1987

Worker perceptions of the fast-food giant : interviews with and class comparisons of teenagers working at McDonalds

Joyce A. Korshgen
Portland State University

Recommended Citation

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF Joyce A. Korschgen for the
Master of Science in Psychology presented July 22, 1987.

Title: Worker Perceptions of the Fast-Food Giant:

          Interviews with and Class Comparisons of

          Teenagers Working at McDonald's.

APPROVED BY MEMBERS OF THE THESIS COMMITTEE:

Janice Haaken, Chairperson

Johanna Brenner

Cathleen Smith

     This study examines the relationship between social
class and adolescents conceptions of work. Four major
areas of the adolescent's work experience are examined:
(1) tasks and training, (2) relations with co-workers and
managers, (3) organizational structure and change, and (4)
family life and work. Forty female adolescent,
nonmanagerial employees who worked part time at McDonald's

franchise stores were interviewed. Two groups were formed: one middle class group (n=20), and another working class group (n=20). An item by item content analysis was performed on data tested for rater reliability. No significant results were found with regard to relations with co-workers. However, significant results were found in all four areas. These include: (1) middle class respondents were more likely than working class respondents to adopt a technical approach to training, (2) middle class respondents were more apt than working class respondents to seek positive, affective ties with managers, (3) middle class respondents were more likely than working class respondents to identify efficiency as a rationale for McDonald's organizational structure, (4) middle class respondents were more likely than working class respondents to deal with perceived unfairness by talking directly with management, and (5) working class respondents were more likely than middle class respondents to identify the principle of the necessity of work as the lesson in their family work experience most helpful in adjusting to service work, whereas middle class adolescents identified abstract capabilities as the most helpful lesson in their family work experience.

In addition, in using motivation for employment and age was exploratory predictors, three significant results appear. First, respondents working for basic needs were

more likely than those working for extra money to identify unfairness at work in the form of exploitation. Secondly, respondents working for basic needs were more likely than those working for extras to identify endurance as a means of dealing with unfairness. Finally, adolescents 17 years and older were more likely than 15 and 16 year olds to report some knowledge of workplace mobility.

WORKER PERCEPTIONS OF THE FAST-FOOD GIANT:

INTERVIEWS WITH AND CLASS COMPARISONS OF

TEENAGERS WORKING AT McDONALDS

by

Joyce A. Korschgen

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the

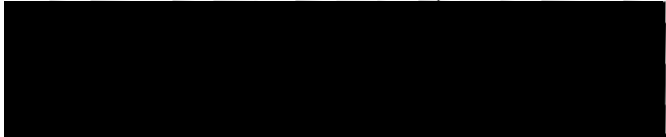requirements for the degree of

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Portland State University
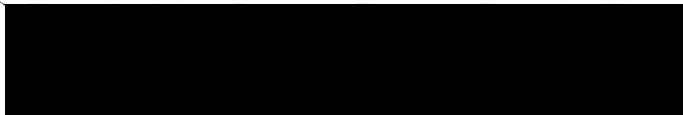
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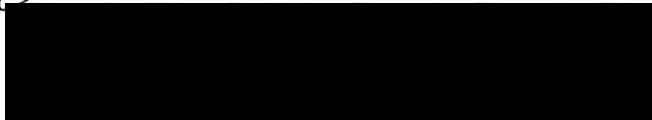
The members of the Committee approve the thesis of

Joyce A. Korschgen presented July 22, 1987.

Janice Haaken, Chairperson

Johanna Brenner
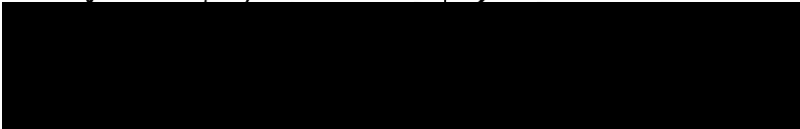
Cathleen Smith

APPROVED:

Roger Jennings, Head, Department of Psychology

Bernard Ross, Vice Provost of Graduate Studies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank all who contributed to the completion of this research. First, I extend my sincere appreciation to my chairperson, Dr. Janice Haaken for her collaborative assistance in this project. For their continued support of this project, I wish to thank my family members. A special appreciation to my partner, Barbara Wilkins, for her patience, support and scholarly critique of this project.

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INTRODUCTION

The steady increase in teenage employment in recent
decades has generated considerable controversy about its
effects on adolescents' psychosocial development. Early
research on adolescence and work was largely confined to
the effects of paid work experience on the acquisition of
adult attitudes and behaviors (Behn, et al., 1974; Bucknam,
1976; Elder, 1974), school performance (Bateman, 1950;
Straus & Holmberg, 1968) and later work aspirations (Behn,
et. al., 1974). Adolescent work was also seen as a factor
decreasing delinquency (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960; Hirschi,
1969). While some research suggests that paid work may be
detrimental to development, e.g., increasing drug abuse or
delinquency (Greenberger, Steinberg, and Vaux, 1981;
Shannon, 1982), the assumption behind much of this
empirical research has been that experience in the "real
world" of adult work is essentially beneficial to
adolescents, offering an antidote to the seeming
irrelevance and infantalizing effects of secondary
schooling. Experiences which hastened the transition to
adulthood were viewed as consonant with the major
developmental tasks of adolescence. Other developmental
literature has suggested a more cautious and protective
tone, endorsing some aspects of teenage employment while

emphasizing the dangers of subjecting young people to low-paid, menial, stressful jobs. The concern is that the conditions under which adolescents typically work threaten to overtax their fledgling adult capacities (Hamilton and Crouter, 1980; Steinberg, 1982a).

The study presented here grows out of recent debates on adolescence and work, where developmental researchers have taken this more cautious, critical stance and have attempted to separate out beneficial and problematic or destructive effects of early work experience. While this recent developmental focus has raised questions about social cognitive processes associated with early work experience (Greenberger, E., Steinberg, L., Vaux, A., and McAuliffe, S., 1980), there has been very little effort to pursue empirically these processes, i.e., how adolescents conceptualize social relations in the workplace.

This study focuses primarily on social class as a determinant of how adolescent part-time workers conceptualize social relations in the workplace. Specifically, I am interested in how class background influences choice of work and adaptations to work settings, conceptions of managerial authority, cooperation with co-workers, conceptions of means of change, and the relationship of family work to paid experiences.

The study focuses on female fast-food workers at McDonald's for several reasons. First, McDonald's is the largest single employer of teenage fast-food service workers, particularly female adolescents, in the U.S. (Luxumberg, 1985). Second, McDonald's stores are located both in suburban settings (providing greater likelihood of drawing workers from middle class neighborhoods) and in the inner city (providing a greater likelihood of drawing workers from working class neighborhoods). Third, McDonald's has been hailed as a "model" for the service industries as evidenced by ability to remain competitive by standardizing and routinizing the production of food services (Roddock, 1982).

McDonald's emphasis on standardized managerial and production processes across franchise stores has important methodological and social implications. Methodologically, it provides an alternative to much of the existing research which is based upon combining different kinds of work settings. The choice of settings is intended to control for variation in type of work and work conditions, hence the adolescents in this study perform essentially the same type of work under essentially the same conditions. Socially, this highly routinized approach to service work represents an important and increasing phenomenon with particularly problematic implications for women and girls who are concentrated in service sector employment (Hochschild, 1983). While researchers in the area of

adolescent employment stress the limited learning
possibilities associated with this kind of work, it was my
starting assumption that adolescents learn a great deal in
such settings about how these fast-food capitalist
enterprises operate, both technically and socially. This
study aimed to determine what, specifically, female
adolescents did learn and how class background influenced
this learning.

My interest in pursuing questions about adolescents in
service work has been heightened by the rapid growth of the
service industry worldwide in the past several decades.
McDonald's corporation, in particular, has sustained a
growth rate which easily claimed worldwide notoriety when
in 1984 McDonald's became a larger employer than U.S. Steel
(Bluestone, et. al., 1985). Fast food restaurants are the
most rapidly growing segment of service industry, with
hamburger restaurants accounting for 50% of all fast food
restaurant sales, or $18 billion worth of business. Burger
King, with about $2.5 billion in sales, is second only to
McDonald's which boasts a phenomenal $8.7 billion in 1983
revenues, up 11.5% from 1982. Indeed, McDonald's is the
established fast food giant, cornering 40% to 45% of the
market over 4 years (Kindel, 1984). Within the last three
decades, steadily rising fast food sales indexed have been
documented. McDonald's, the consensual leader in fast
food, in 27 years has expanded into a multimillion dollar
industry. McDonald's Corporation licenses and operates

9,182 self-service restaurants throughout the U.S., Canada, and overseas employing 136,000 people. Profits have risen to $490 million in 1986; a 25% gain over a 2 year period. Value Line estimates are for a 560 million dollar profit in 1987 (Value Line, Jan. 2, 1987, p. 324). With the built-in need for employees who can work part-time during the midday rush, fast food restaurants have relied chiefly on the labor of young people (Ginzberg, 1977).

Chapter I reviews literature pertaining to the study. Initially, I focus the review on academic influences on the formation of the conceptualization adolescence as a developmental phase, and the employment and socialization literature. I then review three social-psychological literatures: social cognition and development; social class and social cognition; and adolescent employment and family life. The literature review outlines themes addressing the impact of work on adolescent acquisition of adult values, skills, and orientations to work life. Within this context I raise questions about the work-related development of self-direction vs. conformity, the importance of qualitative research to the exploration of the process and meaning of work relationships for adolescents, and the importance of social class in the development of an interpretive framework from which adolescents view the work they perform.

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the following section I examine interdisciplinary
literatures which came in response to the recognition of
adolescence as a distinct developmental period and I review
psychological literature related to adolescence and
employment. In exploring the historical context of
adolescence I go beyond the existing literature by
providing a context for evaluating the experience of
adolescence as it exists today. While existing studies
explore the developmental impact of highly routinized and
fast-paced work (Steinberg, L., Greenberger, E.,Vaux, A., &
Ruggiero, M., 1981; Steinberg, 1982a), researchers often
take as a given the nature and structure of routine work.

I focus on sociological factors influencing the
developmental impact of routine service work in order to
provide a context for explaining adolescents' conceptions
of work processes. In providing this context, I extend the
existing literature on adolescent employment and social
cognition which stops short of an analysis of the work
setting. For example, Steinberg and Greenberger (1981a)
conclude, on the basis of survey data, that working
adolescents are more cynical about work and are more likely

·to endorse "unethical business practices" than are nonworking adolescents. However, the authors do not attempt to explain what it is about work that contributes to these attitudes nor do they attempt to distinguish between cynicism and critical thinking in relation to work. The later distinction is important. Cynicism implies a certain resignation or acceptance of antisocial behavior whereas critical thinking suggests a broader range of attitudinal and action possibilities.

The Advent of Adolescence as a Developmental Phase

Adolescence as a developmental phase and the impact of work on the developing adolescent have been the focus of a number of historical studies. In an article on the history of adolescence, Demos and Demos (1969) critiqued the notion of adolescence as a universal developmental stage. They describe "adolescence" not as a fact but rather as an idea or conceptualization which became well established in the public consciousness in the early part of the 20th century. Drawing on a growing 19th and 20th century literature of child-rearing advice, and a large body of books and pamphlets directed to the young people of the country, these authors compare literature before 1825 to the industrial period which followed and identify changes in child rearing practices which parallel shifting literary trend.

Before about 1825, Demos and Demos (1969) report that
books were "mild in tone and full of simple moral homilies
strung endlessly together." They were not directed to any
particularly problematic or pressing needs in the lives of
their readers. After 1825, Americans witnessed a period
marked by intense nationalism, an interest in childhood as
distinct from adult experience, and general anxiety about
the quality of family life (Wishy, 1969, p. 86). During
this period not only did the U.S. experience a rapid rise
in the production of child-rearing books, some of which
sold many thousands of copies, but the books imparted a
qualitatively different message. Most of the concern
related to problems of parental authority. The role of
parents as disciplinarians needed to be established early
in the child's life and firmly maintained throughout the
years of growth. Even infantile "wilfullness" that
"springs from a deprived nature and is intensely selfish"
was to be suppressed by strict training in obedience lest
it gain momentum and strength resulting in dire
implications for the later adult personality (Bulkeley,
1858, p. 12). Toward the end of the 19th century, some
writers began to publicize discussion of the moral
"dangers" and "temptations" threatening youth directly from
urban life. Inner-city influences such as "the varied
population," "the chaotic social and economic life," "the
frenzied commercial spirit," and "dazzling entertainments"

were in direct opposition to proper growth into adulthood
(Hepworth, 1870).

