and, in a few cases, every night of the week. (In several cases, too, the respondents or their wives or husbands maintained separate activities in which they had participated prior to marriage—membership of sports clubs, for football or cycling in the case of men, and of voluntary organisations such as St. John's Ambulance Brigade for women. But the overall tone of the relationships between these respondents and their spouses was of a "joint" rather than a "segregated" order.)

One final point in regard to activities and relationships between husbands and wives is the emptiness which seemed to characterise the lives of some of the wives especially. Topics for conversation were few; after only a year or two of marriage, some husbands and wives, it could reasonably be inferred, had lost a great deal of the interest which they had had in each other when courting and in the early days of marriage.

Whilst the aspiring young couples had a lot to look forward to and plan for and talk about, then, others, by contrast, spent many a boring hour at home. They had already passed through what would, in certain cases at least, appear to be a short-term phase of joint activities and interests, and now sought again the company of neighbours and friends of the same sex—the girls in the streets and yards, or at "Bingo", the youths in the local pub or club.
Marriage (and to a lesser extent engagement) dominated the later teenage years of a high proportion of young workers, then. Marriage brought with it special problems of its own—many respondents, as we have seen, faced emotional difficulties with parents, in-laws, other relations, neighbours and with each other (in one case resulting in the separation of the husband and his wife). Such matters obviously have some effects, difficult to define precisely, upon motivations in regard to work, to plans and to aspirations. Similarly, those married couples who aspired to "better" themselves, to improve on their position as compared with their parents, set about doing so with reference to a set of values which accorded importance to the sort of work done by the husband, and which often implied, in the case of the wife, that she stopped work altogether. Strain in relationships with parents and other relations ensued in some cases because of the disparateness between the established values of the parents and those values towards which aspiring respondents now directed themselves. In such cases there was a deliberate restriction by respondents of the frequency and nature of their meetings with parents.

There were problems to be faced by married couples, which had to do with the range of social apparatus in adult society. Young
couples found themselves dealing with complicated matters that single respondents were not concerned with. House purchase is one example—the sheer mechanics of buying a house are bewildering to the young worker coming from a family which has not previously owned a house. Respondents seem to have found their way round such complications by a process of trial and error—few of them had anyone to turn to for advice, whilst they had seemingly been given no guidelines in such matters whilst at school.

More directly, marriage affected the respondents' behaviour and attitudes in regard to work in several ways which have been detailed: the need to change be a job which offered higher wages, more overtime, convenience in regard to hours or proximity to the home, for example. Problems of adjustment to employment were clearly exacerbated in some cases by marriage—especially in regard to youths who had to give up jobs with prospects in order to get a higher immediate wage. There were clear examples of marriage "steadying" a youth, and orientating him towards a serious attitude towards work—the wife was then an agent, as it were, in securing adjustment to employment. One girl, for example, said that in order to save money for a house deposit, her husband had stopped drinking—"he realised he had been drinking his money away; now he only goes to the pub once a week, with his father". He was regular in attendance at work now, too—and he talked to his wife about his work problems, and she thought that she was able to help him to solve them.
In regard to the girls, marriage brought to some an early end to the teenage years of fun and leisure: they were burdened by children, and money problems and, as has been said, were old before their time. It seemed, indeed, that several youths and girls had "landed up" in the married state almost without being aware of what was happening—or, at least, not recognising more than a minimum of the implications of marriage for their longer term future. They had landed up as husbands and wives, just as they had landed up at school, then in work. They had no special hopes, ambitions or opinions, but "took things as they came", went to work each day, spent the evenings in a routine sort of way, in public houses or "watching telly"—and never thought much about anything. But other girls had blossomed out in marriage—well content with the married state, they felt that they were at last fulfilling a worthwhile purpose, in looking after a husband and family—certainly more worthwhile than when at school, getting sums wrong, or at work, packing scissors into trays. There were, then, happy and confident couples, who knew what they wanted from life—and work—and who were determined to secure it. Several girls, in particular, were transformed between Interview No.3 and Interview No.4—between the ages of sixteen and twenty years—from uncertain, in some cases petulant, girls into competent wives and mothers with clean and attractive homes.
In coping with the extra problems associated with marriage, respondents were sustained by a variety of factors. There was, in some cases, help from parents—direct loans of money for house purchase, board and accommodation at a nominal rent, help and advice with regard to cooking, household work or tending the children, and "moral" support and encouragement displayed through an interest in the marriage. It has been seen that contacts were maintained by a high proportion of married respondents with their parents. But the content of such contacts varied considerably, and often was "formal" and "dutiful" rather than deriving from strong bonds of mutual support. There were some signs that proximity to relations was likely to lead to discord, whereas distance led to more harmonious relationships. The company of relatives was enjoyed when they visited, or were visited, say once a week; when they popped in each day, they became a nuisance, especially in the first year or so of marriage, when privacy and independence were sought. But in many other cases there was no such help, or not much of it—and in some there was a complete break with parents, or the imposed break, just discussed, consequent upon the young couple having a different set of values from that of their parents, which they were, indeed, seeking to depart from.

Such couples seemed to sustain themselves through enthusiasm to make their marriage work, and a self-centredness in their lives, whereby they were inward-looking to their marriage and their home; it was a self-centredness based upon a feeling of superiority—
over the way of life of others, including parents, and over other young people who were not yet married, had not yet achieved that valued state. Important, too, was hope for the future—well-founded in the case of those respondents who themselves, or whose husbands, were skilled men and who were planning income and expenditure carefully and with reference to long-term criteria. The hope of "getting out" to a better home and a "better area" was a forlorn one for some, as has been seen, but for others it was a real possibility, something to be worked for. Young married couples were inward-looking, too, in the sense that they tended to cut themselves off from other people—they spent a lot of time by themselves, and did not seem to want or need much contact with others. When they did seek company, it tended to be with other young married couples—with similar hopes and aspirations. Over a drink in pub or club, they could discuss matters of mutual concern, advise each other, and reinforce each other.

Engagement and Courtship

In addition to those who were married, a substantial proportion of youths and a very high proportion of girls had serious associations with members of the opposite sex. Thus, 22/75 unmarried youths had either fiancées or "serious" girl friends, as did 33/53
unmarried girls. Thirteen youths were engaged to be married as were 25 girls—this means that two-thirds of all the girls were either married or engaged to be married. 9 youths and 8 girls were "going steady"—by which is meant that they had been going out with a boy-friend or girl-friend regularly over a period of time and regarded the friendship as serious—implicitly or explicitly a relationship which could lead to engagement and marriage. "Going steady" is a clear and accepted stage before engagement, and sometimes formal engagement is omitted: several of the respondents who were "going steady" said that they were thinking about getting married. Of the remaining 53 youths and 20 girls, some had casual girl-or boy-friends: a few girls, but a substantial number of youths, rarely or never went out with members of the opposite sex.

Clearly over the years since leaving school, interest in members of the opposite sex became more widespread and intense—although at the end of five years in employment many youths remained free from, and indeed, impatient of, liaisons with girl friends. Whilst still at school only a few of the girls and even fewer boys had firm friends of the opposite sex. During the first year in employment, interest in the opposite sex awakened and developed, especially amongst the girl respondents; so that by the time of Interview No.3, one year after leaving school, one-third of the youths and two-thirds of the girls went out regularly with a member of the opposite sex, whilst a few of the youths and a third of the girls were "going steady"
(meaning, by a steady friendship, at that stage, one which involved regular meetings, was usually exclusive—no going out with other boys or girls—and which had been going on for at least several months). One girl, at the time of Interview No.3, was married and had a baby. Willmott reports from his study of adolescent boys in East London a similar move towards interest in the opposite sex during the course of the teenage years—"As the boys get older, they become involved in more lasting friendships—the proportion with a regular girl goes up and by the age of 19 or 20 more than a quarter of the boys are engaged". (And one boy in Willmott's sample was married). In fact, just over one-half of Willmott's 19-20 year-old youths were married, engaged or going steady ("had a regular girl friend"), rather more than the overall proportion in the present study. Willmott argues that interest in sex as such gives way to something deeper as the teenage years are passed through so that, by the age of 19-20 years, "sex is still important of course, but now it is more likely to be associated with love and with the idea of marriage. It is channelled into something approaching a husband-wife relationship. In this sense the boys have begun to settle down."¹ No systematic data on sexual behaviour of respondents at any period during the teenage years was collected in the present study, but the evidence from respondents' activities and attitudes tends to support Willmott's conclusion in reference to

¹Adolescent Boys of East London, op.cit., pp.43 and 52.
youths' more "serious" attitude towards relationships with girls in the later teenage years. Indeed, it would seem that the wish to settle down comes very early in the cases of youths and girls, as was seen in the above discussion of marriage.

Of the 13 youths who were engaged, 2 planned to marry within a year, 4 in one year's time, and 6 planned not to marry for two years at least; one youth was indefinite about date of marriage. 9 engaged girls planned to marry within a year, 6 in one year's time, and 3 in periods of up to two years—5 girls were undecided (there was no information on this matter in regard to 2 engaged girls). The comparison between youths and girls in regard to planned time of marriage confirms the general tendency of girls to marry at a younger age than youths. The evidence was not clear-cut, but was indicative of a tendency for girls in Category 'A' employment, and for youths in skilled employment, to plan for longer engagements than girls and youths in other types of occupation. Some respondents had known their fiancées for a long time but did not envisage marriage for a year or more—a joiner, for example, engaged to a clerk, had known the girl since schooldays, had been engaged to her for two years, but did not expect to marry her for at least another year. There were several instances in which the process of "going steady" and engagement would cover well over five years before marriage occurred. The wish to save was the prime factor, but the desire for the man to get established in his work was also important—this was most marked in the case of a hairdresser who was
engaged to a student engineer whom she had known for five years—no marriage date was arranged because of the intention of giving him time to settle in his career. But another reason was the wish on the part of a few girls to spend more time in their career. And a few respondents favoured long engagements so that the couple could "be sure" of each other. On the other hand, some respondents met and married within the space of a year—a shop assistant who had been going out with a youth (whose work was to repair roofs) for seven months was to be married to him in five weeks time, for example.

The fiancéés of youths tended to be of the same age or a little younger; girls' fiancéés tended to be of the same age or a little older. An analysis of occupations of engaged couples showed a similar pattern to that obtaining in regard to married respondents. ¹ Of the 9 youths (out of 13 who were engaged) for whom information was obtained, 7 apprentices were engaged to girls in Category 'A' employment, 1 apprentice was engaged to a Category 'C' girl. Information was obtained on this subject for 18 of the 25 engaged girls. Eleven Category 'A' girls were engaged to skilled workers, 2 Category 'B' to skilled workers, and 2 to semi-skilled; and 3 Category 'C' girls were engaged to semi-skilled workers. (Further analysis of occupations of respondents compared with occupations of youths and girls with whom they were "going steady" showed that the same general pattern obtained). Some of the engaged girls, as well as some who were "going steady"

¹This was also true of respondents in the Postal Survey.
had only a vague idea of what their boy friends' occupations were—
"he's something on the corporation", one girl said, whilst another
said, "he works in a cutlery firm, but don't ask me which one or
what he does, because I don't know"—work was not a topic of con-
versation and, for many, not particularly important until nearer
the time of marriage, when the relevance of occupation to income,
security and prospects loomed large;

Of the respondents who were not engaged or going steady, some
had previously had steady friendships with members of the opposite
sex, but had broken them off because of disagreements, the expense
involved, the wish to spend more time studying, or for some other
reason. Thus one youth said, "I was engaged, but we had a row,
so I bumped her and have not been near her since". Another youth
said that he had intended getting engaged the previous Whitson, but
"got tired of her constantly wanting to know when we were getting
married, so chucked it in altogether". Another youth, stating that
he had no girl friend at present, observed ruefully that "they're
too easy to get and too hard to get rid of." The friendships of
other respondents were uncertain—a cutlery worker said she had
been going out with a boy friend "on and off" for two years, but
"more off than on". And another girl said she was was "not sure"
if she had a boy friend—"I had one when I went on holiday two
weeks ago, but it might all be off, now". And some respondents
who had friends of the opposite sex were quite explicit that there
was "nothing serious"—a youth said he "sort of" had a girl friend
but that, as far as he was concerned, all he wanted at the present was companionship. Another said of his relationship, "We're just good friends—we've been going out together for two years, but we're not going steady and have no plans for engagement". Friendships could, then, persist for a long time, without any strings being attached. But that there was a possibility of the relationship becoming serious, though denied by some, was recognised by others. A youth thus said, "I'm not sure how long I've been going out with her, but it's not long. I wouldn't say we were going just steady, really—waiting to see what happens".

Some respondents had several friends of the opposite sex—they were not necessarily "flighty" or "flirtatious", but they enjoyed varied company, and were also concerned to get to know as wide a range of people of the opposite sex as possible in order to ascertain what sorts of people they liked and "got on with" best—there is, for these, a trial and error period, to find their "type". These are exceptions, it would seem, however—they were, mostly, thoughtful young people, concerned for the future, serious minded and aspiring to rise a little in the social scale. Others of the same sort did not feel a need to experiment, but met up with like-minded people of the opposite sex, as we have seen in the analysis of married couples. Many respondents seemed to have entered marriage, or were about to do so, without making any appraisal of themselves or what they sought in a partner; it was such marriages that tended to deteriorate—quickly, it would seem, although the evidence of the present research is slight in this
respect, and inference rather than observed or stated fact has to be relied upon, largely.

Thirty-two of the 53 youths who were unmarried, and not engaged or "going steady" stated that their "best friends" were of the same sex. Some of these were on the look-out for girl friends and were hopeful. Others scorned the thought of involvement, yet—through shyness; because of a genuine priority for other interests (sport, photography); because of a determination to get ahead in a career; or because of the belief that such involvement should come when older—as one youth said, "anyone getting married before 23 or 24 must have got a peg missing. By 30 they will be fed up. And in any case, you've always got two at the kitchen sink if you marry young and live with parents—I've seen it all on the property repairing kick (job). I'm sick of seeing married couples perform (behave). They abandon their kids to their mothers while they have to go out working". That was not his idea of marriage, and he would steer clear of the opposite sex until he could be sure of a better fate than that. Six of the 20 girls who were not married, engaged or going steady said that their "best friends" were girls—two of these were emphatic that they did not wish to have a serious boy friend, at least not yet: one said, "No, there's
plenty of time for that", whilst the other, as if affronted by
the mere thought of such a liaison, retorted, "Certainly not".
The other respondents—21 youths and 14 girls—had no special
best friend; they either had several friends of one sex or the
other, or spasmodic friendships, or they had no friends at all,
keeping themselves to themselves in their leisure time, or spending
it with the family. One youth and several girls were still treated
by parents as if they were young school children, and closeted
from the outside world and from other young people in it.¹

¹ An interesting footnote on colour is provided by a service-
man who was in Kenya, and who wrote in the Postal Question-
naire, in reply to the Question "Have you a steady girl
friend?", "You must be joking—there are very few members
of the opposite sex out in Kenya". (He meant, of course,
few white, European girls).
CHAPTER XIII
ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOL AND VIEWS ON EDUCATION

At the end of their first year in employment, the majority of children "were pleased to have left school: some had pleasant memories, but they, like the large number for whom school had never meant much, were on the whole glad to be rid of it. It was much better to be a worker". Such was the conclusion to emerge from Research Interview No.3. Five years at work consolidated this feeling, although by this time certain respondents were inclined to distinguish between their own cases (they were glad that they had left) and the general principle that the leaving age should be raised to sixteen. And many, too, who still thought it sensible that they personally had left school at the age of fifteen had different aspirations in this matter for their children.

1 Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.74 (and see Chapter 4 as a whole).
After five years at work, then, 73 youths and 66 girls stated
that they were glad that they had left school at the age of
fifteen, although 9 of these youths and 8 of the girls stated
some reservations. 13 youths and 18 girls said that they were
sorry that they had left at the age of fifteen—they now wished
that they had continued their full-time education. (A distinctly
higher proportion of respondents in the Postal Survey stated that
they were sorry that they had left school at the age of fifteen:
they now wished that they had remained at school longer. Even so,
the clear majority—approximately two-thirds of both youths and
girls—were glad to have left at fifteen. The figures, involving
235 youths and 208 girls, are as follows: 143 youths and 131 girls
were glad to have left school at the age of fifteen; 67 youths and
65 girls were sorry that they had left; for 25 youths and 12 girls there
was no information on this point).

The reasons given for being glad to have left school at the age
of fifteen were various. Some respondents had "always" disliked
school, "and would have left before" if they could; others had had
a neutral sort of involvement with school, and five years of ex-
perience at work had done nothing to persuade them to change their
view as to the irrelevance of school to them and their needs.

The special limitations of the secondary modern school were re-
ferred to—and apprentice joiner, for example, said, "I wouldn't
have learnt much more if I had stayed on, and I would have finished
up in the same job". Another youth said that he knew of boys at secondary modern schools who did not leave until the age of sixteen, and they were "only in labouring jobs". There was, too, a feeling that "education doesn't make much difference in the end"—an apprentice engineer said, "In my experience, I don't think it mattered all that much that I left at fifteen. People with G.C.Es are doing the same work as me. On the requirements for the job I'm doing, I'm no worse off". But this attitude was a consequence of a comparison by the respondent of himself with the less successful products of grammar schools, who found themselves in manual employment. It constituted a rationalisation, or a process of turning a defeat into a victory. For this youth had been disappointed at not going to grammar school, and had to reconcile himself to his present level of occupation. This rationalisation process, whereby the superiority of a selective education was challenged, was evident in several other respondents whose aspirations had not been satisfied.

An argument that was put forward by several girls was that marriage makes continued education superfluous. Thus one respondent who had been an office clerk, said, "I was sorry to leave at first. I would have liked to have been more clever. But what difference would it make now I'm married?—a lot of the clever ones are in the same boat as me, with children to look after." This was said cheerfully and in a spirit of "realism", and the girl added, "Education is more important for a boy, not for a girl—I want
our boy to be clever". This reflected a widespread view amongst respondents, and is another example of their assumption of the values of their parents. In the present example, the effects of marriage upon attitudes is also indicated, the girl revising her views in consequence of her own experience at school, in work, and as wife and mother.

One youth suggested the irrelevance of education. As a long-distance lorry driver earning £13.10s clear each week, he was well contented with his job, and considered himself as one of the elite of workers, since he had such a high wage; his comment was, "I'm glad I left at fifteen—I might not be where I am now if I hadn't": continued schooling, that is, might have held him back from the opportunity.

Other respondents put less stress on the irrelevance of school than upon their own limitations. As one girl, of factory worker, put it, "I wasn't clever enough to do anything but leave at fifteen, and it would have been a waste of time to stay any longer". A motor mechanic made the same point, saying, "I'm not really sorry I left at fifteen—in a way I would have liked to stay on, but I realised that I did not have the mental ability". This sort of idea appears to be engendered in many secondary modern children, who are not of particularly low ability or potential, in consequence of the atmosphere of failure which prevails in such schools, and as an outcome of years of incomprehension of lessons and of low marks in tests. There were other reasons which respondents...
gave for being glad to have left school at fifteen, but they are more conveniently considered in the context of views on raising the school leaving age and will therefore be dealt with in that Section. But it is appropriate to refer to one reason, here, which was pervasive in the replies of many children—namely, that school is artificial and unreal. As one youth put it, "At school they tend to bring you up in a world of its own which isn't at all suitable for when you leave."

Approximately one-sixth of the youths (13/86) and about one-fifth of the girls (18/84) were sorry that they had left school at the age of fifteen. In several cases, the respondents had regretted leaving at the time—one girl, for example said that she liked school, but the financial position of her parents had left her no option but to start work at fifteen. And another said that she regretted leaving at the time because she was "just getting to be aware" of herself and gaining some benefit from school. But others had been keen to leave, and had come to change their views in consequence of their experience at work, and as a result of a re-appraisal of their position towards the end of their teenage years.

Two main categories can be distinguished—youths who were in unsatisfying jobs with no prospects, and girls who were in the higher level jobs, or who had been, and who now perceived the value of education not just in occupational terms but with regard to broader considerations of life styles. An analysis by occupation illustrates the position in Table 92.
TABLE 92
SORRY TO HAVE LEFT SCHOOL AT AGE OF FIFTEEN
YOUTHS AND GIRLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Apprentices</th>
<th>Semi-skilled</th>
<th>Unskilled</th>
<th>Non-manual</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youths</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Category 'A'</td>
<td>Category 'B'</td>
<td>Category 'C'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is seen that 11 of the 13 youths were in semi- or unskilled employment; they were mostly of limited ability (9 were of Intelligence Grade 3 or 4) and they were in dead-end jobs. They felt that if they had had a longer, "better", education, their present fate would not have fallen upon them. Thus a 'bus conductor said, "I'm sorry—I never studied at school or took much notice. Now I'm landed up in this—I might have got a decent job if I'd stayed on". All except one of the youths had had at least two jobs since leaving school, and 5 of them had had four or more jobs. They could not settle down, and could not find satisfaction at work.

All of the apprentices save one, and all except one of the non-manual youths, were glad that they had left school at fifteen: they had no regrets. The two exceptions were of similar viewpoint to the

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1Willmott, similarly, found that a substantial proportion of secondary modern youths in semi-and unskilled work were sorry that they had left school at fifteen. cf. Adolescent Boys of East London, op.cit., pp. 95-96.
girls—that is, they saw now that they could have done better in their jobs, and would now have greater prospects had they had a better education. The girls, as was indicated above, were regretful that their "careers" were blocked by lack of qualifications; as one respondent said, "I'm stuck as a typist". Girls in Category 'A' type employment had their horizons widened, mixed with people of a different social class, and saw the possibilities which could be opened up by a good education not just in terms of career, but also of the life chances which were associated with a career. The typist just referred to, for example, recognised that with a better education she might have become a private secretary, with all that that entailed in terms of interest and responsibility at work, contacts made, and style of life at work and outwith it. For the most part these were girls with ability, who could, indeed, have "gone further" had they had a better education. 13 of the 18 were in the top I.Q. Grades, 8 of them being in Intelligence Grade I. All except 4 girls had had two jobs or more and 5 had had four or more jobs. They, like the youths, had been unable to settle and were striving after something better. The husband of one of the girls was of a middle class background, and this respondent regretted not having continued her full-time education beyond the age of fifteen because she felt handicapped in discussion with her husband. The six girls in employment in Categories 'B' and 'C' were of the same viewpoint as the bulk of the youths—they saw themselves in dead-end jobs, from which a
better education would have saved them.

Whilst these respondents regretted their "lack" of education only two of the youths and two girls had attended further education classes (evening school or day release) during the current Session, although two other girls had attended in previous years. There was little prospect of advancement for them, the youths especially, through such studies—or so they thought: the crucial decision had been made at fifteen, and there was no way of avoiding that truth.

Several youths and girls who were now sorry that they had left school at fifteen used such phrases as "if I had known then what I know now", indicating that it was experience in the teenage years, at work and generally in society, that had taught them a lesson. But other respondents were at pains to stress another aspect; namely, that at the age of fifteen a young person at secondary modern school is not in the right frame of mind to stay on—as one youth said, "School would have been no good to me in the mood I was in—it would have been a waste of time to stay on, because I had no interest."

Regret at not having had a "better" education was more widespread, amongst youths particularly, than the above figures suggest. This was revealed in respondents' replies to the questions, "Do you ever wish you were back at school?", and, "What did you like most/least about school?" These questions were designed to elicit general views on school and attitudes to
education after five years of experience at work. Although not wishing that they had remained at school beyond the age of fifteen, certain respondents were sorry that they had not made better use of the opportunity of studying when they had it. (This accounted for the intention of some respondents to ensure that their own children did avail themselves of the opportunity when the time came.) Thus a farm worker said, "I would have tried harder at school if I had realised then how important academic work is", and a service-man said, "I think that I wasted my opportunity".

Some of the youths were despairing of their lot—a painter in his sixth job, for example, said that he "would have liked to have tackled G.C.E."; he might then not "be in this mess". A warehouse worker, too, said, "I wish I had worked harder and known more about myself—I think I could have made something of myself". He now saw himself as a failure, or, at best, as confronted by a long uphill climb through further education, but with the hope only of scaling one of the minor occupational peaks. Skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled youths alike, said that they "could kick themselves" for "messing about" and "not listening to the teacher"—one apprentice said, "I was foolish, and just drifted through school".

Whilst some respondents blamed themselves, others were more critical of the school. An apprentice joiner who had attended further education classes regularly, with considerable success, had had his appetite for learning whetted. He now sensed his own potential, and was somewhat resentful that it had not been tapped
at school—he said, "If I was a schoolboy now, I would have done better. It is bad for children at school not to be made to realise the importance of school work, and especially the importance of a career, which was not explained. There are jobs which school teachers have never heard of—from the beginning they class girls as nurses and boys as engine drivers and do not widen the scope by raising the educational standard." His point was that teachers did not expect any but the few obviously bright ones to do well—they regarded the bulk of children as incapable of worthwhile study or effort. In such an atmosphere, bounded as he was by home, neighbourhood and school, his own aspirations were restricted, and he had had low expectations of himself; but at work he had travelled around the city, encountered new people and ideas, and had "discovered" education, for the first time, at evening school.

Respondents such as these recognised explicitly—as did some of the more despairing ones implicitly—that their lack of education had placed them at a disadvantage in terms of employment prospects. They discerned the connection between education, occupation, and life chances more generally and they perceived that, although they may try hard, and improve their position to some small extent, the higher level jobs for which a better education might have made them competent are forever closed to them. The picture becomes all the more clear to youths when, at the age of twenty, they are thinking about settling down in the not-too-distant future. Now that they have seen something of life and of how people outwith their immediate neighbourhoods live—
now that they had "knocked around a bit", they became aware of what might have been. This was particularly true of youths whose girl friends or fiancées were from lower middle class homes or who were in Category 'A' type employment, and had assumed middle class aspirations, or something approximating to them. The youths saw that they would have difficulty in providing for their future wives and families the sort of home which a better education and a better job would have made possible.

This regret as the missed opportunity of school was apparent in some girls, too, as has been noted with reference to their views on the age at which they left school. A nurse, bright and enthusiastic in her work, now saw other girls who were doctors and thought that if she worked harder whilst at school she might also have attained this level of work. A new set of values had been engendered by the work experience in such girls: this had re-shaped their aspirations and attitudes. As was suggested above, the girls who were of this outlook consisted of the brighter "career" girls, such as nurses, girls who mixed with better educated people at work (for example in an office), and girls who mixed in their leisure time—or were engaged or married to—youths with a better education and who were in a higher level of employment.

But most respondents, youths and girls, had no regrets about their education—whether because of an antipathy to school or out of the conviction that more progress can be made outside
of school. As an example of the latter view, one youth, a
driver, said, "I've learnt more since leaving school"; whilst a
serviceman, who had exceeded his own expectations, was of the
opinion that he had learnt all he could have learnt at school,
saying, "I've gone as far as I can get on my education". Nothing
more could be expected of him, he thought—he had done as well
as he ever could.

School teachers came in for a considerable amount of criticism.
One girl, for example, complained that the teachers were "hope-
less" and "school was more of a laugh than a place to learn for
me and a lot of my friends". Another girl said, "too many of the
teachers in the secondary modern schools are not really interested
in the children and give the impression of being interested only
in the holidays and the money". In some cases, the antipathy to
teachers was on a personal level—"they were always getting on
at me; one of them frightened me to death. I hated them all."
But more usually it was one aspect of the seeming irrelevance of
school to the lives of these respondents—an irrelevance that
five years at work had confirmed and accentuated. As one girl
put it, "the teachers never liked me, because I told them when I
thought that they were talking rubbish". She was referring not
to matters of fact, but to matters of taste, morality and be-
haviour—and in such matters, all too often it would seem, there
was no point of contact between respondents and their teachers.
An apprentice bricklayer contrasted school and work from this
perspective too, saying, "If I had a difference of opinion with
the teachers at school, I could not talk to the teacher at all—he said what he thought and that was that, finished. But at work
if I want to talk about some disagreement with the foreman, I
can talk to him as man to man." The lack of meeting point, as
has been suggested, is in part due to differences in the socio-
economic backgrounds of pupils and teachers, in part to the
ethos of the school, related as it is to "official" values, and
in part, perhaps, to a generational gap between teachers and
taught.

Whatever the reasons for it, this lack of contact between
teachers and children was obviously real: in some cases it seemed
to have reached the point of open conflict. Thus one youth re-
called with pleasure "the tricks played on the teachers"—he
said, "We had some good lads in the class; we used to drive the
teacher mad". It was not just a matter of "having fun", but by
way of compensation for having to be there at school, and an
opportunity of getting one's own back on teachers, and, through
them, on the authorities generally. This deep-rooted feeling that
the school was in opposition to the child—foreign to his real

1 Teachers tended to be from a middle class or upper working
class backgrounds, and the educational experience of the latter
tends to induce middle class, official values. This is a com-
plex matter, however. See Jean Floud and W.Scott, "Recruitment
to Teaching in England and Wales" in A.H.Halsey, Jean Floud and
C.Arnold Anderson, (Eds.), Education, Economy and Society, op.cit.
See also B. Jackson and D. Marsden, Education and the Working
Class, op.cit.
interests and experiences—even gave rise to some sympathy for teachers, who were, to be fair, but the agents of some larger evil. Thus a labourer, who said that what he liked most of all about school was "4 o'clock"—that is, going-home time—added, "I suppose the teachers weren't a bad set in some ways, considering. They were only doing the job they had to do."

Regimentation and authoritarianism at school ("the way the teachers tell you what to wear, how to do your hair, what to believe") had intimidated some children to such an extent that fear had been induced: and in other cases, a tacit withdrawal had been made, children complying as best they could with what the teachers required of them, doing so grudgingly. When they were released from school and entered the world of work, they felt re-vivified—there were clear examples of youths and girls who had been unable to cope with school, always in trouble and performing poorly in examinations and tests, but who had adjusted to work without difficulty and were competent and confident in it. The social structure of the work situation, in which different criteria of worth were applied and different patterns of behaviour obtained, inspired feelings of adequacy in children for whom school had induced a sense of failure. Freedom and independence were cherished, after years of being bossed around by teachers—a clerk said, "I hated school and didn't like being treated as a child instead of a responsible human being—I didn't like having to be there, and to do things I didn't want to
do, when I could have been spending the time more profitably."

There were, of course, respondents with fond memories of school—the teachers, the friends, even the lessons, and the long holidays; school, too, had been "a good, easy life" in the recollection of at least one youth, a labourer who now spent hours each day on heavy physical work. Nonetheless, despite pleasant memories, only a handful of respondents thought that the merits of school outweighed those of work. These were youths and girls—only three of each—who still, at the age of twenty, had not managed to accustom themselves to the responsibilities and disappointments of adult life at work. Thus a warehouse labourer, despairing after five years of immersion in a dead-end job, said, "It's a marvelous rat-life, when you think about it. You want to get out of school as soon as possible, but it's always different from what you expect it. At school you were at least secure, and looked after." "At school," another youth said, "you could do as you wanted, more or less, and you had no responsibilities."

School in Relation to Work—and to Life in General

In order to explore respondents' perceptions of the purpose of school, and its relevance to them personally, they were asked whether they thought that school could have done more to prepare them for work, and for "life in general."
Half of the youths (41/86) and well over one-third of the girls (31/84) thought that school could have done more to prepare them for work—whether for the particular job or type of job that they had (there were some pleas for more vocationally orientated subjects at school, for example) or for the adjustment to the employment situation. Approaching one-third of the youths (27/86) and one-quarter of the girls (23/84) thought that school could have done more to prepare them for "life in general". It should be said that whilst some of these saw school as potentially playing a much more positive role in preparing them (and by extension all children) for employment, and for adult life in general, the majority had in mind fairly minor shifts in emphasis, in the curricula or in orientation—they did not see the possibility that school could ever be of major importance for the adult world, since it was concerned with children and dealt essentially with childish things: their view was that, nonetheless, some improvements could be introduced. Eighteen youths and 11 girls more thought that school could have done more to prepare them both for work and life in general: so that approximately two-fifths of the youths (36/86) and one-half of the girls (41/84) did not envisage the school as being able to do more to prepare them—in the cases of a few of these, this was because they thought that the school in fact had done something worthwhile to prepare them, but the majority simply did not seem to think that the school had any functions in this respect, or that it had the resources in staff
or know-how to do it; school-attending was regarded as a sort of neutral, or dormant, period—a filling-in of time before you are able to start work, and start life proper. As one youth said, "What happens at school has no relation to what happens outside." That was so even in regard to life as a child—what you did in street and home: a fortiori was it the case in regard to work and adult life.

Analysis of occupational categories did not suggest any special associations with the respondents' views on the role of the school: and nor were there obvious distinctions between schools in accordance with the policies which they sought to pursue—the reactions of youths who attended the school with a vocational orientation did not differ noticeably on the question of the school's rôle in preparation for work, for example, from those of youths attending the other schools. Nor were there clear-cut relationships between work experience in terms of number of jobs or of occupations and views on the rôle of the school—whilst some youths with a high job turnover felt that their experience could in part be attributed to inadequate preparation for work given at school: others were of the opinion that "nothing school could do would make any difference."

Various ways in which school could have helped more were suggested. Vocational courses were advocated by a few—a cutlery worker, for example, said, "Yes, they could certainly give you instructions in the job you want to do—to let you see what you
are in for for the rest of your life." A property repairer argued that "for lads like me"—that is, those who who were likely to enter manual employment and, in Sheffield, probably steel or engineering—"instead of half an hour a week of woodwork or metalwork, they should give you a day a week, using your own mind and planning and making what you want". Toasting forks made in metalwork classes might be instructive in terms of technique, but do not seem to have much relevance to real work for youths living in the shadow of massive steelworks; and not indeed, are they of much utility about the home, nowadays. And as a machine operator said, "The metalwork classes were poor: why could we not have done something more intricate than just turning out masses of useless ornaments and junk? And we never really finished anything that we started properly". Even lessons that purported to have a vocational content and purpose were subject to severe criticism, then. There were complaints, too, about the "total irrelevance" of other subjects—"What's the use of history?" "Who wants to know about things that happened centuries ago, when things are happening now, that they don't tell us about, that will one day make history."

Several girls called for more vocational subjects—shorthand and typing especially—in the last year at school, one girl saying that, "It would have done me more good than just hanging around, or doing what we'd already done the year before." Another girl criticised the commercial course which she had done whilst at school—in calling for more vocational subjects, she said,
"Even what they did teach was wrong—for example, business letters: if I had written what they taught me at school, I'd have been sacked". One girl, a machine operator in an engineering factory, asked, "Why can't there be metalwork classes for girls as well as boys? In Sheffield they would be of real use."

Indeed, other girls were, like her, employed in such work. I have argued elsewhere the dangers of introducing a more heavily weighted vocational element into the secondary modern curriculum, and I have questioned the reasoning underlying the policy, and warned about its possible social outcome. All that needs to be said in the present context is that the respondents who called for more vocational subjects, and more realism in them, were making a plea for their education to have some relevance to them: as it was, they could see very little. They saw the possibility of relevance through their future employment: this is not necessarily the only way in which education can demonstrably and recognisably be relevant to the secondary modern child, however.

More specific to the process of transition from school to work, some respondents said that the schools should give more realistic information about careers. An ex-soldier, for example, said ruefully that they should tell you all about the services, not just

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1 cf. Into Work, op.cit., Chapter 5, "Vocational Bias in Education: Some Reservations".
its good points". Guidance generally in choice of career was also regarded as deficient in the schools. One youth said, "They could instruct you more generally about different types of work—what you have to do in them. As things stand, people say they want to do a particular job, but, really, have no idea what it's like." And a girl argued that "schools don't give every child the opportunity to show what they are best suited for, and when they leave school many of them don't know what work they are best able to tackle. As a result, many people finish up in jobs they don't like, and do them just to be earning money". Schools should arrange, also, to "give you a taste of what you are going to get in the job you think you want"—otherwise "as is often the case now, you don't know what you are letting yourself in for". One girl complained that "the only advice we got was crammed into about three days before we left", and she asked, "What's the good of that?"

It was argued that schools could have done more to provide an insight into the nature of the world of work—to give "a broader outlook" and "a more realistic picture"—for "too many leavers regard work as a kind of holiday". Schools should "help on the social aspects of work as well as on the practical part" one girl maintained—she had in mind such matters as appropriate forms of address to colleagues and superiors at work. A youth said, "They didn't do anything to help, and certainly didn't make you feel independent—they bossed you about too much for that, and treated you like under-dogs." To help prepare you for work, that is,
schools would have to become much less authoritarian and would have to encourage pupils to stand on their own feet, make their own decisions.

An apprentice engineer put the position as follows: "Schools should give you a broader, outside view. They are too narrow-minded, just thinking about school subjects all the time. When leaving school, it was like walking blindfold into the world outside. After being treated like children, we were suddenly expected to behave as adults." One youth attributed the failure of the school to give guidance to the wish of the teachers to be free from the pupils—"they were not interested: they were glad to be rid of us. We were just a nuisance as far as they were concerned". So far from wanting to help him and his fellow classmates, he thought, the teachers were only too anxious to forget about them.

There was a bitter note, and cynicism, in the replies of some respondents who thought not only that school could do more to help, but that what school did do had been misleading, if not quite false. But this often represented a commentary upon the nature of work rather than a criticism of the efforts of the school. Thus one youth said, "a person leaving school has to learn very quickly that to get anywhere one has to back-bite—which is not at all what school teaches you". Another youth was rueful, saying that at school they had been told that since they would be at work for the whole of their lives, they should think
about it—the teachers had meant give serious thought to their choice of work, of course: the respondent's point of view was that the advice was only partially right. They were right about being in the work for the rest of their lives, wrong to suppose that thought would make much difference—so far as he was concerned, anyhow, he was stuck in an unskilled rut, and no amount of thinking would or could alter that fact.

The false ideological premises underlying advice at school were also criticised, as part of the argument that school could do more if it were less authoritarian: and apprentice, for example, said, "They taught us how to talk to people (that is, with appropriate deference)—for example, if there was a wage dispute, all workers should be full of respect, be 'yes-men' and not argue with the boss". Five years at work as a bricklayer led this respondent to say, "I disagree with this advice—you should have a personal opinion and not be an under-dog to anyone. The trouble is that there are too many under-dogs who believe like this, just to be on the right side, and will do anything the boss says. For myself, I will not entertain such a carry-on". As a strong union supporter, he viewed himself as being of the same worth as his employer, and he objected strongly to schools acting (as it were) as agents for the employers and their values and interests. The school should, on the contrary, be stressing the rights and capacities of the individual in encouraging him, if anything, to stand up to those who would exploit him. Another youth
expressed the same view, saying, "At school they told us to keep on the strait and narrow, and keep in with the gaffers and obey orders. This is not right—if you start creeping to your gaffer.....well, use your imagination!" The worker who did not stand up for his rights, that is, would be lost and helpless—the youth was suspicious that that was the outcome that school, as well as "the gaffers", would really like: after all, did not the teachers "always try to hold you down," keep you in what they called, "your proper place"? The comment of another youth, at a superficially less serious level, contained the same sort of criticism. He said, "The teachers told us not to be cheeky to the gaffers, or we would be sacked"—in his seventh job, he went on to say, "they were dead right. I've been sacked several times for cheek." His comment was made ironically—he rejected the values which teachers and gaffers held in common.

There was evident in the remarks of some of those who argued that school could not do more to help in preparation for work, condemnation, sometimes caustic with criticism of the futility and boredom of school, sometimes smiling because of the pretensions of school teachers to "know it all" when they in fact "know nothing about the real world" which working men have to live in. Thus one youth said with some venom, "They told us we'd wish we were back at school—they didn't tell us that the foreman wouldn't be 'Sir'like they had been": teachers were so arrogant, conceited and unaware, that is, that they think children will
want to be sheltered by them—they do not realise that children are individuals with self-respect and a desire for equality. Blinkered as they are, how could the teachers be helpful in preparing people such as he for work? "All they want to do is to hold you down", a girl said: "I remember them telling a girl that she hadn't a hope of becoming a nurse because she'd only been to secondary modern school—but she is one now: they seem to think that all a secondary modern girl can do is be a shop assistant."