In academia, during the late 19th century G. Stanley
Hall and his associates were, for the first time, advancing
the concept of adolescence to the public. His "child
study" movement aimed toward a deeper public and scientific
understanding of human development. Profoundly influenced
by Darwinism, Hall's theory of adolescence was explicitly
linked to an evolutionary, or "genetic" model. In likening
adolescence to a "recapitulated" period of rapid
evolutionary growth, Hall elaborated the idea of "storm and
stress," or severe crisis characterized by "lack of
emotional steadiness, violent impulses, unreasonable
conduct, lack of enthusiasm and sympathy..." (Hall, 1882,
p. 30).

Hall's influence was indeed reflected in a flourishing
of texts in psychology, education, child-rearing, and child
labor. Many of his ideas were not entirely innovative but
they did produce a reshaping of certain popular beliefs
about youth at the time. Still, many questions about the
new concept of adolescence remain. In particular, the
salience of his ideas may reflect larger developments in
American society such as the transformation of the United
States from an agricultural into an urban and industrial
society. This historic period, 18th and 19th centuries, is
in fact particularly important in that it marked a dramatic
change in the material basis of family life ushered in by

the rapid expansion of industrial capitalism. The

protective quality of parental authority was, to a large

degree, undermined by the repressive authority of the

industrial capitalist. Youth in some cases found

themselves competing with their parents for wage work

(Ewen, 1976, p. 140). The "storm and stress" of

adolescence characteristic of Hall's conceptualization may

be a reflection of a growing discomfort with changes in

work-family relations brought on by the advent of modern

industrialism.

Ewen (1976), in his examination of the role of youth

as an ideal suitable to the needs of industrial capitalism,

asserts that management projects an expectation of youth.

Viewed as highly impressionable and hedonistic, young

people represent willfullness and are a symbol of

endurance. Ewen asserts that this made youth a usable tool

in the ideological framework of business (p. 139). Ewen

contends that youth was and is a symbol of the kind of

control routinized work imposes upon young people.

Training and skill, which had been the basis of the

apprentice-master-craftsman system was, over a period of a

few years, displaced to the speed and endurance required of

mechanized production. Likewise, authority previously

afforded the skilled elders in the the workplace was now

shifted to the quicker, more efficient younger worker (p.

140).

Teenage Employment as Socialization to Adulthood

Modern sociological research on the impact of work on adolescent development is still in the early stages of development and is thus quite limited. However, Elder's (1974) research on children of the Depression Years is often cited as evidence for the positive impact of adolescent work experience. A consequence of this period's economic instability was reflected in what Elder calls the "downward extension of adultlike experience" for adolescents who took paying jobs outside the home. Boys in the study who worked showed a much greater interest in adults and spent more time with them in school-related activities than other children. Elder suggests that the economic hardship and some nonspecific aspects of work outside the home increased working boys' desire to associate with adults, to "grow up" and become adults. Other correlates of working for boys include the responsible use of money, energetic or industrious behavior, and social independence (pp. 81-82). Critics of this longitudinal study express serious hesitation in applying these findings to contemporary teenagers. Comparisons between contemporary and past cohorts are constrained by many specific historical factors. For example, young people during the 1930's were more likely than are adolescent's today to make essential economic

contributions to their families' well-being (Hamilton and Crouter, 1980).

Social psychological theory and research on teenage employment is also sparse. As an area in the nascent stage of development, research has been largely confined to the effect of part or full time employment on the acquisition of adult attitudes and behavior (Elder, 1974; Bucknam, 1976), Behn, et al., 1974) and the effect of work on school performance (Bateman, 1950, Straus and Holmberg, 1968; Steinberg, Greenberger, Garduque, and McAuliffe, 1982b; Steinberg, Greenberger, Garduque, Ruggiero, and Vaux, 1982c). Recent literature addressing the issue of the adolescent work experience is attempting to focus on the specific developmental needs of youth. A number of researchers and theorists have argued that personality characteristics such as autonomy, self-esteem, responsibility, purposefulness, self-reliance (Steinberg et al., 1981a) and enhanced social understanding (Steinberg, Greenberger, Jacobi, & Garduque, 1981b) are facilitated by paid work experiences.

Greenberger, et al., (1981) suggest that work experience may adversely affect the developmental process of adolescence. In addressing the consequences of job stress, they list three reasons why work experience may affect adolescent well-being adversely. First, significant hours of work may strain the already overloaded adaptational resources of an adolescent who is involved in

school, adjusting to changing family roles and rules, and exposed to increasing peer pressures. Second, the nature of much of the work youngsters do may be incompatible with the developmental needs of the teen years. Adolescents who are confronting issues such as the development of autonomy and responsibility may find themselves facing everyday jobs which appear trivial or afford few opportunities for self-direction. Youngsters who are struggling with social acceptance and their impending separation from nurturing adults may be severely stressed by a job setting characterized by autocratic supervision and repressive authority. Three, in addition to the emotional stirrings of adult role expectations, adolescence is a time of dramatic developmental shifts, changes in appearance, and cognitive competences (Stevens-Long & Cobb, pp. 108, 133). If these physical and emotional stresses are accompanied by additional stressful events such as death of a loved one, adolescents may be at even greater risk for job related health consequences of stress than adults.

Greenberger et al., (1981) describe a number of working conditions which are potentially stressful. These include poor work environment (time pressure, limited worker control over the pace of work); meaningless tasks, (boring or repetitive work); conflict with other roles, (work which interferes with school or home life); autocratic supervision, (the worker is told what to do and feels no freedom to disagree with supervisor); impersonal

organization, (worker does not feel attached to supervisor or work peers); low wage structure, (worker is paid below minimum wage or feels wage is too low). Results of the Greenberger et al., (1981) study indicate that worker status is predictive of somatic symptoms and school absence, with workers reporting more school absences but fewer somatic symptoms than non-workers. Among workers, there was a positive correlation between time spent in the workplace and the use of cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs.

In addition to discussing the relationship between working adolescents and the developmental process, Greenberger, et al., (1981) conclude that there are gender specific effects of work. They found that an impersonal work environment was positively associated with stress for girls and that an autocratic form of supervision was positively associated with stress in boys.

The Greenberger, et al., (1981) research draws attention to one of the important flaws in contemporary research in this area. As I indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the quantitative research methods so often used in work settings are of limited value when the process and meaning of work are the focus of the investigation. Greenberger, et al., (1981) rely on the use of questionnaires in gathering all of the data for their study. A limitation of this kind of data is that a more detailed analysis of how work experiences are conceptualized is not possible. While the finding that

teenage workers tend to have increased use of cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs is important, it is not clear whether they perceive this as a means of coping with stressful work. There are also a range of ways of coping with stressful working conditions which have not as yet been examined.

Some contemporary research on the developmental outcome of work focuses on the effect of work on school performance or future career options. Experience Based Career Education (EBCE), sponsored by the National Institute of Education as an experiential education program, was implemented in many school systems in 1975. This study has been used, until recently, as a chief source of information concerning the long range benefits of adolescent work experience. As Hamilton and Crouter (1980) state, these studies provide poor evidence for the assertion that knowledge of career options during adolescence significantly affects adult work history. Further, evidence that experience is the best source of career knowledge has not been demonstrated (p. 329). In fact, drawing on hypotheses about the nature of most adolescent experience of the workplace, the conclusion that youngsters would prepare themselves for managerial jobs through higher education as a result of their exposure to managerial type careers may be inaccurate. What seems more clear is the notion that young people would prefer to avoid the low-paying dead-end jobs they have been exposed to and

thus concentrate their academic efforts in the direction of higher paying-managerial type jobs.

Defenders of the program, however, can point to documented beneficial effects. Evaluations of the EBCE program by regional laboratories and by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) showed that the program was accepted. General popularity of the program among students, parents, and employers was reported. No academic losses were found when EBCE students were compared with non-EBCE controls and some differences were found in favor of the EBCE group in knowledge of and attitudes toward careers (Bucknam, 1976). Without data confirming the effect of the EBCE experience on future job success, i.e. finding and holding a job, or whether the students' behavior in other settings was affected, critics of this study cite the lack of data about specific developmental effects of work (Watkins and Corder, 1977 cited in Hamilton and Crouter, 1980). The ETS finding that EBCE students were "more concise and able to speak easily with an adult interviewer than non-EBCE students," is, however, consistent with Elder's finding that employed youth were more "adult oriented" than other youth.

An avenue of recent work in teen employment has found a focus on the impact of employment on school performance. Early systematic study in this area used standardized measures of academic achievement (Bateman, 1950; Straus and Holmberg, 1968). More recently, clear evidence has

surfaced which is unsupportive of the notion that work experience has any positive effect on school performance. On the contrary, Steinberg (1982c) reports that teenagers working more than 15 to 20 hours per week during the school year earn lower grades as a result of the work cutting into the adolescent's school hours, family involvement, and peer activities. By way of elaboration, these authors suggest that, in those youngsters adversely effected, early work experience may occur before the need for school, peer, and family socialization processes has been fulfilled.

There have been attempts at addressing the importance of family life and the importance of assessing the impact of an interpretive framework in adolescent's experience of work. Some authors, for example, cite the lack of careful research attending to differences among teenagers in relation to their experience of work settings and the alienating conditions of work in general (Behn, et al., 1974; Keniston, 1971). Moreover, the acquisition of adult-like and adult-oriented characteristics, as shown by Elder (1974) and others, is not necessarily a positive outcome of work experience and should not be accepted uncritically.

Adolescence and Social Cognitive Development

One aim of this study, as stated earlier, is to explore the working adolescents' capacity for

social-cognitive learning through work. The growth of social cognition in adolescence - the ability to think about social processes and social institutions - is directly related to the adolescent's growing capacity for abstract reasoning. This capacity to think on different levels, to make inferences about processes which underlie concrete, observable behavior, and to conceive of alternative possibilities in social situations, provides much of the basis for the adolescent's heightened capacity for social cognition.

The workplace is becoming an increasingly important arena of social cognitive learning for adolescents. Whereas in 1940, only 5% of male and 2% of female high school students worked during the school year, by 1980, 2/3 of high school seniors and 1/2 of high school sophomores worked part-time (Steinberg, 1985). While there are problematic consequences associated with part-time work, the most important developmental benefit to adolescents of this increased labor force participation is greater interpersonal competence and "general social cognitive abilities" (Steinberg, et al., 1981a). By entering a new social setting, one requiring cooperation with others and some understanding of organizational processes, the adolescent experiences the increased dissonance which may be conducive to some kinds of new learning.

But again, illustrating the limitations of this kind of research, the literature tells us little about what

those "general cognitive abilities" are - what adolescents learn, specifically, about authority, cooperation, self-control and the overall social organization of work as a function of direct work experience. The scant research on social cognition and adolescent employment is based primarily on questionnaire data which tell us virtually nothing about the cognitive processes and sources of conflict experienced by the working adolescent.

The most direct effort to probe the social cognitive dimension of adolescent work experience was carried out by Steinberg, et al., (1981a). As a follow up to their questionnaire study, they interviewed 100 working teenagers. They identified three themes in the interviews which corresponded to their theoretical interests in social cognitive learning. They were specifically interested in examples which illustrated social sensitivity (empathy, perspective-taking), social insight (the ability to reflect on the meaning of interpersonal institutions and processes), and social communication (the ability to intentionally manipulate others in achieving some goal).

The authors found evidence of all three types of social cognitive processes in the interview material. However, it is not clear that there was an extensive and systematic effort to identify thematic trends in the interview material. Another problem is in the theoretical and conceptual themes used to illustrate interview material. One example of a gratuitous leap from theory to

anecdotal material is what the authors offer as an example
of "a more sophisticated understanding of the nature and
dynamics of the relationships between workers and
supervisors, and among co-workers." They illustrate
"sensitivity to an organizational superior" with the
following comments by adolescent workers:

> Well, they (kids) get used to being bossed around.
> You know, some people they don`t know how to be bossed
> around.
>
> I get along (with my boss), sometimes...I get kinda
> mad...I can't do nothing because he's my boss so I
> can't say nothing...(p. 149).

The implication here is that the mere exercise of
self-control represents a "sophisticated understanding" of
and sensitivity to authority. The main thesis is that such
experiences represent a valuable "antidote to egocentrism"
(Steinberg, et al., 1981a). But many of the anecdotes
described could be as easily interpreted as injurious to
self esteem or as simply adaptation to oppressive
experiences. No criteria are provided for making
distinctions between healthy and destructive experiences
with authority figures.

While most of Greenberger and Steinberg's (1980)
research focuses on the effects of working on other major
settings in the adolescent's life, they do present some
additional findings related to social relations and work.
In comparing relations at work with relations with family
and non-work peers, they found that workers reported
feeling less close to their supervisors and co-workers than

to significant others (Greenberger, et al., 1980). The
finding concerning supervisors was puzzling, however: the
only person who was described as less close than
supervisors was their favorite teacher at school (p. 198).
This suggests that the criteria for measuring closeness,
e.g., willingness to discuss personal problems, may not
have exhausted the important dimensions of closeness. For
example, the tendency toward idealization and
identification, i.e., to create exaggerated estimates of
one's own potential vis a vis others and to associate one
self closely with a group or cause, represent forms of
psychological closeness which do not necessarily correspond
to readiness for self-disclosure (Horney, 1966).
Willingness to discuss personal problems is a particularly
problematic criterion in the workplace where fear of
retaliation by supervisors may inhibit self-disclosure. At
the exploratory level, a primary aim of this study was to
identify some of these important dimensions of workplace
relations.

Social Class and Social Cognition

This study focuses on social class as an important
determinant of an adolescent's interpretive framework in
the work setting. As children move from early to late
childhood, class background becomes increasingly important
in shaping their self-conceptions (Rosenberg and Perlin,

1978; Demo and Savin-Williams, 1983) and conceptions of what is required normatively in the world of work (Hochschild, 1983). I would expect that social cognitive learning for working adolescents is influenced by the social class of their parents. I am particularly interested in class differences in conceptions of and identifications with managers, and conceptions of and cooperative alliances with co-workers. In the following section I review of literature on social class which explores the importance of social class in the adolescent's workplace.

One of the problems that emerges while building on the existing literature on social class is that there is no general agreement on what terms such as class, middle class, and working class mean (see White, 1980). There are, however, two general ways of conceptualizing social class in social science research. One approach, which is essentially quantitative and structural, views class as equivalent to different strata of society as measured by a set of indices, e.g., income, education, prestige and occupational status. These groupings or strata are not conceptualized in terms of the interdependence or conflicts which characterize the relationship between social classes in a given society. The other main approach, derived from Marxist theory--and which guides this analysis--treats class as a social relation, specifically as social relations derived from the production process. Class

refers to 1) a common position relative to the means of
production, i.e., ownership or extent of control over the
production process; whether one is in the position of
buying or selling labor power, 2) an interest different
from and in conflict with at least one other class because
of these differing relationships to the production process
and 3) different cultural and social practices
(Oppenheimer, 1985, p. 12).

But what are the social psychological implications of
these structural considerations? Kohn's (1977) extensive
research on social class and psychological functioning
provides the findings most relevant to my research
interests, particularly in making the link between
upbringing and the development of different social
cognitive capacities. Kohn's criteria for making social
class comparisons are similar to mine: he argues that
working conditions, particularly extent of control over
work, is the most important dimension of class in
predicting psychological outcomes (Kohn, 1977, p. xlvi).
Criteria in this study overlap considerably with Kohn's but
include control over other people as an important dimension
of social class.

Kohn (1977) concludes that values acquired through
work differ according to social class and that these same
values are often transmitted to offspring. The differing
working conditions associated with working class and middle
class jobs - most importantly, the possibilities for

decision-making, freedom from close supervision, and
intellectual complexity create different understandings of
what is required normatively in the work world. These
experiences influence, in turn,the lessons parents pass on
to their children.

Kohn's writing attempts to explain class differences
in the workplace through an examination of rules of
discipline in family life. The most important values
related to class position and work are self-direction and
conformity to external authority. Kohn (1977) found that
individuals who had higher level jobs were more likely to
value self-direction and that those with lower level jobs
were more likely to value conformity to authority. At the
same time, Kohn challenges the notion that working class
parents induce conformity by punishing their children more
than do middle class parents. What differs, according to
social class, is not the frequency but the form of
punishment. Working class parents are more likely to
punish according to the consequences of behavior, e.g.,
when the child`s behavior reaches a certain threshold of
tolerance, whereas middle-class parents are more likely to
punish on the basis of inferred motivation or intentions,
e.g., whether or not the child "intended" to be destructive
(Kohn, 1977, p. 104). This difference is believed to
account for the greater capacity of middle class
individuals, apparently beginning with adolescence, to
think in more "psychological" terms about social processes

and to value self-direction and autonomy over conformity to authority (Steinberg, 1985). It is also believed to account for a greater tendency among middle class children to be attuned to the feelings of authority figures because compliance is more apt to be achieved by appealing to feelings (Bernstein, 1974).

Kohn's (1977) research raises questions that I feel are as yet unanswered and as such are included among the aims of my study. Specifically, the relationship between social class and conformity to authority seems far more complex and contradictory than Kohn's analysis suggests. For example, Kohn's findings don't explain why the greatest support for Joseph McCarthy during the 1950s came from among upper-class and upper middle class voters (Hamilton, 1972). Although working class people tend toward less tolerant responses on attitude surveys, they also tend to support more liberal candidates. The history of trade unionism also provides strong evidence that resistance to authority is more apt to come out of the working class than the middle class (Oppenheimer, 1985, p. 184).

In addition, it is important to recognize that the same behaviors can be simultaneously acts of conformity and rebellion. For example, group pressure to conform to production rates (taboos against "rate busting") represent a form of group solidarity in resisting managerial control (Edwards, 1974). In this situation, group conformity (or, more positively, group cooperation) has the aim of

achieving self-direction and resistance to authority. So too, the middle class person's competitive strivings may appear to be self-directed behavior but may be motivated by those internal representations of authority figures whose love and approval are sought. What is key in these examples is the aim(s) of the behavior and the importance and position of relationships, i.e., the relational configuration in which the behavior is embedded.

The question of the importance of the workers' socioeconomic class (SEC) in relation to job stress is not often addressed in social-psychological research. The notable exception is the study by Greenberger, Steinberg, & Vaux (1981). Using father's occupation an an index of socioeconomic class, results show that SEC significantly predicts (a) psychological distress among males, with middle class boys reporting fewer symptoms; and (b) cigarette use among females, with girls from working class families reporting higher use. Work status, however, is predictive of somatic symptoms and school absences, with workers reporting more school absence but fewer somatic symptoms than non-workers in all classes (p. 696).

Results of epidemiological studies also provide support for the finding that low job status is psychologically stressful. Findings indicate that individuals of "lower" socioeconomic status, and thus lower job status, were more likely than higher status workers to exhibit psychiatric symptoms and to be hospitalized and

rehospitalized (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1974).
Greenberger, et al., (1981) argue the possibility that even
without considering the job status factor, stressful
situations have a high prevalence in "lower" class
environments. The authors do suggest, however, that the
issue of job status is not incidental among working class
concerns and "should not be dismissed as a possible source
of stress" (p. 693).

Adolescent Employment and Family Life

A unique contribution to literature addressing work
and youth has been that of Greenberger and Steinberg (1980,
1982). Their ecological approach, while limited by its
methodology, makes substantial progress toward an
understanding of the nature of teenager's work and family
life by including documentation of specific jobs teens are
now holding and on-site behavioral observation of actual
job activity (Greenberger, Steinberg, and Ruggiero, 1982).

The Greenberger, et al., (1980) study presents two
major questions: (1) which kinds of psychosocial
development are promoted by events and interactions within
the workplace (i.e., increased self reliance, greater sense
of responsibility, cooperative attitudes), and (2) what
effects does working have on events and interactions that
take place in other settings of adolescent life? (i.e.,
effects on time spent with friends and family, or position

of greater autonomy within the family)? Results of the study addressed the later question and indicated that, not unexpectedly, working reduced the amount of time that an adolescent spent with his or her family, and reduced the number of times the adolescent ate dinner with his or her family. The study used several indices of family interaction to measure the quality of relationship to family members. The authors found no significant differences between workers and non-workers attributable to work regarding: (1) how close the adolescent felt to specific family members, (2) willingness to discuss personal problems with family members, (3) degree to which the adolescent was involved in decision making, and (4) the effect of work on family rules regarding homework, household chores, and social life. In addition, the quality of the workers' relationship with peers outside the workplace was found to be unimpaired by work.

In contrast to family relationships, relationships with people at work were found to be far less positive than relationships with people outside the workplace. Greenberger, et al., (1980) posed two questions with regard to relationships with people at work: (1) Do relationships with people at work vary as a function of how often an adolescent works and for what period of time the individual has held the job, and, (2) How important are relationships with people at work relative to other relationships in the adolescent's life? Results indicated that although

relationships with people at work were far less intimate than those with people outside of work, work relationships were unaffected by number of hours spent at work or the length of time the adolescent had held a job. Greenberger, et al., (1980) also reported that young people felt less close to their supervisors than anyone else with the exception of their favorite teacher at school. They were less likely to talk to their supervisor at work about a personal problem than anyone else, again with the exception of their favorite teacher.

Similarly, best friends at work were seen as being less intimate relationships than most other relationships in the adolescent's life (Greenberger, 1980). Workers reported roughly equal levels of intimacy with their father and their best friend at work, but were considerably more intimate with their favorite friend at work than with their favorite teacher.

While the questions addressed in the literature about youth and work are interesting, the research methods used typically evoke superficial responses from the workers. This problem may be merely a characteristic of the use of quantitative measurement in survey research. In the Greenberger, et al., (1980) study, for example, the question of perceived emotional distance from the adolescent's employer vs. best friend or favored teacher is raised. While the notion of distance in these

relationships is interesting, its heuristic value is greatly increased by the possibility of a whole series of more in depth questions about the quality of those relationships. When the researcher is interested in the phenomenology of the experience of work, limitations of questionnaire data are most evident; more specifically, the absence of any use of follow-up questions.

This non-phenomenological view, or one which fails to take account of the perceived quality of events, characterizes the existing literature on adolescent employment. This is evident, for example, in the notion of work as a way of acquiring self-discipline (Timpane et al., 1976; Zajchowski, 1978). The notion of work as a path toward "socialization of adolescents into the adult world" is a view that is widely accepted as a positive aspect of the work experience. But, in fact, without understanding the opposing interests commonly seen in the struggle adolescents have with work-related learning, research is not getting at the real question of whether this kind of socialization is necessarily good for teenagers. Do youngsters acquire this "self-discipline" through prosocial compliance or is it based on the fear children acquire of authority? Is it based on a sense of the protective aspects of authority figures or on a sense of the repressive aspects of authority? In the same way, I might be more interested in the particulars of the potential

struggle adolescents have with routine work rather than the simple reporting of its "effects." The lack of any clear data addressing the issue of workers' perception of the structure of work or their patterns of resistance to work demands presents a potential new area of field research.

In this study, I raise questions about the quality of social understanding teens acquire in the workplace. Do class differences play a significant role in the adolescent's response to the work or her expectations for self-development? What are the contributions of the family's social class to the adolescent worker's perceptions of the intrinsic rewards of work? Given the existing limitations of questionnaire research on adolescent employment taped interviews were used in this study. Interview data were useful in two ways. First, it provided qualitative answers for research questions one through six (see Appendix A). Second, it provided data which was analyzed quantitatively to test the set of hypotheses described below.