Schools were unhelpful, that is, in that they restricted horizons; or they did so if they could. Another girl said, "They wanted me to get a job in a factory—a charming idea!" Other respondents recalled examples of teachers' pronouncements which had proved false—one youth told a friend who went for an interview dressed as a "teddy boy". The school master said, "You'll never get a job dressed like that" but "he did get it, and he's still in it." So much for the value of what teachers say: it was satisfying to catch the "know-all" out. Another youth, dejected and resentful about work and school, said, "They told us that jobs were hard to get and that those who worked hardest at school would get the best of whatever jobs there were. I worked hard, but look what I've ended up in". He was a semi-skilled machine operator and he was protesting both at the values of work, where "graft" rather than willingness or ability seemed to be so important, and at the fraudulent nature of the advice at school, which struck him, now, as at best blackmail to persuade pupils to work, and at worst as
evidence of the cloud-cuckoo-land in which school teachers lived. Some respondents displayed what they regarded as a proper scepticism about anything that teachers might say, or anything to do with school—teachers had said that the more education you have, the better the job you will get, but what about youths who stayed on until the age of sixteen and were nonetheless only semi-skilled workers? There was some satisfaction for respondents that, in the end, they had won out over school: "I was never any good at school, and they were always on at me—but I've got a good job". These dismissals of the ability of school to be helpful reveal the strength of the antipathy of many respondents to school—this was evident, too, in their attitudes towards the raising of the school leaving age: they illustrate how powerfully school is rejected, as irrelevant to what work, and life, is really like. And they demonstrate the depth of the bad feeling engendered in some children by the boredom at school, and the apparent lack of understanding by the teachers of pupils as individuals, of the social background in which they led their daily lives, and of the world of work which they would enter.

Others who rejected the idea that school could be of greater use in preparing children for work were more temperate, reasoning that work is too complicated—in the tasks performed and in the total environment of the workplace—for the school to hope to be able to cope with the task of explaining it, the more so since the conditions and tasks varied so much from one occupation to another. It was argued, too, that there were other priorities
for the school: a housewife said that "I don't agree with training for a career at school. The job of the school is to educate generally. Training should come after school."

Another argument was that, given the routine sort of jobs that secondary modern children were destined to do, there was not much that the school could teach about them—a progress clerk, for example, said, "You don't really need anything from school in this job. You learn as you go along and use your common sense". The same argument was applied more forcefully by girls and youths who were manual factory workers and several youths explained that the work was not of the order that school can prepare a child for.

Semi-and unskilled workers, such as they, expected to change jobs in order to relieve the boredom, and could not see how school could help in any way to prepare them for that; thus, a labourer said, "you find out what you want to do, when you want to do it". You adjust as the situation requires, that is—if you feel that you can't stand a job any more you must change it. School, with its emphasis on planning and thinking ahead, has no bearing in this context: "life changes from day to day, so you must please yourself".

The inability of school to help was explained by some respondents as being a consequence of the attitudes of school leavers—keen as they are to leave and sanguine as they are about their ability to look after themselves—a shop assistant thus said, "My attitude was wrong. I wasn't in the frame of mind to be
helped"; and a clerk stated, "No, you're giddy when you're at school. You don't take any notice. It's only when you've left that you get straightened out". The school, then, can do nothing to help—you have to experience work in order to learn lessons about it. There were admissions from respondents, too, that they had not taken advantage of the help that school tried to afford them—one factory girl said "No, I think it were me! They tried their best," and a shop assistant said, "What I didn't learn was my own fault—they did as much as they could".

There were a few respondents who indicated that school had helped them a lot with guidance and advice which had proved valuable—and could not have helped them more: "they were good about this," said one youth, "and at pains to stress the difficulties of adjustment between leaving school and starting work, and pointed out that it would not be all fun."

The 27 youths and 23 girls who considered that school could have done more to prepare them for "life in general" referred to a variety of ways in which school could help.

Again the contrast between "make-believe" school and the real world was referred to: respondents who found themselves subject to conflict between the school and the home—for example, in regard to leisure pursuits or matters of morality—would have welcomed
guidance as to how to square the disparate claims, how to evaluate the opposing schemes of values. One girl, for example, said, "They don't teach you anything, really, about life; they give you a rough idea of what to do, how to get jobs, but they don't know what's going on at home and don't know what they're talking about." The girls sensed that teachers could have been a vehicle for reconciling the quandary imposed by the marked differences between school and home. Another area of criticism was that of the ineffectiveness of the education given—a youth protested that now, at the age of twenty, he felt the need for knowledge about things he had "learnt" at school but long-since forgotten—his complaint was that proper teaching methods would have ensured that he retained the knowledge imparted at school. There were further complaints that "nothing was ever finished off at school"—"we never finished the syllabus", and, "were always left on a knife edge". Now, as adults, these respondents recognised the utility of knowledge, and perceived their own inadequacies.

More preparation for leisure interests was referred to by several respondents—one girl said, "They should pay more attention to the increase in leisure which we all hope we will get when there is more automation". Six youths, but only one girl, said that more sex education should be given—one of the youths stating, "they should try to straighten out sex for you—you only pick it up from work-mates, in an under-hand way." One girl argued that more emphasis could be given to "cultural" subjects,
and, in particular, to foreign languages. A telephonist, she said, "It should be possible to teach a language at every school, not just grammar." On holiday in Germany and Holland with her parents, she had been impressed with the facility with which "ordinary" people on the Continent could speak fluent English.

She could understand, or tolerate, the fact that secondary modern children were destined for inferior jobs to grammar school leavers, but could not see why they should be given an inferior education in matters other than those to do with work.

There were criticisms that school did not pay enough attention to politics and world affairs, and did not spark off enough interest in such matters—at the age of twenty, when some respondents were beginning to take an interest in such matters of their own accord, they felt a basic lack of knowledge which, they thought, school should have provided them with.

A range of "adult skills" was also referred to—one respondent said, "At the moment school does nothing to help you with important decisions you have to make and things you have to do as a grown-up". A housewife was more specific—"take buying a house, for instance: my husband and I didn't know anything about it—all the documents and that. We had to learn it all from scratch. It was all very confusing and worrying". Several other respondents echoed this view. And another housewife said, "they don't teach you the essential things, like how to manage money"—interest rates, hire purchase agreements and national insurance,
were the sorts of things she had in mind. A labourer too, said, "there are lots of things like income tax that ought to be explained". A scaffolder supported this, saying, "I would like to see school learn children more about income tax and a bit about trade unions, because school leavers go to work knowing nothing about these, except what their workmates tell them". A housewife thought that "practical everyday things of use in the home" should be taught; she gave the mending of fuses as an example.

One apprentice summed up the feelings of many respondents when he said, "by widening one's outlook, school could prepare you more for work and life". He went on, "It could teach you about how to buy a house, how the town and the country are run. They should teach political expression and current affairs, giving them full importance. And they could make history lessons more interesting". What respondents wanted was that, in regard to life in general as to work in particular, school should have some relevance, and have it obviously.

But the majority of youths and girls, as we have seen, did not regard school as having special reference to life in general: in most cases they could not envisage it doing so—it's scheme of values and what it seemed to be about were at variance with life as they knew it.

A few respondents argued that school ought not to involve itself with other than narrow pedagogic concerns. It should concentrate on the basic school subjects, to give pupils a good
basis for finding out about life, some thought; others feared even further intrusion and interference by school with their lives; yet others pointed to the complicated nature of life—how could school help? "You can't really teach people about life, can you? You have to get out and learn for yourself, and make what you can of it."

The respondents' reactions to the question of school in relation to work and to life reflected satisfaction with their jobs in some cases, dissatisfaction in others: schools were blamed by some as a rationalisation for the failure to achieve their aspirations. Some respondents saw the possibility of improvements which would help secondary modern children in a modest way. Others considered that there was not much for school to do, given the jobs that they would enter and the lives they would lead. A few respondents took a wider view, and saw the possibility of a re-orientation in the schools such that they would have relevance for "ordinary" boys and girls, and espouse a system of values which harmonised with, or at least could be attuned to, the values of their homes and neighbourhoods—rather than being opposed to them. A further perspective of the young workers' appraisals of education—its functions and possibilities—is provided by attitudes towards the proposed raising of the school leaving age, and it is to this topic that we now turn.

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The decision to raise the school leaving age to sixteen with effect from 1970 was announced in January 1964—that is, the winter prior to the series of Research Interviews No. 4. The decision was given wide publicity in national and local press, and on radio and television—and in any case, the policy of raising the leaving age in due course had stood for some years. The replies to the questions on the raising of the leaving age indicated that most of the respondents did, indeed, know that it was intended to raise the age to sixteen; however, a substantial proportion—nearly one-fifth of the youths (16/86) and one-quarter of the girls (21/84) were not sufficiently concerned about the proposal to comment on it—they had not thought about the matter previously, and did not wish to do so for the purposes of

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1 In 1968 it was decided to put off the effective date for introducing the new leaving age.
the Research Interview. Their attitude was that it was no concern of theirs, that they had done their stint at school, and could not be expected to waste more of their time thinking about it—and that in this life there is not much point in having opinions on such matters: decrees are made, laws passed, and one complies with them: that is all there is to it. It should be said that few of the other respondents felt deeply involved in the issue: their stated support, or their opposition, to raising the age is not to be taken as a necessary indication of the action that they would take, were there to be a referendum on the subject for example. The question for them was hypothetical. Some, however, were very serious about the matter—a few of those who were married and had children had aspirations for them. But it must be remembered that their children were only one, two, or three years old, and the issue of the leaving age was not a major concern for most respondents. This said, the views on the leaving age can be taken as further indication of general approaches towards education, and it is possible to point to certain factors which appear to have influenced respondents' attitudes towards education during the five years after leaving school.

The replies of the respondents may be analysed, then, albeit somewhat crudely, in terms of those who definitely favoured the raising of the leaving age to sixteen; those who opposed the proposal (many of whom tended to the view that it was a matter for the individual or his family to decide, although some could see
that there might be arguments for raising the age especially if the standard of education were improved; and those who had no views on the subject. The numbers falling into the categories are shown in Table 93. (In the Postal Survey, out of a total of 235 youths and 208 girls, the numbers are as follows:—favoured raising the leaving age, 132 youths and 109 girls; opposed raising the leaving age, 103 youths and 99 girls). 1

**Table 93**

**VIEWS ON THE SCHOOL LEAVING AGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Youths</th>
<th>Girls</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definitely favoured raising leaving age to 16</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposed raising leaving age to 16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No views on the subject</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>86</td>
<td>84</td>
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</tbody>
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Support for raising the leaving age increased markedly during the course of the first five years in employment. When at school, only 11 youths and 8 girls definitely favoured a leaving age of sixteen, but by the time of Research Interview No.4, approaching one-half of the youths (38/86) and well over one-third of the girls (31/84) supported the proposal. Of course, the respondents' views during their last term at school were tainted by their keenness to leave: but analysis suggests a good deal of shifting of position in regard to this question during the course of the five years after leaving school, which is not to be attributed merely to

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1 The higher proportions favouring the raising of the age are probably an outcome of bias in response.
casualness in regard to the issue, nor to immaturity of thought. Rather, it is to be regarded as a response to the work experience and/or to changing orientations consequent upon marriage or the intention to marry, and, more generally, associated with a longer term, "adult" perspective.

The extent of the shifts in viewpoint is illustrated by the fact of the 11 youths who definitely favoured raising the leaving age whilst at school; only 4 were of the same view five years later; by that time, 1 definitely opposed raising the age, and the remaining 6 were now undecided. Of 8 girls who at Research Interview No.1 definitely favoured raising the leaving age, 7 remained in favour, but 1 was opposed to the proposal by the time of Research Interview No.4. The point should also be stressed that despite changes in viewpoint during the first five years after leaving school, basic approaches to questions of education remained in most cases constant—youths and girls were imbued with the values of their homes and social backgrounds; these operated broadly either in favour of education or in opposition to it—the strength of feeling of those who were opposed remained strong and there was, as will be seen, some bitterly expressed antipathy to the proposals to raise the leaving age. The trend towards a greater amount of support from respondents for the raising of the age confirmed a process already evident at the end of the first year in employment.¹

¹For an analysis of attitudes towards the school leaving age at one year after leaving school, see Home, School and Work, op.cit., pp.74-87.
Support for the raising of the school leaving age was evident in children in all the I.Q. Grades; however, there was some tendency for a higher proportion of youths and girls in the higher grades to favour raising the age, and for lower proportions to oppose it—and vice versa—with regard to those in the lower I.Q. grades. The numbers involved are too small to be other than suggestive. And the evidence is that respondents' attitudes were less related to intellectual ability, and not often connected with a dispassionate, "objective", appraisal of the merits of raising the age such that those in higher I.Q. Grades might be more capable of making, than of a combination of various factors in which work experience, social background and educational experience (or memories of it) all played some part.

Analysis in terms of level of job showed that both strong opponents and strong supporters of the policy of raising the leaving age were to be found in all the occupational categories. Analysis in terms of number of jobs held did not suggest any clear-cut overall connection between views on the school leaving age and experience of job changing—whilst 8 of the 24 youths with one job only favoured raising the leaving age, for example, 12 were opposed to the plan, and 4 expressed no view. And whilst 8 of the 19 youths who had had four or more jobs were in favour of raising the leaving age, 9 were definitely opposed and 2 had no view. Experience at work did affect views on the leaving age. But whereas one youth would react to a large number of job
changes by arguing that "an extra year" at school might have enabled him to avoid drifting, another would regard the drifting as of the nature of work, and proof that school was of no help to the mass of workers, who were doomed to a succession of dead-end jobs—so that to prolong education would be futile. Similarly, whilst some respondents had changed their views on the school leaving age, or strengthened a view previously held in consequence of marriage and having children, or of engagement—as part, that is, of a process of making a re-appraisal of what they wanted out of life for themselves and for their children—analysis in these terms did not show significant differences (in the non-statistical sense): the supporters of raising the leaving age included about the same proportion of married respondents as in the sample as a whole, for example.

Certain respondents who had no regrets that they had themselves left school at fifteen years of age and who stated clearly that they would have resented having to remain until the age of sixteen, nonetheless now argued that in principle it was a good policy. A factory worker, for example, said that he had been "very glad" to leave at fifteen because school got on his nerves; he nevertheless maintained that it was a "good thing" to raise the leaving age to sixteen, because "no one has learnt enough by the age of fifteen to be ready for the world outside". Similarly, a builder who said that he had been glad to leave at fifteen and that "you think you can make your own mind up at that age about
what you want to do", went on to say that to raise the leaving age would be a good thing, because "it would give you more time to think about a job, and more education generally". He had had three jobs during his first year at work, and had then changed to his present job, which he had held, happily, for four years: his views on the leaving age was a direct conclusion from his own experiences in first entering employment. And a labourer who felt inclined to the view that it would have "done him no good" to have stayed on, because he "wanted to be earning and wouldn't have thought of anything else" concluded that if it were compulsory to remain at school until the age of sixteen, this would be "excellent"—for "you start to slow down when you are fifteen or so, and become more mature—so you could get more out of the last years at school". By "slowing down" he meant becoming more responsible, less mischievous. A motor mechanic was of the same mind, saying, "I think school is a great thing, and kids don't realise it until it is too late—like myself, for my writing and spelling are hopeless. By all means put the age up—they'll realise it's to their own good when they get to my age". These examples, and others to be given below, are illustrative of the changes of views resulting from increased maturity at the age of twenty—from an awareness, that is, of the problems and sufferings of work and of the difference which a better education and a "right attitude in the first few years in employment can make to the entire subsequent career prospects: the examples are indicative,
too, of a recognition by respondents that compulsion may be necessary in the interests of the young person who, given the opportunity, would leave school as soon as he could, unmindful of the longer term benefits to be derived from staying on (and, as some respondents stated and others implied, unguided by parents, teachers or anyone else). There was a widespread view amongst the advocates of raising the age that the children concerned would oppose the measure, but would come to recognise its benefits later. As one youth said, "Those who are there now wouldn't appreciate it, but they would regret it later, if they didn't stay on: you don't realise it until it's too late." This view was not shared by many other respondents, however, who, as we will see, affirmed above all the importance of allowing the individual to make his own choice.

The most important of the reasons for supporting the raising of the age have already been touched upon. Immaturity at fifteen was cited by many respondents—at fifteen "you are only just starting to understand things": an "extra bit of education then will make all the difference later on". These arguments are similar to those advanced in regard to the regret of some respondents at not themselves having remained at school longer (as discussed above). But there were also arguments of a somewhat different order. The difficulties of transition from school to work would be averted if children did not leave school until the age of sixteen, one youth argued, "The extra year would help to break the jump from school to adult life. I felt cut off in my job for the first three years".

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One more year at school, he felt, could have saved him the three years of misery that he had endured in trying to settle down at work. Of course, young people differ in the extent of their social maturity at a given age, as in their physical maturity. And we have seen that the majority of respondents did not suffer major difficulties during the transition from school to work.

But apart from those who were less mature and who did suffer as a consequence of starting work before they were ready for it, there were other respondents whose considered view, looking back over their own experience at work and their observation of other young workers, was that it would be better for all concerned if starting work were delayed until the age of sixteen—fewer mistakes would then be made, fewer decisions taken on false premises and misplaced hopes. As one youth said, "Many people have no plans when they leave school", and "an extra year would give them the greater maturity that they need when they are thrown out into the world".

It was suggested by one respondent that the "extra year" should be used to consolidate the choice of work and prepare a child for it—an apprentice, the youth argued, "They should know what they want to do at fifteen, and spend a year getting to know about the job thoroughly". His view was that this was best done under the "protection" of the school—rather than "having

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1 That this is true is documented in Home, School and Work, op.cit.
to start from scratch" in a work situation which would in any case be intimidating to the new recruit.

From the comments of several respondents with experience in particular trades and jobs it was evident that there was some awareness—although this was not widespread, even amongst those who favoured raising the leaving age—that work tasks are becoming more complicated and technical; the extra year at school was fast becoming, in their view, a sine qua non. As one youth said, "You really need a G.C.E. nowadays, to get anywhere—in twenty years time you'll need it for any job". A general raising of standards all round was referred to regretfully by a van driver who felt his own deprivation; he said, "Yes, it should be sixteen because you need G.C.E.—everyone (that is, employers) seems to want 'O' levels these days."

To summarise, arguments used to support the raising of the leaving age revolved mainly around the advantages in terms of work—getting a better job, adjusting to employment more readily and with greater sophistication and maturity. Support for raising the age to sixteen was particularly marked amongst respondents who

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1 A recent sample survey of the parents of 4,500 13-16 year-old children conducted for the Schools Council by the Government Social Survey showed that parents who supported the raising of the leaving age mentioned better opportunities for and at work and greater maturity as the most important reasons for their support. The survey found that two-thirds of the parents of children intending to leave school at fifteen were at least partly in favour of a later leaving age.

were aspiring to "improve" themselves. They translated their own aspirations into the general question, and saw the raising of the age as part of a process—or as a token of a higher standard of living, materially and in the less concrete aspects of style of life. A few respondents—mainly girls—put more stress upon specific "non-work" matters: one girl, for example, suggested that the year from fifteen to sixteen was a particularly important age for girls, who were then mature enough and receptive enough to benefit from guidance at school in matters of sex and aspects of marriage and the family. Rather more girls than youths looked to less tangible benefits, furthermore—to benefits less obviously connected with work or the family. Thus, one girl spoke of "the need for a more educated population"—"it would be better all-round, for everybody: education is a good thing". She, and several girls of similar mind, thought that conflicts, personal, national and international, could be resolved through "a better" education.

Two points should be stressed in regard to those respondents who favoured the raising of the leaving age. The first is that although a few of them advocated and even higher leaving-age (and others expressed the hope that their own children would continue their education until the age of seventeen, eighteen or later) the bulk—whilst positively favouring sixteen—thought that that was high enough as a matter of compulsion: to go beyond that would be to push the advantages of education too far, and although
children might not be ready for work by fifteen, by the age of sixteen there should be no question about the matter.

The second point has already been mentioned. Namely, the awareness by respondents that to raise the leaving age would not simply be an unpopular move amongst many pupils, but that some would resent it very much indeed. As one respondent said, "It might be a good idea—I think it is in fact: but I feel sorry for the teachers who will have to be in charge of pupils who are being kept at school against their wills". There is a recognition, then, of the deep opposition which the policy would encounter. And the respondents' statements indicate not just this recognition but also that they could envisage as well as the advantages some of the objections to the policy, objections upon which, they knew, some of their peers and the generation following them would place more weight than they would attach to the advantages, if such they could perceive.

32 youths and 31 girls were definitely opposed to raising the leaving age. Some of these had been consistently so throughout the research period—their opposition was a continued aspect of their strong antipathy to school, and reflected, too, home and social backgrounds in which the norms and values were at odds with those which the school sought to promote, or which it seemed to embody.

Opposition to the raising of the school leaving age was, in many cases, strongly expressed—this is true of the respondents
in the whole range of occupational levels, ability and social backgrounds, although it was particularly marked amongst those respondents in the lower level manual jobs who came from the "rougher" neighbourhoods. The immediate reactions of some to the issue was indicative of a long-standing dislike of school, and of a belief that it is largely "a waste of time". Thus a van driver remarked, "poor devils": he did so smilingly, but it was a genuine sentiment. He, like others, had not been particularly ill-disposed to school whilst there, and had not expressed an opinion at Research Interview No.1 as to the desirability or otherwise of raising the leaving age (35 youths and 14 girls were in this category). But his experience at work had led him to the conclusion that "schooling is no use to you"—"What is the use of it to people who are going to end up in jobs like I've got? So if you don't like it, why be made to stay? It's not as if it's any use to you". A number of those, who expressed strong opposition to raising the leaving age were more circumspect, although no less firm in their conclusion. A housewife who had previously worked in a shop and a factory said, "It's a bit too old, sixteen—you've got to learn to stand on your own feet, and looking back on my own experience, I managed alright, and so did all my friends."

A major point made by many of these respondents was that the majority of children have no wish to remain at school beyond the age of fifteen, and that there is "nothing to stop the minority who wish to continue at school from doing so". A co-op shop
assistant, for example, who said that she had "never liked school" protested that "you should be given a choice—they shouldn't make you; it should be up to the person to choose". And a youth in the Royal Navy said, "If a child wishes to remain at school for a further year, then there is nothing to stop him. But most children don't want to. My own final year at school was a farce". Similarly a housewife, who had previously had four factory jobs, argued, "No—people want to get out and earn their living; it's no good keeping people on if they don't want to stay—they just won't take it in." Children varied in interests, ability, aspirations and family circumstances, and this fact should be acknowledged—"with some people it might be a good thing, but most people aren't suited to it". And, "If parents can afford it, all well and good, but mine couldn't and I don't know of many who could".

Differences in maturity of children were referred to—"It might be a good idea for some, but a lot are ready to leave before—I was ready to leave at fourteen; in any case, I think you can learn a lot more after you've left school". More generally it was argued that it was "ridiculous to raise the age when people are supposed to be maturing earlier". The view was expressed not only that it was likely that children would refuse to benefit, by not co-operating—"not bothering to pay attention"—but that they might well be positively difficult. A warehouse assistant, in his sixth job, thus said, "It is silly—if people want to
stay on, let them—but forcing them to do it will make them rebel". He was uniting himself in sympathy with those who would rebel, as well as reporting the situation as he saw it—identifying himself with younger children of similar background to himself. He knew how they would feel, and he understood why they would react so strongly against the raising of the age—school was irrelevant to them: five years of experience at work, with six job changes, had done nothing to persuade him that there was anything to be said in favour of a longer education. What irked such respondents was that school should be both irrelevant and compulsory. As another labourer said, "It is rubbish. If you have no interest, you should be allowed to leave when you are fourteen. If you don't want to learn, why should you be made to? Leaving school and starting work was just great for me. I've enjoyed work, and not had a care." This youth had had six jobs, all of them semi- or unskilled, and a period of six weeks unemployment (which could, however, be regarded as "voluntary"): his values were quite at odds with those of school, and if it came to a fight, he would side with those who objected to the imposition of another year at school.

Opposition to raising the leaving age did not come only from respondents who had a strong emotional antagonism to school, and felt that the measure would in some way implicate them through attacking people like them, possibly their own children. Several respondents spoke less from their direct personal feelings—they
would have been prepared to stay on themselves, and perhaps regretted that they had not done so—than from their observation of school children and fellow workers. An apprentice engineer, for example, said that "With some it's a good thing, but a lot of people aren't suited for it. Some lads don't need it, and it's better if they go out working". Some weren't suited by disposition, attitude or ability, that is: some were brighter than others and would progress better outside; some were much more dull than others, and an extra year would be of no benefit anyway. His experience at work had taught him that, in this complicated issue, you cannot legislate for the mass. Individual differences in ability were referred to by many respondents—"If you're not clever by fifteen, what's the use of doing another year?" It was conceded that "it might be good for those who have intelligence, but for the rest of us it would be a waste of time". There was, indeed, a strong and widespread belief not just that some children are brighter than others, but that most were not at all bright and never could be, no matter what education they were subjected to.1 This belief had already been applied by some respondents in regard to their children's education—the approach

1 The ethos and organisation of the secondary modern school, it has been suggested above, is conducive to this conviction—that there are two main categories, the clever and the rest, and that there is an unbridgeable gap between being clever and not being clever. And cf. B. Jackson, Streaming: and Education System in Miniature, op.cit.
was that there was no question of planning or encouragement: "if the child has got it in him, it will come out—if not, you can't do anything about it." Other respondents saw the issue not so much in terms of ability as in terms of choice of style of life. For these, "education" was something that was "alright if you are interested in that sort of thing". They recognised that some people were, but that they were not—"it's alright if you want a career, but it's no use if you just want a job, like me: you don't need to leave at sixteen to be a lorry driver."

A housewife, previously an office worker, put more emphasis upon "social aspects" than upon the adjustment to employment, or educational benefits in a narrow sense. She had in mind people from "slum areas" for whom the extra year would be pointless—and indeed would amount to "asking for trouble". She said, "I think there is a definite group of people who would not benefit in any way, and they would be a lot happier at work—perhaps in some cases with a part-time educational course—than at school all day". The same sort of idea was in the mind of an apprentice, who argued that "kids like that would cause chaos in the schools at the age of fifteen—they're bad enough as it is, at fourteen". The latter point was taken up by several respondents, who maintained that there were not enough teachers to cope: a labourer in his fifth job said, "I think it's daft—they reckon they're short of teachers, so why keep the kids on—the schools are overcrowded as it is". A nurse said that the teacher/pupil ratio
should be lowered before thinking about raising the leaving age. It is not, however, just a matter of quantity of teachers—a driver salesman, for example, stated, "In my opinion the majority of teachers are not qualified to teach fifteen- and sixteen-year-old pupils: they’re not up to it." If improvements were made in teaching, some respondents would amend their views—"it would be O.K. if more advanced methods of teaching were brought in" said one youth, and another said that pupils would not make the best use of the extra year "unless teachers change their attitudes and can understand older boys better". More particularly, it was argued that there would have to be a re-orientation of schools in their objectives—an apprentice said that "teachers in schools today do not give enough time to teaching the pupil who is slow to pick things up. Therefore he is left alone, miles behind other boys; whereas, with a bit more attention, he could do just as well". A driver’s mate made the same point, saying, "There’s too much emphasis at school on encouraging the brighter pupils to succeed. The less fortunate ones in the "D" stream, like I was, are not sufficiently catered for." The point being made by these respondents was that the extra year would be of no use if, as seemed likely, there was more of "the same mixture as before". As they saw it, the question of the extra year was of little importance compared with the fundamental need to re-orientate school work as a whole so that the less bright, as well as the bright, are helped.
Apart from the disinclination of many fifteen-year-olds to heed what teachers might say, there is the more positive point that, at that age, children are ready to leave school—they can stand on their own feet then, so why not let them? This view was arrived at from various perspectives. The child of fifteen, as an individual, was mature enough; no matter what age you leave, you have to face up to the real world sometime, so "just as well make it fifteen as hang on until sixteen"; and, at fifteen, the best, most stimulating environment was adult-orientated work, rather than child-orientated school—"you're better out working".

Opponents of raising the leaving age inclined to be strong in their opposition. They were prepared to concede that those who wished to remain at school beyond the age of fifteen should be allowed to do so. It seemed odd to them that anyone in his right mind would want to do so, but there always are some peculiar people about—and it is their own lives that are at stake, so they must lead them. But, as a complement to this, it was "only right" that the "normal" person, who has a healthy and sensible desire to get out of school and get on with life, should be able to do so. By fifteen, "you have spent long enough at school and should be allowed to work for your own living."

Incomprehension of the objectives of the proposal to raise the leaving age led to vehemence, scorn and disgust. It "stood to reason" that the aim was not educational—"you've learnt enough by the time you are fifteen—at least all you are likely to learn at
secondary modern school". (One Postal respondent, a milling-machine operator in his third job, wrote, "It's rubbish—10 years is enough to learn the necessities" (sic).) For respondents of this outlook, there is "no call" for special sophistication in writing or arithmetic, least of all in geography or history—"you don't need it", in work or at play. Of course, if you are "in the G.C.E. bracket" then "that's a different matter"—but "most of us aren't". Such views were offered not in a defensive way, but as a matter of realism: and in some cases there was a trace of attack, of criticism of education as such—"all the book-work won't make steel—you need strong men for that", was the faith of one respondent. Several other respondents expressed scepticism at the value of book-learning, and even alarm at the emphasis nowadays placed upon it—an apprentice said, "You must be able to do it practically—there is a swing towards educational theory and knowledge, but things must swing back in favour of the practical man. If everybody's got letters after their name, nobody will be doing the practical—that would be a ridiculous situation." Schools were criticised, too, for not adhering to the basic matters, which could be covered in a shorter time and more effectively if less attention were devoted to frills and irrelevances—a machine operator thus avowed that "there's too much messing about in schools today, and not enough work done". An apprentice engineer said that he could get all the education he wanted from work or from evening school—and this
was just as good as staying on at school "and studying for G.C.E. and that": although not contemptuous of people who did stay on, he was arguing that he was perfectly competent in his job, and that the work was obviously important and worthwhile, which was more than could be said for a clerk or some other non-manual worker, for all the certificates and years at school such people might have. It was argued that "you won't learn any more from fifteen to sixteen," over and over again. There were three main grounds. That the secondary modern child "was not up to learning any more" — "it's daft keeping on those who've not got brains". That there is nothing more to learn — nothing, that is, that the secondary modern leaver, given the sort of job he is going to enter, needs. And that the secondary modern school, whatever might be said about it in theory, in practice does not and cannot teach any more — on the contrary, schools approach even the year from fourteen to fifteen as if there were nothing more to teach, as if they did not know what to do with the time.

The latter point clinched the argument for several respondents, who still resented the waste of time in their own last year at school — a shorthand typist said, "It would be ridiculous: we did nothing in our last year — if you raised the age it would mean nothing would be done for two years". The last year already, it was maintained, was spent in "fooling around and running errands for the teachers". Some of the respondents who opposed raising the leaving age said that they would reconsider their position if
schooling were improved—a student nurse, for example, said that "it might be a good thing provided you learnt something".

In terms of the practical matter of getting a job, respondents' observations had led them to the conclusion that the extra year would confer no advantages. Examples were cited of children who remained at school in the expectation of getting a "better" job but who were disappointed and "ended up in the same old sort of work". Because achievement is out of line with the aspirations induced by the extra year at school such persons are even more resentful, blame the teachers for their lack of success, and pass on their dissatisfaction and repudiation of the value of the extra year to the willing ears of work-mates. Respondents who were reconciled to their level of work also took issue on this point. A driver's mate thus said, "I'm one of eight children and all of us are doing well". He was in his sixth job, in fact, having had three other occupations. But he had a "reasonable wage"—"quite good compared with some"—and he "could be a lot worse off" than he is. Certainly, to his mind, another year at school would be most unlikely to have put him in a "better off" position than he was, and the same was true, he held, for his brothers and sisters. A girl argued the same point—most girls go into factories or shops or offices, and this is true whether they leave school at fifteen or at sixteen. To suggest that an extra year at school will improve prospects is thus untenable, in her view—"girls always end up in the same sort of job". And if
one followed the logic of the claim that the extra year would be beneficial in career terms, "in the end, everyone would have a G.C.E. and it wouldn't be of any use to anyone": in any case, "Someone's got to do the ordinary jobs"—there is a danger of creating a situation in which no one wants to, because they "think they are above it". The mood of such respondents was one of facing the facts and being sensible about them. Viewed from this perspective, raising the leaving age was tantamount to interfering with the state—the balance—of nature. It was, almost unnatural, or of that order. This, too, helps to account for the intensity of emotion engendered by the subject. To attempt to go against the order of things is ridiculous, inexplicable—but frightening, or at least worrying, too.

Several respondents suggested that, so far from the time at school being lengthened, it should be shortened—"fourteen is a better age—that's plenty—they should be out earning a few shillings". It must be understood, that is, that money is needed in a working class home, and that the need is obvious and real, in contrast with airy-fairy notions about the need for education, which at best is a luxury and which often tends to be merely a waste of time. Two respondents, a youth and a girl, maintained that the age for starting school should be raised—"five is too young, they're not ready for it". And one respondent, a housewife who thought that a leaving age of sixteen was "ridiculous", said that "they should be allowed to start earlier—they are ready to start
at four, and it would benefit both mothers and children if an extra year was put in at the beginning rather than at the end." This remark is indicative of a view held by many girls—and their mothers before them, as Research Interviews Nos. 2 and 3 revealed—that the utility of school is to be seen not so much in the task of educating children, but in its function of keeping children out of the mother's way. When children are fifteen, they can look after themselves, and in any case would be out at work most of the time; so school ceases to have a valid function then. It is when they are younger that you most want them out from under your feet—that is the time when the school could be more helpful.

Given that the extra year at school, demonstrably, did not have reference to any educational objective, what was the motive behind it? It was this question that gave rise to bitterness, vehemence and some anguish. The issue was a focal point of respondents' frustration with the power structure of society and their position in it—the ordinary working person was always on the losing side, it seemed. Whilst resentful, some respondents were inclined to dismiss the matter from their minds as inexplicable: others attributed the perverse decision to "Them" and left it at that. But a few youths and girls prodded away, seeking some deeper understanding—it was as if they suspected a plot of some kind, to hold them down. "What goes off at school, it speaks for itself," said a machine operator. He meant that,
given (a) a poor education, poor school amenities and poor teachers—that is, "what goes on at school"—and given (b) the proposal to raise the leaving age, then it is obvious ("it speaks for itself") that there is something odd going on—for (a) and (b) are seemingly contradictory: what then is afoot? A grinder similarly felt that there was "something wrong somewhere", but he "couldn't say exactly what": it was some sort of scheme detrimental to people such as he—presumably aimed at preventing them from taking up their rightful opportunity to earn money. The basic unfairness of it all was expressed by a steelworker, who said, "It is stupid—the brainy ones, who want to make a career, would benefit again": as usual, that is to say, to those who have will be given more—whilst "those who are only going to do unskilled work will miss out again". The already meagre compensation that they had for doing the rough, lowly-esteemed jobs, namely that they were paid for it, would be encroached upon by the forced delay in entering employment.

On a more practical level, the point was made that work can be a spur to academic or "school" work when school itself has failed to inspire. An apprentice mechanical engineer argued this, saying that "many don't recognise the importance of the academic side until they are at work—so it's best for them to get a job and then go to technical school at nights or on day release". A girl argued, too, that school subjects were in any case not relevant—"If you are going to do further study, it is best to
go to a college like a secretarial college—it is better to do
that than to stay on at school just to do more geography and
history and that". A painter/decorator expatiated on this view-
point, saying, "It should be a matter of choice: for some, the
last year already is a waste of time and of public money. And if
a person is so minded, he can learn as much after leaving school,
as lots of cases prove." Another respondent made the same sort
of point, saying, "I wan't clever at school and I've relied upon
my own personality to get where I am. I've no complaints, and I
would leave again at fifteen if given the chance". This youth was
arguing that there are alternative routes to the "top" which ought
to be preserved—that it is wrong that so much emphasis should be
placed upon formal qualifications and upon full-time education.
Other qualities and other sorts of experience were of just as much
value for society. The above respondents had, indeed, blossomed
forth after leaving school, and had been inspired to study sub-
jects which, unlike those at school, both interested them and were
of obvious and direct value in their occupations. A girl argued
likewise: a clerk, she said, "It might be alright to have an extra
year if worthwhile subjects were taught that would be useful in
your job—like commercial subjects, for example. But even then,
I think it would be better to go to a proper commercial college.
At one of these colleges, you are not treated as a child any more
—that is, if someone does anything wrong, like in shorthand
making a lot of mistakes, instead of shouting and ticking you off,
the teachers treat you as an adult. They know that you are
learning something entirely new, and at first incomprehensible,
and explain everything all over again and point out where you went
wrong in the first case. And these colleges also prepare you to
meet different kinds of people and to deal with problems in the
everyday life you lead. Also, the pupils are treated as indivi-
duals and are given individual attention, instead of one person
attempting to explain something to a crowd of people, some of whom
are quicker to learn than others. The slow ones get behind in
that situation, and can't possibly become as good at the job they
set out to do as the others. (The girl was drawing upon her own
experience at a private fee-paying Commercial College, at which
she had done a year's course after leaving school).

The importance of "practical experience" was also stressed—
an apprentice said that "boys want to get started on their careers
and if the leaving age is raised it would put them back a year in
their practical experience". Furthermore, "It would mean that
you finish your apprenticeship later—it is much better to get
boys young and train them." (The possibility of amendments in
industrial training would lead to a reduction in the length of
training was remote to such apprentices, so remote that they either
did not know of the possibility, or they rejected it outright—
for "the unions would never allow it" and, in any case, the fun-
damental point remained, namely, that you need the practical ex-
perience, no matter what anyone says, and the sooner you start,
the better).

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Several girls endorsed the argument propounded by a typist, engaged to be married, who said, "If they raise the age to sixteen, children will be going to school when they are married, soon." The view was that you can't get much more absurd than that. The possibility was not entertained that school might so amend attitudes and aspirations that marriage would be delayed. Rather the approach was that young people had a right to marry at this age, and that the suggestion of an extension of school years should be recognised for what it was, an attack, albeit disguised and tangential, upon that right. This was regarded then, in however unformulated a way, as an issue of personal freedom in the face of state intervention. It was particularly important to girls because they were aware that they would soon settle down, and be tied to husband and family. This was a desired state, but they did want a year or two of freedom and independence—from school and from family obligations. To raise the leaving age would represent a more drastic curtailment of the girls' freedom, they argued, than of the youths'—for the latter was likely to marry later, and in any case would not be tied to the home in the way that the woman is. What is more, even if the trend towards earlier marriage were not to persist, the raising of the leaving age would deprive a girl of a substantial part of the already brief spell which she spends at work—and which is important to her in the process of growing up. Thus one girl maintained that "You need the time at work to prepare yourself for when you have
the responsibility of running a home—"A girl needs to get out from school and away from her own home and neighbourhood, and she needs to mix, in order to get to know about things." She needs to be released from home and school and neighbourhood, before it is too late. From another angle, some respondents argued that whilst there could be some merit in a youth remaining at school longer—if, that is, it benefited him in his subsequent employment—it was a different matter for a girl. For since a girl was likely to marry and become a wife and mother it was a waste of resources to give her an extra year of education—the only exceptions might be those few (by implication somewhat peculiar) girls who wanted a career.¹

The increase in support for the raising of the school leaving age must not be exaggerated—it was pointed out earlier that this was not a particularly "live" issue for most respondents, although many did have views on the matter, and some held their

¹An unpublished study by A.S. Clark in which approximately 300 youths and girls, and their parents, were questioned (in 1965-67) suggested that the most violent opposition to raising the leaving age came from girls and their parents—who were "vehemently antipathetic"—whilst boys and their parents tended rather to be "apathetically acquiescent". (Private communication, 20th June, 1967). I do not know whether it has ever been suggested that the leaving age be raised for boys and left as it is for girls. If this were proposed the public reaction would be of considerable sociological interest.
views, as we have seen, very strongly. And the point has already been made that the fact they they were soon to leave school, and were excited about doing so, obviously would have affected respondents' views on the leaving age as expressed in their last term at school. So that a comparison of views at the age of fifteen, whilst still at school, and at the age of twenty, after five years at work, is rather unreal.