While the predictions formulated in this study emerge from research into adult social class, they are essentially exploratory and reflect the exploratory nature of the study. I began with two predictions. First, using social class as the predictor variable in crosstabulation with responses to questions regarding relationships with co-workers, I tested the hypothesis that adolescents from

working class families would be more cooperative and adolescents from managerial and entrepreneurial families would be more competitive in their stances toward co-workers. This prediction grows from Kohn's research described earlier suggesting that class background is influential in forming the interpretive framework an adolescent carries into the workplace. Kohn (1977) asserts that is is largely the differential effects of discipline and family work structure which account for social class differences such as those I expect. In addition, working class workers are more economically dependent on the jobs they have and enjoy less mobility than middle class workers (Nelkin and Brown, 1984; Garson, 1977). Second, I expected that middle class (managerial/ entrepreneurial family origins) adolescents would express more positive or idealized conceptions of managerial authority and that working class adolescents would be more critical or ambivalent toward managerial authority. This prediction was also tested using social class as the predictor variable and crosstabulated with responses to questions regarding relationships with managers. Here, too, the prediction emerges from the research Kohn presents which suggests that adult workers in middle class positions report a greater affiliation with managerial authority whereas working class respondents are more likely to report allegiance to authority (following the letter of the law)

while their underlying feelings reflect ambivalent or critical values (Kohn, 1973). Several comparisons were made post-facto in this study. In an effort to explore the potential importance of job need and age in forming workers' values at work, I ran follow-up crosstabulations using job need and age as predictors. I reasoned that working for survival vs. extra money might indeed influence the respondent's view of work with regard to, for example, willingness to tolerate unfairness. The crosstabulations using age as a predictor, while also exploratory, did emerge from research described earlier suggesting that adolescent work is detrimental to the development of adult role aspirations. Questions about the acquisition of the detrimental effects are as yet unanswered. I sought to develop some ground work for a study of the age differences in attitudes toward work.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

Participants were forty female nonmanagerial
employees between the ages of 15 and 20 years (mean=17
years) who work part-time at one of eight McDonald's
franchise stores in the Portland, Oregon area. There were
three reasons for forming an all-female sample. First,
McDonald's hires primarily female service workers. Second,
I wanted to eliminate gender as a source of variance in the
findings. And third, I was particularly interested in
women and service sector work. In order to make class
comparisons, participants were drawn from stores in both
predominantly middle class and predominantly working class
neighborhoods. (Managers tend to draw on the immediate
area in hiring entry level employees). My aim was to form
two groups of equal size: one group comprised of
adolescents from working class families (N=20) and another
group of adolescents from middle class families (N=20).

One long-standing area of debate within the Marxist
literature concerns the nature and political importance of
the distinction between the middle and working classes.

While a review of these debates is beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to specify the basis for my own criteria in making class comparisons. One issue is whether or not professional and technical workers who, like other workers, have to sell their labor power to employers, are part of the working class or part of the middle class, i.e., small business owners, entrepreneurs and managers. This is partly a political question because it concerns the readiness of these nonmanagerial professional and technical workers, who are in an ambiguous and contradictory class position, to form political alliances with other workers (see: Aronowitz, 1973; Oppenheimer, 1985). While this remains an important theoretical and empirical issue, I agree with those researchers who use ownership and control as the primary criteria in defining class location rather than ambiguous terms such as "professional status" or "white collar work" (Kohn, 1973; 1977; Aronowitz, 1973; Edwards, 1979). Thus, nonmanagerial professional and technical workers who are not self-employed are included in our working class group. Small business owners, self-employed professionals, managers and administrators are considered middle class here in that they have a degree of control over their own work and that of others which sets them apart from--and sometimes in conflict with--working class people. At the same time, we recognize the potential for ambiguous and overlapping positions that

adheres in making class distinctions.

Determination of social class standing, thus, was based on the work history of the subjects' parents and judged using 3 criteria: (1) supporting parent's occupation, 2) managerial-entrepreneurial vs. nonmanagerial supervisory or worker status, (3) salary vs. wage income. Research participants were all nonmanagerial food-service employees.

Procedure

Pretesting. Eight practice interviews were tape-recorded drawing on participants selected from a pool of Psychology 204 students currently attending Portland State University. All pretest participants met the criteria stated for use in the actual data collection and were informed of the voluntary nature of their participation. Practice interviews were used to refine the interview schedule and develop greater ease of administration.

Recruitment of Participants. Participants were recruited by Dr. Janice Haaken and myself during on-site visits at the eight McDonald's stores. Access to the restaurants was authorized by franchise owner, W.C. Gilbert. Consent was given to contact the managers at the 9th and Alder, West Burnside, Beaverton-Hillsdale, Cedar

Hills, Aloha, N.W. 185th, and Hillsboro McDonald's stores for the purpose of on-site scheduling of interviews and informal observations of the work activity. Our strategy for recruiting participants was as follows. First, we attempted to interact as little as possible with store managers to avoid the appearance of an alliance with management. (In our experience, this is extremely important.) Second, we sought permission from on-site managers to wait in the employee lounge which provided the only reasonable place for discussing the study with potential participants and soliciting participation. As employees came in during their breaks, we explained who we were, making a point of clarifying that we were not connected with the corporation or with management. Third, we emphasized our stance as "learners." For example, we typically said something like the following: "Many people in universities have written articles about teenagers who work--whether its good or bad for teenagers to work. Most of the people who have done these studies haven't really talked with teenagers about their work experiences and how they feel about them. We're interested in doing that." After explaining the study, potential participants (under 20 years of age or having turned 20 within the last three months while having worked at McDonald's for at least a year) were asked if they would be willing to be contacted by one of the researchers for a one to one and a half hour interview. All participants were asked to provide prior

written consent for the interviews. In addition, parental consent was obtained for participants under the age of 18. The consent form appears in Appendix B.

Interviews were tape recorded and conducted at a site of the participant's choosing. All interviews were conducted by the second author, a clinically-trained psychology graduate student, over a period of 10 months. Tape recordings were identified in code prior to transcription. Table I lists the questions selected for the interview. Appendix A outlines the initial strategy for question selection. Questions covering standard demographic information and questions which probed four areas sequentially were presented: 1) reasons for seeking work and the nature of the work, 2) relations with coworkers and managers, 3) conceptions of organizational structure, and 4) parents occupations and family experiences related to work. Standard practice was used to keep participants blind to the research hypotheses and to the predictor variable, i.e., social class.

Data Analysis. Content analysis of the tape recorded interview material proceeded as follows. First, as the study progressed, I reviewed the responses to questions concerning parents' employment in order to assure a distribution of two equal size groups (this influenced our choices of stores in which to recruit participants). I did end up with two groups of twenty participants (N=40).

Sociological experts were consulted in judging social class, based on criteria discussed earlier. All interviews were transcribed with subsequent data analysis involving written transcriptions. The second phase involved careful reading of the transcribed material to identify dominant themes related to my theoretical interests. The third phase involved content analysis of the interview material on an item by item basis. Table II lists questions used in the data analysis and defines the subsequent category content. Responses to 22 key interview questions were selected on the basis of thematic content. Specific conceptual categories were then identified, and criteria for selection elaborated, which allowed ratings to be made of all forty responses to each question. All categories were mutually exclusive and exhaustive in order to permit categorization of all responses. A two-way chi square test was done, using the factors of the adolescent's social class and the thematic categories associated with each question. Table III (p. 66) provides a statistical summary of the findings.

Categories were sometimes collapsed from complex (2 x 3 or larger) to simple contingency tables (2 x 2) using two criteria. First, the complex table needed to yield results near enough to the .05 level to suggest that reducing variation due to the number of degrees of freedom would strengthen the results significantly. Secondly, two or more existing categories needed to be related in such a way

as to be mutually nonexclusive such that two or more categories could be retitled as one category. If the existing categories failed to lend themselves easily to retitling, the row or column accounting for the greatest chi square value was singled out and known as category #1 while the remaining categories were retitled as a single category, #2, or "other." Crosstabulations were then statistically reanalysed.

Rater reliability. This statistic was calculated using procedures appropriate to nominal data. Two raters from a pool of undergraduate level psychology students at Portland State University were trained and asked to make independent category choices from the transcribed interview material on a subject by subject, item by item basis. Both raters were blind to the hypotheses of the study. Percentage of agreement was calculated using Cohen's Kappa statistic (Sacket, 1978) and ranged from .72 to .94. Final category selection was based on raters' agreements; disagreements were settled by the researchers. Appendix D provides a summary of the reliability profile.

TABLE I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Background Questions

1. How old are you? AGE
2. How long have you worked at McDonald's? LENGTH
3. How did you choose McDonald's for work?
4. At the time you applied, what choices did you have for work?
5. Why did you decide to find a job at all? WHYJOB
6. At the time you applied, what did you expect it would be like working there?

Tasks and Training

7. What kind of training were you given initially? TRAIN
8. Describe the order of the tasks that you learned during the training period?
9. Tell me anything you remember about your early reactions to the training. (social and technical) REACT
10. What was your first assignment? Descriptions of work activity.
11. In the course of your day what opportunities are there to learn new things? LEARN
12. What kinds of decisions can you make about how to do the work? DECIDE

Organizational Structure

13. How do people move to a higher level job? MOVE
14. How far up would you like to move?

Social Relations With Co-workers

15. Describe your interactions with other employees. COWORK
16. Can you tell me anything you remember about your early feelings to the other employees?
17. What kinds of things made you feel good about your job? GOOD
18. What kinds of things bothered you about your job? BAD

Social relations With Management

19. How is this store related to the the corporation?
20. How do the owners influence what goes on at the store?
21. What do you as an employee mean to the owners? MEAN
22. What differences are there between in-store managers and franchise supervisors?
23. Can you tell me anything you remember about your early feelings about the in-store managers?

TABLE I (continued)

Manage

24. Can you tell me anything you remember about your early feelings about the franchise supervisors?
25. What is the store manager's job?
26. Do you think there is a need for a manager?
27. What would it be like without a manager?
28. Describe your interactions with the management. INTMAN
29. How do they get people to do things?
30. Are there incentives the company offer you to work harder?

Organizational Structure and Change

31. Are there things that you do to make your job easier, more interesting, or pass the time? EASE
32. Are there things you can do with the other workers that make your job better in some way? BETTER
33. What kinds of things do you do after work?
34. Do employees have an organized way of talking about their concerns apart from the management?
35. Are there things about the job which seem unfair or are not right? UNFAIR
36. Do you think the pay and benefits are fair?
37. How would you deal with unfairness in your work? DEAL
38. Why is it run the way it is? WHY
39. Describe some ways in which your workplace could be made a better place to work? IMPROVE
40. How would that happen?
41. Why do you think there is no employees' union at McDonald's? UNION
42. Do you think these kinds of jobs are good for teenagers?
43. What about authority do you learn at this job?
44. Do you think there is a greater use of cigarettes, drugs and alcohol among working teenagers?

Family Life and Work

45. What kind of work do your parents do? (kind of work, salary or wage, self-employed, level of supervision) CLASS
46. How do you think your parents feel about their jobs?
47. What about the way you were raised influenced how you handle your job?
48. What jobs or responsibilities did you have at home?
49. What happened if you didn't do those things? CON
50. Is there anything you would change about the rules for work at home?
51. Were there things that you learned at home that helped you when you started working outside? HELP
52. What do you think your parents want you to get out of the experience of working as a teenager?
53. What do you imagine yourself doing when you are older?
54. In what ways do you see McDonald's preparing you to do that?
55. What do your parents expect you will be doing as an adult?

* Words in upper case denote code word used in the analysis.

TABLE II

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following table describes the categorizing of responses to the questions actually used in the analysis. Responses to questions not appearing here were not used in the crosstabulation and are summarized in appendix A.

Respondent's Background

Q1: How old are you?   AGE + *   1. 16 years   2. 16 years

Q2: How long have you worked at McDonald's?   LENGTH
    1.   1 mo.   2. 1 mo. - 1 yr.
    3. 1-2 yrs.   4. 2 yrs.

Q5: How did you choose McDonald's for work? WHYJOB + *
    1. Survival, basic income.
       "I wanted to be able to put myself...to be able to live on my own."
       "If I get my hours cut, I can't pay my bills."

    2. Extra Money, college savings.
       "I wanted my own money...spending money."
       "I needed to get money for college."

    3. Self development.
       "It gives me time to think things out...evens my time out."
       "I wanted to get out of the house...to work away from home."

Task Orientation and the Training Period

Q7: What kind of training were you given initially? TRAIN *

Q9: Tell me anything you remember about your early reactions to the training. REACT *

    1. * Technical:

Respondents in this category describe the mechanical aspects of the training period, e.g., how the machinery works. These workers focus on the technical structure of the tasks without an affective component.

TABLE II (continued)

"I didn't like doing french fries. The way they do the french fries is really kinda
stupid."
"...when you get up there and say you're doing french fries...the holding time...its
seven minutes...and when it goes off you just turn it off."