In part the "increase" in support can be seen, too, as an outcome of the unthinking assumption by respondents of what they deemed to be "adult", "responsible" attitudes: "education" was to be regarded as a good thing, and children should be encouraged to benefit from it, and forced if necessary. But we have seen that there were more direct and more substantial factors associated with support for the raising of the leaving age. Experience at work did help to shape attitudes, and to amend them. Youths and girls who had, in their view, "done quite well" at work saw the benefits which a better education could give—they perceived that had they had a better education themselves, their prospects would have been immeasurably improved; having experienced some success, they had acquired the taste for it and advocated it for others. On the other hand, there were respondents whose experience of work had been less happy, who found themselves in routine, dead-end occupations after drifting from one job to another. The lesson that they drew from their experience was that a better education would have saved them from the fate which was now
sealed for them. Of course, for some of these respondents, support for the raising of the leaving age was an easy rationalisation of their own position, rather than being a thought-out view.

There were other reasons advanced, to which lesser importance was attached by the majority of the supporters of raising the age, but which were a major factor in the estimation of some—the benefits the extra year would confer in making the transition from school to work was one of these, it being thought likely that the extra year would equip children for this "jump" and that the children would in any case be more mature at sixteen and better able to cope with the problems.

The majority of respondents, however, were opposed to the raising of the leaving age. The opposition was based in the norms and values of respondents. Some were antipathetic to school, other thought that education was "alright up to a point"—but that after fifteen it was of no value. Experience at work has done nothing to amend these long-standing attitudes for the majority of respondents. And if some respondents who had, whilst at school, opposed the raising of the leaving age, now favoured it, the reverse also was true. So that there were youths and girls who reacted to their lowly occupational status by arguing that education was of no avail for a secondary modern child—that no matter how long you remained at school, you would end up in one of the routine jobs.

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Two further points may be underlined. The first is that respondents placed considerable emphasis upon education in regard to future employment. A few did refer to questions of maturity, and the wisdom or otherwise of an extended education was assessed by these with reference to the individual's personal and social development; and some others were concerned about the part that extended schooling might play in ameliorating the problems of adjustment to employment. But essentially, school was judged by reference to the employment which it would lead to. Hence some, who perceived the possibility of advancement in a career if equipped with a better education, supported the raising of the leaving age. But hence, too, others who could see no possibility of a secondary modern youth or girl entering other than the more routine jobs, however long a schooling was, or who were satisfied that their job was worthwhile and could see no need for further schooling in connection with it, rejected the idea of raising the age. This approach, too, accounts for the strength of the objection by girls—since they would not be at work for many years, why should they need a longer secondary education? It could be argued that this proclivity to assess education mainly of exclusively in terms of subsequent employment is in itself a mark of the school's failure to broaden children's horizons in cultural, artistic and social directions. Education was thought of, too, in terms of its appropriateness for those children who "have intelligence": the bulk of children at secondary modern school
were deemed not to have this, and it would therefore be a waste of time to extend their schooling. Further to this it is to be remarked that whilst some of the respondents who were critical of the "younger generation" (this is discussed in more detail below) called for "more discipline at school", as a remedy, and whilst, as will be seen, over one-quarter of the youths and girls thought that school could do more "to prepare children for life in general" nonetheless, the bulk of the respondents did not perceive of the school as having a major part to play in inducing standards of citizenship. Perhaps this was because the attempts of school in this direction appeared to so many of them as artificial and unrealistic.1

The second point to be underlined is that a considerable number of respondents, drawing upon their own feelings and upon their appreciation of the attitudes of fifteen-year-old youths and girls, emphasised the likelihood of rebelliousness, or at least lack of co-operation from pupils, if they were required to remain at school until the age of sixteen. I have argued elsewhere that the strength of opposition to the raising of the leaving age must be taken into account in the formulation of policy—"The crux of the matter lies in the size of (the) minority for whom the extra year is not sensible—the Crowther majority thought that this was a small number of boys and girls with special characteristics; the

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Crowther minority thought in terms of a rather larger number of children, of varying outlooks and dispositions; (but) the evidence suggests that the minority is so sizeable as to make necessary a re-appraisal of the validity of the policy. At present, sixty per cent of boys and girls leave school at the minimum statutory age; it is not unrealistic to presume that between a quarter and a half of these will benefit little or not at all from an extra year, either educationally or in terms of the development of the personality: on the contrary, they may well become increasingly more fed-up with school, and exert an unfortunate influence upon those who are keen, or at least amenable, to remaining at school until the age of sixteen." Musgrave has argued more generally that "there is a danger that an over protective school environment may promote less responsible maturity than many work situations; and that it may fail to promote social skills, understanding and insight which may often come from work. More protracted formal education has the duty to provide at least as much challenge and sense of responsibility as might be obtained at work." 2

The experiences and attitudes of the respondents as summarised above confirms these doubts as to the wisdom of the policy of


raising the school leaving age, at any rate of doing so universally. The main interest here, however, is not in policy issues but in understanding young workers' perceptions of the nature of society and of their place in it. Education is one dimension of this, and views on the school leaving age provide one angle from which the respondents' perceptions may be gauged. Another angle is provided by respondents' aspirations for their children, and it is to this aspect that we now turn.

Aspirations for Children's Education

All respondents were asked about the age at which they would like their children to leave school, and the type of school that they would like them to attend. It must be emphasised that there are considerable reservations to be made as to the meaning of the replies which were forthcoming, for a variety of reasons.¹

¹A limitation of the research technique is one factor to be taken into account, for although questions on the relationship of school to work were interposed between the question on the general principle of raising the school leaving age and the question dealing with aspirations in this respect for their own children, it seems likely that the "idea" of leaving at sixteen was introduced, to some respondents at least, by the Interview itself, and that numbers of stated aspirations for their children to leave at sixteen or later were inflated in consequence.
Furthermore, only 11 youths were married, and only 4 of these had children, all of them, of course, very young; and whilst 31 girls were married only 16 of them had children, and all of these, too, were young. So that the issue was far from being an immediate one, even for those who were married and who had children. And for most of the single respondents, youths especially, the question had very little meaning at all—they had never given the matter a thought. It was premature to ask them the question—as one of them said, "What a daft question; I haven't shot 'gun yet!" At the same time, it was clear from responses that youths and girls did expect to become fathers and mothers in due course—although two girls and one youth said that they did not intend to have children, one of the girls, adding, "Why should I be tied down?" Apart from the unreality of the question, and the superficiality of many of the replies, it must be recognised that expressions of good intent in regard to children's education were made in a situation in which actual decisions and actions in regard to the matter were far removed in time. Certainly some respondents—whether as a reaction to their own lowly achievements at school and work or because their own success in apprenticeships or office work had given them a glimpse of something even better which a good education might secure for their children, were determined that their children would remain at school for as long as possible. Others, too, were well disposed towards a longer period of education for their
children, but saw the possibility that they might not, in the event, "be able to afford it"—their experience had shown them that prolonged education can be a major burden in the working class home. Yet others expressed the preference for a longer period of education for their children without much, or any, consideration of the implications. So that although at the Research Interview they said that they would like their children to remain at school until sixteen or over, they would probably be of a very different mind when the time came, and they had two or three other younger children to maintain—with only the same income, or not much more, than they were now earning at the age of twenty. The wish, furthermore, however deeply held, is not to be confused with the will or with the competence to encourage children at school. It is a statement of hope, often vaguely held, rather than a plan or principle for action, in the majority of cases.

The figures relating to the questions on aspirations for children's education must not have too much credence attached to them therefore: at best they are but a very rough and ready guide to the respondents' evaluation of education, of its relevance to their own position in society and of its possible relevance to the position of their children. Not much weight is accorded to the figures here—they are mentioned as of some interest: but more important are the perspectives of the respondents which were evinced by the questions on this topic.
This said, the point is worth stressing that the matter was a real issue for certain respondents, who had given thought to the matter. The aspiring respondents, who planned their marriages for some years ahead after they had saved up for a "nice" home, often saw their family as being small (they probably would "plan" their family to this end); and it was part of the style of life to which they aspired that the children would "do well" at school, "go as far as they can with their education", and "get a really good job". Children's education occupied a central place in hopes and plans for the future in some cases, then. And some of the respondents who had no steady relationship with members of the opposite sex had given thought to the question of their children's education. One youth, for example, although he had no girl friend, clearly envisaged marriage in the not-too-distant future, and had ideas about what he wanted from married life: he had not necessarily thought about the matter in a systematic way, but his ideas had crystallised so that he was able to say that he hoped that his children, when he had them, would go to a grammar school, and not leave until they were eighteen years of age: he added, however, that he would not push them if they did not want to stay on. The latter was a commonly expressed sentiment, and will be referred to again.

A further important point is that, at least in certain cases, the school and work experience of respondents was directly and rapidly translated into precepts for children's education. As
and example, one respondent, married and with two children, was emphatic that children would leave school as soon as they were able—because at her school she had done nothing but waste time for the last eighteen months. Her experience as a fourteen-year-old school child was firmly entrenched and now, at the age of twenty, her "policy" for her own children was established: she would take a lot of convincing to amend her views—after all, she "knew" because she'd "been through it."

Approximately five-eighths of both youths (55/86) and girls (47/84) stated that they would like their children to remain at school beyond the age of fifteen (although many of these entered the caveat that this was to be regarded as their own wish, and that if the child wanted otherwise they would accede to his preference). 6 youths and 20 girls wanted their children to leave at 15, whilst the remaining 25 youths and 17 girls expressed no views on the subject. This represents a very substantial proportion favouring extended education for their own children, and it is to be noted that over half of them, both youths and girls, said that they would like their children to leave school after the age of sixteen—that is, at seventeen years or over. There were no obvious differences in aspirations as between the various occupational categories, in regard to either youths or girls.

The figures are to be taken—for all the reservations indicated above—as some indication of the respondents' recognition of the importance of education in "getting on", and as a sign of
their anxiety that their children will have a "better deal" than they had had at secondary modern school, and thus avoid "ending up" in the sort of jobs that they had. The discrepancy between these figures and those relating to views about raising the school leaving age are to be explained by the distinction which some respondents made between the aspiration for their own children and the general principle of compulsion for all. Furthermore, the wish for their children to remain at school beyond the age of fifteen was in many cases explicitly linked with the provision of a better education than secondary modern schools at present provided: without such improvement, it was felt that extended education would be futile—indeed, the hope for a longer education for their children was in some cases expressly linked with the hope they would attend grammar school rather than secondary modern, which, it was felt "never would be much good". A further apparent discrepancy between respondents' own satisfaction at leaving at fifteen—or lack of dissatisfaction—is explained by the fact that respondents recognised, or believed, that they could not have done better "with their upbringing"—but they planned to provide a better upbringing for their children, with a smaller family, a more comfortable home, better budgeted expenditure, and so on, such that their children would be able to benefit from extended education. In addition, the distinction between themselves and their children is to be accounted for by the belief in many respondents that they had not got the ability
themselves—but their hope was that their children would be, as one youth put it, "cleverer" than they. This emphasises the point touched upon above, that most of these respondents were expressing a wish rather than stating a policy. They would not propose to take special steps to encourage their children in their schooling: this did not occur to them as a possibility, because of their belief that education was for the "brainy", and "either you were brainy or you were not". They hoped that their children would be brainy, and their stated wish for them to remain at school beyond the age of fifteen was a function of this hope. At the same time, they would not be bitterly disappointed if their children turned out, in the event, not to be brainy: they saw it as "just one of those chances of life"—it "would be nice" if the children were clever, but that's all there was to it. More positively, some respondents spoke of their unwillingness to persuade a child to try harder when learning did not come easily; "there's no good pushing a child on to pass exams if he can't do them."

It might be argued that the responses to the question on aspirations for children's education by married youths and girls would have a greater measure of meaning or realism than those relating to single respondents. In fact the proportions holding the various aspirations are of about the same order for married respondents as for single ones, and, indeed, so too are those in regard to married respondents with children. Table 94 analyses the position.
### Table 94

**Preference for Age at Which Children Would Leave School**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Youths</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Girls</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married + children</td>
<td>Married no children</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Married + children</td>
<td>Married no children</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would like children to leave at 15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at 16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>at 17+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No views</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The point does suggest itself from this analysis, however, that married youths, and to a lesser degree married girls, were particularly keen for their children to have an extended education. And this is, indeed, consistent in the case of the youths with their hope that their children would do better than they. These youths did find it difficult on the wages which they earned to support the home, especially those with children; several of them referred to the benefits which a better education might have conferred upon them. A warehouseman, for example, with one child and earning a very low wage—and fed-up, as he put it, with his "rotten job and filthy bed-sitter", was determined to "push the children in their education as hard as possible". The benefits of education and the disadvantages of the lack of it were clear enough, in his estimation.

The deeply implanted idea that either a child has "got intelligence" or has not deserves further comment. There were parents who would concede to their children the opportunity of remaining at
school beyond the age of fifteen if they "turned out to be clever"—even though the parents were inclined to be sceptical of the value of schooling, and would have preferred their children to leave as soon as they could. They said, for example, that they "would not stand in their children's way", and spoke as if this were a manifestation of their liberalism and generosity of spirit: they would not "drag the children away" if they liked school so much. The onus, as it were, was very much upon the child and the school to prove the worth of all this education, and respondents would take a lot of convincing. Others, whilst regarding the possession of ability as pre-ordained did not merely accept this and wait to see what turned up in their own case: rather were they desperate that their children should be "clever". Some, indeed, seemed consumed by this hope, and one cited evidence to support her view that it was not an entirely vain hope: she said, "there are some clever kids in our family—for example there's one youth at Grammar School who will be going on to university, and that. I do so want my Robert to be like that." Another girl, who said that she hoped her four-year-old daughter would go on to university, saw cause for optimism in that the child was "bright and very quick to learn". And an apprentice with two children said, "We're hopeful: we've got great ideas for them if they're bright. We've bought an encyclopaedia already."

The point has been made already, but it is appropriate to emphasise it again in the present context, that this widespread
view amongst the respondents that either children are clever or they are not is an inference which they have drawn largely from the air of failure which is attached to the secondary modern school and especially to the lower streams within it. Yet the borderline between secondary modern school and grammar school is arbitrary, and all the evidence points to the existence of a "pool of ability" which awaits tapping. But because of their mistaken appreciation of the nature of ability, respondents, like their parents before them, tend not to understand that encouragement at home and at school, and co-operation between the two, could result in the development in a child of unsuspected ability: not understanding, they are not motivated to provide such encouragement, or to seek guidance as to how they might best help in the educational progress of their children. Some do attempt encouragement, of course, but, as with the youth above, they tend to rely upon the door-to-door encyclopaedia salesmen, rather than thinking in terms of getting appropriate advice. It is as if they feel that by exposing a child to an encyclopaedia he will be made clever.

There were respondents, however, who were not grudging in their willingness to comply with their children's wish to remain at school, if that proved to be the case, and who were not put off by the thought that a child either had the capacity to learn or he did not. These had no reservations about the value of education: they were, on the contrary, enthusiastic—and some
argued that education was assuming increasing importance, and that by the time that their children reached secondary school, the importance would be even more obvious—as a nurse said, "A good education is more and more necessary. You must have a good education to get anywhere, these days". Whilst most of these had fairly modest aspirations for their children—that they would leave school at sixteen, for example, and get "a good apprenticeship"—a few were more ambitious. Five youths (three apprentices the manager of a butcher's shop and a machine operator) and two girls (a nurse and a secretary) were specific that they would like their children to go to university. It should be said, however, that the majority of respondents did not envisage their children going to university, and it can, indeed, be inferred that most did not have more than a vague idea, if any at all, as to what a university was—it was outwith their field of experience and foreign to their framework of reference.

In stating their preference in regard to their children's education, the majority of respondents were at pains to stress that the decision would properly rest in the hands of the child, regardless of their own wishes—whilst they would like the child to leave at fifteen, he could stay on if he wished to, (and, perhaps, if he could demonstrate the benefits of doing so); or whilst they would like him to stay on for a year or more longer, if he wished to leave at fifteen, that, too, was a matter for him to decide. This is a reflection of three varied factors. The first is the
view that if a child does not want to study, it is "no good forcing him to". Secondly, there is the insistence upon the "freedom" of the individual—this was evident in the respondents' own parents with reference to the respondents' choices, and would seem to be widespread in the working class. I have suggested elsewhere that it is to be seen not merely or even mainly as a positive philosophy with regard to individual rights, but as a device for relinquishing responsibility for guiding and encouraging a child, and for evading having to give serious thought to issues which are not easily decided.¹ The third factor is that the issue was not seen, by most, as being particularly important, anyhow—certainly not so important as to be worth arguing about or taking a stand on: it would, as has been said, be "quite nice" for the child to do well at school, but it was "not as important as all that". Some respondents again made the distinction between girls and boys: whilst they would like their sons to remain at school beyond the age of fifteen, because of the presumed advantages that this would confer in regard to type of job, work entered, and prospects in work, they were less concerned, even indifferent, in regard to daughters—for "education doesn't really matter for a girl, does it?"

Finally, it is important to stress that whilst many of the 28 youths (approximately one-third) and the 17 girls (one-fifth) who

¹ cf. Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.92 et seq.
expressed no preference declined to do so because they had not thought about the matter, others held no special views because, to their minds, the leaving age did not make a lot of difference—a child from their sort of background could not get very far, at school or in work, and the question was thus of an academic order, and, as such, not worth wasting time on.

Preference For Type of School For Children to Attend

Respondents were also asked, "What sort of school would you like your children to attend?" The answers are subject to the same reservations and limitations as were enunciated in respect of preferences in regard to age for leaving school. Bearing this in mind, certain points emerge. Those who were not prepared to state an opinion, or who were indifferent, gave similar reasons as in regard to the question of the school leaving age. They had no children and had not thought about it, or the question seemed superfluous—"What does it matter what school you go to anyhow?" As one girl said, "I'm not really bothered, but I would like it to be a school near their home, because of the traffic". Over one-half of the youths and girls said that they would like their children to go to grammar school—most of these had also stated a preference for them to remain at school beyond the age of fifteen. The preferences are analysed in Table 95. (In the Postal Survey, an even higher

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proportion stated a preference for a selective or comprehensive education. The figures are as follows: Selective (inc. comprehensive) 150 youths and 134 girls; secondary modern, 28 youths and 25 girls; no preference stated, 57 youths and 49 girls).

TABLE 95

PREFERENCE FOR TYPE OF SCHOOL WHICH CHILDREN WOULD ATTEND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preference</th>
<th>YOUTHS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Modern</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No views, or indifferent</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>86</strong></td>
<td><strong>84</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preference for grammar school was made subject to the child possessing the ability, by many respondents; and for many, too, it was a question of it being "nice" if the child were to get to grammar school rather than of there being a firing ambition in the respondent for the child to "succeed" at all costs. As one girl said, "Grammar school would be nice, I suppose, but I'm not all that fussy". Another girl, married and a factory worker, said, "I would be proud if they got to grammar school, but they're not going to be pushed there. If they're dozy, they're dozy, and that's all there is to it."

Others were quite clear about the large benefits conferred by a grammar school education, and were eager for their children to enjoy them—"it helps them get a better job", "there are more opportunities open to them", and, "the grammar school carries
weight, whether you like it or not": the fact is that "grammar school will always have the edge over secondary modern". There was, too, a recognition by certain respondents that not just employment opportunities but life styles were at stake: so that a typist said, "naturally I would like them to go to grammar school"—"naturally" that is, given her orientation towards a middle class way of life (she was engaged to a youth in professional employment). And a private secretary said, "I would like them to go to grammar school, although I know it may sound snobbish". Reluctant to appear to betray her own background, she could not but aspire to a different style of life for her children. (It would seem that opposition to comprehensive schooling is to be expected from aspiring working class parents who see the "route out" for their children to be the grammar school: deprived of that avenue of mobility, they fear that no other will be provided).

The distinction was again made between preferences for girls as compared with boys. Thus, a girl said, "Grammar, definitely for my Robert, but for a girl I wouldn't be so bothered". And a telephonist said, "If a boy, grammar—if a girl, I don't see that it matters what school she goes to." It is to be noted that, again, girls were just as outspoken about the modest values of education for a girl as were boys, if not more so. An ex-typist, married with one child, said, "My husband's studying to be a doctor, so I'd like our son to follow him. I wouldn't stop a
girl from doing the same if she were very clever, but it would be a waste of time really. Girls get married so quickly". (She had married at the age of eighteen, herself). More emphatically, a labourer who thought that he would "quite like" a son to go to grammar school stated, "I would not allow a daughter of mine to go to college—it's a waste of time. They just get married". He would not entertain such nonsense, however "daft" some people might be about it. Such attitudes towards the education of girls permeated the whole range of occupational categories and social backgrounds. Presumably changes in the status and opportunities for women will lead to an erosion of this outlook. But it is deeply entrenched (based, as it is, in its "obviousness" and "commonsense", and "standing" as it does "to reason") not least in the girls themselves—who either already were mothers, or soon would be, and who in time, presumably, would be influencing their children towards the same outlook. Whilst only 11 youths and 12 girls stated a preference for secondary modern school for their children, it is not unreasonable to suppose that in addition the bulk of the 19 youths and 16 girls who expressed no view, or who were indifferent to the issue, would have regarded secondary modern school as the expected or "natural" school for their children to attend. Be that as it may, some of those who did state a preference for secondary modern school were assertive in their claim that these schools were "as good as grammar"—there being class overtones, in that to select for a grammar school was seen
as in some way betraying fellow workers, going over to the other side, as it were; and grammar schools are to be condemned as snobbish—the pupils and their parents think they are "it". Who would want to mix with that lot? There was also a justification of respondents' own personal positions—to prefer a grammar school education for their children would be to admit, in a sense, their own failure. Thus the attitude was, "I went to secondary modern, and I'm as good as the next person": it was a matter of pride. There were other respondents who favoured secondary modern school because they wanted a quiet life—they did not wish to be disturbed from the normative routine in which they led their lives, and recognised that were a child to go to grammar school there would be some disruption of their established ways: they would have to cope with problems which were unfamiliar to them, of which they had no experience. They said, then, that "secondary modern is good enough for me": sometimes they rationalised this into a denial of the wish to "enter the rat race"—and others who renounced such an ambition did so out of a genuine rejection of what they saw as unfettered competitiveness, to get more qualifications, pass more exams, get a better job, a bigger home. They preferred a quiet life.

Some respondents took the line that one type of school was as bad as another, so that they might as well opt for the devil they knew. Others argued that a secondary modern education was of equal value to that provided in grammar school, if not superior.
Thus, one youth, a well-established apprentice, said, "I passed the eleven-plus but I preferred to go to secondary modern, and my parents let me choose what I wanted to do. I would let my own children do the same, if they had the opportunity to choose, because I have never regretted my choice. In fact I am a firm believer in leaving at fifteen, and I would prefer them to go to secondary modern." There were assertions, too, that grammar schools are not all that they are cracked up to be (an office girls said, "I know, because my sister is at one"). In any case, how could a grammar school education be all that much more beneficial, since there is not all that much to be learnt—you know all that school can tell you by the time you are fifteen, whatever school you go to.

One youth stated a preference for his child, if it were a son, to go to technical school, because he thought that persons with such an education would be increasingly in demand in industry. Most of the 7 youths and 8 girls who stated preferences for other types of school referred to schools of a particular religious bent (Roman Catholic or Church of England). One youth, however, said that he would like his children to go to a public school. An estate agents' assistant from a middle class home, he explained that his cousins were at Birkdale, and public schools "seemed to have more time to spend on children as individuals". Most of the respondents had no experience of public schools (although the father of one youth was educated at one): such schools did not
come into their terms of reference. One girl, however, a sales assistant, was outspoken about the shortcomings of a "private school" education. She said in answer to the question on her preference, "I don't know, really. Whatever the teacher thinks best. Not a private school, though, even if we had the money. I see children from these schools in our job. They don't get on any better at private schools—they are for ever off school, so far as I can see. With their long holidays, and days off for this and that, they're never there." Involved in her appraisal was a scorn for people of a "superior class" who "paid a lot of money" for their children's education—yet it stands to reason that the children can't be getting a better education if they are never at school. Whatever else such parents might be superior in, it can't be intelligence: for anyone else can see what they seemingly are blind to.

Only two youths and six girls gave comprehensive schools as their preference—one of them simply because she believed them to be popular, and wanted to go with the tide ("they're all the rage, now") the others because they thought that a wider range of subjects was offered—one had a fourteen-year-old sister at a comprehensive school—and/or because the worry over the eleven-plus would thereby be evaded. Comprehensive schools are discussed further in the following Section.
Knowledge About, And Views On, Comprehensive Schools

In an attempt to ascertain respondents' knowledge and awareness about contemporary issues and problems, and the positions which they adopted in regard to them—with the aim that is, of discovering facets of their perceptions of society and of their place in it, a series of questions were asked covering such varied matters as "Mods" and "Rockers", automation and redundancy—all of them being live issues at the time, with wide coverage in local and national press and on radio and television. One such topic was Comprehensive education, and it is appropriate to discuss the responses at this point. The questions were asked towards the end of the Research Interview, some time after the main section dealing with education had been covered. The questions were asked, "Could you tell me what a Comprehensive school is?" and "What do you think of the idea?".

It had been decided by the local Council in 1962 that Sheffield would move "as quickly as possible towards a comprehensive system of secondary education for the whole city, with the ultimate aim of abolishing segregation at the age of 11+".\(^1\) The decision was given considerable publicity in the local press at the time, and sporadically thereafter; the general principle of Comprehensive schooling was also the subject of constant debate in the national media. So that from the age of 17-18 years, the respondents could

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\(^1\)City of Sheffield, *Education, 1964-66*, p.29
be said to have been open to stimulation on the subject. The introduction of the Comprehensive schools proceeded slowly, however, and by the summer of 1964, when the Research Interviews were held, only two such schools had been established: this meant that the opportunity for direct contact—through brothers and sisters or neighbours attending such schools, for example—was very limited in regard to the respondents. If has been seen that only 2 youths and 6 girls stated comprehensive schooling as a preference for their children. These respondents had a reasonably good knowledge as to what a comprehensive school was, and what the principles underlying it were. Altogether, approaching one-third of the youths (26) and girls (25) had some reasonable idea about what a Comprehensive school was, either in terms of organisation or in terms of the educational and social principles underlying them, or both. But one-third of these were vague or limited in their description. Analysis by occupation does not suggest any connection with knowledge about Comprehensive schools (or attitudes towards them): and nor were any other relationships, for example, as between socio-economic background, size of family, I.Q. Grade, or, indeed, voting intentions or political or class affiliation, discernable. Whilst, when it came to the point in the Research Interview, respondents were able to draw on their stored knowledge, and pass an opinion, the matter was not a particularly important one for them, on the whole, and they did not see it—save with some notable exceptions—as
affecting themselves. This helps to explain why the bulk of those who did have some knowledge about Comprehensive schools earlier in the interview stated a preference for grammar school or secondary modern school for their own children—these were familiar choices. There were other reasons, of course—there were respondents who disliked the principle and practice of Comprehensive schooling as well as those who were well disposed towards it. It should be noted at this point that two-thirds of the respondents did not know what a Comprehensive school was, even in broad terms. And this may be taken as significant of a lack of awareness of, or interest in, issues which affected themselves or their children or would soon do so, and which were of direct relevance to matters of social justice and equality of opportunity.  

The respondents' descriptions of Comprehensive schools tended to be blurred by their views as to whether or not the principle was a good one. Some were enthusiastic on educational grounds—an ambitious non-manual worker, for example, said, "I am all in favour of changing the educational system in general and abandoning the eleven plus and the secondary modern, technical and grammar schools in favour of Comprehensives. I have the feeling

1 Amongst the suggestions of respondents who had not even a vague knowledge of what a Comprehensive School was were the following: "a school for backward children?"; "where you go when there's something wrong with you?"; "where you go if you do something wrong?"; "some kind of private concern?" One youth said, "Is that a sort of Borstal?" The majority of respondents who did not know, however, stated that they had "no idea"—some adding, "I'm not really interested in that sort of thing."
that my last year at school was wasted, due to the fact that since I have been at work I have managed to gain 'O' level G.C.E. and I'm taking 'A' levels soon. I feel that given the right opportunity I could have passed these at school. This would have probably altered my whole outlook, as far as a career." The strength of opposition to the 11 plus was, indeed, very marked in respondents' comments—an apprentice engineer said that "Comprehensives are schools where there's no segregation at eleven plus and children are put in streams for different subjects according to their ability—they cater for each type of child and give everyone a fair chance. It's certainly a better system than killing all desire to learn for the majority, at the eleven plus seed-out". A girl, well established as a private secretary, described in detail her nervous state during the 11-plus examinations, her failure, and the amazement of her teachers and her family that she had not passed. She saw Comprehensive schooling as being fair and just—in contrast with the unfair and unjust 11-plus examination. Respondents such as this, who had been disappointed at the 11-plus selection process were fervent in their support of Comprehensive schooling and strong in their criticism of secondary modern—"If you fail the eleven plus you're finished" said one youth. Nervousness, and even "fear" of the examination were referred to by several youths and girls. And from the point of view of morale, comprehensive schools were thought to be good—"a lad knows that he's got a chance": if he does not succeed, he
has only himself to blame, and not the system—doubts about injustice can be removed. Furthermore, the comprehensive school is a good idea for people who don't start budding out till later on—at secondary modern it's too late then and, "they raise the absolute ceiling for those who would otherwise be at secondary modern school, presenting opportunities for education which would be taken by many who wouldn't bother at secondary modern because they didn't know they had it in them". Because of the wider range of subjects covered, too, and because of the "philosophy" underlying them, comprehensive schools were said to bring out the best in a child, instead of "picking out his faults all the time". It was thought, too, that "ordinary children could learn something from the brighter kids": as a van driver said, "competition is a good thing. The kids who are below par would not think they had been shunned, and might really get down to some work to see how good they could be."

Some respondents laid less stress on the pedagogic aspects, on the opportunities for individual academic achievement, than upon the "social" benefits of comprehensive education. Comprehensive schools were good because there is "no grammar school privilege just for one class, then". The greater variety of people to mix with in terms of social class was referred to as beneficial—and one girl said, "I like the idea: it does away with a lot of snobbishness and helps all types of children from all types of homes to mix and learn about life from one another".

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More negatively, one youth said, "It would be a good idea—the grammar school people think they're dead clever—they need bringing down a peg or two". (There were, however, some doubts on this score, too, even amongst those who in principle supported comprehensive schooling—as one youth said, "It has both advantages and disadvantages. A brainy lad might make friends with a thick, a lad not up to scratch, but no one knows whether the one will benefit or the other get worse." And another youth suggested that the upper class—"the big heads who pass the eleven plus" (he equated these two categories) "might start fighting the lower ones": so that "you might have to have separate buildings")

Five of the 26 youths and 7 of the 25 girls who had some idea about comprehensive schooling opposed the principle. Most of them were concerned about the educational consequences. Their view was that it was essential to separate the chaff from the wheat—there was a need for excellence, and comprehensive education would prevent a high standard being reached by any one: "clever children would be held back"—this was argued strongly by one youth in particular, who stressed that he in no way regarded himself as clever or hard done by. He was concerned that comprehensive schooling would "lower the general standard of the country" for "after all, you've got to have really well educated people": but he was concerned, too, that comprehensive education would close the escape route for the working class child. As he said, "I hope my child will turn out clever and get to a grammar
school, and really get on". From the other point of view, respondents argued that the less bright would suffer under comprehensive schooling—they "just wouldn't get the attention"; indeed, "what you want to do" with bright children is to "get rid of them, shove them into special schools, and let the rest of us be free to get on at our own level"—free, that is, from being held up constantly for adverse comparison with the clever ones. And, at a comprehensive school, "the less clever ones would always be at the bottom of the class", whereas "in a school of their own, they have a chance of getting to the top". The argument was put forward at the pragmatic level, too, "it just wouldn't work—for different children you've got to have separate schools".

Comprehensive education was also opposed on the grounds of the incompatibility of members of different social classes—the doubts of some have already been mentioned. Others had no doubts and urged that "grammar school snobs should be kept away from ordinary, decent people".

From these analyses of respondents' replies to the question on comprehensive schools certain conclusions emerge. The first, already stressed, is the ignorance of, and/or lack of interest in the topic that characterised two-thirds of the young workers. The second is that certain respondents do see the possibility of educational improvement for people such as themselves in the future, including their own children (although most saw the grammar school as the best vehicle, to the extent that they had thought about it at all). Thirdly, there was an awareness by respondents of the
"social" objectives of the comprehensive principle, but whilst some welcomed the proposals as a proper avenue for improvement of the working class position, others saw them as an insidious intrusion into working class integrity: they wanted no truck with "grammar school snob" types. The working class, and the associated secondary modern schooling, was good enough for them, and it would be good enough for their children.

Aspirations in Regard to Type of Work for Children

If questions relating to children's education had an air of unreality for respondents, this was even more true in regard to questions on their hopes for their children's work—some respondents revealed their exasperation at being asked questions on such a topic, when they had not yet even got a regular girl friend, for example, never mind a wife and children. So that all the reservations made in regard to aspirations for children's education would apply with equal or greater force. In fact the questions on aspirations were posed to respondents in an ambiguous way—replies sometimes took the form of level of work and sometimes specific occupations; the results defy sensible quantitative analysis.¹ But it is possible to salvage from the replies to this

¹This was the result of faulty communication between myself and some Interviewers; the mistake was not corrected until it was too late.
question certain general conclusions which are of importance. Firstly, this was a very live issue for a few respondents, married and unmarried, who were keen for their children to get non-manual employment, preferably managerial or professional. This was true not just of those from middle class homes, but also of some of those who aspired to improve their standards of living compared with their parents and to adopt a new style of life. Secondly, there were respondents who were less concerned, or unconcerned, about their children rising in the occupational/social scale, but who were anxious that they did not fall below the level of the respondent. Thirdly, some of the youths in jobs which they saw as dead-end were concerned for their sons to do better—to get a skilled job, or at least a secure semi-skilled job. A fourth point to emerge is that there was more concern about youths than about girls—although some respondents said that they would not like their daughters to do factory work because it was dirty. Fifthly, overall, the reference point was the band of jobs open to secondary modern children, with a few aspirants for something better. Finally, there was an insistence by over one-third of both youths and girls that choice of work was a matter for the child to decide upon himself—some respondents said that they would try to advise, others said that they would veto certain jobs (as being too dirty, or without prospects, for example): but the feeling was strong that children ought not—and indeed cannot—be pushed, and there were some doubts about the propriety, even, of advising.
Two points arise from this. The first is that this emphasis upon independence and free will in choice of work echoes that of respondents' parents before them. The second is that, although some respondents did call for more guidance in choice of work from school and Youth Employment Service, the bulk, despite their own experiences, which often included considerable job changing, still advocated that this situation should persist. Freedom and independence of the individual in choice of work, chimera though it may be from many points of view, was to be held as of supreme importance.
CHAPTER XV
LEISURE

The objects of this Chapter are, firstly, to indicate the ways in which respondents spend their leisure time, the importance which they attach to particular activities and the "meaning" of the activities for them; and, secondly, to trace the connections between leisure activities and work involvement (or lack of involvement). Leisure activities are dependent to some extent upon the amount of money available, and this Chapter therefore begins with an analysis of amounts of spending money: this is put in the context of expenditure upon board and accommodation, and money put aside as savings.

Spending Money

By "spending money" is meant the amount of money available for the respondents' own personal use—it includes money for purchases of clothes, which is indeed a major item, nowadays, for both boys and girls—clothes are bought for fun, and to enliven the leisure hours. Spending money is to be regarded
then, as the amount which the respondent allows himself, or is allowed after basic payments for food and lodging have been met, and after expenditure connected with work (fares, meals) has been allowed for. The position is shown in Table 96.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 96</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANALYSIS OF SPENDING MONEY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount per Week</th>
<th>Youths</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to £1 a week</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over £5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None or no Information*</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes 5 youths and 4 girls who replied to Postal Questionnaire and for whom there is no information, one youth and one girl who declined to say what their spending money was, and 6 married girls who had no spending money as such.

Table 96 on page 635 above indicated the relatively low amount of spending money which married respondents had, compared with single respondents. Only 2 of the 42 youths with over £5 a week were married, for example, and only 2 of the 43 girls with over £3 a week spending money.

The amounts of spending money at the time of Interview No. 4 show a sharp increase in comparison with the earlier Research Interviews, of course. During their last term at school, only 3 youths received more than £1 a week and no girl received more than 15/-. And after one year at work, half the youths and all
the girls received less than £1 a week. This picture reflects the increase in wages over the five year period, already noted—of the whole, spending money was in direct correlation with amount of wage, although there were exceptions: these were mainly in regard to married respondents with domestic responsibilities, but there were also cases of girls (and some youths) with relatively low wages who were charged only a small sum by parents for board and accommodation. This represented an inducement by parents for their children to remain in jobs with prospects or which were "socially acceptable". The other important reason for the sharp increases in amounts of spending money is that youths and girls became independent of parents, and, rather than giving their wages to the mother and receiving "pocket money" from her (which most respondents were still doing at the end of their first year at work), paid an agreed sum in board and lodging. Only 3 youths, and no girls, still handed over their wage packets and received pocket money in return. Although it is now something of a commonplace, it is worth emphasising the considerable amount of money for leisure spending which twenty-year-olds have, especially single persons.² Half of the youths had over £5 a week.

¹For details, see Home, School and Work, op.cit., p.277
for example, and half of the girls had over £4. And the figures suggest the major change in young workers’ lives between the ages of fifteen and twenty, when their spending money jumps from a few shillings a week to several pounds. With many, the major increase occurred about the age of eighteen—this was particularly true of girl factory workers and of skilled and unskilled manual youths.

It is notable that the tendency persisted for youths to have more spending money than girls—this was already obvious whilst the respondents were at school and was marked, too, at the end of the first year in employment. Mainly, this results at this stage from the higher wages, in general, earned by youths: in part, however, it reflects the persistence of a view—amongst girls and parents as well as youths themselves—that a boy is entitled to more spending money than a girl. So that mothers negotiating with daughters about the charge for board and lodging are inclined to demand, and to be conceded, a proportionately higher amount of the girls’ wage than would be the case in regard to a son. "Adjusting" to their newly affluent condition does not seem to cause difficulties to young workers—far from it: although the pattern of expenditure which ensues may be regretted a year or two later by those who have had "a fling", the general reaction was that it is important to "enjoy yourself" while you can—and, in any case, much expenditure was carefully planned, and there were many respondents who saved regularly throughout their teenage years.
Some of the respondents were very methodical in their expenditure—especially girls with relatively low amounts of spending money, who had to be careful. One girl allocated her money weekly, through a compartmentalised money box, as follows:—Clothing £1; Holidays 7/6; Birthdays 5/-; Christmas 5/-; Church 3/-; Miscellaneous 9/6—Total, £2.10s. By contrast, some of the "big-spenders" scorned any such planning. A painter/decorator with £8 a week spending money said that "Most of it goes on drinks and cigarettes", for example, whilst a semi-skilled steel worker with £14 a week spending money said that it went on "fags, drinks and women". Some youths and several girls indicated that they were "shocking smokers", and whilst details were not ascertained in all cases it would seem that at least one-half of the youths and one-third of the girls smoked regularly. Other expenditure was on the cinema and dancing. And the youths spent a lot of money on drink—54 youths went to a public house or Working Men's Club at least once a week. Expenditure on cars and motor cycles was also a major item for a number of youths. If girls had less money to spend, they were compensated, in many cases, by the fact that fiancés, "steady" boy friends, or just ordinary boy friends or "pick-ups", tended to pay for the entertainment when they went out together—one girl said, "I don't mind, I don't need much spending money. My boy friend pays for everything", for example. Engaged couples often had agreements, however, whereby expenditure was shared, or the girl saved all her money for the future home and the youth paid for outings.
**Payment For Board/Lodging/Housekeeping**

The amounts paid by respondents in board and lodgings are shown in Table 97. The position in regard to married girls is somewhat complicated, and the data is not complete, so these have been omitted. The "housekeeping plus rent", which 9 of the married youths for whom there is information paid, has been included, however.