2. Other:

The three subthemes in this category, competitive, enthusiastic, and critical, seem to
reflect evaluative components. Competition, for example, implies an evaluation of
another's performance relative to one's own. Establishing an overall thematic blend of
these subthemes, however, was abandoned. Hence, the category "other" predominates.

"When I first started, I didn't think I was going to get along with anybody."
"I thought it was really hard. Like when you make mistakes, they really come down
hard on you."
"It was really exciting 'cause it was new. I like a challenge."

* Same categories as for question #7

Q11: In the course of your day, what opportunities are there to learn new things? LEARN

1. Focus on Problems:

Respondents here identify barriers, i.e., managerial interest in keeping workers
unskilled or maintaining managerial control over the labor process, favoritism,
prejudice, misuse of incentives by managers, inadequate training.

"It depends on your manager. Most managers don't want to teach you anything that
they don't think you need to know."
"My experience has been that the only way you learn anything extra is to come in on
your off time."

2. Focus on Potential:

These workers identify the possibility for learning social skills, i.e., how to talk to
people, how to get along with people; technical skills, i.e., grill temperature, shake
mix ingredients, how to tally waste sheets; and/or managerial skills, i.e., calling for
newly prepared food (calling shots), and/or opening and closing the store.

"If you work at McDonald's, you get to interact with the public. You learn how to
deal with the public."
"You learn how to run the cash register, and to "call shots," make shake mix and
stuff like that."

Q13: How do people move to higher level jobs? MOVE *

1. Same Knowledge of Hierarchy:

TABLE II (continued)

Respondent offers some knowledge of the hierarchical structure. Respondents in this category fell into two subgroups.

a. The potential for moving up is minimal, i.e., promotion based on individual merit is very unlikely. Management is reluctant to move crew to management positions. Generally pessimistic about actually moving up.

b. Promotion is based on Individual Merit: Upward mobility dependent on the abilities and motivation of the individual, or the extent or length of experience.

"There's really not much you can do. Just work harder and harder, get faster and faster and then you get a raise. Moving up is not really possible."
"_____, he promoted two guys who used to be employees. Now they are both managers and they are also really good friends of his. Plus, his wife, who was his fiance at the time, became a manager."

2. No knowledge, does not know, no explanations given.

"I really don't know...I don't want to be a manager."

Social Relations With Management and Co-Workers

Q15: Describe your interactions with other employees. COWORK

1. Conflictive:

Respondents here report some emotional investment in relationships with co-workers, i.e., desire for closeness or very interested in co-workers, but they are aware of some obstacle or barrier. The barrier may be psychological, interpersonal or organizational. They describe feeling angry with co-workers, "personality conflicts," "blowing up" at people or some upsetting situation which interfered with achieving closeness with co-workers. This category does not include responses where co-workers are upset and/or where respondent takes pleasure in or justifies some advantage over co-workers.

"If you make a mistake...they never forgive you....They are just standing there waiting for you to take a fall."
"I've always had a hard time getting along with girls and women. I never really had friends at school. (At work) most of the girls are older...and I feel that if I earn their respect, then they'll do the same."

2. Close, cooperative:

Respondent describes having "fun" with co-workers, helping each other, sharing, being a "team," getting together outside of work or living together, being like a "family."

"You always kinda have a positive outlook 'cause you know you have to work with them so, you know, you try to make friends."
"They were all really nice and tried to make me feel comfortable...and they worked with me and answered all of my dumb questions."

TABLE II (continued)

3.   Competitive or Aloof:

Respondent describes interactions as friendly but emotionally distant, or alludes to feeling superior to co-workers or looking down on them. When describing co-workers in positive terms, implies social politeness, e.g., "people are very nice," "I say Hi to everyone." Little evidence of real emotional investment in relationships with co-workers.

> "I feel kinda bad about it, when I came I was older than everybody. I had been to a year of college so I was kinda looking down my nose at everybody."
> "I could tell right away who were the snobs and who the shy people and who were the ones that didn't want to get their fingers greasy. You had to learn to work around it if you wanted to get in."

Q17: What kinds of things do you like about your job? GOOD

1. Rewards are derived from management or hierarchy:

Respondent describes emotional or social rewards from managers or comparing herself favorably, vis a vis co-workers. May express feeling superior to co-workers. Liking to be complimented by managers. This does not include benefits such as time off, extra break time, increase in wages where no mention is made of their symbolic meaning, e.g., "It made me feel appreciated."

> "Getting a good pat on the back (from the managers.)"
> "Like running the bin during lunch and afterwards having the manager come up and tell you that you did a good job."

2. Rewards derived from interactions with co-workers or customers:

Reports feeling good about getting a smile from a customer, joking around with co-workers and customers.

> "You meet a lot of kids here and if you make them smile it feels good to you too."
> "If I please the customer, that makes me feel good."

3. Rewards derived from intrinsic aspects of the job:

Describes feeling good about being fast, completing a difficult task, being able to demonstrate "knowing a lot."

> "When I do a good job...when I get the food ready really quick."
> "Well, when I heard there was going to be a test...working breakfast was a test and it felt good to hear people saying it was going to be tough and it was a challenge."

4. Rewards derived from extrinsic aspects of the job:

Respondent reports seeing no value beyond getting wages, breaks, days off or preferred hours.

TABLE II (continued)

"Nothing makes me feel good except getting the check and depositing it."
"Well, I've been here a long time...I just look forward to going home at night."

Q18: What kinds of things bothered you about your job? BAD

1. Focus on people or relationships with people:

Respondent reports being bothered by management/hierarchy and/or coworkers/customers.
Respondent may describe feeling controlled or exploited by managers. Being called in
unexpectedly, managers overlooking break allocation and/or management overlooking the
basic needs of the workers, e.g., the condition of the break room, repair of facilities
or machines in the store. In addition, they may mention getting a rude remark from a
customer, other workers being too bossy or unfriendly, other workers not pulling their
own weight, workers complaining too much about the work or conditions of work.

"You get really frustrated 'cause you work so long and hard and never get any
appreciation for it."
"People that down talk McDonald's"

2. Focus on the work:

Respondents here are bothered by events/activities involving intrinsic or extrinsic
aspects of the job, e.g., pace too fast, training practice and/or time allowed for
training is seen as inadequate. They are bothered by their own limitations, e.g., making
too many mistakes, not being able to keep up with the work. Respondents may mention
being dissatisfied with low wages, missed or shortened breaks due to a sudden rush, not
getting days off or preferred hours.

"Being rushed through the training. There's a lot even now that I don't know how to
do."
"The fact that it was fast and it had to be fast."

3. Not bothered by anything about the job:

"Nothing much...I'm just glad to be working instead of sitting home in front of the
TV."

Q21: What do you as an employee mean to the management? MEAN

1. Exploitive:

The emphasis in this category is on management as having the sole interest in making
money off the workers. The worker here feels little reciprocal dependency from
management. Feels easily replaced or dispensable.

"(Laughing) Diddly squat! They can dispense with me anytime. They don't care. You
have a little number and when they are through with you, they give your number to
someone else."
"Nothing...because I'm part of a chain and there's a certain group of us that work
together...like a well-oiled machine."

TABLE II (continued)

2. Exploitive dependency:

The owners use the workers but also depend on them. Emphasis here not so much on being replaceable as on providing skills or services upon which management depends. This relationship is described as a parasitic, unequal, or exploitive one.

"I'm an employee and I'm there to have a smile on my face at all times and look happy and do what they need me to do."
"Cedar Hills does the most volume but I don't think they really care about that."

3. Personal dependency:

Managers or company described as needing her as an individual. Workers may see themselves as an extension of the owners, e.g., "We keep the store going for them, he needs us to be there or we help the store work." There is no mention here of conflict or exploitation. The respondent may mention striving to demonstrate dependability to owners or feeling exceptionally cared for.

"I think we are pretty valuable to them...they make the rules and we work for them...I think they have to watch how they treat us. They can't afford to have twenty people up and quit on them."
"Well, I called in sick a lot last year and they didn't can me. I guess I'm pretty important if they did that."

4. Ambiguous/don't know:

Expresses vague or conflicting sentiments or doesn't express an opinion.

"I don't know...they replaced my check when I lost it...so I guess they care...but then...I don't really know."

Q23: Can you tell me anything you remember about your early feelings about the in-store manager? MANAGE

1. Critical:

Respondent describes managers as unnecessary. Reports that they do not help out when needed or that they don't do much. Managers may be viewed as abusive. This does not include criticisms of upper management when criticisms are limited to defending middle management, e.g., "They took our good managers away."

"My first feeling was about what they do. Most of the crew people do the work, you know. Why are they there? And, one time, I asked them, I said, "You're a manager, I mean you hardly do anything." He said, "Well, if a situation arises that's really hard to handle, I'll be responsible."
"He really gets on my nerves because he says if you want a day off in advance, put a note in my box and I'll try to give you that day off, so you put a note in his box and he always schedules you for that day. You ask him about it and he says he never got the note. So he goes and looks for it and it's still in the box. It's like he never even looks for it."

TABLE II (continued)

2. Affilial:

Respondent reports wanting to be liked by managers as friends. The emphasis here is on affection for managers, personal attachment, flirtations, repeated emphasis on friendliness. May be angry about withdrawal of affection or describe feeling upset about being yelled at. Competition with co-workers for managerial status is also included here.

"He said, "I have a good feeling about you. You have a nice smile." That made me feel really good. I felt that he was the most personable of all the managers, and that he really wanted to help; wanted me to like working there."
"They were really supportive because I had no friends there. _____ was really nice. He helped me out a lot, and he was my friend and wanted me to be comfortable and made sure that I was OK. He said if I had any problems with anybody that I could just come and tell him."

3. Cautious:

Respondents emphasize getting along but also report feeling scared. "They were nice but kept an eye on you." They may mention having to be nice to get more scheduled hours of work.

"Well, they were helpful in a way but also really more bossy. I didn't really understand anything, I didn't know some things, so I had to keep an open mind. I didn't want to get mad at anybody, cause I get mad at people easy."
"I was a little intimidated. When you first start a job, managers are almost scary sort of. You know, you better not do this or that or the manager's gonna catch you and you're going to get in trouble."
"I was kind of scared of her. Every time she'd come through the door I'd spill something. I was afraid of getting on her bad side."

Q28: Describe your interactions with the managers. INTMAN *

1. Positive or idealized:

Respondents express the need for having someone "in charge," or for developing personal friendships with managers, (as distinct from just "friendliness"). There is idealized quality about the respondent's image of hierarchy. They seem to take pleasure in flirtation with managers, being like family.

"I can call him up if there is a question, at home even. If we have something wrong that's a personal problem...I like that feeling that there is someone there for me in case something happens."
"Oh, the store manager is just like Dad, he's the big, you know. It's really nice to have a management team that you can really feel close to."

2. Other:

a. Formal compliance:

TABLE II (continued)

Respondent describes an ability to get along with managers, or a "friendliness" with management as opposed to a "friends" or special relationship.

> "With the managers it's more of a working relationship than with the crew people, who are more your friends. Some people are really good friends with the managers...really close."
> "I work with most of the managers good...most of the time...all but _____ . They don't usually say anything to me and I just try to get along with them."

> b. Avoidant or critical:

Respondents report attempts to stay out of the way of managers. Managers are seen as having the potential for taking out frustrations on the workers. Worker describes more negative interactions, describes being more comfortable or friendly with co-workers than bosses.

> "One time, this manager went out of the store and left with a rush and didn't bother to get us help or anything. We were short 2 people and he just left. That got me really mad and I told the district manager."
> "You feel a distance between you and the manager. I feel like they just take advantage of their position and slack off."

Organizational Structure and Change

Q31: Are there things that you can do to make your job easier in some way? EASE

> 1. Emotional/Social Resistances:

Responses fell into two subgroups:

> a. Emotion Management: Respondents report maintaining control over their own emotions, they "try not to lose it." Try to "get along" with everybody. They report learning not to care about the quality of the work and try to avoid watching the clock.

> "There are some things you have to just ignore. You have to learn not to get mad."
> "Not watch the clock...not get wrapped up in how the work is done right or wrong...and now I just have such a light attitude. I just do my job and kinda keep to myself...talk to people but not let McDonald's become my whole life."

> b. Social Interaction with co-workers or customers: These respondents report learning to work together as a team by creating team game strategies to lighten the pressure. Many report, for example, doubling up to lessen the pressure of the pace. The practice of "doubling up" is often resented by management who, unless the work is restructured, is forced to bare the sight of unoccupied workers.