**Table 97**

**Analysis of Amount Paid in Board/Lodging**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Single Youths</th>
<th>Married Youths</th>
<th>Unmarried Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to £2 a week</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£2-£3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£3-£4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£4-£5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£5-£6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£6-£7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£7-£8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£8+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>53</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No information for two married youths.*

It is seen that the married youths had substantial outlays for housekeeping (including rent) each week. Two married youths who paid only £2-£3 a week were living with parents or "in-laws". The single youths paying high board had special home responsibilities, and/or had high wages. For example, the single youth paying over £8 was an apprentice painter/decorator with a take-home pay, including bonus, of between £18 and £20 a week—his parents remained rather "strict" with him.
Despite the increase in the cost of living, a substantial proportion of respondents, especially lower paid ones, were not paying appreciably more for board and lodging than they were at the age of sixteen. Whilst there is some correspondence between wages and amount paid in board, this is not straightforward. The amount of board money paid is decided with reference to factors other than income alone, that is—such as size of family; whether siblings are older or younger, or whether parents are alive or in ill health (in other words, the general financial situation of the family); parents' views on the amount of money which it is "good" for a child to have—some still watched daughter's spending money, especially; the ability or inclination of the young worker to challenge or bargain with the parent; and whether the respondent was engaged—for example, the parents of one girl charged her only 30/- a week, because she was saving up for her wedding. The changed situation of parents themselves, after respondents had been at work for five years, were another factor influencing the amount of board paid—if all the children in the family had left school by then, for example, and were earning, or if mothers had started to go out to work themselves, less was demanded of respondents. What does seem clear is that few parents could be said to be making a profit out of their children.
Savings

Half of the youths (41) and well over half of the girls (49) were making regular long-term savings at the time of Interview No. 4. By "long-term" is meant savings extending over a year or so which it was proposed to maintain for some time yet to come. The purposes varied—2 years for a new car; for the past 4 years, for "nothing in particular"; "for the future". Many engaged girls and youths were saving amounts varying from £1 to £3 or more a week exclusively for marriages; and many married couples were saving consistently, and in accordance with a plan, for house purchase—one couple, for example, both of whom worked, saved £7.10s a week between them (other married couples were saving as and when they could for a house, or for the home generally, but were not saving regularly each week, finding that their income did not allow for this).

Three youths were saving with the thought of marriage in their minds, although they were not yet courting—one said he was saving for "house purchase and possible marriage" and one invested in a Building Society account. This is suggestive of the conclusion indicated in other contexts, and put forward also by Willmott, that towards the age of twenty, youths' thoughts turn to marriage and to "settling down". Even though they are not courting, the idea was clearly in the minds of many youths. Engaged youths were less prominent in saving for marriage than engaged girls. This is to be explained by the tendency for girls
to do most of the saving, whilst youths are responsible for the costs of leisure activities.

Included in the analysis of long-term savings is Hire Purchase of major items. 11 youths were buying cars through hire purchase and 11 were buying motor cycles; some others were buying cameras and other expensive equipment in this way.

Despite the relatively low wages, half of the apprentices and 4/5 of the non-manual workers were making regular long-term savings—reflecting a concern with planning ahead: only 4/12 unskilled labourers made long-term savings, but two-thirds of the semi-skilled workers did (19/30)—the latter being a reflection primarily of the high wages earned (one youth, for example, had £5 regularly stopped from his wage under the Works Savings Scheme).

21/37 girls in Category 'A' employment made regular savings, approximately the same proportion as with Categories 'B' (10/19) and 'C' (17/28). Of the 31 married girls, 16 were saving regularly and all these were, indeed, girls who were still at work. 6 of the 11 married youths were saving, also, but most of them in small amounts—the wives of 4 of them worked.

Some respondents were making short-term savings, often of a substantial order. One factory girl, for example, with a wage of £10 net and £3 a week to pay for board, was saving for a holiday in Spain. This was to cost £50, plus £40 for spending money. An office girl, who had previously been on a coach tour of Switzerland, was now saving £3 a week for further travel abroad. Girls,
especially those who were not courting, tended to go on holiday with one or two girl friends, or with parents—whereas youths went in groups, for example, to Blackpool, or some similar seaside resort. It was not uncommon, especially for those respondents who were not making long-term savings, to spend considerable sums on holidays.

But some respondents were unable—because of low income or what they declared to be their disposition, to save at all, whether for long-term or short-term purposes: an office girl was typical of these, saying, "I just can't save—money runs through my fingers". Others had no interest in saving, and "just lived from day to day", "having a good time" whilst they could—that is, whilst still single, and/or whilst employment was safe. In the present situation, in which they had got money, that is, they thought that they might as well enjoy it. This was not necessarily feckless behaviour, by any means—but a deliberate policy. And one youth, who did not save, said nonetheless that he "likes money in the pocket", and is "never skint at the end of the week". He planned his expenditure, that is.

**Leisure Activities**

Leisure activities, analysed in terms of respondents' status with regard to the opposite sex—married, engaged, going steady, and the remainder, are shown in Tables 98a and 98b. Certain activities are affected by the seasons, of course: there is more
### Table 98a

**Leisure Activities—Youths**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Going</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Engaged</th>
<th>Steady</th>
<th>Remainder</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinema 1 a week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a month</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Rarely&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing 1 a week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a month</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Rarely&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public house 1 a week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a month</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Rarely&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watches T.V. &quot;a lot&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sometimes&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Rarely&quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Rarely&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church 1 a week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a month</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Rarely&quot;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No information for 5 youths who replied by Postal Questionnaire.

The regularity of attending the cinema going in winter than in summer, for example. Regular attendance implies throughout the year, although, of course, respondents may and do change their patterns of activities; this will, indeed, be demonstrated below.

Over the four year period between Interview Nos. 3 and 4—between the ages of sixteen and twenty, that is—there was
TABLE 98b
LEISURE ACTIVITIES—GIRLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Going</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Engaged</th>
<th>Steady</th>
<th>Remainder</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Cinema</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>84</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>1 a month</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Rarely&quot;</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a week</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 a month</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Rarely&quot;</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watches T.V.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sometimes&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Never&quot; or &quot;Rarely&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belongs to an &quot;Interest&quot; Association</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is an Official</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not belong</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>1 a week</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 a month</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No information for 4 girls who replied by Postal Questionnaire.

A marked decline in cinema attendance (well over fifty per cent of respondents went regularly once a week when aged sixteen); the proportion of youths who went dancing regularly each week rose a little during the same period from one-fifth to one-quarter but girls fell from one-third to less than one-fifth; attendance at youth clubs and other organisations (for sport or "interest") declined from approximately one-quarter of the youths and girls to only 12/86 youths and 11/84 girls; Church attendance remained at
the same low level for youths (4 at Interview No.3 and the same number at Interview No.4), and fell off from one-quarter of the girls to 8/84.1

The major activity in which there was an increase (apart from the various aspects of courting, already discussed) was in frequenting public houses and Working Men's Clubs (for drinks and entertainment). Only a handful of youths and girls went to public houses or clubs when aged sixteen. By the time they had reached twenty years of age, three-quarters of the youths (63/86) and well over one-half of the girls (46/84) went to "pubs" or clubs at least once a week regularly.

There were, of course, various factors making for the changing pattern of leisure activities—more money to spend; attainment of the legal age for drinking; different tastes acquired with age, different fashions in entertainment (for example, decline of the cinemas and growth of "pop" groups, entertaining in public houses and clubs). The point should be stressed here that the leisure activities of many respondents revolved around their liaisons with the opposite sex, or attempts at effecting such liaisons; particularly was this so in the case of girls. A four-stage cycle can be discerned whereby leisure activities are to be understood in terms of relationships with a member, or members, of the opposite sex. In the first stage, the object is to find a boy or

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1 Detailed figures for the situation at Interview Nos. 1, 2 and 3 are given in *Home, School and Work*, op.cit., Chapter 16.
girl friend, perhaps to have several at the same time or in succession; the cinema and dance halls are important "hunting grounds", as well as local streets. In the second stage, when a regular girl friend or boy friend has been found, the pattern of leisure activities may change—in this and subsequent stages, courting is a full-time concern in leisure hours, and the couple spend most of their time together. The cinema and dancing are still popular, in the second phase, and there is, indeed, intensive involvement in these activities, youths and girls going out together every night and at weekends. In the third stage, marked by engagement but perhaps prior to it, there is a falling off in dancing and cinema attendance—the couple know each other well enough not to require company or "turned-on" activity, and are more interested in going for walks, for example, or in visiting each other's homes; there is anticipatory socialisation into domestic affairs, a process whereby girls and youths become known and accepted by the prospective "in-laws". The tendency would seem to be for girls to take their fiancé's to their own home1 rather than vice versa.

Leisure activities are curtailed in stage three, also, because thoughts are turning towards the cost of the impending marriage.

1Willmott's study of adolescent boys in East London led him to say that "the numbers are small, but they seem to suggest a preference for the girl's home". This fits in with Willmott's main argument to the effect that as boys get older they accommodate themselves to the local sub-culture, which is matrilineally oriented. cf. Adolescent Boys of East London, op. cit.
and savings are necessary for this. One youth, for example, explaining that he was saving to get married, said that he went to the Working Men's Club for a drink sometimes, but indicated that his activities now, essentially, were non-spending ones—"Going round to see the girl friend, going for a walk, fishing at the weekends, just talking and that". In one case, at least, the cutting down on leisure activities which a youth endured was the outcome of his wish to win his girl friend and prove himself to her—he was "turning over a new leaf" to show that he could behave decently (rather than going drinking every night) and that he could save as well as the next man.

There is a further aspect, however; namely, that at this stage of the courting cycle, when matters are settled and agreed, young couples, by withdrawing from much teenage activity emphasis to themselves and to others (other teenagers, siblings, parents) their separateness from the ordinary run of young people who are not yet betrothed. In the fourth stage of the cycle, with marriage, that is, there is perhaps financial stringency, or the wish to save more, to restrict activities: there is the new home to be enjoyed together or to decorate, a garden to cultivate, perhaps, or a child to look after and to knit clothes for. But there is also the possibility, as has been seen, of husbands and wives starting to go their own ways in leisure time, husbands to a "pub", probably, wives staying at home or mixing with girl friends or other married women.¹

¹This could perhaps be regarded as a fifth stage, but I doubt whether it is universally applicable to young married couples.
Cinema

It has been noted that cinema attendance fell off during the first five years in employment. Numbers in the various categories are small of course, but the figures are sufficiently good for illustrative purposes. Thus only a small proportion of married couples now went to the cinema, for reasons already enumerated: babies were mentioned frequently as a barrier to cinema attendance—"We went six months ago, on my wife's birthday: the baby keeps us at home a lot now". Expense, too, was referred to—in one instance in association with a baby; "We took our Glenda (aged four years) three months ago—it cost 4/6d for her to go in and she fell asleep five minutes after it started." When you have children, the cinema is not worthwhile, then, unless you can get a baby-sitter—and this is not easy if you live some distance from relations. The prospect of resuming a more active leisure time when babies were a little older, and "could be left", was referred to by some respondents. Only a third of the 13 engaged youths, but one-half of the engaged girls went to the cinema regularly—however, most of the girls (9/13) and 2 of the 4 youths went only once a month. It has been explained that, at this stage, engaged coupled tend to withdraw from public entertainments, or at least to participate less in them. Access to each other's homes, and more open familiarity, do away with the need for the cinema in its function of providing, in the dark, a measure of seclusion for petting. This seemed to be the
explanation for the otherwise enigmatic statement of one youth that "We used to go regularly, but now we’re married we don’t need it so much". The matter was put more bluntly by another respondent who said, "We don’t go now, we use t’couch instead". Engagement regularises the substitution of a couch for the back row of the cinema for young couples and, often, tacitly for their parents—as well as providing, through the practice of visiting each other’s homes, the opportunity of availing themselves of the couch. A high proportion of youths, but a somewhat lower proportion of girls, went to the cinema regularly, and the broad picture in keeping with stage two of the courting cycle, as suggested above. Of the remaining youths and girls—those who had no regular or serious friend of the opposite sex, less than one-third of the youths went regularly to the cinema, and only just over one-third of the girls. Youths tended to go with groups of several other youths—hoping, often, to "pick up" girls, who went in pairs and who, in turn, were hoping to be "picked up".

It is notable that overall, the numbers going regularly to the cinema once a week were small for both youths and girls—and two-thirds of the youths and approaching that proportion of girls went less than once a month, or did not go at all.

Dancing

The proportion of youths who went dancing regularly remained
fairly high, at about one-quarter. Most of these were single youths without a fiancée or a regular girl friend. Most of the point in going to dances was to meet a girl friend: often, it would seem, youths did little dancing, but waited with other youths in the bar or around the edge of the floor, hoping for something to happen. Whilst the proportion of youths going to dances was about the same at the age of twenty as at the age of sixteen, many different persons were involved. Earlier frequenters of dance halls were either engaged or married. They had been superseded by other youths as their inclination to find a girl was awakened. A further point is that at the age of sixteen youths tended to go to local dances (though not exclusively): now they were inclined to go to the large and more expensive dance halls in the city centre.

Engaged girls might continue to go dancing with their fiancéés from time to time, or even regularly—and, if they did not go, they had the compensation that savings for the future were being made. Not so with married girls—although two couples did go dancing regularly, the remainder went seldom or never. Babies, lack of money and "other things to do" were all reasons, as with the decline in cinema attendance. But additionally, there was obstinacy on the part of husbands—secure, now, in marriage, they could refuse to budge when wives suggested going dancing. Never keen on dancing as such, and regarding it as a device for meeting girls, the husbands now saw no point in going dancing:
but the girls, with a real sense of loss of romance in consequence, remarked that their husbands refused to go, and even "turned nasty" when asked to do so.

One girl ceased going to dances on being converted to membership of the Salvation Army—this put an end to her erstwhile visits to pubs, too, and to the boy friends with whom she used to go. But more important than such personal conversions, was the feeling of difference, of superiority, and in some cases even out-of-dateness that twenty-year-olds had when comparing themselves with younger teenagers. One shop assistant thus dissociated herself from public dance halls "where you get mainly fifteen- to sixteen-year-old kids". Indeed, insofar as the younger teenagers are catered for by dance halls nowadays, older teenagers may find themselves squeezed out—not wishing to associate with the "kids". Possibly it is as a consequence of this that so many turn to "pub" or Working Men's Club.

New fashions in dancing were dismissed as inferior—"I used to go, but dances aren't the same now. I don't like it much, all this mod stuff". And in some cases, the dances were avoided because respondents felt, as it were, too staid and settled to involve themselves with the "young things" of today— one respondent said of her husband and herself, "We feel a bit out of it now, when we do go—we used to love it and go every week. In fact, I met my husband there. But now we've got two children, and we feel old-fashioned when we go—with all that jumping about". Thus, at the age of twenty, the assimilation of the adult role was demonstrated.
Public House and Working Men's Club

A very common response from youths to the question, "How do you spend your leisure time now?" was "boozing"—and, indeed, it is seen that three-quarters of the youths went to Public Houses regularly—9/63 youths going about once a month, or rather more, and the remaining 54/63 going at least once a week. Of the latter, some, as they put it, "went drinking" regularly three or four nights of the week. High proportions of youths in all categories of employment and in various statuses in regard to the other sex—unattached, going steady, engaged and married—frequented public houses and/or Working Men's Clubs. However, the lowest proportion related to married men, with 4 of the 11 going regularly. There were, indeed, important differences in behaviour within this broad grouping of persons going to public houses and Working Men's Clubs. Some went for about an hour each evening—either with work-mates after clocking-off, or to the local neighbourhood pub, to meet friends. Activity then consisted of talking, smoking, or playing darts or dominoes. In certain occupations, a drink in the evening was part of the lore—thus, certain of the youths in heavy steelwork regarded it as expected behaviour for people in this occupation to be heavy drinkers. Others, single men who had no regular girl friends, would "go out with the lads for a drink", three or four nights a week. Here, too, the activities might be talking, smoking and
games. But some young workers conformed less to this traditional pattern, and rather than going to "the local" sought out drinking places—pubs or clubs—with special entertainment attractions. To frequent such places often involved substantial expense (but the single youths had money to spare) and mobility too—many of them had cars, however, or had friends with cars. One youth, for example, went regularly on Saturday nights to a public house in Wakefield (some thirty miles distant)—he said, "I go with the lads round the corner in their minie there's a good place, with a stripper".

A youth who had a "steady" girl friend, and who owned a car, was more sedate in his tastes: a "pub in Wakefield with a stripper" was no more in harmony with his conception of proper enjoyment than a local street corner pub with darts and snooker; his enjoyment was in going with his girl friend "for a drive in Derbyshire" ending up "at a small country pub for a drink". And he, like several other respondents, was at pains to indicate that he did not drink to excess, remarking, "I never get drunk".

Whilst most of the above examples could be said in some sense to represent participation by young workers in long-established forms of leisure activity—and, especially in regard to frequenting the "local" to be indicative of a process of reinforcement of norms and values which have permeated working men's leisure activities over the years, there was evidence, too, of newly evolving patterns whereby the pubs and clubs re-fashioned them—
selves to supply what would seem to be essentially a teenage demand—namely, for "pop" groups and singers. Thus, certain respondents—mostly those who were engaged or who had "steady" girl friends, but including, too, some single youths, chose the public house by reference to the quality of the "group" playing there—and would travel some distance, to the other side of the town or outside the town, to listen to the group. If there was no "group" at the local pub or club on a particular evening, they might elect not to go for a drink at all.

With regard to girls, over one-third went to public houses or clubs at least once a week, and one-sixth went once a month or rarely. Less than half of the married girls went to pubs or clubs—most of those who did go regularly each week went only one night, and, invariably, married girls were accompanied by their husbands. Those with babies found difficulty in getting out in the evenings. Some married girls joined their husbands in the local pub for "the last half hour", on Fridays for example (pay day). And there were signs that many of them did so rather reluctantly, and only because their husbands expected it of them ("I just go for the last half hour—I can't stand being there all evening"). Just as husbands during the later stages of courtship had been reluctantly "dragged" to dances, new wives were "dragged out" to the pub: the local pub tends to be male orientated, and wives are soon bored with the heavy atmosphere of darts, tobacco smoke, and drunkenness, and don't like to
witness the waste of so much money, which they think could be better used in the home.

A high proportion of engaged girls, and girls with "steady" boy friends, went to public houses each week. For the most part, they went on one evening only, at the weekend. And they tended not to go to the "local", but to more "expensive" and "posh" places, in town or out in the country—and to places where "groups" were playing. It was a feature of certain girls that they frequented, with their fiancés, a particular public house which was "special" for them—they had a group of friends there, it was a familiar setting, and a place which was neutral, as it were, from the background of either themselves or their fiancés. This is probably a feature of moderately aspiring young couples during their courting days—they escape from their local environment and the ties that go with it. It is notable that half of the unattached girls (10/20) went to public houses or clubs less than once a month, or never at all. This is indicative of the feeling amongst girls (and youths and parents as well) that a girl—or even two or more girls together—ought not to frequent pubs or clubs unaccompanied by a male; girls who do go unaccompanied run the risk of being disparaged as "pick-ups". The main exception relates to groups of girls who are celebrating a special occasion—the birthday of a work mate, for example; but this only occurs from time to time. There was one instance, however, in which a girl respondent regularly went to a public
house unaccompanied by a male. She was a nurse, and it was accepted behaviour for nurses to go to public houses near to their hostel, accepted by the nurses and by other customers alike, that is: they constituted a special case, and were neither embarrassed nor embarrassing by their presence, it would seem.

The popularity of the public house and of the Working Men’s Clubs is undisputed, then. This overall popularity conceals a wide range of attitudes and behaviour, however. There are those who “go drinking” every night, and those whose main interest is in listening to a group, once a week, with an occasional drink during the evening. For single men, the local pub or Working Men’s Club serves a variety of functions—it is a refuge from an overcrowded home; a place for relaxation after a physically tiring and/or mentally boring day; and rendez-vous for youths of the same age and interests. For married youths, too, it may fulfil some or all of these functions, although in the early years of marriage youths tend not to spend much time out of the home or in the company of other youths. For engaged youths and girls, and those “going steady”, the public house is a place for spending the evening together, perhaps in the company of friends—a place, too which “plusher” than their homes are, where youths can “show off” their worth and wealth to girls, and girls can reciprocate by dressing smartly and playing their part as a modern teenage girl.
Youth Clubs and Other Organisations

Only 17 youths and 11 girls were members of "interest" or "activity" associations: the bulk of the youths belonged to sporting and other recreational clubs (for example, angling, snooker), whereas more of the girls were involved in "social service" activities—such as Girl Guides and St. John's Ambulance Brigade. Only two youths held official positions in voluntary associations—one was Social Secretary of a Community Association, and the other Secretary of a Sporting Club. Three girls were officials—two as Instructors in the Girl Guides and the Ambulance Brigade respectively, and one as Secretary of a religious sect association for young adults.

Youth Club membership and membership of youth organisations as such had lapsed for most respondents in their early years of employment—the trend was already apparent at Interview No.3, when the respondents were only 16 years of age.¹ By the time of Interview No.4 no respondent belonged to a Youth Club—the last one to attend was a rather quiet girl from a middle class home who had recently stopped going because all the other girls were younger than she.

It may be noted, however, that a high proportion—over one-half of both youths and girls—had belonged to a Youth Club or other youth organisations at some stage during their teenage years. Willmott, too, found that this was true of boys in East London, and he argues that there is a cyclical pattern in regard

to membership whereby the proportion of youths attending rises after school leaving, to a peak at the age of 16/17, and then declines towards the age of 20 years. Willmott maintains that "When there are plenty of clubs of different kinds (Bethnal Green was well provided in this respect), including a choice of 'open' clubs, then most boys, if not girls, will join", and that "Whatever other worth-while activities take place in youth clubs, the cyclical patterns suggest that the principal functions of the youth service is social. It provides a getting away from school, work or home, where boys learn to mix first with each other, then with the girls". One of its advantages, apparently, is that it can help ease the processes of adolescence by providing an institutional framework in which young people can learn to behave as adults, while still largely insulated from adult superiority and disapproval. The conclusion, in other words, is exactly contrary to the argument of Musgrove in a recent book, where he asserts that youth clubs are "age-segregated institutions, imposed by adults on unwilling adolescents in order to exclude them from adult society". Willmott argues that "At a stage in adolescence, segregation seems to be exactly what they want". Several comments on Willmott's argument are called for in the light of the present study. In the first place, there was no such cyclical

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pattern evident, but a steady decline in youth club (and other youth organisation) membership: this may be associated, simply, with the lesser provision in Sheffield compared with Bethnal Green. But this does not seem, in fact, to be the main or at any rate the only factor. Youth clubs were seen by most of the present respondents—girls as well as youths—as being for "school kids" rather than young workers. They did not wish to remain associated with them, therefore—and although some respondents, who had not previously attended youth clubs, flirted with them in their first year or so at work, the flirtation was short-lived. For the present respondents, then, youth clubs could not except with reference to a minority—be said to represent an institutional framework; nor, for that matter, were they successful in accordance with Musgrove's criterion of "age segregated institutions imposed by adults on unwilling adolescents"—these young workers were not prepared to be imposed upon. There was no institutional framework of this order, then; boys met their girl friends elsewhere than in youth clubs. Possibly it is one aspect of the lack of such a framework that so many young people seek to settle down so early—to adhere, that is, to the adult institutional framework of marriage and the family; and possibly, too, it is some explanation of the widespread use of public houses and clubs by young workers—these, too, provide a much more amenable framework for the young worker than does the youth club (the tendency—though one which in recent years has been subject
to in-roads—for professional people to marry later than manual workers may be attributable not just to long years spent in qualifying, nor to the fact of them coming predominantly from middle class backgrounds which tend to favour later marriages, but also to their involvement in educational institutions—at first the sixth form and then the university—which may provide them with a framework during their teenage years and early twenties).

Other Activities

A handful of youths and girls were interested in "cultural" activities, narrowly defined—theatre, art, musical concerts, playing music, and serious reading. All of these were from middle class backgrounds, and all the girls were in Category 'A' employment and the youths in non-manual employment.

Other outdoor, or out-of-the-home, activities, included ice-skating (there were complaints that the nearest rink was in Leeds thirty miles away), roller skating, watching speedway, and bingo. One girl sang with a local "pop" group, and a youth spent several hours each week drumming with a Territorial Army band. Several youths went angling regularly, and one or two of the girls

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1 That there are problems for young people which the appropriate sort of institutional framework might help resolve is undeniable. One study suggests that there is considerable need amongst the unattached young people for guidance over a whole range of matters—G.W. Goetschius and M.Joan Tash, from their study of unattached young people in an Inner London Borough "came to see the unattached as a community problem rather than as a problem of young people unable or unwilling to make use of the facilities offered by the Youth Service. Indeed, we came to see the part the agencies themselves played in causing unattachment". cf. Working With Unattached Youth, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1967.
went swimming: six youths continued to play football regularly. Other sports were associated with respondents from middle class homes, or who were from working class backgrounds but employed in non-manual occupations. There were two youths who played golf, for example, one who played tennis, and a girl who went riding regularly (the "class" nature of leisure activities is also well illustrated with reference to a girl from an aspiring working class background, a hairdresser, whose fiancé was in professional employment—most week-ends she went on treasure hunts in her fiancé's car).

Leisure time activities in the home included reading, but in only a few cases were books read: mostly if respondents read at all, they read comics, newspapers and women's magazines. Only a few youths had hobbies of a serious order, such as photography, and only a few girls had "creative" leisure pursuits, such as dressmaking. One girl spent a lot of her spare time washing and setting her girl friends' hair (she was a warehouse worker); whilst another girl, a factory machine operator, said that she spent a lot of time washing her own hair, and rinsing it in different shades.

A few youths, and rather more girls, had regular evenings at home—never going out on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, for example (most respondents did go out at weekends).¹ The youths adhered to such regular patterns in part because of the expense

¹That youths are inclined to spend rather more time out of the home than girls, is supported by Willmott's study, op.cit., and by J.B. Mays' study of Liverpool youths, Growing Up In A City, Liverpool University Press, 1954.
involved in going out every evening, in part because of the wish for "a rest", and in part because of positive attractions on T.V. Added to these reasons in the case of girls were domestic chores to be done about the house, such as washing clothes and mending and darning, and preparations for going out on subsequent evenings—washing of hair on Thursday evening, "ready for the weekend", for example. Additionally, with some girls, there was a felt duty, and perhaps a motherly expectation, for them to stay at home with the family a certain amount—as a mark of respect, as it were, for parents and for brothers and sisters.

When youths did spend time at home, they were likely to watch T.V. (discussed below) or, as in several cases, tinkering with cars or motor cycles. For one youth, this was a major preoccupation. A labourer, he spent most of his leisure time, and money, on a motor cycle that he had "designed" and built. He had spent £100 on it in the three months prior to the Research Interview. He was seeking to perfect this machine, and his technique, to enter competitions, and he aspired to become a professional racing driver.

Those with cars and motor cycles, as has already been indicated—and those with friends owning transport—were able to go further afield in their leisure activities, whether to strip-club in Wakefield or to country pub in Derbyshire. Even so, much time was spent by them, as by respondents without such access to transport, in Sheffield itself, in the city centre or in the local neighbourhood.

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Much of the time that was spent at home was passed in an apparently desultory fashion, "doing nothing", "hanging around", half watching T.V. and half sleeping. After a day at work, and a full evening's activities on other nights of the week, respondents were tired; but they were also, many of them, lacking in interests and not very proficient in reading—the easiest way out for them, in leisure hours spent at home, was to "do nothing".

On the whole, respondents were satisfied with what Sheffield had to offer them in their leisure hours—it provided what they wanted, and, if somewhat "dull compared with Manchester", as a few youths remarked, it catered for most needs (although the lack of an ice skating rink and, by implication, a strip-tease club, were complained of).

There were a few vociferous youths who castigated Sheffield for its lack of zest, however: they referred to it in such terms as "a dump"—the main complaint was that "everything closes up at ten". Youths out for lively enjoyment found it tame; whilst courting couples, too, regretted that they were denied the opportunity to round off the evening with a drink at a coffee bar after the cinema. But most respondents had to be up early on weekdays, found plenty to entertain them at weekends, and were far from complaining.
Television

Approximately one-third of the youths said that they watched Television "a lot" (28/86): the proportion for girls was higher, distinctly over one-third (35/84): and a higher proportion of youths than girls said that they watched Television "never" or "rarely"—23/86 compared with 17/84.

The analysis here is necessarily superficial, because insufficient data was obtained—one youth’s "a lot" for example, meant watching for the whole of the evening two or three evenings a week, whilst another youth meant by the same description that he watched for about an hour each evening, whilst having his tea and prior to going out. Thorough analysis, too, would have to take due account of variations amongst respondents in terms of potential viewing time—the factory girl who finishes work at 4 o’clock has more hours to spare before meeting her boy friend at 7 o’clock, than the shop assistant who finishes at 6 p.m., for example: travelling time, shift work, a younger brother with homework to be done, all such factors affect the situation.

Despite these limitations, however, some general points are worth making.

The greater tendency for girls to watch television, compared with youths, is related to the longer hours of leisure which girls spend in the home—this is true of married, engaged, "going steady" and single girls. Whilst some respondents watched television programmes avidly, others were casual, and it would
seem that T.V. is turned on in many homes as a general background to other activities—eating meals, playing cards or ironing—and is not watched consistently or with concentration (hence, presumably, the inflated audience research figures which would seem to be based upon numbers of persons in a room when a switch is turned on rather than upon actual viewing).

Certain of those respondents who did not watch television at all, or did so only rarely, explained that they had no set at home (married youths with heavy household expenses were prominent in this respect). Others stressed that they did not watch much because they were so little time in the home. And yet others explained that they disliked the programmes, and did not watch for that reason—"a lot of tripe", said one youth; these respondents had had a surfeit of cowboys and serials and political broadcasts, and found it all boring, the same thing over and over again. Not that dislike of a programme necessarily resulted in respondents deciding not to watch it—on the contrary, some seemed to be held, in a masochistic way, to programmes which riled them. And, as has been indicated, the set was often kept on in the home all evening, irrespective of what was on, or of who wanted to watch a programme, if anyone. The only alternatives to watching were to go out of the house altogether or to a bedroom. Thus, one youth who was scornful, indeed resentful, of "Songs of Praise", explained that he had to watch it "because the pubs were not open at that time of a Sunday".
Even if programmes were not liked particularly, T.V. at least had the merit of helping to pass the time; this accounted for quite a lot of viewing—for the want of anything better to do. As one girl said, "I just watch anything that comes on—I don't mind anything".

In reply to the questions on main programmes—"likes and dislikes"—the respondents gave a total of 183 "likes" and 109 "dislikes", as indicated in Table 99. A few comments may be made on these preferences.

**Table 99**

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<th>DISLIKES</th>
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<td><strong>57</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
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There was a clear lead in popularity amongst both youths and girls for plays and films—girls favoured "love" stories and youths preferred detective, horror and war settings. The popularity of plays and films is understandable in terms of their...
familiarity for respondents, who were used to seeing such entertainment at the cinema, and had been for some years. This entertainment was, that is, intelligible to them. Pop records and musical shows are designed specifically for teenagers and it is not surprising that there should be a fair number of adherents (it was second preference for many other respondents). "Coronation Street" is a special case, because it is so long established, a talking point in factory, pub and shop, and because it is shown at a time—early evening—when respondents could see it before going out. It had staunch supporters and also some vehement opponents. (This finding is in line with a National Opinion Poll conducted in May, 1967, which indicated that "Coronation Street" was the most popular individual programme but also the most widely disliked). The "homely", "gossipy", quality of the programme, its (at any rate superficial) realism, and its sentiment, probably account for its appeal to girls. But the interesting point to emerge from the present enquiry is that strong dislike as well as strong like came from respondents living in "Coronation Street" type houses and neighbourhoods. Those who liked it and who came from such areas seemed to relish its familiarity; those who disliked it felt that it held them up to scorn, made them a laughing stock, demeaned them in the eyes of the world, and represented a further attack upon their lot. It would require much more

\[1\] Indeed, further than that, the Poll showed that, as in the present study, women prefer the programme decisively more than do men, whilst it is disliked distinctly more by men than by women.
investigation, of course, to establish these points: but such would seem to be the mechanism at work—the programme is taken as purporting to represent life as it is actually lived, and the stories strike a chord amongst people from ostensibly similar backgrounds: those who subscribe to the sentimentalism and humour enjoy the programme, those who are already critical of their neighbourhood repudiate it as a further blow to their self-esteem.

Of other programmes that were liked, it is notable that 15 youths but only one girl gave "sport" as their favourite, whilst 1 youth but 7 girls disliked sport. One girl protested that "sport" "pushed out other, decent programmes" a reference to the tendency to postpone regular programmes if there is a special sporting occasion to report, such as football or a boxing match. Ten girls liked "Compact"—a programme about life in the office of a woman's journal. The girls who liked this programme were, for the most part, office workers themselves, and perceived at least some aspects that were familiar in their everyday work lives: the youths who particularly disliked the programme seemed to be motivated, as manual workers, by a general scorn for white collar workers—"silly", "stuck-up" girl typists, and men of doubtful manliness. Youths were similarly intolerant of the romance of "Emergency Ward 10" (doctors and nurses "falling" for each other) whilst girls delighted in the make-believe world. One youth: a sheet metal worker, referred disparagingly to the "soft eyes and poofy grin" of the doctor in the series.

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Of the programmes which no-one liked, but which high proportions of respondents disliked, Quiz Games had 13 opponents—a few of these had in mind the more serious programmes such as "University Challenge". Their objection to them was either that the programmes "showed them up"—revealed to them their lack of knowledge, that is: thus one respondent said, "I don't even understand the questions"; or they objected that the programmes were just "plain boring"—for they felt that they had nothing in common, as young workers, with "dopey-looking" undergraduates. Others of these respondents disliked mainly the more superficial type of quiz, such as "Double Your Money", and here the basis of the dislike seemed to be two-fold—firstly that the programmes were condescending towards the contestants, with an assumption of ignorance on their part: and, secondly, that there was inconsistency as to whether or not to accept an answer, and in giving hints and encouragement. "Bad luck" would have been acceptable, but unfairness was deplored.

High proportions of respondents stated a dislike for news and current affairs programmes, and for political broadcasts. The former were disliked because they were "above the heads of young workers", as one respondent put it—or, "too intelligent for me" as another said. It was, as it were, rubbing it in, to be subject to such programmes, which only served as a reminder of one's lack of progress at school. That was one reaction—another was of anger that leisure time should be thus intruded upon.
"Panorama" was subject to particular vilification on this point, by a youth whose view was that Monday was a bad enough day to get through, anyhow, without that to end up with. All "serious" things were disliked by most respondents: indeed, some lumped them together as dislikes—"opera, ballet, politics, all that stuff—I can't stand it". "Religious programmes" were explicitly put in this "serious" category by one youth, who was vehement that they "spoil a Sunday—all that chat, when you want a bit of entertainment and relaxation."

As to political broadcasts, these had been taking up distinctly more time just prior to the Research Interviews, in connection with the impending General Election. They were especially irritating to respondents when they took the place of more popular feature programmes (sports programmes, as we have just seen, were condemned by girls for the same reason). But they were also disliked for themselves—politicians who "talked, talked, talked" were infuriating ("you'd think they'd get fed-up with their own voices!"): young manual workers are intolerant of talkers, knowing that their own livelihood depends on effort, not words. They "can't stand" politicians "prating on"—they know what life is like, and you won't change it by talk. "Words make you sick"—what young workers want is to forget about the problems of life, in their leisure hours, not be reminded of them by "some know-all in a suit".

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This, albeit slight, discussion of reactions to programmes is indicative of various facets of the impact of television—it is turned to for escape, or at least for straight entertainment, rather than for a deeper appreciation of the arts or of intellectual matters. It is a superficial experience, one which passes the time. What emerges, as a general point, is that the ideas of young workers are not significantly amended by the mass media—their horizons are not extended, nor are their attitudes much changed. Rather, by virtue of the programmes watched and the attentiveness or otherwise with which they are watched, previously held views, attitudes and interests are reinforced. Young workers extract from the medium what is readily intelligible to them and easily digested by them, and interpret what they see by reference to well-established attitudes and dispositions. What they do not understand they repudiate, condemn and even, in extreme cases, switch off. The question of the impact of television will be taken up again, below, in the discussion of the interplay between "work" and "non-work" involvements.

Leisure Time With Parents And Siblings

Relationships of married respondents with their parents have already been discussed. And it has been noted, too, that many single respondents, youths to a markedly greater extent than
girls, spend most of their leisure hours out of the home—save
that in the later stages of courting respondents spent more time
in their homes, with their fiancés. Specific questioning on
leisure time spent with parents confirmed the conclusion that
respondents, with only a very few exceptions, spent little time in
leisure activities with parents or siblings. They preferred to
be with their peers ("I like to be out with people of my own
age"). In some cases this was directly related to antipathy be-
tween parents and children, whether as a consequence of personal
quarrels ("I don't get on too well with my father, who has been
too strict—-so I always go out at night"), or because of dif-
ferences in values and aspirations (for example, a youth from a
squalid home who was intent on "improving" himself, and kept out
of his home as much as possible).

Such time as was spent in the home was not, normally, used
for active participation with other members of the family. One
case reported of joint activity in the home was of a marginal
order—"We watch T.V, and generally scrap about, and usually one
of my younger brothers gets a clip on the ear from my father."
Conversation was slight, it would seem, and the evenings were

\[1\] Willmott found this preference amongst boys in East London—
in leisure, boys select friends of about the same age, and
even at work, where there are contacts with a wider age range,
there tends to be a similar selection in friendship for youths
of the same age. The latter point, too, is confirmed in the
present study (see Chapters VI and VII above).

spent passively, all watching but often scarcely seeing T.V. The main exceptions were girls with special responsibilities in the home—one girl, for example, spent most of her time looking after her invalid mother and keeping her company. A nurse, who lived in a hospital, said that she liked to spend as much time as possible in her home, because she was very fond of family life, and particularly of her four sisters and her young brother.

As regards joint family activities outside the home, these, too, were limited. A few girls occasionally went to the cinema with their mothers, or went shopping with them; but girls tended to be impatient to get out with their boy friends. Some youths went fishing with their fathers, and rather more went to the local public house with them—usually on Sunday at lunch time. At Interview No.3, when respondents were sixteen years of age, they tended to be self-conscious about being seen out with a parent—boys, especially, thought that it made them look childish. By the age of twenty they had a maturity which overcame this fear, and they were, too, able and desirous of participating in adult activities—such as drinking at the pub, with father.

With regard to siblings, the wish to be with people of their own age was an important factor in minimising joint leisure activities—furthermore, older brothers and sisters were likely to be married (and living away) or courting (and preoccupied with that): whilst younger brothers and sisters were "too young" and
"childish". The exceptions were in regard to girls with siblings of up to about ten years of age—who did spend some time with them, occasionally taking them to the cinema, perhaps, or for a walk.

**Friends of the Same Sex**

The limited extent to which respondents spent leisure hours with work-mates has already been discussed. The preoccupation with members of the opposite sex meant that other friendships tended to be limited, too—on the whole, little time was spent by married and engaged respondents, and those "going steady", with friends of the same sex. Indeed, marriage and engagement were often given as the reason for the breaking-up of friendships, some of which had been long-standing since schooldays.

In particular, the arrival of children seemed to curtail friendships—in part because of the time which the mother has to devote to her child, and in part because of the transformation in interests and activities which ensues. This cuts off the mother from the girl without children. Friendship was unable to sustain the competition of the attraction of the opposite sex—thus one youth said that he used to go out with a friend of his schooldays until about six months previously, when "there was a big blow-up over girl friends". It was a matter of loyalty—who was to be given preference, he as an old friend, or the newly acquired girl friend? The latter won. A few respondents did maintain strong
friendships, even whilst courting— one girl, with her girl friend, went out regularly with their fiancées, making a foursome; and a few youths, even though courting, reserved one or even more nights a week, to "go drinking with the lads".

Single youths and girls, who were not courting, did have more friends of the same sex, with whom they spent a considerable amount of time—and some of these friendships had persisted over the years, being founded at school or in the neighbourhood. None-the-less, such friendships were subject to pressures. Re-housing consequent upon slum clearance, which resulted in the dispersion of families previously constituting neighbourhood groups, was one such pressure. Another was involvement in the work situation; this, as one girl said, means that "you often lose contact with school friends when you start work". There is much less time for meeting them, that is, and, of course, there is no central meeting place such as school provides—although in certain areas girls working in large factories did often see school friends. In addition, the process of starting work is one which school leavers see as a major step forward from the childhood days at school—as part of this process, they almost deliberately shrug off school friends, apart from special friends, early in their work years, as unwelcome reminders, as it were, of their childhood days of school. A further way in which starting work may influence friendships is through the amendment of norms and values, such that aspiring young workers assume new orientations which inspire them
to discard old associations. Thus, a secretary said that she had not got much interest in her old school friends now, because she mixed with "a different set of people, who come from all over the city".

Of course, old school friends were seen in street, shopping centre, local pubs or, in some cases, at the work place. But by the time respondents had reached the age of twenty, if they continued active friendship with old school friends at all, it tended to be with one or perhaps two only, in the case of girls, and three or four at the most with youths. A few girls, too, maintained regular contact by letter with friends who had moved away—but no youths did this.

It was indicated above that girls tended to go out with one or at most two girl friends, if they went out with friends of the same sex at all. Often they went to dances or for walks, in the hope of meeting boy friends—the importance of operating towards this end in pairs was referred to by several respondents—in part it would seem to be associated with some ideas of protection, but mainly it is a matter of self-assurance, combined with the wish not to appear as "a tart"—the company of a friend of the same sex at least conveys the appearance of not being obviously "on the look out". Youths tended to move in groups—not organised gangs—of three or four, perhaps five: they were "all fellows together", bolstering each other in confidence, possibly casting
eyes at the girls, but mainly out for enjoyment as a group, whether at cinema, pub, sports match, or just "hanging about".¹

**Church Attendance**

Only three youths and eight girls attended Church regularly each week: in addition, one youth attended about once a month. The remaining 82 youths and 76 girls went to Church rarely, or never. Those who did go from time to time went only in connection with special occasions—as one girl said, "We only go for things like weddings and Christenings". Most respondents had not been to Church for "years". Apart from 3 regular attenders, married respondents had last attended Church for their marriage ceremony.

Of the regular attenders, several were active at Church—an apprentice painter was a Bible Class instructor, for example, whilst one married couple sang in the choir together. The most ardent attenders in terms of frequency were a Salvation Army girl and a member of the Plymouth Brethren—the latter attended for worship three times each Sunday. Most of the respondents who were attending Church regularly had done so since childhood. There was, however, one recent convert, and also two youths whose interest was being awakened. The convert was the Salvation Army girl—it was indicated above that the pattern of her leisure activities

was radically affected by her new allegiance. Of the youths, one said that he had started to think seriously about religion whilst on a Youth Club expedition to Greece the previous year, whilst the other said that his girl friend had persuaded him to attend Church, and that in consequence of talking about religion with her he now planned to worship regularly.

The low Church attendance confirms a trend evident during the first year in employment. In their last term at school, one-tenth of the youths and one-third of the girls attended Church regularly: by the end of a year at work, only 4 youths and one-quarter of the girls attended regularly. Most of the respondents who stopped attending between Interviews 3 and 4 did so after Interview 3, at the age of sixteen or seventeen. This fall in attendance seems to be related to various factors—the securing of independence from parents, who no longer feel able to insist on attendance; the feeling that Church-going is for "kids" and old people; more love interest in the opposite sex; and the wish,

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1 David Martin has pointed out that figures for Church attendance by adolescents remain comparatively high until the age of eighteen, and then drop. He is referring to overall figures however. I would guess that, probably, the drop at the age of eighteen is accounted for by the end of full-time school education for those attending selective schools. On the basis of the present study, although the figures are small, I would say that the main drop in attendance for children who leave school at the age of fifteen is in the first year after leaving with another main drop amongst girls (attendance by boys is already very small) at the age of sixteen to seventeen.

after a week at work, to have Sundays free (compelled to adhere to a time-table for the rest of the week, young workers elect to please themselves on Sundays). There was no evidence, in the present study, that the decline in Church attendance represented a facet of rebelliousness amongst youths or of inter-generational strife. For parents, for the most part, did not attend Church, either, and those who encouraged their children (daughters, especially) to attend Church until the age of 16 or 17 did not seem to have raised objections when the young person finally decided not to continue attending.

Work and Leisure

That there are relationships to be established between work and "non-work" in regard to activities, involvement and behaviour is clear. In this Section, I propose to review various aspects of an important element of the non-work sector, namely leisure, with reference to work, and to suggest certain tentative conclusions which emerge from the foregoing discussion of the leisure activities of young workers. It has been noted earlier that leisure friendships with other people at work characterised relatively few

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1This is confirmatory of David Martin's diagnosis, op.cit., p.128.
respondents—and that an important reason for this was the wish to keep "work" and "leisure" separate. But in important and varied ways, as will be suggested, such a separation is not possible.

It has been emphasised that relationships with members of the opposite sex dominated the leisure-time activities and interests of a high proportion of young workers, girls in particular. Largely because of the supremacy of this factor, no special patterns emerge in terms of proportions of workers in the different occupational categories ('A', 'B' and 'C' for girls, apprentices, semi-skilled, unskilled and non-manual for youths). High proportions of respondents in each of these categories frequented public houses or Working Men's Clubs, relatively low proportions went regularly to the cinema or to dances. The decisive factors were marriage, engagement and "going steady". This said, it must be stressed that the figures obscure some important differences between respondents in the various occupational groups, differences which have a bearing upon the inter-play between work and leisure. There was, for example, a tendency for apprentices to make use of the lounge rather than the public bar when out for an evening with their fiancées or girl friends—or to go to a "de luxe" public house in the suburbs rather than to the local street corner pub; whilst Category 'A' girls would be taken by their boy friends to the "better type", "respectable" hotel bars, Category 'C' girls could well find themselves in the "snug" watching their men-folk play darts.
Different "styles" of leisure activity were most clear-cut in regard to non-manual youths, small in number though they were, and to Category 'A' girls, who were engaged or married to non-manual workers. In part, this reflects the middle class background of certain of these respondents, but it also indicates the network of relationships entered into at work which stimulate leisure activities such as golf and tennis in youths from working class backgrounds—through invitations from fellow workers to join the Club, for example—and a penchant for dinner-dance and car treasure hunts amongst girls. These leisure activities cannot be sustained independently of work contacts and relationships, but, on the contrary, are based in them and supported by them. They represent, in the case of young people of working class background, a break from traditional family patterns, and the inspiration for them, as well as the support, is derived from their peers at work (and in leisure) rather than from parents, siblings or neighbours.

There were, of course, more direct ways in which work impinged upon leisure activities. Youths in occupations which required attendance at evening school had their leisure time curtailed not just by the classes but by the need to do home-work. Shift work, for example, of 'bus conductors and some steel workers, obviously affected the content of leisure activity, especially for those who worked night shifts. The possibility of overtime—which enabled the earning of more money, and in turn led to a re-patterning of
leisure time, was another direct factor. Number of hours worked and their disposition throughout the week (five-day week, Saturday work, etc.), was an important consideration. In a straightforward sense, the amount of leisure time was affected, as was its correspondence or otherwise with the leisure time of friends, especially fiancé's and "steady" friends of the opposite sex.

But, in more general terms, there is the possibility of a link between the length and structure of the working week and the nature of leisure activity and participation. There is no direct data from the present study to substantiate it, but it is appropriate here to recall Wilensky's conclusion that "a simple structural fact—group schedules of work—is a powerful source of diversity in leisure style". The sheer fact of having long hours of leisure to dispose of, as it were, independent of level or type of occupation, is conducive to "compulsive absorption of T.V. as a time filler". Whether apprentice or labourer, shop girl or school teacher, if long hours are available for leisure, then poor T.V. will be watched—such is the sense of Wilensky's conclusion.

Certainly the present study shows that many respondents, of all occupational categories, do spend a lot of time watching or half-watching repetitive and unimaginative television programmes.

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and many of these, as has been indicated, utterly condemn the more "serious" programmes.

It is not just that there is a playback of work upon leisure; there may be influences working in the reverse direction—Dumazedier suggests that the trend in industrial society is towards a preeminence for leisure such that involvements and interests in non-work hours may shape the choice of career, and attitudes towards a particular job or to work in general. The fact that night-shift work enabled more time during the day for fishing or motoring, or that one job rather than another provided more time for the housewife to do her domestic chores, was an influential factor in deciding certain respondents in the present study to do one sort of work rather than another. It has been noted, indeed, that certain job changes were made with such factors primarily in mind—including leaving apprenticeships, with the associated time-consuming further education and study, for the less demanding occupations of semi-skilled or unskilled workers.

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Indeed, more generally, it could be said that girls' choices of occupation—and parental attitudes in this regard—are in many cases best seen in terms of a reconciliation of the need to work with the desire to maintain a certain style of life—so that girls are discouraged from entering factory work, as not being "nice", but encouraged to enter "clean" work, where their appearance (for non-work hours) will not suffer, and their "manners", by virtue of the company at work, might be enhanced. There is scope for further analysis of the extent to which leisure, or more broad "non-work" considerations, determines occupational choice by reference to present and potential wage reward, the wage being taken as a measure of the ability to participate, in non-work activities, in a particular style of life. This leads on to such questions as the extent to which work is instrumental, a subject which will be taken up again below.

A further perspective of the interplay between work and leisure is that deriving from the idiosyncratic life styles of persons in certain occupations, and of their families. The work of members of the Chicago School on various occupational groups set the tradition for this sort of study. Research in Britain has indicated

\[\text{Burns has commented that "occupational choices...often seem to be made not so much to provide the income which will support the highest standard of living—even within the purview of a particular class or status group—as to consort with a preferred style of life." cf. "A Meaning in Everyday Life", New Society, 25th May, 1967, p.276.}\]

\[\text{cf. E.C. Hughes, Men and Their Work.}\]
the ways in which the local miner, for example, extends the bonds stemming from the need for common effort in the face of danger in the pits to the non-work situation, and spends much of his time in company with his workmates at the local miners' welfare centre—his wife accepts this as "normal" and "proper" and herself consorts with other miners' wives, all fulfilling their roles as preservers of the home and children, and providers of meals. Other studies have pointed to extra-work implications associated with the occupations of dockworkers, of advertising men, of policemen, managers and "organisation men". Tunstall's study of Hull fishermen has described how the content of leisure activities is shaped by the fact of being aboard ship, away from home for weeks on end, and accumulating money as a result; so that men are enabled to "live like Lords" during their few days of leave ashore. (Tunstall's analysis refers to the wider context of the position of young fishermen in the system of social stratification, a point which will be returned to below).

In the present study, the distinctive mark which certain occupations made upon styles of life was evident clearly in regard to

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1 F. Henrixes, C Slaughter, and N. Dennis, Coal Is Our Life, London, 1956
servicemen—especially one, who was stationed overseas, and whose leisure hours, in large measure (by virtue of the lack of an alternative way of spending money) were devoted to further education. Another serviceman, a cook in the Royal Navy, relished his high wages, with "all found": it was he who asked the Research Interviewer, "Wouldn't you like £8 a week spending money?"

There were other examples—steel workers on heavy jobs who had absorbed the "lore" of heavy drinking; a policeman, who spent most of his leisure time with other policemen, and who explained that "The only friend a policeman has is another policeman"; and nurses, who were still subject to strict discipline as well as less formal sanctions in regard to activities and appearance outside working hours just as within them—especially was this so for those living in hostels.

A consideration of relationships between work and leisure raises basic issues as to the nature of work activity in modern industrial society, and the meaning of work—and of leisure—to the individual. This subject is dealt with at some length above; it raises grand-scale issues, as to the nature of "alienation", for example. But it is appropriate here to draw attention to certain facets which are directly pertinent to leisure. Leisure may be regarded as a compensation for the "lost" hours put in at
the workplace—in Wright Mills' formulation, "Each day, men sell little pieces of themselves in order to try to buy them back each night and weekend, with the coin of fun".  

Certainly some of the respondents in the present study could be said to regard their leisure time thus—and some were prepared to put in long hours of overtime in order to make more substantial purchases of "life" in the leisure hours remaining to them. Whilst there may, indeed, have been an element of this reaction to work in a high proportion of respondents, it was all-important with reference to only a few. Others who did make use of their leisure hours to "have a fling" were responding less to the routine of work than to the recognition that they were "only young once": girls, in particular, knew that they would soon be tied to the home; but youths, too, expected—and indeed welcomed the thought—that they would soon "settle down". The "coin of fun" was, for these young workers, a device to compensate for the constraints of settled, married, adult life to which they would soon, not unwillingly, be subject.

Of course, reaction to routine work does not necessarily take the form of wild, spend-thrift fun—withdrawal, in leisure hours, into an absorbing, private hobby or interest (photography or gardening, for example) is another form of response. As Cotgrove and Parker have expressed it, "Withdrawal to home-centredness

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offers compensation of a different kind. Here a man is boss of his own small world, and can engage in meaningful tasks of his own choosing. ("Withdrawal" from work, in this sense, might be of a totally different order, of course—such that supremacy is given to the religious order of life, which either makes work meaningful, no matter what the tasks may be, as a public service and duty to God, or makes it irrelevant, and but another aspect of transitory life on earth. The orientations of the Salvation Army girl, and the member of the Plymouth Brethren, can be understood in this light). And leisure hours may be viewed not as a compensation for work, but as a superior activity to it; "fun" is then to be regarded not as the product of work (arising in compensation for it) but as, in a sense, prior to it—work provides the means to it. But it is not just "fun" which may be seen in this perspective—the building-up of a home and family may also be regarded as worthwhile objectives in non-work hours, and work may then be viewed as a sensible and acceptable means to that end. Provided "fair" wages and conditions were accorded, then, work was not despised insofar as it made for the possibility of a satisfying home life. This whole argument has a bearing upon the instrumentality of work, in regard to certain workers at least, and this is discussed elsewhere; all that need be said here is that work/leisure can be regarded as a package deal, without complaint or recrimination in leisure. This analysis would seem to make sense when applied to certain of the respondents in the present
study, and in particular to those aspiring married and engaged couples who were aiming at a somewhat higher standard of life than their parents—with a home of their own in the suburbs. Work for them was seen not just as a means to the end that they had set themselves: the proper sort of job was seen as an essential component of that end.

The theory that the content of leisure activity is to be understood in terms of compensation for work is subject to further reservations. It could be, for example, as Louchet has suggested, that there is a tendency for the most frustrating leisure to be associated with the most frustrating work. This would seem to be a facet of the theory to the effect that certain routine work induces a moronic frame of mind (or perpetuates one which has been engendered or encouraged at school) which spills over into non-work hours, shaping the whole life of the worker—who is unable to discriminate outside of work in consequence of being prevented from doing so within the work setting. This formulation, too, would seem to obtain—although in rather less extreme terms—with regard to certain respondents in the present study, who were bankrupt of ideas as to what to do with their leisure, and who spent endless evenings and weekends "hanging about" with no company, and "doing nothing in particular"; or who went, evening after evening, to a succession of films at the

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local cinema, films which left them largely unmoved, about which they could recall little or nothing shortly after seeing them, but which filled in long hours which had to be filled in somehow.

The reaction to the same work situation may vary, at least to some extent, from one individual to another—the response in leisure activities to a dull, routine life at work may be active, apathetic, moronic or resigned, for example. It could be that the problem, at any rate in regard to certain individuals, is to be posed not in terms of the work situation determining attitudes and activities in leisure—or more broadly non-work hours—but vice versa; this, of course, brings us back to Dumazedier's thesis. An example in the present study was of the girl who elected to do factory work (despite the objections of her father and fiancé)—she led a full enough leisure life, dancing, singing with a pop-group, drama, swimming—not to have to worry about her routine factory job, which she apparently breezed through, transforming it into something of a joke with her vivacity and lively contacts with other girls at work, as if grateful that there was work available that took up so little of her hours and energy (compared, that is, with possible alternatives). Indeed, the stronger the satisfaction enjoyed in non-work activities, the more acceptable, or less unacceptable, may be the work situation itself.
There remains the large question as to the impact of technological change upon leisure, currently and in the long run. It is known that in Britain and the U.S.A., many workers have chosen, so far, to make use of a shorter working week to secure secondary employment and thereby earn extra money. But the progress in technology may soon lead to a transformation in kind, such that there is not just more leisure time available, but so much more as to change the meaning of leisure.

Galbraith has suggested that the affluent age affords the opportunity—and, indeed, makes the demand—for a re-appraisal of the meaning of leisure/work, and advocated that satisfaction in the work task be catered for at the expense, if need be, of production and monetary profit. There are, indeed, various plans for job enlargement, such that life at work is made positively satisfying—ironically, it has been found (in certain instances) that the result is an increase in productivity, rather than a decline.

But it could be that with the posited transformation of social life consequent upon technological change, leisure will assume even greater importance as an outlet for individuals who would otherwise be subjected over-much to the non-human influence of the machine, not just whilst at work, but totally in the environment—leisure

1 cf. Into Work, op. cit., Chapter 1
2 cf. J. Dumazedier, op. cit.
4 For examples of job enlargement, and a discussion, see Into Work, op. cit., pp. 169-172.
would then be viewed as an escape from highly organised, mechanised, regimented society. This raises matters to do with grand-scale theories which were touched upon in Part I, above, but which it is not possible to develop further here—they are referred to merely to provide a context for the less ambitious concerns of the present research. It need only be commented that it is not sufficient to think merely of relationships between particular occupations or types of occupations and particular leisure activities: there are the larger issues as to the meaning of life in a modern society in which industry, technology, bureaucratic organisation and leisure are components that interplay and are intertwined.

There is a final perspective to be referred to here. Namely, that relating to the effects of mass media upon "cultural" interests defined narrowly, and, specifically, the impact of television which, as we have noted, is an important element, at least in terms of hours spent viewing, for a substantial proportion of young workers. Television viewing is, indeed, an important feature in the leisure activities of the British population generally: Mark Abrams has estimated that on average 25% of each adult's waking hours potentially spent at home (a total of 9½ hours out of 24) is spent viewing T.V.—with men alone, the proportion is as high as one-third.

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1 This could possibly be reformulated in terms of the attempt of the individual to attain experiences denied him by the routine bureaucratic, organised modern industrial society. E. Dunning and N. Elias have thus discussed leisure pursuits in terms of "The Quest for Excitement in Unexciting Societies"—unpublished paper presented to the British Sociological Association Conference, London, April, 1967.

An important factor about this "mass" viewing is that it appears to cut across social class and educational differences—the study by Wilensky in the U.S.A. led to the conclusion that "there is little doubt from my data as well as others that educated strata— even products of graduate and professional schools—are becoming full participants in mass culture; they spend a reduced fraction of time in exposure to quality print and film. This trend extends to the professors, writers, artists, scientists—the keepers of culture themselves"—so that "television, the most massified of the mass media, the one with the largest and most heterogeneous audience, has become central to the leisure routines of majorities—at every level. The usual differences in media exposure and response among age, sex, and class categories—easy to exaggerate in any case—have virtually disappeared in the case of television". 1

This fact of the exposure of young workers to leisure entertainment which is the common experience of other major segments of society in terms of age, sex and social class does not, in the present instance, seem to have significantly transformed the young workers, in the sense of making them adherents to a common culture, of whatever lowly an order. The explanation probably lies in the earlier suggestion that television viewers, at least the young workers in the present study, select from programmes aspects which make sense to them: the same programme, although watched by a

1 H.L. Wilensky, "Mass Society and Mass Culture: Interdependence or Independence?", op.cit.
cross-section of the population, could thus have a different
meaning for different segments of it. Irving Howe has suggested
that, further to this, it is important for the worker that mass
culture does not disturb him—"Whatever its manifest content,
mass culture must therefore not subvert the basic patterns of
industrial life. Leisure time must be so organised as to bear a
factitious relationship to working time: apparently different,
actually the same. It must provide relief from work monotony with-
out making the return to work too unbearable; it must provide amuse-
ment without insights and pleasure without disturbance—as distinct
from art, which gives pleasure through disturbance, mass culture is
thus oriented towards a central aspect of society; the depersonal-
isation of the individual."¹ The evidence of the present study is
that, insofar as they have a significant influence on young workers,
the mass media support or reinforce the "depersonalisation" in Howe's
sense, that school and work experience have, in many cases, pre-
viously induced.

¹Irving Howe, "Notes on Mass Culture", Politics, Vol.5, Spring
1948, pp. 120-123.
"Mods" and "Rockers" were very much in the news in the years prior to Research Interview No. 4 and during 1964 itself. Yet little was known about the young people involved—who they were, how old they were, how they differed from each other, whether they were the visible peak of a sinister iceberg or merely an extremist body of harmless exhibitionists. The Research Interview was used to throw some light on these questions. Following upon the questions on "Mods" and "Rockers", the subject of young people was broadened. As a device for assessing the nature and extent of the assimilation of respondents into adult society, and in an attempt, also, to examine the existence and nature of a "youth culture", respondents were asked about "the younger generation" in the following terms, "What do you think about the younger generation—people who are leaving school now or who have left in the last year or so?"

In this Chapter, I propose first to describe and analyse the responses to these questions, and then to attempt, on the basis
of inference from the replies but also by reference to the broad picture that emerges of the respondents' experiences and behaviour during their teenage years, to examine various theories relating to the idea of a youth culture, and to assess their applicability to young workers.¹

"Mods and "Rockers".

With only a few exceptions, respondents had heard about "Mods" and "Rockers", and most attempted to distinguish between them in terms of dress and appearance. Some, however, argued that there was little to choose between them—"they are all off their rockers", whilst there was near unanimity that these were a minority, albeit one to be chastised. One youth and two girls had had direct involvement with "Mods" and "Rockers" that was not of their own choosing—the same incident related to all three. The brother of one girl, who was a boy friend of the other girl and a friend of the youth, had been caught up as an innocent by-stander in a city-centre fight between "Mods" and "Rockers". The youth, aged fifteen, was "beaten-up" by twelve "Rockers", who mistook him for a "Mod" (because of his dress). He was thrown through a plate-glass window

¹The fact that questions on the younger generation followed immediately the question, "What is the difference between a "Mod" and a "Rocker"?" might have led to rather more condemnation of young people than in fact occurred, because attention had been directed to "extreme" cases. In fact, this does not seem to have happened—those who condemned "Mods" and "Rockers" often emphasised that these were a minority whilst those who con-demned the younger generation more generally gave reasons which indicated that they were concerned about young people as a whole, and not just about, or by reference to, a minority.
and spent five weeks in hospital. The effect upon the respondents was to enrage them—they spoke forcefully of the disgracefulness of such behaviour. Four youths said that they had been "Mods" (or "Rockers") during their earlier teenage years; by this they meant no more than that they had assumed particular styles of dress and kept company with other youths of the same sartorial bent. The bulk of the respondents, in their comments, were reacting to direct observation of "Mods" and "Rockers" (usually slight), to newspaper and television reports, and to hearsay.

There was a good deal of condemnation of "Mods" and "Rockers" by youths in particular—"They are a lot of soppy clots, I'm disgusted", said one youth, whilst another commented that "They are a shower". Concern was expressed at the injury to the public—a butcher, for example, said, "I think it's degrading. I'm bothered by the damage they're causing; something should be done about it." Punishment was recommended, too,—"They all want a damned good hiding", and, "what both lots need is locking up—either that or birching". Deficiencies in the "Mods" and the "Rockers" mental, psychological and sexual capacities were imputed—they "are all nits", "crazy", and "queer", it was alleged. This seemed to reflect the manual worker's vilification of anything suggestive of effeminacy in a man. The youths, indeed, made a lot of this argument, saying that "you can't tell the boys from the girls". They were charged, too, with exhibitionism and self-advertisement—traits which were deplored by unassuming youths who resented
any form of claim to superiority in leisure hours, being subject to constant such claims from managers and "office" staff which they had to suffer whilst at work. A few respondents, in distinguishing between "Mods" and "Rockers", stressed social class factors—one respondent said that "Mods" were "students who look down on working class lads (that is, the "Rockers") who had money to spend on motor bikes": the point was that "Rockers" were viewed by the "Mods" as pretentious upstarts. Another youth said that "Rockers" were "the working class element".

Girls were inclined to be less scathing than youths—although they ridiculed both "Mods" and "Rockers", they dismissed them as "silly" rather than seeing them as a threat—"just two sets of louts, best ignored."

The differences cited between "Mods" and "Rockers" had mainly to do with appearances, then—"Rockers" being dirty, untidy, dressed in imitation black leather and having long hair; and "Mods" being relatively clean, wearing more casual clothes of the latest fashion, and with long hair. Whilst "Rockers" tended to have motor cycles, "Mods" went in for (the allegedly more effeminate) scooters. So far as activities were concerned, each set was a nuisance, moving around in groups, obstructing other people, and generally causing trouble. Many respondents described the differences between "Mods" and "Rockers" in such terms, and there was a fair amount of agreement in the descriptions. The concern here, however, is not with "Mods" and "Rockers" as such but with their
relevance to the understanding of young workers. In this regard, it seems clear that, overwhelmingly, they were rejected by the respondents—and that although a few in part emulated one or other set, usually by dress or ownership of a motor-bike, neither "Mods" nor "Rockers" were "trend-setters" for the respondents, and least of all were they the stereotypes of a youth culture, or cultures, to which the youths and girls in the present study could be said to subscribe or in which they participated. On the contrary, but "Mods" and "Rockers", if they roused any sentiment at all in the respondents, tended to give rise to condemnation, ridicule, dismissal, disgust or impatience. One respondent, for example, said that "if they want to fight, they should get out on the moors, and scrap there": he meant that they should get out of the city, away from sensible, mature people. At the age of twenty, too, with responsibilities for a family—either actually or in mind—respondents were critical of the conspicuous consumption of "Mods" and "Rockers", who seemed to have plenty of money to spend, and plenty of time to spend it in: such respondents did not like to see young people so openly "skiving" and apparently "getting away with it". The most emphatic point, however, is that respondents saw both "Mods" and "Rockers" as atypical, and certainly as unrepresentative of themselves now and, with but a handful of exceptions, throughout their teenage years. And even the exceptions, were vague as to the nature of their previous affiliation—as a labourer said, "I used to dress up a bit and go to cafés and

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stay out late, and all that. So maybe I was one of them—I don't know. Anyway, I've jacked that all in now." Much in the news, "Mods" and "Rockers" did not mean much to these young workers—except as another facet of the irresponsible and immature teenage years which respondents felt that they had now left behind. It is to their views on the younger generation more generally that we now turn.

Respondents' Views On The "Younger Generation"

The term "younger generation" made sense to respondents, who clearly saw themselves as "adults" in contrast to the teenagers who constituted the younger generation: the married and engaged respondents, in particular, saw a divide between themselves and people of school leaving age and young workers of sixteen or seventeen—but so, too, did the other single and "unattached" respondents. Some of the respondents, of course, had teenage brothers and sisters, and others came into contact with young teenagers at work or in leisure—and yet others, without much direct contact, had formulated (or possibly received) opinions on the younger generation. But there were some respondents who had given no thought to the matter and declined to comment. An important reason, given by several of them, was that they did not wish to generalise, since they knew so few members of the younger
generation. But there were also indications of a wish not to think about young people, because of a sense of lost youth—hard though this may be to envisage in a twenty-year-old. The majority did respond to the question, however, and many of these answered by reference to implicit or explicit comparisons between their own generation and the one—albeit only five years younger or less—that was succeeding them.

Many respondents were of the view that the younger generation was much the same as they themselves had been at the same age. Blended with this outlook there was, often, a rebuttal of what was seen as an implied criticism of young people; this in itself is an indication of the extent to which publicity in recent years had been directed towards adverse reports of the younger generation.

A welder, for example, replied to the question by saying, "They're alright—you can't criticise them"—whilst a girl argued that "most of the troubles are caused by newspapers", who over-reported and thereby encouraged or stimulated other young people to follow the ways of the extreme ones. Nonetheless, one-third of the youths (26/86) and approaching two-fifths of the girls (35/84) had definite adverse comments to make about the younger generation—whom they saw as being too advanced, too "cocky", lazy, feckless and irresponsible, and, as such, a threat to society. These criticisms will be returned to below.

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1 An international swimmer who retired from the sport at the age of twenty years (Linda Ludgrove) is reported to have explained that she was "too old" at twenty, and "looked like Grandma".
A common view amongst the uncritical, and those who positively favour certain attributes of the younger generation, was that it takes all kinds to make a world. A van driver thus said, "They vary, some good, some bad—some are crackers, and some are O.K." On the whole, however, "most of them are pretty decent" A girl with considerable contacts with young teenagers (albeit of a selective nature—they attended St. John's Ambulance Brigade classes, at which the respondent was an instructor), said, "If treated properly they are alright—I've taught hundreds of them, and I've found them fine". A policeman, too, drew upon his experience in his occupation in commenting that "the majority of them are alright, and no different from us". "Why, after all, should one expect them to be that different?" was the mood of certain respondents—as one said, "we're all human, aren't we?" There are exceptions, of course—"you always get the odd one or two", and it is "a few out of the majority who give the others a bad name". It is "just older people who criticise them a lot—but for every bad 'un there are ten good 'uns."

Some respondents drew attention to the special problems confronting young teenagers—associated with work and with "growing up in general". So that if young people appear to behave badly at times, it must be recognised that they are young and inexperienced, "green" in the world of work—and, as one youth said, "I suppose we were the same at their age". Another youth argued, "Like everybody else at that age, they are proud of having a job and money in
their pocket and they feel good"—but, he added, "the charm soon wears off". Members of the younger generation were, then, just going through a phase—a phase that was "normal" and "natural". There were reminders from some respondents, too, that the difficulties of the transition could be formidable, and that not much help was afforded: one youth, for example, said, "they don't have much chance when they leave school. The firms don't bother about them. They often end up at the Labour straight away". In such circumstances, a certain amount of apparently irresponsible behaviour is to be expected of the younger generation. The matter was generalised by several respondents into a major social issue—as one said "teenagers are often bored because at fifteen they are pushed into a job they do not want, by their parents or those in authority": how could one expect stability in such circumstances?

By and large, then, the younger generation was held by these respondents—the majority—to be moulded in the same cast as themselves with the same problems to confront; and teenage youths and girls were thought, on the whole, to be turning out to be much the same as the respondents had been before them.

But other respondents did discern signs of changes—the younger generation, compared with themselves, were "a bit wilder": and although respondents had also "been out for kicks", nowadays young people seemed to "take it too far, sometimes"—they "get a bit giddy". Specific developments were mentioned as having occurred in the previous few years, to give rise to these changes in the behaviour of
young teenagers. Nowadays, youths and girls were held to have more money to spend than did respondents at their age—and in the extreme case, as argued by one respondent, "crime increases because they have more time and money to waste". But, essentially, young people were the same as they always have been, and, without doubt, "we would have been the same if we'd been in their position".

Changing fashions in entertainment were noted, but with similar conclusions—"all they think about is beat groups, but I suppose I would have thought about this kind of things, too, if I were their age". Indeed, the new leisure activities were regarded by some respondents with a tinge of envy—but also with admiration for the vivacity and boisterousness of young people, with their groups and gay appearance; as one factory girl said, "I think they're great", whilst another commented, "good luck to them". New teenage styles in clothes were referred to by both youths and girls—again with some approval mixed with envy. (There were, however, criticisms of dress, too—a married respondent said that she thought that "girls today dress in a ridiculous way", and another girl said that "modern girls don't have much dress sense").

Other changes which respondents remarked upon had to do with a suggested greater maturity of young people—physically and otherwise. One respondent said, "They are much the same as we were, but they seem much bigger". Others held the greater mental and social maturity to be of much greater import—because of better education, it was argued, teenagers now are "more intelli-
gent than we were at their age". A shop assistant said, "they are a clever generation, and know more than I knew then"—"they all seem to be studying like mad". An apprentice said, too, "they are more learned than we were at their age—I don't know some of the things that they know now". And a nurse said that, on the whole, she felt that the members of the younger generation were an improvement upon her own generation—"more of them are staying at school for an extra year; they have the sense to realise it will do them good. The secondary modern school makes them capable of standing on their own feet". The improved opportunities were clear, then—as an apprentice said, "They have more on their side than my age-group had; they're reading books and discussing things I never thought of. They've got more sparkle. They are really going to take over, one day". Girl respondents referred specifically to the accelerated maturity of teenage girls—"They know more than we did about everything, and are altogether much more grown-up than we were." "They have more idea about life," said another. There were a few suggestions that this semblance of greater maturity might, indeed, be superficial—for example, one girl, a secretary, said, "They seem to know what they want a little better, but there is no reality behind this apparently greater maturity."

But generally it was thought to be substantive. A cutlery warehouse worker, himself married, said, "They are much more advanced for their age than we were—they look older and act
older, and they have bigger ideas." And a multiple stores sales superintendent commented, "Since I left, they're getting more mature—going out with boys earlier, dressing up earlier." Her point was endorsed by another girl, who said, "They all seem the same as everyone—even kids of twelve seem to be just like nineteen—and even twenty-year-olds—when you meet them at parties and so on." And a florist said that young people now "Seem to be more broad-minded, to have a wider outlook: and they are more adventurous." A clerk, too, subscribed to this view, saying that "They are growing up quicker, and are more self-confident than my generation used to be. We used to be shy and reserved, but young people are not like that now. They know a lot more about life than we did." The greater confidence of the younger generation was illustrated by one youth by reference to "going drinking"—"They are braver than we were, because they go into pubs at sixteen more often than we dared". The point was taken up by another respondent, who developed it—"They're a lot more mature than they've ever been before. I was boozing and dancing when I was fifteen. But the young ones do it now when they're thirteen. When they're eighteen they're married".

Whilst some respondents "explained" this accelerated maturity by reference to suggestions such as young people having more money nowadays, or less discipline, or better upbringing in terms of food or education, others thought the explanation lay in terms of the rapidity of social change—"Times are changing quickly, and
young people are moving with them”, said one youth: whilst another, less sanguine, said “The world is moving so quickly, and young people try hard to keep up. They’re bored by school and work, so they have to make their own fun in their leisure time.” What the latter respondent seemed to have in mind was that the established educational and occupational institutions were no longer relevant, in the eyes of young people, to the possibilities in life which modern technology and communications offered.

So much for those who spoke in favour—or defence—of the younger generation: they saw youths and girls as being essentially similar to themselves or with added knowledge, confidence and ability. Those who criticised tended to be more extreme in their comments. A major criticism was that young people are “cocky”, “cheeky”, and, “think a lot of themselves”—they “know all the answers, or think they do”. In the tone of some of these criticisms, as of others to be referred to below, there seemed often to be a note of resentment, of a two-fold character. Firstly, that the respondents had had to bow under to the discipline of work, or had not had the nerve to do otherwise—so why should today’s youngsters “get away with it”? And secondly that young people today have better opportunities—notably in education—yet do not appreciate them, but, on the contrary, appear not to care. There was in some respondents, too, the feeling that young people today were unjustly avoiding the problems and strifes of teenage years which they had had to endure—it was unfair.
Thus one respondent referred to the "precociousness" of young people and suggested that they "have it with jam on nowadays."

Another charge was that young people were over-concerned or confident about their own importance—and not sufficiently concerned about other people—"They don't care about people or things very much"; they are "irresponsible"—about money, work, loyalty, friendship. "They don't care about money", said one girl, "though they get enough of it". Another girl said that today's teenagers were "a disgrace"—she went on, "Look at the kids who hang around outside the Cathedral. They do nothing. They won't budge to let you pass on the pavement. They are untidy in the way they dress. They are just a menace." Another girl said, "They are too carefree—they come in at night too late. They take pep pills, and they smoke." A youth described teenagers as "idle layabouts". And there were complaints that young people did not take life seriously enough—"I don't think they're as responsible as people were in years before", said one youth—"Life is a game to them"; a girl echoed this view, saying that for young people nowadays life is "all for a laugh". They have "no thought for tomorrow"—"They don't seem to be really bothered about bettering themselves, and go for a job because of the money, not because they like it."

Even if allowance were made for the special problems of teenage years, these critical respondents argued, today's young people still cannot be excused—"It is only a few years since I was the same age, but we didn't go off like that" (the respondent had in mind hooliganism, exhibitionism and irresponsibility):
the younger generation was "definitely worse off than us at their age". One girl said, "They are worse, morally and with bad behaviour in general, than we were—they used to say that we were bad, but we were nothing like them!" There were expressions of what seemed genuine worry about the condition of the younger generation, and what its implications were for the rest of society—"I don't know where the world's going", said a shop assistant, "young people always seem to be fed-up, moaning and groaning: they are always discontented and nothing pleases them."

A student nurse said, "It makes me sick to see them just wandering around the town. They may be decent enough in some ways, I suppose, but they should be kept busier. It's not good for them to be the way they are." An apprentice fitter was of the same opinion—"I suppose we might have been like them in a way, but gradually they are going a bit too far. For me, the world's on the verge of a big shake-up." A comptometer operator was similarly troubled saying, "Too many of them behave as if they had got a grudge against the world—as if the world owed them a living." The younger generation seemed to be "in a right mess", "lost". A nurse commented that "They are wrong, somehow. We meet everything in the casualty ward: one day a girl with blonde beehive hair, thick make-up, high heels, tight skirt way above her knees, drunk was sent in. She was just fourteen, and still at school. This is typical. It baffles me." The fear that these respondents seemed to have was that the younger generation was laying up
trouble for itself in the future, and also, probably, for everyone else, too. Dress and appearance were taken as signs of irresponsibility, immodesty, and unconcern with the feelings of others—a clerk said, "I don't think much of them, youths with hair down their backs and roaming around the streets like Beatniks." They were as much subject to ridicule as to resentment—one respondent said, "My husband whistles at long-haired youths"—but they constituted a threat, nonetheless. Indeed, the behaviour of too many of them verged on the delinquent: a youth said, "They try to be really cocky, and are insolent to the police. It's a bit much when you can't take your parents and girl friend to the seaside without having a brick thrown at you." Their sexual morals, too, were subject to criticism—"They are too free about such things"; and "girls lead the boys on too much, nowadays."

Many of these criticisms are well known, of course, but they are normally associated with the older, more conservative sections of society: one youth's comment had a distinctly Blimpian flavour, for example—he said, "God help us if there's a war". The magisterial condemnation of young people was evident, too, in the suggested remedy for the juvenile threat—punish them. Thus, a nurse said, "They need a good hiding, most of them. Otherwise they're in for a big shock. I had a different outlook when I left school from what I have now. Later on they will realise what they're up against in life". Other respondents argued that the younger generation "needs disciplining, preferably with the rod",

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"a damned good hiding", and, "Some strong discipline". "More parental control" was also called for—"lack of parental control naturally affects lack of self-discipline—one thing stems from another". Young people "have too much money, and don't value the money enough"—"parents aren't strict enough, and teenagers are given too much freedom and therefore get out of hand—it will have to be watched." The school, as well as parents, was blamed in this respect—"I think they ought to give children at school a little more discipline. They don't seem to take much notice if they are rude or ill-mannered, as they did when I was at school, which is only five years ago." National Service was suggested by several respondents as a corrective—"It ought to be brought back, for the Army did a lot of good for some". The felt superiority of status of respondents, by virtue of their age—and especially those who were married—lay behind much of this condemnation: pretensions by teenagers, and apparent disregard by them for their elders were seen as resulting in an erosion of the respondents' own status. A few respondents felt secure enough to stand above this, however—or at least, to put a good face on it: thus one youth pointedly said that "they need a smack", to indicate that the younger generation were but children, to be chided by their elders and betters. It is important to remember that these were twenty-year-olds, speaking of youths and girls who were but two, three or four years their junior. How far these attitudes and appraisals are to be regarded as a response to a markedly changed
generation, and how far they are to be understood, rather, in terms of a rapid assimilation of young workers into adult society such that they soon assume attitudes of the older, perhaps authoritarian-orientated generation, is an issue to be taken up again below.