> "Once in awhile two people will do the same job. That helps a little...but it's basically really boring when it's not busy."
> "Well, since we are all really close we can laugh and joke and when one of us is in a bad mood the other can bring us out of it."

TABLE II (continued)

    2. Technical Resistance:

        a. Resisting or altering the pace or nature of work: Respondents keep busy by staying ahead of the work/pace. Respondents try to look busy or look for ways to "get away from it all," find things to do before being told to do something. They may report developing shortcuts, altering prescribed order of tasks.

        "Keep busy...it makes the time pass faster...find odds and ends to do."

        b. Respondents describe altering the nature of work: developing a personal pride in the work.

        "You can sometimes, if its slow, clean things really well." "If you're a good worker, you'll stay busy." "I like it when it's busy."

Note: Care was taken to differentiate between "being busy" and "keeping busy." The former is a "pace" resistance, the latter a control over pace and emotional resistance, being "out of the managers eye."

Q32: Are there things that you can do with the other workers that make your job better in some way? BETTER

    1. Close/Cooperative:

Respondents here report attempting to develop positive emotional ties with their co-workers. They report trying to help each other out, share personal problems, share expressions of hostility against McDonald's. Working as a team is included here when this is described as a form of emotional support or reciprocity, e.g., "I help her and she helps me." Some respondents express dissatisfaction with competition in or outside the workplace.

    "If someone has problems, you help them out. They're friends. Sometimes they're short of money or in a bind and you help them out...lend them money. Some are young and if they need advice...I get asked advice a lot."
    "We do things in team work instead of individuals, it's a lot funner, and even if you make a game out of it. You race against each other."

    2. Aloof/Disdainful or Functional Amiability:

Respondents here report attempts to avoid getting on the "bad side" of co-workers or complaining about co-workers. The emphasis is on trying to "get along" with co-workers, trying to develop better working relations. The company baseball team was the primary example given of the effort put forth in this regard, though the interaction was not always considered positive. Some respondents seemed to enjoy the competition more than cooperative close relationships; some were critical of co-workers that didn't work as well or as hard. There was often little desire for interaction. "Getting to know people may be merely a way of avoiding boredom."

    "You have to work together. That's basically it. You know, ya just have to get along and work together. The baseball team is a good idea even though it's such

TABLE II (continued)

harsh competition once you get out there. I don't know what happens once we get out there, 'cause we are such good friends when we start...and then we get out there and, ya know, "You should have caught that fly ball...we just get mad at each other cause we don't win."

Q35: Are there things about the job which seem unfair or are not right? UNFAIR *

1. Exploitation concerns:

Respondents in this group were critical of speed ups, the redundancy of the work, cutting of hours, having to work off the clock, and/or the inadequacy of the food allowance. Favoritism was included here when the respondent identified feeling pitted against another worker or when the reasons for favoritism are unspecified. Also included were responses to feeling oppressed, i.e., being in a service position.

"People getting more hours than you when ou're equal and not getting more favors. That's not fair."
"Yeah...them hiring so many people and...not giving 'em enough hours. If they wouldn't hire so many people they could give 'um the hours...have you heard about that?"

2. Interpersonal concerns or non-critical:

a. Reports of not being treated nicely, being yelled at, wanting to be preferred by managers over co-workers were included here.

b. Noncritical.

"I think it's unfair that some of the managers are really rude...even though you try so hard...they're still really rude...and you can't ever really say what you feel."
"I don't really think there is anything unfair."

Q37: How would you deal with unfairness in your work? DEAL **

1. Talk to managers:

Respondents in this category emphasized appeals to the managerial hierarchy with complaints or issues of unfairness at work.

"I would probably talk to the manager...ask to sit down and talk to him."
"If you really want to get things done you go the the head office."

2. Endure; nothing can be done or passive resistance:

Most respondents in this category emphasized a helpless feeling in response to unfairness. They reported feeling hopeless and trapped by the company. Some respondents reported passive resistance, e.g., slowing the pace, giving away food, or attempting to solicit group solidarity.

TABLE II (continued)

"You really can't do anything. I mean you don't have any say. I've said stuff before and nothing ever changes. Never does! They are set in their ways and they're not going to change."
"A lot of things you really can't change. There isn't anything you can do and you just have to let it slide by."

Q38: Why do you think it is run the way it is? WHY *

1. Efficiency:

Respondents here viewed the company positively. Things running smoothly or the fast pace were viewed as virtues in and of themselves. These workers saw the "system" developed at McDonald's is more scientific and, thus, positive or progressive.

"For efficiency, for speed. They want to get out the most food in the fastest time possible."
"Efficiency, I think it's the most efficient way that it could be. It's gotta be fast to work well."
"Well, you're always going to have to try to have a high profit margin. That's number one."

2. Other:

   a. Profit:

Here, the company's motives are profit oriented. The system is set up as a means of increasing profits. Efficiency here is seen as a way of extracting more from worker, increasing sales, and/or maintaining a competitive advantage in the fast-food market. The response here is not positive. Respondents are critical of McDonald's public relations and marketing strategies and/or McDonald's emphasis on image or commercial factors.

"So they can make as much money as possible. I think that's the whole point."
"So they can compete (for profit) with other fast-food restaurants."

   b. Personal Virtues, Capabilities, or Inadequacy:

In this category the company's emphasis on efficiency is seen as in the service of a personal concern for customer satisfaction and/or a personal interest in the workers or customers. Included are responses with emphasis of the company's desire to "serve the community." Lack of personal care for workers or lack of attention to interpersonal issues also appears here.

"They want to make it easy on the customers and the kids who need an easygoing job. They've set it up so they can get it out fast and get those workers to work."
"I think the people go there for the service. Really fast service. The customers like it that way."

   c. Does not know or no opinion expressed:

TABLE II (continued)

Q39: Describe some ways in which your workplace could be made a better place to work.
IMPROVE

    1. Psychological/individual change:

Respondents here desire change in the style of management, better attitude, more
individual respect or status, pay based on individual effort, co-workers not pulling
their own weight.

    "I think, first of all, that there should be more respect, just for each person...and
    a lot more tolerance. Fair pay, definitely! And, rather the raises for...'cause
    they've been there for so long...people should get raises 'cause of the way they're
    doin' their work."

    "More spirited managers and crew...working together not tearing each other apart.
    The managers not yelling out every little thing the crew should do."

    2. More equity/change in the labor process:

Respondent identifies discontent about speedups, pressure, low wages, lack of control,
inequities of various kinds, lack of social cohesiveness amongst crew.

    "Maybe if they did have crew meetings, they'd find that a lot of people feel really
    strong about who gets raises and who doesn't. We work a lot harder than they do.
    (Their job) wrapping food is the easiest thing in the world."

    3. Change in work environment:

Respondent identifies discontent about the uniforms, crowded work areas, cleanliness,
crew room or bathroom.

    "Different uniforms, probably. I hate polyester. I hate working in a fast-food
    restaurant...really gross, really greasy."
    "Cleaner! That place is so dirty...and they need some ammonia. All they use to
    clean is water. If the health people come they'll be out of business."
    "A softer floor."

    4. Don't know/no change needed or possible:

    "I don't know. I think it's a pretty Ok place. I just want to work there and get a
    good reference when I leave."

Q41: Why do you think there is no employee union at McDonald's? UNION

    1. Youth of the workforce:

Respondents here feel that it is easier to exploit young people. They cite unemployment
among young people and/or that young people don't take working seriously.

TABLE II (continued)

"Well, it's just kids here. We're not willing to invest that much time. Unions are for truckers and older people."
"It's just teenagers working there and if they don't like it they can just put up or get out. It's not like it's a lifetime job or anything."

2. Unions as inconsistent with the structure of the work:

Here, respondents emphasize the assertion that workers are replaced easily, and/or that the low level of skill required at McDonald's makes workers interchangeable. They feel that part time workers have less investment in the work; they expect to be temporary. Thus, there is a high turnover rate which makes organizing more difficult. Respondent may focus on the greed of the owner, i.e., that employers don't want to pay. Sees the owner as thinking primarily about profit.

"Cause they would all go on strike if they had one (laughing.) They all know we're talking about it...ya know...let's picket...ya know...unfair treatment."
"Because you can get so many other people to fill in, do the work."
"Maybe it's because they don't want people to demand certain things and get um."

3. Other: Never occurred to respondent, doesn't know:

"I don't know. I don't really know much about a union."

Family Life and Work

Q45: What kind of work do your parents do? CLASS + *

1. Working Class or nonmanagerial middle class:

Respondents were identified as coming from working class backgrounds when the head of their parental household was employed in nonmanagerial wage work.

2. Middle Class:

Respondents were identified as coming from middle class backgrounds when the head of their parental household was either self-employed or employed in a supervisory, salaried position.

Q49: What happened if you didn't do your jobs at home? CON

1. Compliant approach:

Pride in complying with expectations. Compliance was seen as a successful means of avoiding criticism or avoiding being told what to do. Strict or harsh lessons of parents responded to positively or with admiration, e.g., "She was right" (in being so strict).

2. Matter of fact approach:

Respondents here describe the consequences of noncompliance without much subjective response. Some struggle or consequence of noncompliance is identified followed by an

TABLE II (continued)

compliance, e.g., "then we did it." The emphasis here is not so much on uniform, immediate compliance or extreme goodness as it is on compliance in face of some struggle of fear of the consequences. Fear of the consequence might take the form of extreme disarray, i.e., "If I didn't do it, it didn't get done."

3. Hostile/Conflictive:

Respondents here describe feeling put down a lot and are, as a result, critical or angry with a parent.

Q51: Were there things at home that helped you when you started working outside? HELP *

1. Necessity of work/self control:

The emphasis here is on the necessity of acquiring a working knowledge of concrete tasks, e.g., cleaning or sweeping and/or having to tolerate difficult working conditions. Respondents often felt they had learned to get along with others and to tolerate abuse or favoritism. They felt they had to work, e.g., "I didn't have things given to me."

> "I learned hoe to take criticism pretty well and there's a lot of times when the crew or managers will just blow up or something."
> "Just that you work 'cause you get paid and you'd get paid unless you work for it."

2. Abstract capabilities and/or Self development:

The emphasis for these workers is on having acquired self direction, having learned to "deal with people," "communicate," "take initiative," "get respect." Learning to handle "different behaviors" or "different people's attitudes" was a frequent comment. References to the necessity of work were illustrated by contrasting it with awareness of available privileges, e.g., "I had to do things because we didn't have a maid."

> "To make sure you did your best and not to cut corners on it. Make sure they recognize that you did your best or tried to."
> "We all had to help out around the house, cleaning up after meals and everything. I learned to work like that...we couldn't really afford a maid or anything."

+ Indicates predictor
* Indicates that responses yielded significant results
** Indicates dependent measure yielding significance in crosstabulations with more than one predictor.

<center>RESULTS</center>

Tasks and Training

Class Differences in Approaches to Training. Five of the 21 comparisons made with regard to social class and the four major areas of investigation, i.e., tasks and training, relations with managers and co-workers, organizational structure and change, and family life and work, yielded significant results. Questions and probes for attitudes and early feelings in response to the training period were useful in gaining information about class differences with regard to perceived social hierarchies at work, work distribution, and early strategies for coping with workplace pressures.

In response to the question, "Tell me what you remember about your early feelings about the training period," two categories are identified. First, the technical approach represents a focus on the details of the training period and an interest in how machinery and equipment work. These workers focus on the technical structure of the tasks. The second category could not be defined by any inclusive thematic content and is thus seen as other. However, three subthemes were considered which seem to be linked by an affective component. A competitive approach represents an awareness of the hierarchical nature

of workplace relations and a preoccupation with competitive advantage vis a vis co-workers. An <u>enthusiastic</u> approach reflects the worker's excitement of having begun a new job or positive feelings about the training period with particular emphasis on the "newness" of the experience. The third subcategory, a <u>critical</u> approach, refers to a focus on abusive or exploitive aspects of work, e.g., dangerousness of the work, the menial and degrading aspects of the work. Results indicate that 55% of middle class respondents adopted a technical approach to learning during the training period in contrast to 25% of their working class co-workers. Working class respondents were more likely to adopt one of the "other" approaches to training, x^2 (1) = 3.80, p < 05.