From the above description of respondents' attitudes towards and views upon the younger generation, and particular sections of it, such as the "Mods" and the "Rockers", certain conclusions may be drawn. The condemnation of the "younger generation" cut across all categories—I.Q. Grades, occupation, school attended and area lived in, and type of home background as indicated by size of family, selected education of relatives, and so on. Nonetheless, there were some signs that the more extremely critical respondents were the married ones, already settled down, and those who aspired to move up the social scale modestly: these respondents feared that young people's attitudes and behaviour would be destructive of the social order which was the basis of their own lives. When it came to "Mods" and "Rockers", there was fairly general condemnation amongst respondents—but even so the tendency was to dismiss them as extreme minorities, and as oddities, or people who were "going through a phase" and who would "soon grow up". But on the whole, respondents saw the younger generation as being very much in their own image, although some argued that there were now superior opportunities and that the better upbringing enjoyed by younger people was enabling them to take advantage of the new
chances open to them. The two main conclusions to emerge are, firstly, that these young workers predominantly saw themselves as established adults, separated from the younger generation: and this was so whether they were married, engaged or unattached. They were immersed in the adult order, and displayed a considerable conservatism of thought and a felt superiority of behaviour which mirrored the attitudes towards them of their parents but five previously. And the second main conclusion is that, by inference, the teenage years of these respondents cannot be understood by reference to a concept such as that of a "youth culture"—if such a culture there is, it would seem to have been evaded by these young workers. It is to a consideration of this argument that we now turn.

The Idea of a "Youth Culture", and its Relevance to the Present Study

The idea of a "youth culture" has been invoked so much in discussions of teenagers in recent years by sociologists and laymen alike, that it seems necessary in a study of young workers to devote some attention to a consideration of its utility, or otherwise, in the understanding of the attitudes and behaviour of youths and girls during the first years in employment. In this Section, therefore, I propose to sketch the predominant attributes of a
youth culture, or cultures, as postulated by sociologists, to summarise the arguments which have been propounded to explain the phenomenon—and to examine these in the light of the data available in regard to the present study.

The essential features of a youth culture, as formulated by Talcott Parsons, are as follows: "It involves a kind of esoteric culture sharply differentiated from that of adults rather than a stage of approximation to adult behaviour. Responsibility and a compulsive conformity coupled with a certain peculiar hedonism—the orientation of life to the goal of having a good time—seem to be its primary characteristics." Elsewhere, Parsons has suggested that "perhaps the best single point of reference for characterising the youth culture lies in its contrast with the dominant pattern of the adult male role. By contrast with the emphasis on responsibility in this role, the orientation of the youth culture is more or less specifically irresponsible.....Negatively, there is a strong tendency to repudiate interest in adult things and to feel a certain recalcitrance to the pressure of adult expectations and discipline." Parsons is statedly concerned with the United

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States of America. However, his analysis has been taken over by other students, who advocate its applicability to other societies. Kenniston, for example, suggests that "The beginnings of a youth culture are appearing in other highly industrialised countries, which suggests that this institution is characteristic of a high degree of industrialisation."\(^1\) Central to the idea of a youth culture, there is the involvement of young people with their peers—they break away, to a large extent, from their families and evolve values and norms of their own. In Eisenstadt's exposition, there has been in industrial societies "a growing discontinuity between the life of the children, whether in the family or the traditional school, and in the social world with its new and enlarged perspectives". In such circumstances, "youth groups develop"—and "youths' tendency to coalesce in such groups is rooted in the fact that participation in the family became insufficient for developing full identity or full social maturity, and that the roles learned in the family did not constitute an adequate basis for developing such identity and participation. In the youth groups the adolescent seeks some framework for the development and crystallisation of his identity, for the attainment of personal autonomy and for his effective transition into the adult world."\(^2\)

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\(^2\)S.N. Eisenstadt, "Archetypal Patterns of Youth" in (ed.) E. Erikson, The Challenge of Youth, op.cit., p.38
According to Eisenstadt, then, as societies become more industrialised and transformed by technology, so universalistic norms become dominant, and the family is no longer competent to act as the socialising agency for adult life. Its influence has to be supplemented by, or even replaced by, other agencies, which include schools and other formal institutions, such as youth associations, but also youth groups. The youth groups subscribe to, or are components of, a set of norms and values which may be termed a "youth culture".

There are many difficulties in applying this sort of analysis. There is a lack of clarity, for example, as to the ages of the members of the youth culture, and as to whether they are at school, or at work—or whether they may be recruited from both spheres. And there is little indication from the theorist with regard to the duration of participation in youth cultures. Further, whilst Parsons would seem to view the culture as some sort of aberration from adult values and norms, and as such scarcely a preparation for involvement in them, Eisenstadt appears to view the youth culture as intrinsic to the socialisation process in a complex industrial society. These points will be taken up again, but there is one major problem to be considered first, namely that of social class. Parsons' analysis refers particularly to middle class American youth—that this is so is implicit in his suggestion that a major characteristic of youth lies in the prominence of athletics which is "an avenue of
achievement and competition which stands in sharp contrast to
the primary standards of adult achievement in professional and
executive capacities.\textsuperscript{1}

It is a big leap from the American middle class to Sheffield's
working class. Eisenstadt has concerned himself with this sort
of issue. Within broad class categories, he argues, the character-
istics of the youth culture will remain essentially the same from
country to country—"While the organizational framework of the
group and the values of various upper and middle class youth may
differ from place to place, and from country to country, yet their
main values and orientations seem similar."\textsuperscript{2} However, Eisenstadt
recognises that there are different "patterns" of "youth groups"
among the lower classes. But his description of them is such that
they do not appear to constitute a youth culture in the sense
previously employed—as a distinctive set of norms and values
manifested in behaviour which is in marked contrast with that of
adults.\textsuperscript{3} On the contrary, lower class youth groups appear rather
to conform to the patterns set by their elders. As Eisenstadt
writes, "In many ways the pattern of behaviour prevalent in these
groups.....is to some extent a continuation of the pattern of
adult life within these sectors; or at least there is a stronger

\textsuperscript{1}"Age and Sex in the Social Structure of the United States", op.cit., p.92. (My emphasis).

\textsuperscript{2}From Generation to Generation, The Free Press, New York, 1956, p.94.

emphasis on some of the patterns of behaviour accepted in
the adult group, and not a distinctive opposition to it."\(^1\)

Sugarman has recently attempted a reconciliation of obviously
different modes of behaviour amongst young people of different
social backgrounds and from different societies by comparing
his own study of fourth-formers in four London secondary schools
with the studies of Coleman and Gordon of U.S. high school teen-
agers.\(^2\) Sugarman suggests from his study that "youth culture"
is linked with a "thorough-going alienation from school"; whilst
the studies of Gordon and of Coleman found, in Sugarman's words,
that "although the basic values of youth culture conflict with
those of the academic world, the institutional focus of youth
culture is nevertheless at high school."\(^3\) Sugarman suggests that
a reconciliation may be effected between these apparently contra-
dictory factors by reference to a distinction between "youth
culture" as a set of symbols, assumptions and standards" and a
"teenage social system as a group or groups of interacting teen-
agers who orient their behaviour by reference to the standards,
assumptions and symbols of youth culture." Sugarman then argues


\(^2\)James S. Coleman, \textit{The Adolescent Society}, The Free Press,
New York, 1961; C. Wayne Gordon, \textit{The Social System of the

\(^3\)Barry Sugarman, "Youth Culture, Academic Achievement and
Conformity", \textit{The British Journal of Sociology}, Vol.XVIII,
that the American studies were concerned with the teenage social system—and that the high school was particularly important as a base for this; whereas his own preoccupation in studying London school children was with a youth culture—and there are factors in British society (such as earlier school leaving age, fewer extra-curricula activities associated with the school than in the U.S.A.) which are conducive to the siting of the teenage system outwith the school, in club, coffee bar or street corner. The distinction between youth culture and teenage system seems worthwhile conceptually, and Sugarman argues that "comparisons between youth in contemporary Britain, and the U.S.A. should serve to throw some light on our theoretical problem, of how the relationship between young people's involvement in youth culture and their behaviour and attitudes is affected by the structure of the teenage social system."¹

The issue here being examined is whether there is evidence of a distinctive youth culture amongst young workers—or even amongst the school children whom Sugarman studied—which requires relating to the structure of the teenage social system (assuming that such can exist without necessary reference to a youth culture). It is not the concern here to assess the validity of the various American high school studies, although it is apposite to mention that Coleman's analysis has been challenged on the basis that it is founded on "Surrey questions that in effect create the social

world being analysed"—so that the study represents "an analysis of an entity that probably does not exist". This criticism, made by Peterson, derives from Coleman's method of asking questions about a stipulated "leading crowd" which may not exist, and indeed with reference to which Coleman himself states that "people cannot be clearly divided into leaders and non-leaders, popular heroes and non-heroes. Instead, leadership resides in many people, in varying degrees." As Peterson comments, "If the leading group is not really a model for more than an indeterminate, but probably small, proportion of the students, then a study that presumes to analyse the adolescent society by looking mainly at this model suffers from a fundamental inadequacy." ¹

Sugarman's enunciation of the characteristics of the teenage culture as it obtains amongst London school children proceeds from the argument that distinctive dress and adornment by teenagers is symbolic of their repudiation of adult values and authority in general. Sugarman argues that this repudiation "extends beyond matters of taste and fashion to a repudiation of other adult standards, so affecting the behaviour of the young over a wide area", and he goes on to suggest that "we may picture the teenager as being placed between the rival appeals of two cultures or sets of assumptions and standards: the youth culture and the official, middle class, adult culture represented by the

schools and, for some, by their parents too." But the two words "for some" seem to me to affect the whole basis of the argument. For if the majority of school children are from working class homes, a high proportion of which, judging from the present research and other studies documented above, repudiate the school and uphold norms and values that are at variance with it, then the "need" of "reason" for the development of a special youth culture in opposition to the school would seem to be reduced, or to disappear altogether. The youth culture, as viewed by Sugarman, would then seem to be restricted to what might be called deviant middle class youths and girls who reject both school and parental values. Such opposition as there is between working class children and their parents would be intelligible in terms of inter-generational conflict and/or as a by-product of adolescent psychological adjustment, without the need of the apparatus of a youth culture to institutionalise it. Yet Sugarman argues that youth culture is peculiarly associated with rebelliousness against school norms and a poor performance in school—"youth culture is in this sense the culture of the non-mobile working class, the downwardly-mobile and of those who cherish hopes of mobility along channels where the criteria of the school do not apply."¹ Now the respondents in the present study are, of course, predominantly non-mobile working class youths and girls. It is important to

stress, therefore, that neither as school-children nor as young workers did they display signs of participation in a youth culture wherein there were norms and values which made for an acute conflict with adult society. There were a few who admitted to flirtation with "Mods" or "Rocker" norms; there were examples of inter-generational strife; and the dress of some was idiosyncratic. But these do not add up to a repudiation of adult standards, if by that is meant something fundamental such as the standards upheld by their parents, neighbours and work mates. Whilst they might be concerned to do better than their parents, the whole tenor of the behaviour and attitudes of these young workers was, as we have seen, towards conformity with established patterns and, indeed an anticipation or hastening of involvement in the adult way of life, represented by marriage or plans for settling down. Respondents' appraisals of the "younger generation" support this conclusion in regard to conformity.

Sugarman uses as criteria of adherence to a youth culture a rejection by young people of the subordinate role which school seeks to impose, and a rejection, also, of the school's "deferred gratification" value. Whilst these may be pertinent to school children, they would seem not to be relevant to young workers, freed from the classroom and with a sense of independence from the rigid authority structure of school. They are aware, of course, with workers of all ages, that they are operating at work within another authority structure, but this is one in which there are
institutional checks and balances (notably trades unions and shop stewards) and which it is possible to step out of, if it is too oppressive, by leaving the particular job. And, as workers, young people are able to indulge in the spontaneous gratification and hedonism which school denied in the company of others who were of the same bent—or to elect, as many did, for the value of deferred gratification with reference to marriage and settling down in the pattern of the adults against whom the youth culture argument would suggest they are in revolt. In sum, I would maintain that Sugarman's analysis points less to the existence amongst young workers (or working class school children) of a youth culture in any strong sense of the term, invoking opposition by youths in a systematic and formulated way, than to adherence to a working class way of life as practised by their parents and elders, modified in certain respects—fashions in music, clothes, appearance—but in essentials of the same order. More generally, the present study suggests that there is not a youth culture obtaining amongst young workers in other than the weak sense of there being particular fashions in entertainment, dress and so on. Whatever the appropriateness of Parsons' analysis to the American teenager, there is no sharply differentiated culture, esoteric or otherwise, to be discerned—whether in opposition to the prevailing institutionalised norms in society or, as in Eisenstadt's interpretation, as a device whereby the adolescent may be channelled into full participation in the complex adult society.
That this is so is supported by the evidence not just of the present study but by various other research projects specifically concerned with this issue—all of which suggest that young people conform and are conservative rather than being revolutionary and radical—whether in the field of politics, sexual behaviour, or attitudes to elders.¹ Young workers have neither the imagination nor the stimulation (from school, involvement in politics or local affairs) to formulate an ideology in opposition to that or those already predominating in society, nor the means whereby to organise themselves if they had such an ideology.

There are two other aspects which require emphasis in regard to the present young workers. Firstly, the fact that there are significant differences by age within the teenage population—this was noted in the sections above dealing with friendships and with relationships with siblings. As Ganis has pointed out, of the American scene, "teenage is an adult tag; adolescents grade themselves by age. Older ones refuse to attend dances with the younger set, considering forced association with their juniors insulting."²


In the present study we have seen that there are distinctive modes of leisure activity associated with age, and with status in relation to members of the opposite sex, such that any conception of a youth culture would have to account for considerable variations in behaviour, norms and values within the teenage population of a given social class.

The second aspect relates to the nature of the involvement of young persons with their peers. This is a crucial dimension in youth culture arguments—the norms which are in opposition to parental and/or dominant institutionalised norms are sustained, and sanctions applied to conform, according to these analyses, by contact with peers. Thus it has been suggested that young people in industrial society are required to orientate themselves to a multiplicity of groups and that they experience a confusion of roles—and "a peer culture which can combine these roles and resolve conflicts has great attractions, and it is not surprising that many teenagers should show a passionate attachment to a

1Although Sugarman suggests that "presumably youth culture developed out of a teenage social system, (perhaps helped by commercial interests) but (that) now it is in existence a teenager may be orientated to the symbols, assumptions and standards of youth culture—without necessarily participating in any group of teenagers which is so orientated. One implication that follows from this is that involvement in youth culture may be a solitary, social phenomenon". This would seem to be a very weak sort of participation, however and scarcely indicative of a set of values strongly at variance with those obtaining amongst the persons with whom the isolated teenager does mix, namely (presumably) adult relations and fellow workers.
society of their contemporaries which can succeed in fulfilling this function, thus providing them with some sense of security and identity”. ¹ There are, of course, some large teenage gangs, but these are untypical—most youths (and it would seem almost without exception, girls) do not go about in gangs.² On the contrary, as with the present respondents, they tend to mix in small groups or in pairs—and soon many of them start courting and going about exclusively with the one member of the opposite sex. Gangs tend to be associated with delinquent, or at least deviant, groups, rather than constituting the normal response of young people to their position in society.

And since friends tend to be chosen from persons of a similar sort of background, as we have seen, the opportunities for innovation in respect of new “peer group” values, and the possibilities of the peer group providing special security and identity would seem to be remote. This is not to overlook the fact that leisure time, with a small group of friends, may be spent in company with a large number of other teenagers, at dance hall or pop concert, for example—but the opportunity afforded in such circumstances for the promulgation and preservation of a teenage oppositional ideology seems to be slight. And the fact of teenage


magazines and of television programmes directed at youth and projecting items of teenage culture does not significantly affect the case, either. The argument advanced above, that young workers select what is familiar from the mass media, rather than having new vistas opened up for them, is relevant here. It is clear that the peer group constitutes a "reference group" for the adolescent. Willmott found that the East London adolescent boys "identified" with other young people, and shared their values and attitudes; further, he found that within the peer group "the adolescent boy can enjoy a freedom and equality he cannot find at school, at work or inside his family." But this is not dependent upon—and cannot be said to be indicative of—a youth culture as such: it means little more than that young people like the company and share the interests of others of the same age.

It has been argued, thus far, that young workers, at least those in the present study, are not characterised by membership of a youth culture in anything other than a weak sense, which amounts to little more than a label for particular leisure interests and particular fashions in dress and appearance—that it has no grand scale ideology to confront that of the adult world. On the contrary, the emphasis is rather upon conformity to adult norms, values and behaviour and a speedy adoption of them. But since the term "youth culture" has been used, in various commentaries and studies,

1Adolescent Boys of East London, op. cit., pp.33-34.
and in a variety of ways, it is worth pursuing the matter further. And since much of the discussion of youth culture is posed in terms of an emerging phenomenon—something which is becoming more evident and more powerful in Britain, a convenient device will be to examine the idea by reference to the theories propounded for its initiation and development. I propose to do this briefly, and to comment in the light of the present research where appropriate.

Eisenstadt's argument—that youth culture is one element in the development by modern society of institutions which will assist or supercede the family in the socialising process which is necessary for the inculcation of universalistic values in young people—has already been referred to. Eisenstadt does not give prominence to the idea of a youth culture as such, least of all one that is in opposition to the older generation. He is more concerned with educational institutions and with youth groups, formal and informal; and his concern is with the processes by which societies' cultural and social traditions are transmitted from adults to young, rather than with the emendation or rejection of such values. Furthermore, as was noted, Eisenstadt's conclusion in regard to "lower class" youth groups was that they reflected a high degree of conformity with adult norms and values.

Parsons' analysis of the emergence of a teenage culture in the United States is in more psychological terms—"Our family system places the child in a position where his security depends on an intense emotional relationship to a few people, notably the mother;
but at the same time it requires him to break these ties to a large extent in setting up his own independent family, and to do so on the basis of emotional attraction to a marriage partner. Broadly speaking, the element of revolt and the assertion of independence from adults may be interpreted as a means of out young people's achieving this necessary emotional independence of the family of orientation. Since their earlier dependence is so real and intense, drastic measures, as it were, are psychologically necessary in order that they achieve emancipation. At the same time, the need for dependence is very great and cannot be satisfied within the family circle. This need therefore tends to be transformed to the group of their age peers, which thus acquires a compulsive intensity of solidarity.¹ Leaving aside the major issue as to the mechanics whereby such a device emerged in response to the presumed need, there would seem to be a lack of evidence as to "the compulsive intensity of solidarity" amongst the young—at least amongst the young workers presently under discussion: but Parsons' analysis also postulates a family type which is not universal—many of the respondents in this study were brought up in families which expected them to behave independently from a very early age—and most were brought up, too, in neighbourhoods which induced in them the expectation of marriage at an early age, and were encouraged by a wide range of influences—at school, church perhaps, in youth club,

¹The Social Structure of the Family", op.cit., p.196
street or home, to regard marriage as desirable. They were, as has been noted, eager to settle down, many of them. There were no apparent stresses, at least none of a major order, involved. But to the extent that there is substance to Parsons' analysis, it would seem to point to some "problems of adolescence", to be resolved on an individual or at least a family basis, or in the company of a few friends or through membership of a voluntary association, rather than being indicative of the need for, or the functioning of, a grand scale youth culture.

Another argument that has been advanced to explain the emergence of a youth culture is the need of young people for a handrail, as it were, to help them to accommodate to the accelerated pace of change in modern society—the argument seems to be that technological and accompanying changes are so rapid that the older generation is incapable of guiding the younger one, which must therefore construct its own scheme of values and norms. Gibbens and Ahrenfeld, for example, statedly in a mood of conjecture, suggest that "where the culture (that is, of the society as a whole) changes so rapidly that there are no longer recognised boundaries for teenage behaviour, young people will evolve their own norms."¹ This is a familiar sort of argument, of course: Margaret Mead long ago pointed to the wide range of "choices" opened up for the youth in modern society, which may confront him with a series of crises.² B.R. Wilson has suggested

¹They add, "and, consequently, become confused about their roles in society". cf. Cultural Factors in Delinquency, op. cit., p.68
²Coming of Age in Samoa, Mentor Books, New York, 1949
that a consequence of the postulated acceleration in the rate of change is a widening of the gap between the generations—"the generations are pulled apart in a mobile, rapidly changing society so that the young quickly grow apart from their families, and, especially in adolescence, reject identification with them and their values." ¹ Jean Floud, too, talks of the "chasm-like proportions" of the "social and spiritual gulf between the generations."² But the evidence for such extreme gaps, and even chasms, between the generations is hard to come by—in regard to the young workers studied in the present research project, whilst there were significant differences between certain of them and their parents, there was no indication of an all-embracing dichotomy between the generations. On the contrary, the ready assumption by youths and girls of the norms and values of their elders stressed the continuity of the social order rather than pointing to change in it. Arguments based upon rapidity of change seem to underestimate the strength of institutions which perpetuate "sameness"—institutions such as the family and the school, the Church and, indeed, elements of the mass media (newspapers and television especially) which give emphasis to traditional behaviour as well as to new

events and "trends". There is the valid point that improved and more extensive education may lead to gaps or discontinuities between the generations. The study by Jackson and Marsden of upwardly mobile children from working class homes, whose education had led to a rift between them and their parents in terms of norms, values and behaviour, is relevant here. But the experience of such people is untypical of the working class, the majority of whom do not have access to higher education. Nonetheless, Jessel has made the reasonable comment that "there remain certain differences between this young generation and previous ones. For one thing, whatever the horror stories of illiteracy at secondary schools, more people are better educated to a higher level than before. They have travelled more, and the ubiquity of television has ensured that they are better informed...about the world beyond their village or suburb." And whilst the young workers of the present study, and the many thousands like them, may not have participated to any notable extent in this new order, at least some of them saw the younger generation (youths and girls but three or four years younger than they) as benefitting from increased opportunities, educationally and otherwise, as noted above. But the extent of this likely change is a debatable point, and one on which

1 Education and the Working Class, op.cit.
2 Stephen Jessel, "Youth may not be a race apart", The Times, August 14th, 1967. I would repeat that it is easy to exaggerate the effects of television in broadening horizons.

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evidence is lacking. It suffices for the present purpose merely to repeat that notwithstanding the pace of change in regard to certain aspects of British society, much remains the same in the social backgrounds of the young workers under discussion, and the norms and values to which they subscribe are similar to or compatible with those of their elders. If some do aspire to "something better" than their parents, it tends to be of a modest nature, and essentially of the same order—to have a rather better job or house, to have somewhat more successful children.

Inconsistency in regard to their position in society has been suggested as another reason for the alleged involvement of young people in a culture of their own. Writing of the U.S.A., Kingsley Davis states that "in our society.....the adolescent finds an absence of definitely recognised consistent patterns of authority. Because of the compartmentalisation of culture he is defined at times as an adult, at other times as a child." J.B. May has echoed this analysis in regard to British society, writing that "the emotional instability and general turbulence which have long been associated with adolescence in our kind of society may very easily arise as a result of the indeterminate status of the adolescent rather than from innate constitutional causes. The so-called 'storminess' may be the outcome of social indeterminacy of role

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rather than inevitable psychological stress."¹ By implication or statedly, young people are presumed to react to this uncertainty by constructing for themselves a pattern of norms and values which is consistent for their purposes: usually it would seem, however, that the youth culture which is the outcome is of a less pervasive kind than that discussed above, having regard exclusively to leisure activities and the release, through "fun" of pent-up emotions. The mechanics of this process are never made clear, however. Thus, Littler, supporting Kingsley Davis¹ argument in the British context says that "for the British teenager, the position is much the same and for many young people there is no satisfactory lead given during these years of development. Instead, they are reduced to manufacturing their own 'teenage-culture'—a culture eagerly exploited by the enterprising businessman—to bridge the 'no-man's-land' of adolescence."² The use of the phrase "reduced to manufacturing" (a youth culture) is interesting because it reveals what seems to be a common attitude amongst commentators upon "youth culture" (or those who urge that it is a fact of modern society): namely, one of regret, or condemnation of young people because of disapproval of their activities, which are regarded as superficial, hedonistic, irresponsible (however excusable) and/or as a threat. Wilson, for example, urges that the youth culture, by its accentuation of

¹ J. E. Maya, The Young Pretenders, op. cit., p. 42
"living for the moment" and "living for kicks" and for excitement, is a threat to the moral order of society—his argument is that young people enjoy too much freedom in certain spheres, and his answer to the problem of inconsistency of roles is to make them consistent by imposing more authority upon the young, permitting them less freedom in regard to places of entertainment frequented, for example, or to the hire-purchase of motor vehicles.\textsuperscript{1} F. Musgrove draws the opposite conclusion, urging that young people are "ready" for admission to adult activities at a much earlier age than they are at present permitted to participate—the "youth problem" would be solved if young people were not segregated, if their period of formal education were reduced (thus allowing them to enter the world of work where adult values obtain) and if, more generally, adults would dispense with the myth which they have created of adolescence as a separate stage between childhood and adulthood.\textsuperscript{2}

But this is very much in the realm of speculation. To look at some of the facts which obtain in regard to the young workers of Sheffield, there was little indication of personal difficulties consequent upon a conflict of roles. It is true that the inability to enter a mortgage agreement before the age of twenty-one years

\textsuperscript{1} B.R. Wilson, "The Social Context of the Youth Problem", Thirteenth Charles Russell Memorial Lecture, London.

caused inconvenience; and there were, as has been seen, problems associated with age of marriage. But the respondents as a whole seemed unworried by such inconsistencies in their statuses as might be inferred as existing, and they seemed not to have been troubled significantly during their early years at work. None objected, for example, to the fact that they were not entitled to vote: many, indeed, emphasised their impatience with politicians and in no way felt deprived at not being able to vote for them. And if difficulties arising from inconsistencies in status were present, but undetected by the research, there were no signs of respondents having resorted to a youth culture, which certain commentators, as has been indicated, suggest as the appropriate response. ¹

Another argument that is put forward to account for the development of a youth culture is that it represents a claim by young people of equality with adults—"it repudiates the idea of youth being subordinate to adults and asserts, in effect, that teenagers are 'grown-up' in the sense that they are equal in status to adults, though different in kind." ² But this again suggests that the overriding categories in which young people view their position in

¹ A Gallup Poll conducted for The Sunday Telegraph in August, 1967, after the publication of the Latey Report on the 'Age of Majority' issued the previous month, showed that substantial minorities of teenagers were against the recommendations to reduce the voting age, the legal age for marriage without parental consent and mortgage and hire purchase legal ages, and many would not avail themselves of the new opportunities if they were afforded. cf. The Sunday Telegraph, 6 August, 1967.

² B. Sugarman, op.cit., p.154
society are those of youth on the one hand and their elders on the other—as if all elders were lumped together in one vast and undiscriminated mass, as if young people felt themselves in competition with them, and as if there were no other categories, such as those associated with school or work or entertainment personalities or sportsmen, some of which unite young people with their elders (as with support for the local football team, for example). An extension of the above argument is that young people are resentful of adults' rights—in regard to voting, age of marriage and so on. We have already seen, however, in the discussion of inconsistencies of status, that these are not sources of discontent: specifically in regard to marriage it is pertinent to draw attention in this context to the long engagements which many respondents proposed, and to the tendency of others to defer involvement with the opposite sex until they felt established in their jobs or otherwise "ready" to settle down: and whilst the majority of girls, and many youths, too, were already motivated towards settling down, this was in no spirit of jealousy of their elders, but rather represented an unobtrusive wish to emulate them.

It has been argued, too, that a youth culture is the outcome of teenagers' concern with "the state of the world", and represents a withdrawal from the "mess" that the older generation has made of things. This argument is put at various levels. Young people are rebelling against parents who quarrel, it is alleged, or more broadly against the family as such. Thus Edmund Leach asserts
that the conflict between young and old which he claims to discern is to be understood not in terms of the breakdown of the family (the weakening of traditional bonds, that is) but, by contrast, is to be regarded as a revulsion against family life, and "the closeness" of the family structure "with its narrow privacy and tawdry secrets." Presumably Dr. Leach arrived at his conclusion in regard to the family by means of introspection, since there is no research evidence to support his descriptions of it: and it may be noted that "the family structure" is in this argument held to be the same throughout British society, irrespective, seemingly, of religion, class or creed. Be that as it may, the respondents in the present study were far from rebelling against the tawdriness of family life: on the contrary, they were very much orientated to marriage and the setting up of their own families. (And whilst it might be argued that some young workers think in terms of "having a good time before settling down" and of "having a fling", this is scarcely to be regarded as indicative of a youth culture with a scheme of values of the same order but in opposition to the adult "culture": in any case, the "fling" is by reference to the accepted end of settling down in the fairly near future).

At another level, despair at the conflicts of adult life is held to relate to more general dissatisfaction with the values which obtain in modern society, and the contradictions between words

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and deeds; particularly there is a noticeable boredom with and repudiation of politics and politicians. The latter has been noted already and will be discussed in more detail below—but there is no evidence of a youth culture rising in consequence, and nor is it clear how the connection between the two is to be made. In any case, studies of political attitudes and behaviour suggest a similar boredom with politicians amongst large sectors of the population, especially the working class population. Furthermore, as Martin has said, we need not "attribute to youth any special faculty for seeing through adult pretensions and hypocrisies." Matza's theory of "delinquency and drift" is relevant to this argument, too. Matza argues that it is likely that children will have the know-how to institute a delinquent culture in opposition to that of their elders—nor indeed are they likely to have the inclination to establish one. The influences of institutions such as the family and the school are working in the direction of inculcating established cultural values, and, against these, young people have little influence. Matza argues that delinquents are delinquent only part of the time—most of the time, and in most areas of activity they conform to existing norms and values; and when they do come into conflict with the dominant code, they evade it rather than opposing it directly—by selecting trends already evident in the wider society (for example, the disregard of

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1David Martin, *A Sociology of English Religion*, op.cit., p.128
property rights of large firms, from which stealing is thought of, by extension, as fair game). The argument seems plausible in regard to delinquency, and apt, also, to the more general issue of the behaviour of young people who are in some sense disabused about the larger society.

It has been suggested, in recent years, that a youth culture has emerged in Britain as a response to the fact of teenage affluence, notably the affluence of young workers—which suggests that much of the content of the culture, or at least most of the participants, will be of working origin. The ground for such a culture, it is argued, is well prepared in that school has failed to induce interest or an awareness of the possibility of enjoyment in work or in the traditional leisure activities—as Elder puts it, "the seeming irrelevance of modern school for the life situations of many enrolled youths has left a void in their lives which has been filled in large measure by commercialised youth culture." Commercial interests have been attracted to the teenage market, which represents a hitherto unprecedented source of revenue, given the expenditure power of young people with high wages and low financial obligations. Musgrove has argued that this de-facto power of the teenager, notwithstanding formal deprivations of status, makes adults jealous of young people, and it is as a consequence of this that adults try to "keep down"

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2 "Life, Opportunity and Personality" op.cit., p.189.
young people "in their proper place." Two comments may be made here. The first is that, as has been indicated above, the amount of money available for expenditure by teenagers is easily exaggerated, when account is taken of payments for board, fares, insurance and so on; and many young workers in any case are keen to save money, at least by the time they reach their late teens. The second is that the irrelevance of the education of many secondary modern children is unlikely, as an outcome of the boredom which they endure, to act as a stimulus to a lively youth culture—rather is the imagination likely to be stultified so that the resultant youth culture would be of a superficial order, and would, indeed, have reference not to a whole way of life or to a special teenage ideology, but merely to a stereotype form of entertainment. And this, indeed, is what certain commentators appear to have in mind when they refer to "youth culture"—no more than the enjoyment (superficial or otherwise) by teenagers of a particular sort of "pop" music, dancing, and expression through clothes. But the content of this "pop" culture need not be superficial. Peter Worsley has condemned its dismissal as "just some frothy surface epiphenomenon", arguing that it represents a "main channel of communication between teenagers, an opportunity for them to find identity and to enjoy self-expression, which their

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1 Youth and the Social Order, op. cit.,
school experience, and the rigid, established social institutions generally, would deny them. Worsley sees something positive in pop culture, then, something which is a real and worthwhile human experience, rather than being synthetic and superficial. But Worsley recognises, too, that the commercial influence upon the content of the pop culture is strong—and he elsewhere poses the situation in terms of an "interfusing" in the young person of commercial values with the social values implicit in identifying with the culture of the peer group—"nothing is more striking than the way in which the very revolt of youth is so standardised. Deviance indeed, has its quite prescriptive uniform and regalia and fashion exercises quite as authoritative a sway over the beatnik as it does over the readers of *Vogue*. Hence the dictatorship of the Top Twenty reflects and responds to far deeper wants than could ever be artificially induced by the most ingenious or unscrupulous public relations teams. Yet the media do command very considerable power, and the values they purvey are importantly internalised: when the young audience says that they'll buy it 'because it'll be a hit' they are at once internalising commercial values (it will sell), and the social values of identification and solidarity with the culture of the peer-group: their friends will be playing it, dancing to it, and talking about it. The search for identity involves an interfusing of both milieux within the psyche. Paradoxically, the search for self-expression and freedom from the old restraints and circumscriptions of home and school involves
a new, dense commitment to the world of the peer-group and its culture, and a new susceptibility to the appeals of a new set of agencies, the mass media, which generate material consumption by manipulating 'free floating' need dispositions. So that whilst fierce independence of direct personal control is the aim and hallmark, there is less concern about the more real control, which is indirect and 'faceless'. Whether or not Worsley's analysis of the process of internalising these contradictory values is accepted, his point is important, that there are various factors interplaying, and commercial interests constitute one important element—while the search for enjoyment and involvement with peers is another. But one is left wondering, nonetheless, how the youth revolt (and associated youth culture) was introduced—what is the evidence for it, how widespread is it, and what is its nature? The analysis of leisure activities of the present respondents, despite the interest which it revealed in "pop music" and "pop groups" is scarcely suggestive of a motivation in young workers to break from the social order. And such statements as that of Leach that the teenager "is in revolt against the whole principle of a predetermined social order" do not stand up to scrutiny. It is only in the weaker sense of youth culture that the present respondents could be said to be "involved"—and then

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2 The Third Reith lecture, op.cit.
only tangentially and by no means universally. Indeed, the most satisfactory analysis of youth culture, at least as it relates to young workers, would seem to be that of Turner. Cotgrove has usefully summarised Turner's position as follows: "A youth culture is 'segmental and ritualistic' in character—it does not embrace a set of values and beliefs about all the major areas of life, but is primarily related to peer group activities. Moreover, its symbolic function as a means of expressing solidarity gives it a ritualistic flavour; it may be subscribed to without any inner conviction or internalization. It follows that youth culture does not necessarily involve the devaluation of academic or occupational achievement. In particular it does not necessarily eradicate differences in attitudes towards education and occupation derived from class backgrounds, and has less of an equalizing effect than might be supposed."  

The attempt has been made in the above discussion to separate some of the strands which are often confused in discussions of "youth culture", and to point to the varied definitions which, usually implicitly rather than explicitly, are applied to this term. The general conclusion that emerges is that, whilst certain of the notions advanced in regard to "youth culture" are helpful in throwing some light on the norms, values and behaviour of the young workers under discussion, in overall terms the concept is unhelpful: on the contrary it is often misleading and misconstrued.

Respondents were asked a series of questions on the theme of social class. The questions were in pursuance of the attempt to ascertain the young workers' perceptions of society and of their place in it, and to discern relationships between education and subsequent group affiliations, attitudes and ideologies.¹

The topic of class was introduced with the question, "Do you think that there is such a thing as social class?" The few who looked blank at the question were then prompted with the suggestion,

¹The "open-ended" approach was used in conformity with the general orientation of the present study, and with the recognition that there are considerable methodological problems involved—but such difficulties are inherent in the research process. And, in the present instance, the concern was less with the declared class label than with the meaning that it had for the respondents—meaning which was apparent or could be inferred from their explanations in connection with this and other questions. For a discussion of the methodological problems and matters of technique involved in research into class affiliation, see John H. Goldthorpe and David Lockwood, "Affluence and the British Class Structure", The Sociological Review, New Series, Vol.11, 1963, pp.133-163.
"for example, upper, middle, and working classes", and this prompt succeeded in orientating them to the theme. They were then asked which class they belonged to, which class they would like to belong to, whether all working men could be "lumped together" into one class, or how they could be divided, how one assesses which social class a person belongs to, whether they had friends or contacts in a class other than their own, and whether a person born into a working class community should try to move into another class. Finally they were asked which Party they would vote for in a General Election. The questions were arranged in the above order with the object of avoiding putting words and ideas into the respondents' heads, on topics about which most of them rarely talked and in regard to which the views of many were but vaguely formulated. This object was attained, so far as inferences can be made from the contents of the replies. In the ensuing analysis, a different sequence of topics is employed for ease of exposition.

Elizabeth Bott has drawn attention to the variability and fluidity of people's conceptions of class models, pointing out that the model which is employed is likely to vary in accordance with the context in which it is applied, and indicating, too, that an individual's model may accordingly embrace seemingly contradictory components. The replies of many of the respondents to the various questions showed some disparateness and disjunction,

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but nonetheless demonstrated what Bott has called "a strain of consistency and continuity". Five youths and 3 girls denied that there was such a thing as social class, others protested that there ought not to be, or need not be, and some said that whilst social class did exist, they did not subscribe to the values implicit in the maintenance of social class distinctions, personally—as one youth said, "there is class, but I don't believe in it, myself."

Contact With Members of Other Social Classes

Social interaction with members of other social classes was slight, with the majority of respondents. Those who did have more than slight contact normally had contact in consequence of their work—and, in situations in which their rôle was clearly distinguished from that of the member of the other (normally higher) social class—for example, the servant-customer context. There were some respondents, however, who entered employment in which their contact with members of a higher social class was on an equal footing—some office girls, hairdressers and nurses of working class background found themselves working alongside girls from middle class homes, for example. This led in some cases to shared leisure activities, and, it will be argued below, resulted
in a re-orientation of aspirations in accordance with the middle class norms and values which the working class girls came to assume. There were a few contacts through membership of youth organisations, such as the Boy Scouts and the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, furthermore. And several of the respondents from middle class backgrounds were in occupations in which they mixed constantly with people from a working class background.

The main point, however, is that, on the whole, work and leisure tended to consolidate intra-class relationships rather than breaking down barriers between the classes. The analysis above of marriage partners and friends of the opposite sex provides a concrete illustration of this point.

The overwhelming majority of respondents recognised the existence of social class. Its special strength in Britain (implicitly or explicitly by reference to what was deemed to be the situation in other countries, that is) was referred to by a few—for example, a student nurse, whose reaction to the question, "Do you think that there is such a thing as social class?" was, "In this country there is, definitely". As in other cases, there was evident in this girl's answer a protest at the inequality of opportunity from which she felt sure that she and her school fellows, work mates, neighbours and relations suffered. Whilst the nature of the inequality tended to be unformulated, it was strongly felt.

Social class was regarded by many respondents as a fact of life, however—something which is incontrovertible, and which manifests
itself in a variety of ways: as a housewife said, "you find it all over". Commonly, social class differences were reduced to two broad categories—"There's poor and there's rich"; "there's them that have and them that hasn't"; "there's those with money and those without it". The respondents saw themselves, with the vast body of workers, as belonging to the "poor", those without money, those who more generally were deprived of the opportunities which people with money were afforded. Whilst some protested and others were resentful, many saw social class as inevitable and to be accepted—"you've got to have different people, doing different jobs, so naturally some are going to get paid more than others". Indeed, in the minds of a substantial number of respondents there was a brand of the functionalist model of society, with the emphasis upon the different occupations which had to be filled and upon the different abilities of individuals, such that whilst some are competent to fill "higher level" jobs, others are suited only to the general run of jobs. Some put the emphasis on the former (society's needs) others on the latter (individual's abilities). Thus, one youth said that "social class definitely exists, it ought not to in a sense, but it's inevitable." His point was that the fact of social class may lead to some unfortunate consequences, in terms of extremes of wealth and poverty, but that the competitive element in man is such that nothing could be done about it. Whilst social differences would necessarily persist, some could see the possibility of an amendment of the criteria by which persons were assigned to...
particular classes, and a few urged the need for "reform" in this respect (though without having constructed proposals as to how the reform might be achieved—not having thought about this: there was in the remarks of some an implication that "They" could secure a change in the situation if they were so minded). Thus, one youth said, "Yes, there is class. But I think it is bad when it is based on material possessions. It would be good if it were based upon ability. Someone in a profession should be higher than the manual worker". The youth was himself an unskilled manual worker. There were advantages to be seen in the class system, then; the able person could be rewarded. Another youth argued that "those who have done well should be in a class of their own"—he was indicating his respect for effort and achievement, a respect which was fairly widespread amongst the respondents, who applauded social class differences provided they were earned rather than being conferred by wealth and "influence". Furthermore, the fact of class offered a "way out", or at least the hope of it—thus a machine operator said, "Yes, it's a good thing. I'd like to be up in social class". There was something better than the life which he led, that is—there was the possibility of getting out. If there were no social differences, if everybody were to live like him, life would be "hell". Another youth put the same point in a more positive way—"class can be a good thing, as it gives an aim in life to those who are struggling to move up".