Social Relations with Co-workers and Management

<u>Class Differences in Relations with Managers and Co-workers</u>. The major predictions of this study focuses on class differences in relations with managers and co-workers. The crosstabulations of social class categories with those regarding relations with co-workers (class x co-worker, class x better) produced insignificant results. However, crosstabulations of data regarding

social class variables in relations with management resulted in a significantfinding. In response to the question, "Tell me about your interactions with the managers," (followed by probes for further explanations and examples), three identifiable themes emerged. The first category, positive or idealized, represents a tendency to form positive attachments to managers or to focus on the positive attributes of managers. An interest in forming a strong, personal attachment is seen here. The other major category, other, is subdivided into two themes. Formal compliance represents a desire to get along with managers in order to maintain a good working relationship. Here, artificially constructed relationships serve the purpose of "getting along." The operative distinction between this sub-theme and the former is that of "friendliness" (in the latter category) versus "wanting to be close friends" (in the former category). The second subtheme, avoidant or critical, involves expressed efforts to maintain distance, focusing on conflictual relations with managers, or rejecting managerial control. Consistent with my first prediction, 85% of the working class respondents fell into one of the two subcategories termed "other" in contrast to just 50% of the middle class respondents. Further, 50% of middle class respondents reported "positive of idealized" relationships with managers in contrast to just 15% of the working class respondents, x^2 (1) = 16.62, p < 001.

Organizational Structure and Change

Class Differences in Approaches to Resistance and
Mechanisms for Change. Class differences in resistance to
workplace conditions emerged from two key questions.
First, in response to the question "Why do you think the
company is run the way it is?", participants were asked to
identify a rationale for working conditions and the labor
process thereby drawing on their capacity to conceptualize
social processes and social institutions. Two dominant
themes were associated with this response. The first
category efficiency represents the view that the production
systemat McDonald's is scientific and thus positive or
progressive or that the way the company operates is proven
efficient and therefore "good." The second category is
classified other. Efficiency is described critically as a
means of getting more out of the workers, increasing sales,
and/or maintaining a competitive advantage in the fast-food
market, e.g., "It's done this way because they need to be
number one." Results of this crosstabulation suggested a
middle class emphasis on efficiency, i.e., on the positive
aspects of the McDonald's system. Eighty-one percent of
the middle class respondents fell into the first category
in contrast to 38% of working class adolescents,
x^2 (1) = 6.86, p < Ø1.

In response to the question, "How would you deal with unfairness in your work?", respondents were asked to comment on their ideas about the potential and means for change. Two main themes emerged in the analysis of responses to this question. The first category, communication with management, focuses on communicating directly with management with the expectation that management would respond favorably to these efforts. The second category other, is a combination of two subthemes. The first subtheme, endure, involves an endorsement of passive resistance or stoicism in dealing with workplace grievances. The second subtheme characterized a small percentage of the responses (12.5%). It involves some form of individual or group defiance in dealing with workplace grievances. Resistance in this context did not always refer to a rejection of general social imperatives, e.g., resistance could emerge as a rejection of structural constraints in the workplace while preserving behaviors generally considered socially positive. For example, workers reported giving away extra catsup packets or ignoring time constraints while talking with customers. Eighty percent of middle class respondents fell into the first category in contrast to 40% of their working class co-workers, x^2 (1) = 6.66, p < 05.

Motivations for Seeking Employment, Unfairness and
Resistance. In attempting to gather information about the
relationship between motivations for seeking employment and
the relations of work several exploratory crosstabulations
were performed. Of the total (21 comparisons), two
produced significant results. Participants were asked,
"Why did you decide to find a job at all?" Two categories
emerged in responses to this question. First, the search
for a job was motivated by subsistence needs. In this
context subsistence refers to a need to work either to
augment their parent's wage or to provide basic income for
their own necessities. The second category,
self-development or extras refers to those responses where
job search was motivated by the desire for either "spending
money," or money for college and/or that work is a context
for learning skills useful in developing work related
social skills. Initial assessment of the data revealed
that thirty-two percent of all participants were working to
provide a means for subsistence, sixty-seven percent worked
for extra money and/or in the interest of self-development.

In the chi-square analysis, there was a significant
interaction between job need (whyjob) and two other
variables. First, in an effort to explore the adolescent's
perception of the workplace grievances, participants were
asked the following question, "Is there anything about your
job which seems unfair or is not right?" Two categories

were identified. In the first category, <u>exploitation</u> <u>concerns</u> are the primary focus. Respondents are critical of speed-ups, the redundancy of the work, cutting of hours, working off the clock, or food allowance inadequacy. The second category, <u>Interpersonal concerns or non-critical</u> consists of two subthemes. A preoccupation with <u>interpersonal concerns</u> is the main focus of the first subtheme. Not being treated nicely, being yelled at, or wanting to be preferred by managers over co-workers are concerns found in these responses. A <u>non-critical</u> <u>position</u>, e.g., defending of management and management's prerogatives, characterizes the second subtheme. Typically, respondents here view middle management as a benevolent influence. Management's overall aim is to provide a service to the public; the personal costs to employees are understood and accepted as fundamental and necessary. Forty-five percent of respondents working to meet basic financial needs fell in to the first category in contrast to 25% of respondents working to meet additional living expenses. Results indicate that respondents who work primarily for subsistence reasons were more likely to identify concerns about being exploited in their work, x^2 (1) = 6.84, p > 01.

While adolescents working to meet subsistence needs were more likely to identify the exploitive aspects of the work than those working for "extra" money, these

adolescents were also more likely to stoically endure perceived unfairness at work. Two major categories, one single category and two subthemes are associated with the question, "How would you deal with unfairness in your work?" These include stoic endurance, and other. Subthemes of other were (a) talking to management, and (b) individual or group defiance. Fifty-four percent of respondents working to provide for basic needs fell into the stoic endurance category while just 15% of respondents working for other reasons fell into the same category. Results indicate that workers who are working for basic necessities are more likely to report stoic endurance as a means of dealing with unfairness in the workplace, x^2 (1) = 8.99, p < Ø1.

Age Differences and Upward Mobility. Of the 21 comparisons made with age as the predictor, all but a single crosstabulation were insignificant. One question in the series of those aimed at gathering information about working adolescents' knowledge of the organizational structure produced significant though not surprising results. In response to the question "How do people move to higher level jobs?" respondents 17 years of age and older were more likely to report some knowledge of this process. They reported that either one moves up in the company through individual merit, i.e., that it is

dependent upon the abilities and motivation of the
individual worker, or the extent or length of experience,
or that the potential for moving up is minimal, i.e., that
individual merit is irrelevant and/or that moving up is
dependent upon the likes and dislikes of management and,
furthermore, is not influenced or altered by individual
effort. In contrast, 15 and 16 year old workers reported
no knowledge of the organizational structure, they simply
said they did not know how one moves up. Results indicate
that 44% of the respondents 15 and 16 years of age reported
no knowledge of the means of upward mobility while less
than 1% of the respondents over 17 gave similar responses,
x^2 (1) = 11.51, p < 01.

Family Life and Work

Questions about the carryover of family life into the
workplace guided a major part of the study's organization.
Social class interacted with responses to one question
addressing the carryover of family life into the workplace.
In response to the question, "Were there things that you
learned at home that helped you when you started working
outside?," themes fell into two categories. First, a focus
on the necessity of work or self-discipline indicate an
emphasis on the mandatory nature of housework, the need to
tolerate or "control" feelings about family work, e.g.
abuse and/or favoritism, or the "need" to work for what

they had at home. These understandings associated with housework are viewed as helpful in adapting to the workplace. The second category, abstract capabilities or self-development, represents an emphasis on learning in the family to get along with people, communicate with others, or take initiative with others. The need for respect in relation to family work emerges from the view that self-respect or pride in one's work can be accentuated by contrasting it with an awareness of available privileges, e.g., "I had to do it all since we didn't have a maid." Eighty-five percent of working class respondents fell into the first category in contract to 45% of middle class respondents. Working class respondents tended to emphasize the necessity of work and self-discipline whereas middle class respondents more often focused on self-development and abstract capabilities associated with family work, x^2 (1) = 5.38, p < Ø5.

TABLE III

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS

Question #	Predictor	Dependent Measure	(df)	x^2
7	class	train	(1)	3.8Ø*
28	class	intman	(1)	16.62***
37	class	deal	(1)	6.66*
38	class	why	(1)	6.86**
51	class	help	(1)	5.38*
35	whyjob	unfair	(1)	6.84**
37	whyjob	deal	(1)	8.99**
13	age	move	(1)	11.51***

* p. <.Ø5   ** p. <.Ø1   *** p. <.ØØ1

In concluding a review of the results of this study it
is important to clarify the overall statistical
significance of the data. Of the 55 questions with
potential variability in responses, n=5 significant results
were obtained when looking at social class as a predictor.
As this is roughly 10%, or 5% more than would have been
expected by chance alone, one may conclude that the social
class predictor is probably an important determining factor
in the outcome of the data. However, the n=2 significant
comparisons each for <u>age</u> and <u>whyjob</u> are no greater than
would be expected by chance alone; therefore I am inclined
to view these results with more caution.

CHAPTER III

DISCUSSION

The interview schedule followed an outline of four
general areas of interest related to adolescents and the
fast-food segment of service work: 1) tasks and training,
2) relations with managers and co-workers, 3) conceptions
of organizational structure and change, and 4) family
life. As illustrated in Figure 1, social class differences
emerged in all four areas. Each of the four areas is
presented graphically in the figure. Age differences and
differences related to motivations for seeking employment
were found to be related to perceived notions of
organizational structure and change. Figure 2 provides a
graphic representation of these findings.

A series of theoretical questions surrounding the
work-family linkage fueled this research from the start.
Previous research findings associated with social class
background raise questions about the nature of the
relationship between work and family. While more evidence
has surfaced in favor of the "generalization hypothesis" or
one which suggests that the work environment is an arena
into which family life extends or "spills over," (Pleck,

1977; Rosenberg, 1979; Mortimer and Lorence, 1979) others suggest that work and family life are linked by a kind of compensating dynamic. That is, the workplace compensates for the needed but absent functions of the family (Piotrkowski, 1978).

The predominance of one model over the other has not been established. It would seem that both models operate in varying degrees and with varying frequency in family and work linkages. In the present study of class differences, for example, results in the area of "tasks and training" suggest that values acquired in the family may "spillover" into the workplace. Adolescents from the middle class were more likely to adopt a technical approach to training. While the results of this study suggest the predominance of a "spillover" effect, questions about the predominance of one model over the other are perhaps not as important as the factors sustaining the existence of each. Some of the factors I have identified will be addressed in the following discussion of the results of this study.

FIGURE 1

FINDINGS RELATED TO SOCIAL CLASS

```
|           (*) middle class      (#) working class     |
|                                                       |
|100     (1)       (2)        (3)      (4)       (5)    |
|-     TRAIN     INTMAN      DEAL     WHY       HELP     |
|-                            *        *               # |
|-                            /        /               / |
|-       *                    /        /               / |
|-50     /        *           /        /               / |
|-       /        /           /   #    /       *       / |
|-       /        /           /   /    /       /       / |
|-       /   #    /           /   /    /   #   /       / |
|-       /   /    /   #       /   /    /   /   /       / |
|- Ø    _/_ _/_  _/_ _/_     _/_ _/_  _/_ _/_ _/_ _/_  |
|       Tasks      Social    Organizational  Family Life |
|     & Training  Relations    Structure      and Work  |
```

MAJOR AREAS OF INVESTIGATION

Figure 1. Percentage of respondents reporting (1) a technical approach to the training period, (2) a positive or idealized relationship with management, (3) endorsing communication with management in dealing with unfairness, (4) a positive view of efficiency as a rationale for the McDonald's operational structure, (5) emphasis on the learning of self-control or the necessity of work through family work. (See Table 1, questions 7, 28, 37, 38, and 51 for the interview questions.)