Given as a datum that there will be, in society, differences in terms of occupation, ability, wealth and income, then, there is
an issue as to whether these differences should attract differential prestige—such was the way in which some respondents posed the issue. The answer tended to be in the affirmative: if the financial rewards were honestly earned by the individual, then he was entitled to enjoy them—and this meant leading a different style of life in terms of expenditure than that of the bulk of the workers. But there was a further point, namely that social classes, as institutions, were to be welcomed because they afforded the opportunity for persons of different wealth to live together in society without conflict. As a labourer put it, "Yes, I agree with it. It wouldn't work to mix people. You feel higher if you've got money." He favoured the "segregative" nature of social classes that is, arguing that "you couldn't expect anything but trouble" if you "did away with classes".

The immediate reaction of a substantial number of respondents when the topic of social class was introduced was to criticise the claim to superiority of persons—such as bosses and school teachers—who were in a different social class from them. Thus, a sheet metal worker said, "Yes, you get a lot of people looking down on you. They think they're better than you". The latter point was challenged by many respondents, who argued, as will be seen, that all people were equal in the fundamental sense of being human beings in a large and inexplicable universe. Such differences—in ability or possessions—as did exist were minute in comparison with the similarities between men. What irked
respondents was that the trivial differences were interpreted by "the superior class" as representing a difference in kind. One youth said that "there's them as thinks they're better than you, but they're not. Our Managing Director is one of them—he's a right loud mouth". The trouble was that, whilst respondents contested the asserted superiority, and considered that, in any case, it was all a matter of luck or of what chances you were given in life to "get on", the fact was that they "had to put up with it", without overtly complaining—the bosses after all, had the power to sack, and there wasn't much that an ordinary worker could do about it. When given the chance, however, young workers may "get their own back" to a small extent. An apprentice from a middle class home, whose father owned an engineering business said, "Yes, there is social class. I get it, a bit, at work: the other workers reckon I am "posh", because I intend to go into my father's firm. They try to get at me." The respondent's reaction was that whilst he thought no less of them because of their attitude towards him, the class difference between him and the other workers was of importance to them—they could not forget it.

Some respondents referred to the suggestion that social classes in Britain are undergoing change. Thus, one youth said that "you're all supposed to be equal nowadays, but the class system does exist". It is not easy to infer whence the respondents had got the idea that the social class system was under-
going change. It seemed to relate not to any debate about the system of stratification as such—as to whether there is a process of *embourgeoisement*, for example—although the mass media might have drawn the attention of some respondents to such issues. What the respondents had in mind mainly, however, was adjustments in standards of living consequent upon social welfare policies—at the time of the Research Interviews the build-up was taking place for the General Election, and much emphasis was being placed upon this in the press, and on radio and television. Reactions to the suggestion of change reflected the respondents' own home circumstances, and the nature of the neighbourhood in which they lived, and reflected also their contacts with people outwith the neighbourhood, at work or in leisure. Thus, youths and girls who lived in slum-like neighbourhoods or on housing estates, and who worked in large factories or local shops, tended to stress that there remained substantial class differences, whatever "people might say". But respondents who did not live in such neighbourhoods, or who worked outside of them, tended to say that there was substance in the argument. And so too, did respondents who rated themselves as middle class, (especially those who thought that they had "moved up"), as if to excuse themselves from any charge of arrogance or snobbery. A policeman, whose father was a mechanic and whose mother was a part-time shop assistant thus said that "there is not much class nowadays". A few respondents referred specifically to the impact of
mass media and the growth of a mass market, and to a general shifting of values in regard to social position.

A good example is that of a married respondent who had one child and lived in a privately owned house on a new housing estate. Her husband was a semi-skilled machine operator, and she had previously been a shop assistant. She said, "If you talk good, you are accepted more now. In any case, look at the Beatles—there are more people on T.V. who talk broad than people who talk like you (the Interviewer). And lots of university people (furthermore) are scruffily dressed. The working class used to be looked down upon." Her point was that it was no longer realistic to look down on them. The criteria of "bad" or "slovenly" speech and appearance could no longer be applied to one class rather than another: "success" was not necessarily associated with either "good" speech or smart appearance. This respondent's appraisal was largely affected by her wish to defend herself, as a person of working class origin living in a private house on a new estate, amongst people who were mostly of middle class origin—she was asserting that she was as good as they. Indeed, in another context she belied her appraisal of class by condemning the snobbery of her neighbours and she and her husband planned to move home soon because they could not afford payments on their present house. But she was, in addition, stating a viewpoint upon trends in society as she saw them—after all, she and her husband had managed to get a private house and had, thus far at least, managed to hold their own (albeit
with difficulty) in the new environment—it showed that there were no impenetrable barriers between the classes, and the success of people of working class background, such as the Beatles, clinched the argument.

Whilst some of those who referred to the alleged changes in social class tended to welcome the trend towards "classlessness", others saw the changes as dangerous. Thus, a secretary said that although there were still social classes, "the lower class is fading out. People in the slums are earning up to £20 a week." Her strongly held view was that certain people, by virtue of their lesser ability or "lower standards" (of cleanliness and in regard to thought for tomorrow) ought not to be so well rewarded (they're often better off than decent, hard-working people nowadays"). It was "not fair" that social class distinctions should be eroded in such circumstances—why should not "better" people be rewarded by prestige and a superior standard of living?

(Five youths referred specifically to coloured immigrants when questioned about social class. An apprentice steelworker, who lived in an area to which many Pakistanis and West Indians had moved in recent years, referred to "a lower class of people moving in—all these niggers". And a van driver said, "although I am not really against coloured people, I do think that the Ministry of Labour would not have the unemployment problem they have now if the coloured people were stopped altogether from working in Britain." Another youth said that there "certainly was class—
with all these darkies coming in." It is difficult to say precisely why coloured immigrants were referred to in response to a question on social class. The explanation seemed to be that there was a mixture of satisfaction and anguish. Satisfaction at finding someone whom they could regard as inferior, at last. (Much as privates in the army are able to accord status to themselves, by reference to "the wogs", the only people in their lives who they can claim to be beneath them). And anguish because this assigned lowliness of coloured immigrants appeared to be contradicted by facts—here were these people getting as good, if not better, homes, jobs and cars than local born, British people).

The view that whilst there is such a thing as social class, it "should be done away with" has been referred to already. The germ of the argument was, in most cases, that it was "bad", because it was to the disadvantage of the working class person. The plea was for "everyone to be treated the same", because "workers in Britain are underpaid and under-privileged": the working class should, indeed, be "catered for better than what they are at present". One youth said, "I would like to see working class people, also old age pensioners, getting a fair share of life", and another called for "more equality of pay as between occupations"—he argued that, for example, "the money that footballers get is ridiculous, compared with the £12 I get for 46 hours a week in the building trade."

One youth blamed the social class situation upon the educational system, saying, "It is very unfair at the moment, in
Britain, because, on an average, a boy or girl coming out from a middle class home stands a much better chance of going to grammar school and on to university than a working class pupil does. This relative sophistication was uncommon, however, and most of those who condemned the social class system attributed it to individual selfishness, ignorance, or to some other undesirable personal attribute. Thus a Woolworth's shop assistant said that "people should not look down on others. Somebody's got to do the dirty work, just the same as somebody's got to be the manager—you can't all be the same." It was argued that "everyone should be in the same class, and not think themselves better than anyone else—it is only some people who are just out for themselves who make it like that." A factory worker stated that "there's two or three classes—higher, middle and the really low class—but they all ought to be classed as one. The trouble is that some people at both ends don't act as if they were equals."

The basis of much criticism of social class was that it implied conflict, when what was needed "above all" in life was peace and harmony. It was felt that "if only" people would pull themselves together and put aside their selfishness, "it would be better for everyone"—"there's too much of it—everyone is the same: we'd all be better if we pulled together, instead of fighting all the time. I get sick of seeing it in the papers—employers and unions always at each other's throats. Why can't we all live together? There's no reason why there should be different classes."
Some respondents, whilst accepting that there was social class, stressed that they did not personally attach significance to it. It did not, they asserted, affect them. For "everybody's equal—no one person's better than another". "People with money just think themselves better". If they wish to delude themselves, let them. A labourer pointed to this delusory aspect with an implied superiority at being able to see through the pretence—"Social class is only what people make themselves out to be. People who have money might promote themselves and move out to Dore (a middle class suburb) thinking they were really 'it'. But they wouldn't be any different, really; we're all the same when it comes to the point." A mere belief for some, this was also a code of action for others—a shop assistant, for example, said, "Yes, there is class if you make it so. I don't and never have. I always treat everyone as equal to myself. I don't know if you (the Interviewer) have noticed, but I can talk to anyone—a social lady, sirs, well known people, the lot. I treat them all as equals. You get a lot of important people in our shop, and I get on with them all." This respondent carried over her experiences in the work situation to the non-work context, in which she had little or no contact with people other than working class—as the important thing, to her, however, was the principle—she regarded herself as neither superior nor inferior to "anyone else".

There were some respondents who, whilst recognising that there were social class differences, did not consider them to be important,
and were not inclined to bother themselves about them—"Yes, there are social classes, but I couldn't care less about it."

They felt no special deprivation; and they were not going to waste their time talking on something which involved thought—least of all were they prepared to affiliate themselves with any call for reforms or any association (e.g. Trade Union) which might require their co-operation and effort. There is class—but "so what?": all they wanted was a quiet life, to be left untroubled.

The 5 youths and 3 girls who denied that there was such a thing as social class fell into two main categories. Firstly there were those who disliked the idea of social class differences and who thought that by admitting to their existence they would be helping to perpetuate them—they spoke with some impatience, to the effect that merely by talking about social class one was distorting the true state of affairs. Thus a girl clerk said, "What does it matter? This question of class becomes very boring. There's far too much of this so-called class distinction in Britain today. Why can't people grow up and accept each other, they are, instead of splitting up into different groups and parties and unions?"

The second category consisted of respondents who, it would seem, did not wish to admit to the existence of social class because of the feeling that, if they did so, they would without question be assigned to the lowest class: for the sake of their own self-respect, therefore, they preferred to deny that there was such a thing as social class—to do so, they thought, would be to admit failure on their part.

- 874 -
"Signs" of Social Class

Respondents were asked, "How do you tell which social class a person belongs to?" Over two-fifths of both youths and girls (35/86 and 38/84 respectively) gave speech as a criterion; and one-quarter (23 youths and 21 girls) referred to dress and/or appearance. The only other criteria to be referred to by more than one or two respondents were type of house and/or area of residence (10 youths and 5 girls).

The question was posed in terms of the identification of the class membership of a particular individual if he were encountered, and was answered in such terms except by a small minority, who referred obliquely to aspects of their styles of life (for example, "you tell by their education" or "by their possessions") or to "objective" criteria such as occupation or income.

There was, as the above figures indicate, substantial agreement as to what were deemed to be the most obvious indices, namely, speech, dress and place of residence. Many argued, however, that it is difficult to tell—that "you can't tell by obvious things like dress or speech—you have to see someone in their social surroundings before you can decide on their class". With so much affluence "even a working class person can afford a decent suit" ("the average navvy can lay out £30 for a suit"). The point was that "appearances are misleading"—people can "put it on", furthermore. It was argued, however, that it was normally easy to pick out the
person who was imitating a superior class—"usually their dress or manner gives them away". Some respondents suggested that no one criterion sufficed—that class manifested itself through a combination of speech, dress, general appearance and demeanour.

**Speech.** A nurse said, "you can tell a person's class the minute they open their mouth and speak—they may have a beautiful dress, but when they start to speak!!" Apart from intonation ("not necessarily what they say, but how they say it"), content of talk was referred to—"the way they talk and the things they talk about." The "better" speech of the middle class was applauded by some respondents—for example, an office girl said, "they talk correctly—I wish I was like that", and an apprentice said, "some people seem to talk better than the ordinary working man." Negative virtues as well as positive were referred to—an assistant in a grocer's shop with a middle class and professional clientele remarked that "the upper class talk without swearing, and are a good set of people". But there was derision as well as praise for the speech of the middle class—a shorthand typist said that she had a friend from a middle class family who "talks very, you know..." She meant that there was an element of pretentiousness and of "airs and graces" in the friend's speech, which was to be contrasted with the no-nonsense, down-to-earth working class speech. Youths who referred to speech as a mark of middle class affiliation were inclined to ridicule men who "talk posh in
a high-pitched voice"—"they sound like a lot of queers". But there was a corrective from one steelworker who said, "You can't tell by speech"—for "the gaffers at the works come around fucking and swearing"; they were, that is, just the same as the workers in that respect.

The suggestion that speech was but one outward manifestation of more profound differences between the classes was made by several respondents. One girl, for example, said that you can distinguish middle class from working class by "the way they talk and their views—they don't think the same way." She had in mind differences of norms and values rather than the more subtle analyses of language and social background such as that of Bernstein, though possibly she did have in mind the latter sort of difference, albeit in a very naive and unformulated way. For when respondents said of middle class people, "They don't think the same as us" they seemed to have in mind the mechanism of thought as well as its content.

Dress. This was regarded as an important index of class by one-quarter of both youths and girls. A typist said, "you can tell by the way they dress—you can see the difference between a woman dressed in a smart suit and one wearing a tatty headscarf around her rollers." A nurse suggested that "the upper class

\^Up.cit.
either have not very fashionable clothes of top quality, or the
top fashions themselves." Even when superficially similar in
dress, the differences between the classes can be discerned, it
was argued: one girl said that she considered that she could tell
the difference between clothes bought in C & A, and those from the
more expensive shops. But some respondents were doubtful about
dress as an index of social class. A clerk, for example, said that
"some people have plenty of money but dress shabbily". And fashion
sense, it was suggested, was not necessarily associated with social
class—a laundry girl said, "you can't tell from the way they
dress. A woman who shops at Walsh's (a "high class" departmental
stores) for a dress is no better than one who shops at C & A's.
She thinks she is, because she's got more money—but she may not
dress as well as some women with less money."

"Manners, Demeanour, Attitudes and Possessions. A variety of "signs"
were suggested, many of them associated with wealth. For some,
the display of wealth was a sign of the "upper classes", by which
was meant all those who were not working class. Thus, one youth
said that "you tell by their speech and dress, and by the amount
of money they flash about". Upper class people were said, also, to
be "always bragging—'I've got this', 'I've got that'." By con-
trast, care over money was taken as an index of the upper class by
another respondent, who said, "them what are money misers are upper
class." These apparently contradictory points can in fact be
reconciled. The argument is that working class people do not have a lot of money to "flash about", but what they do have, they spend generously in the pub, on friends and on relations. By contrast, upper class people are thought to have much more money, to boast about it, and to spend conspicuously—but they tend to keep it to themselves and are miserly in regard to tips, for example. Such was the argument of these and other respondents.

The possession of a car was held to be a sign of social class. However, respondents found it necessary, at a time when many working class back-streets are filled with cars, to qualify their suggestion by saying, "a big car", or an "expensive" car. (If friends and parents, or some respondents, had their own cars, they were, usually, second-hand models, and small; and, for many respondents, their friends and families, there was no question of having a car—their present and likely future income would not stand it. Those who did possess cars had, also, to service them themselves, and invariably had to give up cigarettes, drinking or girl friends in order to keep up the Hire Purchase payments).

Another "sign" of social class suggested was that in regard to drinking habits—the "Upper classes drink shorts in a pub, the ordinary working man drinks beer" (this is a more noticeable difference in England than in Scotland). Furthermore, "the average worker has a good time when he goes out" while "a higher class person won't muck in—he will have one whisky and soda and make it last an hour, while a working man will have five or six beers.
in that time." A comptometer operator considered that "you can
tell by the way they walk—most young lads walk about at work as
if it were too much trouble to pick their feet off the floor: but
one lad from a good (that is, middle class) home walks around so
that you would think he was a Director"; the way of walking encaps¬
sulated, it would seem, an attitude towards work—of acceptance,
grudging and reluctant, on the one hand, and on the other of
keenness, ambition and determination to succeed. Another girl
made the same comment, saying that, "the way they walk tells you—
upright, and not slouching, as if they owned the place": the hands
were suggested as a "sign" of class by several respondents—the
working men's hands being coloured and calloused with dirt. And
the face was similarly referred to—"you can tell what kind of
job they are in by their face". Whether or not a person got dirty
at work was an indication—"most working class people get dirty
at work—but you don't find many middle class people who do."
Indeed, a grocery shop assistant was somewhat exasperated that
"the upper class do everything without getting dirty"—"even dirty
jobs"!

The way in which persons behaved in company was also suggested
as an index of social class—in the working class, you are
"accepted as men, and made to feel welcome: working class people
are more sociable, whilst, by contrast the snobs will sit apart
and look down on you" (e.g. in a public house). No one index was
sufficient, in the view of many respondents—there is a combination
of factors, which they referred to in such terms as "the way they go about things" and "their manner—the way they present themselves". One youth gave a detailed example, which he suggested was indicative of a difference in "attitude to life" as between working class and middle class people. A steelworker, he was out for the day at the seaside with his girl friend (an office girl), her girl friend, and the girl's boy friend. The respondent and the other youth went for a wash. The respondent stripped to the waist, but the other youth only turned back his collar and cuffs—he did not have a "works wash".

Such were the ways suggested for distinguishing between members of different social classes. It is important to emphasise, however, that most respondents were reluctant to suggest one index, such as speech, or dress. They did not, for the most part, have direct contact with members of other classes, save in the work situation, and on occasions when they had contact with officials such as Youth Employment Officers, or with specialists such as doctors. Their reluctance to state any one index of class was less a matter of lack of contact and opportunity of observation, however, than an indication of their recognition that there are various facets to class and that in toto they represented a different style of life which was difficult to convey in words—examples and illustrations were
all that was possible. It was because of this complexity that "shame" could so easily be picked out. To adopt middle class dress or a middle class voice does not suffice—for other working class facets of poise, bearing, and manner "soon give you away". Though respondents found it difficult to expound the "signs" of class they were nonetheless real to them: they indicated differences between them as young workers, and the upper classes. And whilst most welcomed the "obvious" differences between themselves and the "snobs" and the "prigs", some, as we will see, were moved to emulate the upper classes in speech, dress, and, if possible, in manner, bearing and attitude.

Social Class Membership

In response to the question, "Which social class do you belong to?" replies were given as shown in Table 100.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claimed Social Class Membership</th>
<th>Youths</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working (including &quot;Lower&quot;)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denied existence of class</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response, and &quot;don't know&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>86</strong></td>
<td><strong>84</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several of those who are classified as "Other" referred to themselves in terms which suggested an affiliation to the working class. For example, an apprentice steel worker who said that he thought that there were two classes, "the haves and the have-nots", said that he belonged to the latter. And several did not feel able to assign themselves to the crude categories of "middle" or "working"; they drew distinctions too finely for that. Thus a secretary who was engaged to a 'bus conductor, who was the daughter of a skilled steel worker and who lived in a council house—by "objective" criteria a clearly "working class"—said, "I belong somewhere between working and middle". She felt that she could not reasonably claim to be the latter, but she did not want to be thought of as the former. She thought of the "working class" as being the "low" people—people who "didn't care about appearances at all, and let themselves go to pieces, and who drink and swear". Thus, too, a despatch clerk, whose father was a skilled machine operator and whose fiancé was a motor mechanic, said, "I'm not middle, but a little upper from lower." Those who said that they did not know to which class they belonged felt a similar reluctance to "brand" themselves—a Comptometer Operator, whose father was a semi-skilled worker and who lived in a council house said, for example, "I don't really know. I am not high class, and definitely not very low, though I am not a big-head." This concern to dissociate themselves from the "lower working class" led to certain respondents claiming to belong to the middle class. A shorthand typist,
married to a graduate teacher—both she and her husband were from working class homes—rather grandly said that "We belong to the great new class of technocrats." It was difficult to infer precisely what she meant, but the emphasis should probably be on the "new" rather than the "technocrats"—she and her husband were acquiring numerous new articles, ornaments and pieces of furniture for their home, and seemed consciously and deliberately to be striving towards being different from their parents. Two other respondents assigned themselves to "the younger generation". One of them, a laboratory assistant, said, "I belong to the younger generation—the under twenty-fives: the old class barriers are fast disappearing." The other youth, a van driver, was more circumspect: whilst he affiliated himself to "the modern generation"—people who, irrespective of home background, wear similar clothes and enjoy similar leisure activities—he saw himself as something of a crusader: for he met with rebuffs from the old established class order—"The old barriers can still be seen, especially in 'better class' hotels, where I've been ignored by other people. But I don't believe in distinctions—if I've got money in my pocket and can speak reasonably well, then I think I'm on equal terms with anybody."

Reference has already been made to the respondents who denied the existence of social classes. They were consistent when asked about their own class affiliation, saying, for example, "I don't belong to any class. I just try to be ordinary", and "I think
you should always regard people as individual personalities, and
never lump them together." Somewhat irritably, one youth said,
"I've told you, I don't believe in social classes—I don't belong
to any class." And a steel worker argued that he could assume
the characteristics of persons alleged to be in other classes if
he so wished—"I can talk posh when I want to"—and that dis¬
tinctions were therefore superficial and to be ignored: it was
pointless, to his mind, to call himself middle class, working
class, or anything else.

Tables 101 and 102 analyse the respondents in terms of level of
their occupation, and Table 103 in terms of their parents' occu¬
pations.

TABLE 101
CLASS ASSIGNMENT AND LEVEL OF SKILL—YOUTHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Semi-</th>
<th>Un-</th>
<th>Non-</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apprentices</td>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working class</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuted idea of class</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By virtue of their own occupations, only two youths who assigned
themselves to the middle class—both non-manual workers—could be
said to be in accord with "objective" criteria as employed by socio¬
logists: with girls' occupations, the position is more obscure,
TABLE 102

CLASS ASSIGNMENT AND LEVEL OF OCCUPATION—GIRLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>'A'</th>
<th>'B'</th>
<th>'C'</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working class</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuted idea of class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

but it could be argued that the 13 girls in Category 'A' who called themselves middle class were "justified" if reference to their own occupation alone were made—though it is to be noted that almost as many girls in Category 'A' employment assigned themselves to the working class, as did, by implication, some of those who are classified as "Other". In fact, as will be suggested below, the respondent's own occupation was in most cases not, or at least not alone, the basis of self-assignment to the middle class. As regards parental occupation, it is seen that 13 of the respondents who assigned themselves to the middle class were the children of non-

TABLE 103

CLAIMED MIDDLE CLASS MEMBERSHIP AND PARENTS' OCCUPATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Youths State-Middle class</th>
<th>Girls State-Middle class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-manual</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
manual workers, and that most of the remainder had fathers who were skilled workers.

The tables suggest discrepancies, then, as between claimed social class, own occupation and father's occupation—discrepancies, that is, with reference to the categorisation normally applied, whereby manual workers and their children are regarded as being working class. How are these discrepancies to be accounted for? There were some respondents who appropriately placed themselves in the middle class, having reference to parents' occupation, their general home background (type and area of house, etc.) and/or their own occupation—as one such respondent said, "I'm middle class, I imagine—I'd be rather lost without this background, and I wouldn't know where I belonged." This category accounted for 8 youths and 8 girls. There were, secondly, respondents who were aspiring to "rise" modestly, from their working class background—and some of these, who were married, had given tangible expression to this aspiration through house purchase. In regard to these, it could be said that they were, arguably, realistic in assigning themselves to the middle class rather than the working class: 2 youths and 4 married girls were in this category. These respondents identified themselves with the middle class—or, at least regarded themselves as having broken from the working class, or as being in the process of doing so. There were, also, one girl who had married into the middle class and 3 others who anticipated doing so (they were engaged to persons in middle class
occupations). Finally there was the important category of 15 youths and 7 girls who termed themselves as middle class mainly in order to differentiate or dissociate themselves from the "common", "lower" element of the working class—working class, to them, meant "rough" people whose standards in regard to cleanliness, manners, bringing up of children and morality they deplored and repudiated.1

There were a few respondents who by virtue of their own occupation or that of their husband, or their type and place of residence, could reasonably have assigned themselves to the middle class, but who called themselves working class—this was because they made reference primarily to their social origin, to their parents' occupations, the neighbourhoods in which they were brought up, and the schools which they attended. But the bulk of the 45 youths and 35 girls who described themselves as working class were, of course, clearly that by reference to any of the objective criteria normally applied. The manner in which respondents stated their class affiliations was revealing of interesting differences in attitude, however. Most stated in a matter-of-fact way that they were working class. But some felt the need to expatiate—a girl progress clerk, for example, said "I'm the bottom class—working. A managing director wouldn't ask me to his house for cocktails—he would invite someone on his own level." This

was a matter of realism: she had no illusions, no pretensions, no wish to claim that she was "something that I'm not". Rather different was the reaction of certain other respondents who inclined to be remorseful—a van driver from a dirty, untidy home, for example, said "I'm working class—we've (that is, his family) got nothing to brag about". There were those who were defiant, too—thus a butcher said, "I'm working—but working class people are not really bothered about that sort of thing: it's only the high-ups who waste their time worrying about what class they are in." And a shorthand typist said, I'm working class, and I'm not ashamed to say so." Some respondents, whilst wishing, as one of them put it, "to be quite honest", were at pains to point out that, working class though they may be, they were superior working class (with a good steady job) and that they were not to be discounted, or written off as worthless ("I'm working class but I've got a few ideas of my own"), or that they had plans and hopes for their children to do better—"We're working class in speech and approach, but we've ambitions for our two children and will do all we can to help them succeed in life."

There were no clear-cut relationships between stated class affiliation and views on raising the school-leaving age and aspirations for children's education (and nor were relationships with voting behaviour straightforward, as will be seen). There are two main explanations for this. The first has to do with the crudity of the categories—so that the category of persons who would like
their children to go to selective secondary schools, or to remain at school beyond the age of fifteen, for example, includes working class respondents who "quite like the idea", and think it would be "nice" but would do nothing about it, working class respondents who would encourage their children to pursue their education with a view to getting a good, steady but working class job, and middle class (self-assigned) respondents who, aspiring to a higher position in the social hierarchy for themselves, hoped that their children would consolidate and improve upon their upward move. Furthermore, the "middle class" category in fact includes, as we have seen, a substantial element of persons who were dissociating themselves from the lower working class rather than affiliating themselves with the middle class proper. The second explanation is that whilst there are considerable variations to be noted as between respondents, in regard to their attitudes, interests, and experiences, the fact is that most are similar in certain broad respects—notably social background, education, and sector of the occupational structure in which they were engaged. What they had in common was, often, more important than the apparent differences between them.

"Which Class Would you Like to Belong To?"

After they had stated the class to which they belonged, respondents were asked, "Which class would you like to belong to?" Most of them said that they wished to "stay as we are". There was in-
formation on this question for only 73 youths and 70 girls. 26 of the youths and 14 girls said that they would like to belong to a higher social class. Of these 10 youths and 8 girls were self-assigned middle class, but half of them were in fact working class respondents who called themselves middle class in order to differentiate themselves from the lower working class. These said that they would like to rise "a little" in the social scale—mainly to put themselves beyond all doubt that they were not of the same order as the "roughs". The remaining self-assigned middle class respondents were aspiring to consolidate the upward mobility they had already enjoyed, or were ambitious to rise substantially in the social scale, above the level of their parents. Many of the 14 youths and 12 girls who were self-assigned working class and who said that they wanted to rise in the social scale, in fact had in mind not a move from the working class to the middle class, but an upward move within the working class, to what some referred to as "upper working class" and others described in terms of greater security, or prospects, or a higher wage. It is important to note, too, that whilst some of the respondents did think in terms of a possible upward move, others were merely remarking how nice it would be if they were able to benefit from the presumed advantages appertaining to a higher class—they would like to belong to the middle class because such people have big cars and lots of money and nice homes: this was a very different
matter from having the intention, hope or expectation of ever in fact attaining the middle class. Thus, reasons for preferring to belong to a higher class included the wish for material benefits as distinct from prestige—a shorthand typist said, "I'd like to move up, if possible—but I'm not worried about the class, only the standard of living." Concern not to become "snobbish" was expressed by other respondents—a youth said, "I should like to experience what I consider to be middle class life," but he warned that, "it can bring a lot of pretensions into life and make it much more difficult." Ease and comfort, and the freedom from fear of discomfort were referred to, also: a despatch clerk said, "It would be nice to be comfortably off, and not have to worry about money." A labourer said that he would like to be a member of the upper class (meaning non-working class) because, "If you're upper, you don't need better chances than other people—it's all laid on for you": his point was that for a person from his background to get on, you needed luck: the upper class person was guaranteed success. And a few respondents engaged in flights of fancy—one girl for example, saying, "I would like to be a snob and have loads of money." There was, however, some circumspectness.

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1 A Postal Respondent wrote that he would like to belong to "Royalty", because of the good life they lead; he underlined the seriousness of his reply: he would have liked the "life of luxury"—and his reply to the question as posed was genuine—by adding, "Dear Sir, I have not filled your chart in for a farce—these are my honest personal views to your questions".
evident in several respondents who, whilst seeing advantages in the material benefits associated with membership of a higher social class, were concerned to maintain their present family and neighbourhood ties—for example one girl said, "I would like to be middle class and have more money and do more things—on the other hand, I've always been working class, and that's what I'm used to." And an apprentice said, "Yes, I sometimes do wish I was a bit higher, like the people who seem to have everything and can go anywhere. But I like to save for the things I want, and to work for them." He would like, that is, to work his way up.

The concern of several respondents was not with material benefits. A secretary from a working class home said that "The middle class are self-confident, and I would like to be like that." And the working class mother of two small children said, "It would be nice to be middle class—for I'd like the kiddies to talk nice."

Finally, several youths echoed the sentiment of a semiskilled machine operator, who said, "It would be nice to be in the upper class—I'd like to be one of those heavy drivers (that is, bosses, like slave drivers) and it would be nice not to have to do any work." The tone of many of these comments substantiates the point made above, that, for many, these were not aspirations (those with aspirations to rise are considered in more detail elsewhere) but, rather, observations about the delight which would be shown if the benefits of membership of a higher
class were, somehow, to be conferred, as it were, out of the blue.

Those who stated that they would prefer to remain in their present class included respondents in the self-assigned middle class category who were satisfied with their progress and/or prospects, and with their standard of living. Those who affiliated themselves to the working class revealed a variety of outlooks. Some rejected the idea of any change in their situation which could be avoided—as a warehouse packer put it, "I want to stay just as I am now." It was not that he was positively satisfied, but rather that he could cope with his present undemanding life (including his job) and was frightened that he would not be able to deal with any changes in his circumstances. There were similar replies from other respondents. And one argued that he didn't think he could "alter" in his ways and that he did not, therefore, wish to try. A shop assistant, too, argued that she was properly placed in the working class—she had no pretensions, and claimed no special abilities or qualities which might justify her aspiring to a higher class, that is, and she was in any case satisfied as she was. Several respondents made a point of their unconcern about other social classes—indicating that they felt no jealousy, no wish to emulate, and no sense of deprivation. It was suggested, too, that attempts to rise in the social scale were doomed to failure, and likely to lead to unhappiness—"I've seen people trying to rise socially, people from the pre-fabs round about here, and I'm not taken by them—they just pile up trouble and
debts for themselves." Embarrassment when in the company of "upper class" people—when having gone into a saloon bar by mistake, thinking it was the public bar, for example—led some respondents to the view that they were "best off" in the class into which they had been born: "I want to stay put" said one, "or else I wouldn't know how to act."

The positive merits of working class life were also referred to—a progress clerk stated that "this class is more friendly than the higher up classes, who are all competing with one another". And a bottle labeller said, "I want to be in the one I'm in—the one where folks say 'hello', and ask how you're doing"—and she added, "I like them as they come, rough and ready, like you and me". There was the question of what you are used to, and the question of loyalty, too. A labourer said, "I'm content, I'll stick with my own mates. I know a lot of people living in Dore, but they're not for me—they do different things from what I do. I'd rather knock about with my mates."

And what, respondents asked, is so great about the middle class? "They're all snobs, and I can't stand snobbery"; furthermore, "higher up, friendships are not real, but artificial." A typist, saying that she was alright as she was, added that she would find middle class life "dead boring"—she seemed to have in mind a picture of mannered visits and stilted dinner parties, something, at any rate, different from the "mateyness" of the life she knew.
Several respondents indicated that they would not be averse to having more money—but that they had no interest in the trappings of middle class life associated with more money—"I'm happy as I am, working class like my parents; but I could always do with more money, of course."

Such were the reactions of individuals in regard to themselves. They were also questioned on the general principle, "Do you think it is right that a person born in a working class community should try to move out into another social class?" 14/73 youths for whom information is available, and 10/70 girls, said that they thought that a person should try to rise to another social class. Of these, two youths and one girl were self-assigned middle class, and "objectively" were in this class. They tended to stress the duty of a person to try to improve himself, with some hint of the implication that the working class should cast off their sloth. The remaining 21 respondents regarded themselves as working class, and were objectively of that class. They, too, referred to the importance of a person trying to "better" himself, and argued, also, that since the opportunity was there the working class person ought to avail himself of it—there was no excuse for not doing so, and if the attempt were not made to rise, the condemnation of the working class as being lazy and lacking in initiative was
All of these respondents were, in fact, themselves striving, through their jobs, through plans for a home and family, or plans for their children, to improve themselves. There was recognition amongst those who thought it right for a working class person to try to move up, that effort was required: "You need gumption, but you ought to try." It was a matter of individual pride to do so—for "people are branded by their class, and they should try to get out of the rut", if they "want to make a go of life." Amongst difficulties mentioned was that of overcoming one's background to the satisfaction of employers—a girl referred to her own case, when applying for a job as a solicitor's clerk—the employer questioned her closely about her father's occupation, her school and her neighbourhood, and seemed very sceptical—although he did in fact offer her the job. And obstacles were to be expected in regard to acceptance by people in the higher class—"it's not easy, because it depends on whether they will let you in," said an apprentice painter from a working class home. Whilst a nurse from a middle class

1There was some ambiguity in the question with regard to the word "right", which some respondents interpreted in terms of a positive duty and others in terms of "not wrong". This does not seem to have affected responses detrimentally. The 24 respondents who thought it definitely right to try to move up regarded it as a "duty" to do so.

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home said, "Definitely, if they can make themselves better, then
good luck to them. They may find it difficult. The higher class
don't want to accept them at first, but if the person has deter-
mination he will gradually be accepted. Indeed, he will become
like them in the end. You just have to have determination to do
it."

There was a streak of puritanism in the comments of several of
these respondents—that the person should work hard and earn
what he gets. So that a labourer said, "a man ought to do his
best, to work hard and earn more for his wife and kids." And a
machine operator said, "Yes, they should try to work right up, and
be successful—not just by winning the pools (although there are
three of us here trying to win them, mind you)". He was drawing the
distinction between the ideal, or principle, and the practice.
And there were traces, too, of class loyalty, and the belief that
it was important to beware of the temptations that befall members
of a higher class—a shop assistant thus said, "They should
try to better themselves, but if they are successful they should
not look down on, and ignore, old friends"; and several others
referred to the dangers of "snobbery" and "selfishness". "They
should remember what they used to be", it was urged—for it "can
change people completely". Not only might the upwardly mobile
person be reduced in character, but his friends and relations
might suffer through loss of affection, interest or, even, material
help—"some of them break right away from their families, just

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leave them." Although there was this real danger, it was not
insurmountable—a girl referred to a friend who worked in the
same office, and whose husband "used to be just a lorry driver":
"Now he has his own contracting business, but they're still friends,
it hasn't made any difference to them, or altered them at all."

One respondent who thought that a working class person should
try to rise to another class was unconcerned with principles of
loyalty, friendship or any such sentiment. A 'bus conductor, his
view was that "if he can make it, good luck to him": if, that is,
a person managed to "get out of this lot"—the life of the working
class—it was the sensible thing to do, and it would be foolish
to be constrained by the thought of what other people might feel.
The chances of succeeding were slight enough, without adding self-
imposed complications.

Many of the assumed attractions of the higher class way of life
have been stated or hinted at in the quotations from the respond¬
dents. They comprised a higher material standard of living, in-
cluding security, a "better" home in a "nicer" district, a "nicer"
set of friends, and "better opportunities for the children". On
the negative side, it was important to escape from the trials and
exigencies of working class living conditions—housing, type of
work, quarrelling neighbours, perhaps, and from the general air of
unsuccess, of being failures, "at the bottom of the heap", and in
a "rut". And although the dangers and difficulties were known to
most, there was implicit in many of the replies, too, the notion
that the working class way of life is in important respects, material and otherwise, inferior, and that membership of a higher class implies a superior way of life not just in terms of possessions, but in terms of satisfaction and happiness—in every way: it was something of a package deal.

The bulk of the remaining respondents for whom information is available on this topic—all except 8 of the 59 youths and 5 of the 55 girls—were of the view, with a greater or lesser extent of interest and involvement, that it was "up to the individual", who was entitled to try to move up to another class if he so wished, although there was no compulsion upon him to do so; indeed, some respondents took the view that it was rather odd for a person to do so, and could be regarded as in some degree treacherous to the working class.

A girl clerk, living in a council house, said, "I don't blame people for bettering themselves if they can—after all, working class life is not easy, and if people can do themselves a bit of good, it's understandable." Another girl, from a middle class home, said "I wouldn't say it was wrong"—her mood was that she would not feel threatened by the incursion and that there was, in any case, justice in the sharing of privileges with those who show themselves to be worthy.

There was scepticism as to the likelihood of success, but a feeling that, for those who were that way disposed, it was "worth a try"—many respondents were careful to point out that they...
"wouldn't want it" themselves. They did not relish the thought of putting in so much effort, striving to get on when the chances of failure were high, and when the end-product, if successful, would be to "mix with snobs". It seemed an odd sort of ambition, but "there's no accounting for tastes."

The emphasis of others was more akin to that of the working class residents of the council housing estate of Dagenham, described by Willmott—people who "get on" are "not so much to be envied as to be congratulated." Again there were warnings, however. Aspirants might carry goodwill in their efforts, but this would be dissipated if they forgot their origins or if they presumed superiority. "I don't mind, so long as they don't forget their parents and friends, who put them on their way", said one youth, and another commented, "It's O.K. in general, I suppose, but I don't hold with all this hypocrisy and pretence." And it was stressed that "It is not good to go above your parents and feel ashamed of them". Whilst it may be that there have been more instances in the past decade or two, in Britain, of children who have been upwardly mobile "cutting themselves off" from their parents, other relations and friends, this is not to be viewed as a new phenomenon. Indeed, from the remarks of many respondents

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it would seem to be so long established as almost to amount to folklore. It did not appear to them as a new danger, but as an established fact—that people who "rise out of their class" tend to betray their relatives and friends by no longer mixing with them, by appearing to feel awkward in their company, by ceasing, even, to visit elderly parents, and perhaps by contributing less financially to the family than others who could less easily afford it. That was the nature of the betrayal, and respondents were inclined to attribute it in part to a weakness of moral fibre in the individual, or to an over-concern with personal ambition, partly to the insinuatory influence of the higher class, which eroded principles long-held to be basic, in the working class—principles of responsibility to parents, especially, and of not putting on "airs" which represent a claim to superiority.

Several respondents put the emphasis upon encouraging children to rise in the social scale—one married girl, for example, said "the children should be helped to get better jobs than their fathers". The point was, as it seemed to such respondents, that the working class man or woman has little hope of rising—if they ever did have the chance, they lost it when they went to the school which they attended, or when they entered the employment which they had taken up. Or, if they still had the opportunity, they were too fixed in their ways, or too lazy maybe, to take the opportunity of it—it would mean a long and single-handed struggle. On the other hand, there was the opportunity, or at least a chance, for
children, if encouraged, to do better, and it was therein that the parents' duty lay.

The caution of several respondents arose primarily not from doubts as to the principle, but as to the chances of success and the likelihood of disappointment, even if aspirations were on the face of it satisfied. A sheet metal worker, for example, said, "You might end up as a Manager or a Director, but it may not make you any happier." Too many people, he thought, were chasing chimeras. Indeed, a person might find himself worse off than before he started his upward move—life at the top may prove difficult and different from what it seems from below. A comptometer operator expressed this view, saying, "You can try, but you want to be careful, because it often leads to tears and frustration. You can't get what you want as easily as you think, and the people higher up take no notice of you."

A few respondents acceded reluctantly to the idea that a working class person should try to rise to the middle class—one, for example, saying, "I suppose so, but it seems a bit disloyal". And several reacted more strongly and in rather different vein, with an attitude of "good riddance"—a welder thus said, "If he thinks he can better himself, let him—he might as well go". Be it on his own head, that is—if a person wishes to cast aside worthwhile down-to-earth working class values and comradeship, in exchange for the vapid superficiality of middle class life, where men aren't men, so be it: he alone will have the regrets.

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Eight youths and 5 girls were definitely opposed to the principle that a working class person should try to move into a higher class. Their attitudes have been foreshadowed in many of the comments quoted above of respondents who felt that, whilst an individual was entitled to try to move up if he so wished, there was an undertone of disloyalty, folly and futility in the attempt. A factory worker, for example, commented that she "disliked crawlers"—anyone who "went over to the bosses side": a working class person ought not to do that. Duty and good sense combined to say "No"—as a labourer said, "You should stick with your own class, your friends and your mates." What was there to be ashamed of in being working class, anyhow?—"Why should he try to move out, if he does a good day's work and earns his living?" Does not that confer sufficient moral worth? And there were no necessary advantages to be gained: you can make enough money, if that is what you want, in the working class, without changing to alien ways—"I've known people who have made a lot of money and are still the same—they still live in the same house, in fact": you don't have to subscribe to all this middle class outward show—it can be avoided. It was safer, too, not to attempt to move up in the social scale—for a rebuff, or the likelihood of one, was then avoided, and the opportunity was not presented to the "snobs" for them to practice their supposed superiority—"You can do what you want in your own class—no one can show you up there. I used to feel awkward in my old firm where
everyone else talked posh" (a cutler, he previously worked for a small, family firm). It is best to recognise the fact of difference and keep away from the danger of offence or indignity. A labourer argued that "if you're born working class, the higher ones will only try to push you back down", and a motor mechanic said that the working class person had not got, and could not acquire, the skills required of members of a higher class, remarking, "he'll only come a cropper". The detrimental effects upon character of upward mobility from the working class were also referred to. A welder gave an example of a university student interviewed on television who found himself unable to talk (have conversation with) working class people any more. The respondent found this reprehensible, and argued that the fact was that the student no longer wanted to talk to "ordinary" people.

The argument of other respondents was that a person should not waste his time trying to move up because the attempt was doomed to failure—"Take next door, for instance. She has married above herself, and puts it on—you find people out who do that". They "only make themselves look ridiculous": for "though you can try to disguise it, people tell what class you come from." As a machine operator put it, "It's impossible. I don't think you can move up—you're always the same class." It was not the impossibility but the chanceiness that weighed with one youth, an apprentice mechanic. He had met another youth, whose girl friend travelled all over Britain—"doing jobs for daddy"—in an E-type Jaguar.
When they met, the respondent found that he had "nothing in common with her". He was "bored stiff, and annoyed"—and "maybe a little jealous on account of the E-type". But the fact was that "whilst some folks are high class and you would never know it, others are just unbearable." In his view, working class people would do better not to attempt to rise to the middle class at all, than to rise and find themselves mixing with people such as the E-type girl.

The Nature of the Working Class

After respondents had stated the class to which they thought that they belonged, and the one which they would like to belong to, the question was raised as to whether there were divisions or categories to be discerned within the working class. The questions asked were, "Some people say that you can't lump all workers together in one class—what do you think? How would you divide them?" (that is, if they would do so). There were positive replies from 71 youths and 58 girls (more girls than youths declared that they could not understand the question or "did not know enough about it". A few respondents, seized upon the ambiguity in the question to observe that lots of people from all classes were "workers" (e.g. "the Prime Minister's a worker", and "even millionaires work"), but Interviewers then followed instructions to direct their attention to "working class workers". Approximately one-
quarter of the respondents giving positive replies thought that the working class was homogeneous; a few were equivocal, but almost three-quarters of both youths and girls thought that there were important distinctions to be made within the working class—some, of course, had said as much, unprompted, in reply to earlier questions on social class, whilst we have seen that for others "middle class" in effect meant "upper" or "superior"—or not lower—working class.

The substantial minority who thought that one could not make distinctions within the working class applied a variety of criteria as, indeed, did those who considered that there were important differences within the class. There was the argument that all workers constitute an "interest" group in something approximating a Marxist sense—they were in the same position in regard to the market (or the bosses, or "the high ups" or "Them")—"We're all in one class—all workers earn money, and they are all liable to get the sack if the boss feels like it." And differences of skill do not add up to much—"If you're a working man, you're a grafter no matter whether you are an apprentice or a labourer"; they "all work on the shop floor". Furthermore, "you shouldn't hold it against a man just because he's unskilled: he probably works just as hard as a skilled man". There might be some case for arguing that foremen are "higher"—but on inspection this does not make much sense, for "everyone knows that someone's got to give the orders, and the foreman's not much different from the workers."
In terms of non-work factors, too, the conclusion was the same—all workers have had a similar ("lousy", as one youth would have it) education; they live in similar houses, and they have the same range of leisure interests and activities. In terms of appearance, too, the similarity holds—"When labourers are walking out after work, you can't tell them from anyone else." One should not, then, be deluded by apparent differences—these are of a minor order—a 'bus conductor pointed out that "though transport workers and steal workers lead different lives in some ways", they are "all even really.". The real "break" is between workers and bosses—and "the division comes higher up": it is a difference between "ordinary wages" and "really big wages"—no working men get the latter ("except possibly miners" one youth said).

A few respondents allowed that it was arguable that clerical workers constituted a distinct set: but this did not stand up, in their view—they "may wear white shirts instead of blue overalls, but what difference does that make?": and "they might think they've got more brains—but they wouldn't even have a job at all if it wasn't for people like me who do the really hard work". Their asserted superiority denied, clerical workers were accordingly classified as being "ordinary workers, like everyone else." The class structure was clear-cut, so far as several of these respondents were concerned—there is the working class to which they and
the mass of other people belong, and the other one (upper) or two (middle and upper) classes. All working (that is, mainly manual) men were in the working class. The suggestion that further divisions could be made was a matter of exasperation for one youth, at least, who thought that the essentials of the situation were clear enough. He said, "I can't see the point of dividing the workers up. After all, there are already three class divisions. If you make any more divisions, you're going to have everyone running around with a flipping label on their front." The weight of opinion amongst the respondents, however, was that there were clear differences to be discerned within the working class. Most respondents thought of two "sub-classes", and some had clear-cut criteria—"the lower working class swear", one youth said, critically. And indeed there was a good deal of castigation of, and dissociation from, the lower working class, who were seen as morally worthless. They were alleged to "blue all their money on drink", and to "bet frequently, in order to get more money to drink": the latter were in contrast with the "ordinary, decent working class" who "don't drink—or at least don't drink too much, and try to make an honest living". Lower working class people were also declared to be lazy and dirty, and it was said that they "won't even work when the opportunity arises". A semi-skilled worker advocated that "the rough 'una should be put with the rough 'una"—distinguished, that is, as a category and not left to taint the picture of the true working man. Several respondents, employing
all or some of the above criteria, argued that there were three classes within the working class. An apprentice steel worker said that there were (a) "those who get on with the job" (b) "those who are unemployed and not caring about it" and (c) you do get the odd one or two who are really working class but who have no kids, have saved hard to buy a house, or live on an estate, and who reckon they're better than you." A similar scheme was suggested by a builder, who said that within the working class there were three classes, upper, middle and lower— as regards the latter, "some people are really low, the sort who go to the pub every night, and things like that, and leave their children outside the pub". A nurse subscribed to this appraisal, saying, "there are (a) upper working class who have money and intelligence", (b) "the middle working class who have good sense, and are honest, hardworking people", and (c) "the lower working class, who live (that is, live for the moment) but make money by graft and by wangling round things. They skive along."

Whilst the "really low class" were derided by most as lacking in moral fibre, a few respondents put the emphasis upon poverty, which "makes life very difficult for them, especially for the wives and kids." Level of skill (e.g. labourer or skilled man) was the criterion by several respondents, and some, too, said that foremen

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1 Many respondents thought that council estate dwellers were superior to persons living in rented terraced houses—the point is pursued below.

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were a category on their own—"not as high as the bosses, but higher than ordinary workers." It was clear that the assessment did not have reference merely to the work situation, but to a way of life and/or attitudes towards others in society which were thought to be derived from position in the authority structure at work. A married respondent, now a housewife, said that there were three different classes of girls, factory, shop, and hairdresser or office. When she had been a shop assistant, she "considered herself above factory workers."

Another important criterion suggested was income—"A working bloke in the pits earns about £2,000 a year—as much as a junior executive. Obviously he's different from a warehouse worker like me, on £10 a week. Money tends to mean class nowadays." One youth related income to stage in the domestic cycle and family size, saying that "a young couple with a family to keep finds it a struggle", whereas "elderly couples in good jobs should have plenty of money": he envisaged the likelihood or possibility of movement between the two classes of "well off" and "poor" within the working class.

The criterion of whether a person was potentially socially mobile was applied by several respondents, too. Thus it was said that "you could divide the working class into those at the top who have a chance of making the next class, and those at the bottom who haven't ability and probably wouldn't want to move up". An apprentice joiner was of the view that if one put aside "elderly people who
have had a rough past and are not in a position to get out" (by a "rough past" he meant the depression and the general lack of opportunity for manual workers in past years), then there were two classes of younger people—those "who have the chance to get out but aren't bothered and don't know any better" and those who, like himself, "get on, and try to get out". By "getting out" he meant getting out of the shabby district in which he lived, but also getting out of the working class—which essentially consisted, as he saw it, of the uncaring mass, and of those aspiring to something better. The same emphasis was made by a painter/decorator, who said, "they can't all be lumped together—some will always try to do better for themselves, by fair means or foul, and some just don't bother, and even turn their new council houses and flats into slums."

Further distinctions suggested were between workers with "clean" jobs (office workers, some skilled men) and those with dirty jobs (road sweepers, mechanics). But usually there were associated with these crude indices other attributes, whether of ability ("some are clever, the others are oafs") qualifications ("some have had to study hard, and know their jobs") or attitudes to work ("some just don't care"). There was then, a basic notion, explicit in some respondents, implied and often but vague in others, that the working class contained within it sub-classes which had distinctive styles of life: the differences were hard to pin down, and there were inconsistencies. The criteria used by respondents varied, as we have seen, some referring to the work setting, others to area and
type of house, some to income, others to attitudes and aspirations. But although the way in which they described the differences varied, there was a good deal of agreement as to the substance of the situation.

One particular point that comes out strongly may be mentioned here, although it has been stressed already and will be taken up again later. Namely, the strength of feeling with regard to differences within the working class—such that some respondents were very concerned indeed to dissociate themselves from the lower working class. In terms of skill, general ability, moral attitudes and behaviour, these respondents regarded themselves as superior to the "roughs". They had no particular interest in rising to the middle class—that way of life was of a different order, and largely outwith their knowledge, experience or concern. But they were intent not to fall below their present level, into the lower working class, and they were anxious to maintain their distinctiveness from them.

This discussion of respondents' views on social class will be taken up again below in the context of images of society and of social stratification. But it is convenient, first, to analyse the political attitudes and involvement of the young workers, and that it is to this we now turn.
CHAPTER XVIII
SOCIAL CLASS AND POLITICAL AFFILIATION

The General Election of 1964 was pending when the Research Interviews were held, and although the precise date of the Election had not at that time been announced, it was known that it would be held, for constitutional reasons, within the next year or so. The Election was, indeed, very much in the news, on radio and television, and in the newspapers, which gave a considerable amount of space to comment and to the analysis of the frequent public opinion polls.

Following the questions on social class, respondents were asked, "Would you mind telling me which Party you would vote for in the General Election?"—it was known, of course that respondents were not yet eligible to vote because of their age, and that even if the Election did not occur until the following year, most of them would not be able to vote because of the time lag associated with the listing of names on the Electoral Roll. It was for this reason that the word "would" rather than "will" was used,
and respondents who pointed out that they were not entitled to
vote were expressly asked to state such preference as they had.
The replies to the questions are shown in Table 104. The immediate

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YOUTHS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would Vote Labour</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Other&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Not Vote</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>86</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

points to note are, firstly, that support for the Labour Party is
very pronounced, approaching one-half of both youths and girls
indicating that they would vote for that party. And, secondly,
that there is nonetheless substantial support for the Conservative
Party. A third point is that a high proportion of respondents said
that they definitely would not vote or were undecided about whether
to do so, and, if they did decide to vote, were uncertain about
which party they would support. (The Postal Survey showed a similar
profile of voting intentions, though with even more emphatic support
for the Conservative Party, doubtless associated with the biased
nature of the response noted elsewhere. Out of a total of 235 youths
and 208 girls the results were as follows: Labour, 120 youths and
95 girls; Conservative, 56 youths and 44 girls; Liberal, 11 youths
and 14 girls; Communist 3 youths and 3 girls; Would not vote,
14 youths and 5 girls; Undecided, 14 youths and 24 girls. There was no response from 17 youths and 23 girls). An analysis in terms of occupation is made in Table 105 for youths and Table 106 for girls.

**TABLE 105**

**VOTING PREFERENCES AND OCCUPATIONS—YOUTHS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would Vote Labour</th>
<th>Semi-Skilled</th>
<th>Un-Skilled</th>
<th>Non-Manual</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Other&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Not Vote</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is seen that there is strong support for Labour amongst skilled, unskilled and semi-skilled workers. The non-manual workers, apart from one who was undecided, supported the Conservative Party—in two cases this was associated with a middle class home background, and in the other two cases seemed primarily to be the outcome of anticipatory socialisation to the middle class to which they aspired, combined with the respondents' belief that their non-manual occupations made them different from the ordinary working man. These points are further explored below. None of the unskilled workers supported the Conservative Party, and only 2 apprentices did so. Of special interest is the high proportion of apprentices who said either that they would not vote, or that they were undecided—over one-third (11/29). Several of them were
thoughtful about the matter, and had a serious concern as to how they should vote. With regard to girls, again support for the

**TABLE 106**

**VOTING PREFERENCES AND OCCUPATIONS—GIRLS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'A'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Vote Labour</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Other&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Not Vote</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Labour Party is emphatic in all types of employment. There is pronounced support for the Conservative Party amongst Category 'A' girls, however, associated with anticipatory (or hopeful) socialisation towards the middle class in some cases, and in others associated with a middle class home background. Again, high proportions in each type of employment said that they would not vote, or that they were undecided whether to, or which party to support if they did vote.

Studies of voting behaviour and public opinion polls suggest that young people in their late teenage years and early twenties tend to be the section of the adult population least interested in politics or, at any rate, in voting for the established political parties. They have few domestic responsibilities, are relatively prosperous, and in a sense have less of a stake in political decisions (apart, possibly, from the married ones). The high
proportion of respondents who would not vote or who were undecided whether to do so, or which Party to vote for, lends support to this conclusion, although, as will be seen, some of those who were undecided were by no means uninterested. Those who were undecided or who said that they would not vote were of varying occupational categories, although apprentices were particularly prominent, as has been noted. In terms of self-assigned class, a rather higher proportion of working class respondents than middle class said that they would not vote, or that they were undecided.

Would Not Vote

Nine youths and 4 girls were quite definite that they would not vote. They gave a variety of reasons. A laundry girl, for example, said that she was "just not interested in that sort of thing" and "didn't understand it." There was, too, a refusal to give support to politicians who, as a category, were regarded with suspicion, distaste or derision—"I wouldn't support any of them—they're all stupid", said an apprentice. This repudiation and distrust of politicians has already been remarked upon in the consideration of

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1 One matter which has received less attention than it deserves from students of political sociology, and psophologists, is the reason for the normally very high turn-out at General Elections in Britain, in the face of a known widespread lack of interest in "politics" and antipathy towards politicians. An analysis along the lines of the analysis of the Coronation by E. Shils and M. Young might be fruitful. cf. "The Meaning of the Coronation", The Sociological Review, Vol.1, December, 1953.
respondents' reactions to political broadcasts on television: it was pervasive also amongst many of those who were undecided whether to vote, and was evident, too, as a reservation in the minds of some whose party affiliation was clearly stated. The belief was strong and widespread that as far as politicians go, "one is as bad as the other." A warehouseman thus replied, "I wouldn't vote. They're all bad. I might have voted Labour, but not now that Spain has broken all those contracts because she fears that a Labour Government will get in." He was worried, that is, about the prospect of unemployment under a Labour Government—that was a matter for concern; but the Conservatives "probably wouldn't do any better". It was an "out-of-the-frying-pan-into-the-fire" business in politics, and the only form of protest was to abstain: this, the respondent knew, was not very effective, but at least it enabled a person to retain some dignity and honesty with himself. A housewife, likewise, said that she "had not got much faith in any of them," and an apprentice painter/decorator observed that "none of them are worth voting for". Some disappointment and disillusion was evident—as in a motor mechanic who said, "they're all the same—nothing but promises. They all want a big reshuffle."¹

One other strain implicit in several respondents' stated reasons for not voting was that this was one of the few things in life where they could please themselves entirely. At work they were

¹A sailor thought that he was not entitled to vote, explaining "the Services don't vote unless there's a tie in the ballot".
bossed about, as they had been at school: at home there were few major decisions unaffected by the stringency of the domestic purse. Here was one area in which a man could stand up, as it were, and speak for himself—by doing nothing: that was what the respondents thought of politicians and all their talk about building a better Britain—better for whom?

Undecided

Eighteen youths and 20 girls were undecided whether to vote and/or which Party they would support if they did vote. The fact that respondents were not yet entitled to vote probably helped to inflate these numbers, but from their comments it is plain that in most cases this was by no means the major factor. The disdain apparent in the remarks of many who had definitely decided not to vote was echoed, as has been indicated, in many of those who were undecided. An apprentice engineer, for example, said, "I wouldn't like to say just now. Things may be different when the time comes along, but, to tell you the truth, I'm not much impressed by any of them. A shorthand typist said "they all say they'll do great things, but never do—I wonder whether it's worth voting for any of them"; and a joiner said, "they're all a lot of rubbish—I don't know, but I probably wouldn't miss anything to go to vote". He would not accord it priority over other matters, that is, such as leisure activities or jobs about the house. There was a widespread feeling that politicians were "only in it for their own benefit", 

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"for what they can get out of it": and that they are "loud-mouthed" and "self-important". "When they get in, all they do is look after Number One" (that is, themselves), it was alleged—"All political parties are out to line their own pockets". And what was there to choose between the Parties anyhow? "At one time I thought Conservative," a shop assistant said, "but I don't know now—they both seem as bad as each other." A steel worker said, "If Labour came into the open a bit more—for example, explained exactly what they meant by nationalisation—I might vote for them. Or I might vote for the Conservatives, except that they haven't fulfilled their promises." And what troubled some respondents was doubt as to whether any political action could change the fundamental facts of their own position—there always will have to be workers, always will have to "some with and some without", whatever politicians say. So why accede to self-delusion by voting for them?

Several of the respondents who were undecided explained that they had never given it a thought before—though they presumed that they would do so at some stage. Others said that they "did not know enough about it"—this was, indeed, a rider added to the comments of a large number of respondents and many of those who did declare a party affiliation made the point that they were not very well versed in matters of politics and, indeed, not particularly interested. One-third of the undecided youths (6/18) but a much smaller proportion of the girls (3/20) could be said to be "thoughtfully undecided"—these were, indeed, more thoughtful about the
matter than many of those who were decided about which party to support. They wanted to "read more about the subject", or were concerned to weigh the issues carefully—"Labour gives equal chance. Their education plans are good. But I don't like nationalisation. I'm not really sure, but I'd probably vote Labour, if anything." An apprentice draughtsman said, "I'm not very well up in politics, though I'm beginning to take an interest. Tory, possibly, on what I know now, but by the time I have the vote, I think I should know more about Labour. They're not really much different, so far as I can see—except their values and nationalisation." In practice, that is, there was not much to choose between them. An apprentice engineer said, "I keep swaying between the two. Perhaps I think too much about it, because I think I've got everything worked out, and then it all falls to pieces again. The Daily Express maddens me, when I read it." And a nurse from a middle class home commented, "I'm not sure. I would not vote Liberal or Labour, and Conservative ideas are mixed up at present. They are like cat and dog, squabbling over little things. Basically I'm a Conservative, but you must look at things from all practical sides."

Lack of interest was also mentioned ("it all bores me to death"). But there was a recognition that, when it came to the point, a decision would be made—"I'll put my cross somewhere, I suppose", a semi-skilled worker said, meaning that he expected to feel a responsibility to vote when the time came, or at least, that the
chances were that he would go along with the tide and place a vote, like most people. But for the time being, it was not a matter to concern him, and he did not propose, could see no reason, for thinking about it.

A self-confessed lack of knowledge was offered by some as an excuse for not voting, and by others as a reason—it was a serious matter, and they had not been able to make up their minds because they were not satisfied that they had enough information, that they had got the issues clear—a laboratory assistant, for example, said, "I really don't know. I'm too mixed up between the Parties". The idea was that voting was a serious business, and that if one were not sufficiently knowledgeable, or sufficiently interested to get a fuller knowledge, then one should not vote. An apprentice steel worker accordingly said that he probably would not vote, as he felt that he did not know enough about politics—but that if he had to vote, it would probably be Conservative. The indecision of several respondents arose from doubts as to certain aspects of a Party's policy—a motor mechanic, for example, said, "maybe Labour—but I probably wouldn't vote at all, because I don't agree with all they say." He did not think it proper to endorse a policy that they could accept in its entirety.

Several respondents said that they did not propose to think about the matter until they were old enough to vote—they could see no point in doing so: for "thinking about it won't do any good". And when the time did come, they would probably
support whichever Party was then in power—a comptometer operator said, "I'm not really sure that I would vote. All parties seem to promise a lot. So if at the time of voting I'm old enough, and if I'm satisfied with the government then, I should probably vote for whoever is in power at the time."

The idea, implicit in the declaration of lack of interest by many girls, that politics was not a woman's concern, was made explicit by several respondents—one, for example, said, "I leave that sort of thing to my husband", and another observed, "It's not really a matter for a woman, is it?" The tradition, if such it be, of family voting was also apparent in the responses. A youth, whose father happened to pass through the room at the point when the question was asked, enquired, "What Party is it, Dad?" On being told it was "Labour" he said to the Interviewer, "I don't really know, but I suppose it would be Labour, then". And another youth said, "I will vote the same way as my family, but I haven't found out what it is yet." This was not entirely or merely blind adherence: for young workers who have little interest and sparse knowledge about political affairs, it seems sensible to follow their parents—whom they can assume (however wrongly) to have decided on the right course for people such as themselves. On the other hand two respondents, although not sure how, or if, they would vote, were emphatic that they did not feel an obligation to vote for the same Party as their parents—an engineer said, "I don't know my parents vote Labour, but I won't automatically
follow suit. I will either think carefully about it, or not vote at all." And a secretary said, "I've no idea. At one time you would vote for the same party as your parents or husband, but now everyone has their free choice and I don't know enough about the political parties yet to choose which one to vote for."

Several respondents, too, denied any necessary allegiance to the Labour Party—"just because" they were "working class" and "ordinary people"—an electrician thus commented, "I don't know—but I certainly don't think I'd have to vote Labour". One youth was more clear about what he would do—"I don't know how I will vote, but it certainly won't be for a Commie." He was "too much of a Britisher" for that.

It has been stated already that interest in politics is widely recognised as being relatively low amongst people in their late teenage years or early twenties. It might be thought that this would obtain to a lesser extent in regard to persons of this age who are married and who could be said to have a more obvious stake in the political affairs of the country, with reference to taxation policy, housing, education, child welfare and so on. An analysis of the respondents' voting intentions does not lend support to this view—although the figures are small, especially in regard to youths. The position is analysed in Table 107, in which it is seen that one-half of the married youths and one-third of the married girls were undecided, or said that they would not vote.¹

TABLE 107
MARRIAGE AND VOTING PREFERENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Married Youths</th>
<th>Married Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would Vote Labour</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Other&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Not Vote</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though several of these couples were seriously troubled by housing problems, and by low incomes, having regard to their necessary expenditure, they tended not to turn to politicians to help: they shared with single respondents a scepticism or scorn for politicians—as one married youth said, "I won't vote—they don't do anything for me, so why should I do anything for them?"

Another reason for the indecision—especially marked in regard to some of the girls—was that some young married couples were, as we have noted in various contexts, inward-looking and determined, as couples, to make their own way. They were undecided about voting mainly because they had not thought about the matter—it did not come into the ambit of their thoughts: they were preoccupied with building up their new home.
Would Vote Labour

The supporters of the Labour Party were spread over all the occupational categories for girls and youths. They were associated particularly with those respondents who regarded themselves as "working class", and most of those who styled themselves "middle class" but supported Labour were, indeed, "objectively" working class—and had in mind in calling themselves "middle" their superiority over the "low" or "rough" class.

Labour was, in fact, widely represented by respondents as being "the Party for the worker"; this was the image that they had of it, and this was the reason for their support. An engineer thus said, "the working class is robbed to death at present, under the Tories—Labour supports the workers." And Labour was said to be "more for the people—the workers, you know. Conservatives are people with money." Labour was, too, "the party that gives money to people who need it most, like workers and old people." Support for Labour was automatic and unthinking in many cases—respondents said that they would vote Labour because it was the workers' Party, without giving the matter further consideration: it seemed the obvious Party to support. The idea of voting other than Labour was cause for some mirth, indeed.

The other main reason given for voting Labour was that of family and/or background tradition. So that a shop assistant said, "I'd vote Labour, I suppose, like everyone else in the family"; and a bottle labeller said, "Labour—it's what I've been brought
up to believe." A factory girl said that she did not understand politics, but that "Dad says I'll vote Labour"—that was his advice and he seemed to know about that sort of thing. And a housewife likewise deferred to her husband—not just because of his supposed superior knowledge, nor out of meekness or obedience, but as a mark of loyalty and affection—"I think it's right for a woman to do the same as her husband." (The respondent said that her uncle voted Tory, but he was "pretty rich"—so what would one expect?). A steel worker living in a dense area of terraced houses and factories remarked, "I'm not one for politics," but added, "Since this is a Labour district, I'll go along with them." The main factor which swayed several respondents and which played a part in the decision of many others was the alleged failure of the then Conservative Government—it was felt to be "time for a change". An apprentice said, "I'd vote Labour. Not because I'm socialistically minded, but I'd like to see what the other Party can do." And a van driver said, "I would give Labour a chance. It's not just because my parents vote Labour, but also because of Conservative dithering. Labour couldn't possibly do worse."

Some of those who said that they would vote Labour expressed reservations—about politicians in general, or particular aspects of Labour policy—two respondents expressed an interest in Communism, but said that they would support Labour pending an ultimate decision on Communism (2 other youths stated that they definitely would vote Communist).
There has been considerable debate in recent years as to the extent to which traditional working class attitudes and loyalties are undergoing change—the issue has been raised in regard to industrial societies as a whole,¹ but also with reference to the particular situation in Britain. Butler and Rose, for example, have argued that there was, during the 1950s, a "gradual erosion of working class attitudes".² The "bourgeoisification-affluent worker" discourse is, of course, central to the theme of changes in the British class structure, and particularly in the working class component of it. From a rather different perspective, there is the point that the younger generation of voters—such as the respondents in the present study, aged twenty years in 1964—have grown up in a different social and economic environment from their parents. Mark Abrams has made this point, arguing earlier in the sixties that when young people vote in 1963 or 1964, "practically none of them will have had any first hand experience of the 1930s—that is, of the social and economic conditions which, so far, have shaped very largely the ideologies of both major Parties. Those circumstances, those ideologies, and

¹For a résumé see J.H. Goldthorpe, Sociological Review Monograph, No.8, op.cit.

consequently those Party loyalties which grew out of the conditions of the 1930s, will be irrelevant in the 1960s as far as these millions of young people are concerned. They will not only be irrelevant, but they will be unknown to them. They will hardly know what politicians are talking about when they refer to the great depression, to Munich, to the Means Test, to the General Strike and so on.... Their teenage experience will be almost entirely in terms of a full-employment economy and a Welfare State society, with a general background of more or less steadily rising material prosperity.¹

It would be foolish to expect that the young workers of Sheffield who are the subjects of this study would be in the vanguard of changes in the attitudes of youth. In regard to the Sheffield workers, at least, however—and without contesting the fact that attitudes are likely to be to some extent amended by virtue of the changed conditions under which they have grown up—Abrams' conclusions are not apposite. The education which the respondents received, if in some sense superior to that of their parents, was nonetheless deficient in its impact. They were not entirely free from fear of unemployment—some had suffered redundancy during the first few years at work. Their parents had told them of the years of depression—or were, in some cases of ill-health, living reminders of those years; and the terraced

slums of Sheffield are not symbolic of the benefits which a Welfare State may confer, and nor were the home circumstances of many of the respondents suggestive of "steadily rising material prosperity." With regard to the effects of affluence and embourgeoisement, these young workers were not involved in these processes—and, in any case, the evidence is that "affluent" workers are by no means automatic defectors from labour and converts to the Conservative Party.¹

The comments of respondents quoted above suggest some tendency to give superficial explanations, picked up, perhaps, from newspaper or television, for their Party preferences. And the point has been made that many young workers are largely uninterested and lacking in knowledge. But the evidence indicates that there is nonetheless a strong attachment to Labour which is of a traditional order—that even when stated reasons seem superficial, there is an underlying commitment—which is presumably the product of socialising influences and experiences at home and in the neighbourhood, at school (through the opposition to official norms),² and at work. The conclusion is, then, that the young workers tend to adhere to the traditional affiliation of people of their social background;


² Glen H. Elder suggests that "presumably the effects of closure in educational opportunity or, conversely, the opening-up of opportunities, is also associated with political affiliations and attitudes towards social institutions", cf. "Life, Opportunity and Personality", op.cit, p.196.
at least, at the age of twenty, they show few signs of shifting significantly from that pattern. This is in line with the conclusions of Philip Abrams and Alan Little, whose sample study of young voters in Britain, conducted in 1964, led to the conclusion that there was a continuity of traditional ideas and perceptions amongst the young in regard to political matters and that "there is little reason to treat the young in contemporary Britain as a new political generation.....(their) perceptions and orientations are organised in an old frame of reference.

In the present study, both the stated affiliation and the given reasons for them had the ring of this orientation to a traditional and established frame of reference. This, indeed, is consistent with the images that many respondents had of the nature of society, the class system, and of their place in it—matters which have already received some attention and which will be returned to below. It is consistent, too, with leisure interests, and their attitudes in regard to education, work, and the younger generation, as already discussed. In their political outlook, as in their appraisals in regard to these other factors, the young workers were responding to the complex web of relationships in which they were involved, and to the established social institutions in which they had grown up.

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Would Vote Conservative

Thirteen youths and 16 girls said that they would vote Conservative. It has already been noted that 4 of the 5 nonmanual workers said that they would vote Conservative, and that 7 semi-skilled workers, but only 2 apprentices and no unskilled workers would do so. It has been noted, too, that support for the Conservatives was particularly strong amongst girls in Category 'A' employment (11/37). Support for the Conservative Party is analysed in terms of self-assigned and "objective" social class in Table 108.

TABLE 108
SUPPORT FOR THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Youths</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self assigned middle and</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>objective middle class</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self assigned middle and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>objective working class</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self assigned and objective working class</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents from middle class homes who proposed to vote Conservative regarded this as natural or even inevitable—it was the "obvious" thing for them to do. One office girl thus remarked, "I really don't know what the principles of each party are, but I shall pretty certainly vote Conservative, like my parents", and another office girl said, "Conservative, because my parents do, and because my father talks a lot about it—but I've not really gone into it". Another girl, the daughter of the owner of a butcher's shop, and the wife of a steel worker, said, "I'll vote Conservative.
The family always does, though my husband is Labour”. Youths from middle class homes argued less in terms of how the family voted—although several did refer to this—than in terms of the supposed advantages, of freedom for the individual, opportunity to "get on", and avoidance of bureaucracy and red tape, which a Conservative government would confer. A policeman gave as an added (and to him very important reason) that "the Conservatives look after the Police", for "the trouble with Sheffield is that it's got a Labour Council, and Labour Councils don't give a damn about the Police". (He was much concerned over the recent turmoil in the Sheffield Police Force, in which some Officers were found guilty of using brutal methods upon suspects, and the Chief Constable had resigned—the effect upon the local image of the Police clearly troubled the respondent).

Working class people who think of themselves as being middle class do tend to vote Conservative—as part of the playing out of their self-assigned position in society. ¹ This accounts for the voting intentions of the 4 youths and 2 girls who were self assigned middle class but objectively working class. In stating their affiliation to the Conservative Party, they were merely reformulating, or projecting, their claim to be middle class. The respondents in several cases emphasised their position by repudiating the Labour Party and its supporters as being untested—by contrast

with the Conservative Party which had "not done any harm" over the past twelve years. In the case of one girl, the link with the Conservative Party was established when she was introduced to the "Young Conservatives" by a friend who worked in the same office. She now spent a considerable amount of her leisure time at dances and conferences, and particularly participating in various social activities organised by the Association.

What of the 5 youths and 9 girls who declared support for the Conservatives whilst regarding themselves as being working class? There was evidence of deference in the replies of these respondents—deference of the order suggested by Nordlinger\(^1\)—namely an unemotional "realistic" appraisal to the effect that society is as it is, and is likely to remain so, and, that being so, the task of government is best left to those who are used to governing, who know about such things. The alternative, of handing over government to people who are unused to it is to court disaster—thus one youth said, "the Conservatives are used to it. Labour don't know—they haven't got the experience. Everyone's out of a job when Labour get in—they're not used to it." Whilst Nordlinger appears to put the emphasis upon the recognition—or supposition—by working class Tory voters of the superior governmental skills of Conservatives, several respondents put the emphasis the other way round—upon the utter unsuitability of working class people to organise

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anything, through lack of intelligence or through sheer sloth. Thus a painter/decorator, in his sixth job, said, "I'd vote Conservative, any time. They know what they're up to—not like these Labour people—they just argue away amongst themselves. And that bloke Brown's a nut case."

A builder, too, married with one child and keen to establish his family in a comfortable home—which would be in contrast to the squalor of his parents' home—was scornful of the socialist emphasis upon welfare, and convinced that nationalisation was a recipe for slothful workers. In pursuit of his aspiration to provide a good home for his family, he worked long hours of overtime, and he detested workers who did not put effort into their jobs. He said, "I'd vote Conservative—I've seen these people in nationalised industries—they don't know what a decent day's work is. And I've seen Yorkshire Electricity Board men supposed to be 'working'. I believe in real work—you'll never get people doing that under Labour."

This particular respondent was modestly aspiring—he had no pretensions to middle class status, but he wanted to have a good, "decent", working class home—one which he had striven for and earned. He equated the Labour party with the "low", "rough" working class—people such as his parents, who drunk away their money and lived in a filthy house; and people such as the workmen whom he saw on building sites, who skimped their jobs, idled away their time and expected money for nothing. Other respondents
were of a similar mind. They were concerned for effort to be rewarded—and they thought that this was more likely under Conservative government than under a Labour government. Party political broadcasts had played a part in persuading at least two of these respondents. A girl said, "What the Conservatives say sounds better to me", and a youth said, "The last Conservative broadcast convinced me: I like their general policy." Several of the girls aspired to improve upon their position in the social scale—they were engaged to youths who were in "better" jobs than their fathers, and they saw the possibility of a more comfortable home and a higher standard of living generally than that which their parents had been able to command. Whilst not thinking of themselves as middle class, at least not yet, they saw that the possibility was there—there was an avenue open. There was a recognition that in supporting the Conservatives they were departing from what was to be expected of them—but the way of life which Conservatives held out was attractive to them. Thus an ex-clerk who was married to a heating engineer who had served an apprenticeship (they were buying their own house) said, "I suppose it is right to vote for Labour, but I prefer the Conservatives. I like their ideas more.

There were, then, examples of deference voting, although not deference in the sense of unthinking allegiance to those of "high birth". The deference, rather, was to a set of values or beliefs which were held to be superior to those of the common mass. And
there were examples, too, of what may be called anticipatory socialisation voting, that is, by reference to aspirations to rise in the social scale.\(^1\) It is not possible to develop the theme of working class Conservative voting here, on the basis of the small numbers and minimal data available on this matter in the present enquiry—although certain aspects, related to perceptions of society, will be taken up again later. It is sufficient here to draw attention to the complexity of the issue. Richard Rose has recently demonstrated that whilst social structure is likely to be more important than national culture in determining party divisions.....in this context social structure means much more than division into occupational groupings; it also includes divisions into racial, religious, nationality and peasant groupings. Among these groups, there is a strong suggestion of a hierarchy of influences, with class less important for Party divisions than non-class determinants of the composition of society.\(^2\) Factors such as race, colour, religion and rural-urban distribution tend to be more important, according to Rose’s analysis. It is not sensible, then, to assume that some special explanation associated with class stratification is necessary simply because a person of working class background supports the Conservative

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Party. Rosa's insistence upon the complexity of the issue receives support from Kelvin, whose survey of "non-conforming" voters led to the conclusion that "In essence......we cannot make any statements about the man (or woman) who votes for a party other than that which is the party of his class. The people with atypical experiences among non-conformers are no more than a minority within the non-conforming group itself." Kelvin suggests that sex differences and size of family may be a more salient factor in accounting for non-conformity than has thus far been supposed, and indicates that these possibilities require further exploration.

1 F. Parkin has suggested that it is the working class Labour supporters who are deviant, in that they are departing from, or reacting against "the institutional orders which occupy a key place in the social structure " in Britain, which are of a "traditionalist, conservative order", as "the values surrounding (them) which exercise a dominant influence throughout society". In Parkin's analysis, working class support for Labour is dependent upon the insulation of the working class from the dominant institutions which large factory labour forces and vast housing estates may afford. So that manual workers do not vote Conservative because they are deferential or because they conceive of themselves as middle class; rather they have a deferential and a middle class and a Conservative outlook when they are isolated from structural positions which provide an alternative normative system from that of the dominant institutional orders of society", (F. Parkin, "Working class Conservatives: A Theory of Political Deviance", The British Journal of Sociology, Vol.XVIII, No.3, September, 1967, pp.278-290). Parkin's analysis is referred to again below.

Having given fairly substantial space to the discussion of respondents' stated voting intentions, it is proper to conclude this section by re-emphasising the fact that the majority of these young workers were not particularly interested in or knowledgeable about political affairs. There were a few who were keen on politics and active in Trade Union affairs. And one or two, on the broader plane, expressed concern about "the way the world's going"—they had in mind the threat of war, especially of nuclear war—so that one respondent, married and with a child, when asked about the Sheffield of the future said, "if there is a future". But most respondents were not politically sophisticated, locally, nationally or internationally. They had not thought in anything more than a vague way about the nature and seats of political power, did not concern themselves with such matters—and many, as we have seen, tended to be cynical and suspicious about people who did. It is not sufficient to dismiss them as politically apathetic. Their approach is to be understood not in terms of a lack of enthusiasm or will, but in terms of their orientation to society, which is such that they do not perceive the nature and potential of political activity, and do not recognise its relevance to themselves and their families. Their attitudes may be amended, of course, as they get older and assume more domestic responsibilities: the direct
benefits in terms of welfare or employment policies which they may deem the one party or the other would confer may lead them then to take a greater interest. But, at least at the age of twenty, young workers would seem to be largely uninterested in politics and politicians, only vaguely informed as to the issues which are the subject of political debate, and unconversant with the ways in which such issues relate to their own lives.