FIGURE 2

FINDINGS RELATED TO MOTIVATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

```
-100
 -
 -
 -                                    (#1)        (#2)
 -                                    UNFAIR      DEAL
-50                                               *
 -            * basic needs    *         /
 -            # extra money    /         /
 -                            /    #      /
 -                           /    /      /     #
 - 0  _____   / /        / /
           Tasks        Social     Organizational    Family
       and Training    Relations     Structure     Life & Work

               MAJOR AREAS OF INVESTIGATION
```

Figure 2. Percentage of respondents reporting
unfairness in the form of (1) exploitation, and (2)
percentage of respondents endorsing endurance as a
means of dealing with on-the-job unfairness.
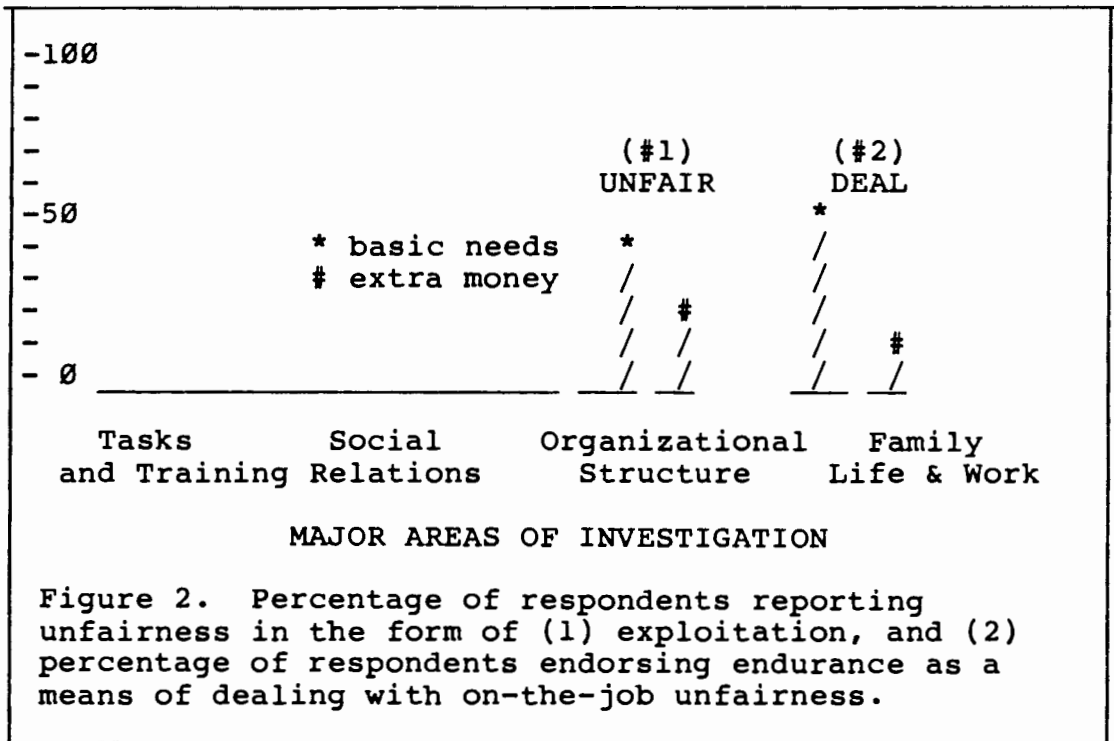
Tasks and Training

Several questions at the beginning of the interview
schedule probed for the participants' retrospective
accounts of experiences leading to work at McDonald's. A
series of questions followed that focused on the
respondents' experience of the training period and the

nature of work tasks. The interest here was in assessing
respondents' descriptions of their earliest memories of
work. I focused initially on the entry period, reasoning
that new reactions to the work would be most salient at
this time, as would prior influences on conceptions of
work. While questions about reliability of retrospective
accounts have been raised (Robinson, 1976, p. 63), there
is also evidence that individuals are able to accurately
recall psychologically salient experiences, particularly
those experiences which have meaning for self-concept and
that mobilize affect (Tulving, 1972).

Middle Class respondents were more likely to adopt a
technical approach to the training period. This finding
may relate to class differences in the degree to which this
kind of technological mastery is unique or challenging.
Working class women may know many other women who run cash
registers, take food orders, cook, etc. Having become more
familiar with this kind of work, they may view the learning
of the skills necessary to master the technical tasks with
less enthusiasm and/or with less anxiety. Hence, working
class women may focus on some other, possibly
sociopolitical, factors affecting their security at work.

Social Relations with Management and Co-workers

This series of questions focused on social relational
aspects of work, probing for differences in respondents'

views of co-workers, managers, and store owners. Initial
feelings about social organization were established here as
well as an assessment of the kinds and quality of alliances
formed through this kind of work. Here, class differences
were expected to emerge in respondents' accounts of their
cooperation with versus resistance to organizational
hierarchy in the workplace.

Relations With Managers. While social class was not a
significant predictor of relations with co-workers, class
differences were related to female adolescents' relations
with managers. The working class adolescents were more apt
to maintain emotionally distant relationships with managers
whereas middle class adolescents were more apt to seek
positive affective ties with managers. Earlier, in the
discussion of developmental factors associated with these
results, I addressed claims that working class parents
focus more on overt behavior and appeals to parental
authority and that middle class parents more often focus on
motivational factors and appeals to feelings in
disciplining children. Results of the present study
suggest that there is another side to these findings
concerning childrearing practices. Perhaps working class
children learn a two-sided lesson: one must develop a
capacity for submitting to authority but one must also
learn to resist authority. If one becomes emotionally

here was to probe respondents' overall reactions to the
work setting, both positive and negative, as well as to
identify motivational issues related to the desire for
change.

Class Differences in Approaches to Resistance/
Mechanisms for Change. Middle class workers were more
likely to view management positively than were working
class workers. The lower frequency of close relationships
with managers among working class respondents is a finding
with implications for understanding resistance. As stated
earlier, it may be the case that working class adolescents
learn a meaningful lesson about the risks of forming
emotional ties with people in authority and for that reason
are apt to express resistance in the workplace in the form
of emotional distance from managers. Additional findings
in the area of resistance and mechanisms for change in the
workplace contribute to a broader understanding of the
basis for this emotional distance.

Middle class adolescents were more likely to identify
the positive aspects of efficiency as a primary rationale
for McDonald's work structure than were working class
respondents. Thus, further study of the relationship
between attitudes toward management and perceived rationale
for McDonald's system could shed light on the mechanisms
used to effect change. Middle class workers may in
addition to having a more positive, less threatening

experience of authority, (see this discussion, Relations with Managers) draw on the positive aspects of efficiency, i.e., some inherent value of the structure of the workplace, when making decisions about approaching management emotionally. They may be more likely to approach management emotionally because management is perceived as safe, non-threatening AND because they believe that the company's principles are morally benign or positive.

In addition to holding positive attitudes toward management and viewing the organizational structure as inherently good, middle class respondents were more likely to emphasize the importance of communication with management in response to perceived unfairness than working class respondents. Working class respondents were more likely than middle class respondents to endorse endurance of perceived unfairness. A small number of respondents from both middle and working class groups endorsed developing an individual or group form of resistance.

One contribution to an understanding of results of this kind is offered by Kohn (1977) in his discussion of class differences in conformity. Kohn found in his research on class determinants of orientation to work that the working classes were seen as more likely to embrace conformity to prescribed order in society, "hold a more authoritarian view of what is acceptable behavior, and will

more rigidly reject behavior that does not conform to the acceptable." Middle class workers, in contrast, are seen as more likely to be open-minded and self-directed in their judgments about social values and in their tolerance of nonconformity (Kohn, 1977, p. 141; Christie, 1954). This aspect of class divergence is seen as having its origins in child-rearing practice and is reinforced by workplace experience. The results of the present study could be seen as supportive of Kohn's position that respondents from middle class families extend self-direction into work by approaching management with perceived unfairness, i.e., boldly approaching management with a complaint rather than simply absorbing the problem. Respondents from working class backgrounds, in contrast, demonstrate an acceptance of the rules, i.e. adopting less powerful, more passive forms of resistance or stoic endurance.

There is another way of looking at Kohn's findings, however. One argument suggests that conformity in Kohn's argument is too narrowly defined. Kohn (1977) defines conformity in terms of focus. Self-direction, according to Kohn, focuses on internal standards for behavior; conformity on externally imposed rules. Self-direction implies a concern with internal dynamics—one's own and other people's. Conformity is defined by an allegiance to the dictates of authority and a sensitivity to one's

peers. The present study raises questions about the meaning of "conformity."

If we look at the workplace as a setting heavily regulated by hierarchical channels for registering complaints, stoic endurance begins to take on the character of a self-regulated means of coping with workplace grievances. While the question of the respondent's underlying motives for enduring, i.e., a means of rebellion vs. maintaining and approval of the status quo were not examined, enduring working conditions cannot be necessarily equated with overall conformity. I suggest that conformity may be as much a characteristic of managerial work as among the working class. Likewise, self-direction may also abound in the working class group where rebellion may take the form of passive resistance (Bowles and Gintis, 1976).

While the enduring of working conditions is a more passive stance than acting upon unfairness overtly, a distinction can be drawn between expressing a willingness to participate in maintaining the status quo versus feeling internally rebellious but nonetheless restrained by authority, e.g., management's prescribed rules. Stoic endurance can be seen in this light as an expression of resistance. The present study falls short of making a full assessment of respondent's understanding of conformity. Underlying motives were only weakly ascertained through, for example, Question 31. (See Table I) Thus, the

assumption that "endurance" equals "conformity" in this study is premature as is the related assumption that the following of prescribed "chains of command" in reporting unfairness are antecedents of "self-direction" and "open-mindedness."

   Motivations for Seeking Employment, Unfairness and Resistance. With regard to motivations for seeking employment found in this study, not surprisingly, there are differences in how female working adolescents view unfairness and how they deal with it once it is conceptualized. These differences appear to be partially rooted in the adolescent's financial dependency on the job. These adolescents working to meet subsistence needs were far more likely to identify concerns about being exploited in their work. Furthermore, they were more likely to endure the unfairness than were adolescent's working for "extra" money.

   Greenberger and Steinberg (1982) report that fewer than ten percent of working teenagers contribute a substantial portion of their money earned at work to support their families. In contrast, the sample drawn here consisted of a relatively high percentage (40%) of workers who were employed as a means of meeting subsistence needs. However, it should be noted that these results are based on the subjective experience of the respondent. Further, the

lack of a significant relationship of job need to social class suggests that these findings relate more strongly to respondents' feeling the need to work than to the respondent's degree of privilege. It may be that the actual circumstances of their financial reliance on their jobs were inconsistent with their perceptions. However, I reasoned that their experience of the work was based largely on their experience of feeling motivated to work by financial "need" versus financial "interest."

The outcome of this area of the study might easily be explained by the obvious--that working to meet financial obligations in the form of subsistence is inherently a more precarious and limiting position than working for the purpose of "gaining work experience" of the world or "developing social skills." Subjectively, these restrictions might take the form of feeling less powerful, less in control and less willing to take risks (Garson, 1977; Nelkin and Brown, 1984). Thus, an adolescent working to meet subsistence needs would be far less likely to jeopardize her job by acting on perceived unfairness.

The second finding in this area might be explained using a similar line of reasoning but with an additional factor determining the final outcome. I found that while adolescents working for subsistence needs were less likely to act on perceived unfairness at work they were more likely to view exploitation as the primary form of

unfairness in their work. Adolescents working for "extra money" or for self-development on the other hand, focused on either unfairness originating in the interpersonal dynamics at work or they were non-critical of the work. While job security is the chief concern for adolescents working for basic needs and job security is increased by not challenging the "status quo," this is not incompatible with the view that the work is exploitive. The pressure to conform may be only skin deep in this situation where financial pressures guide the argument as it is in Kohn's (1977) discussion of social class variables. That is, it seems that motives for working may be deferentially predictive of worker orientation. Those adolescents working to meet basic needs may conform to prescribed rules of behavior while underlying ideas about equity are more rebellious.

Age Correlates in Knowledge of the Organizational Structure. Not surprisingly, older adolescents were more likely to have worked longer at McDonald's and were also more likely to report some knowledge of the organizational structure. Older respondents reported some ideas about how to climb the hierarchical ladder independent of their inclination to do so. Apparently, the work provides a means of gathering information about upward mobility. There was, however a large discrepancy in the reported

means of moving up. Older workers were nearly evenly
divided between viewing promotion as (a) largely out of
their control and based on the likes and dislikes of the
management, and (b) based on individual merit, an
aspiration largely dependent on individual effort and
motivation (42% and 55%, respectively)

Family Life and Work

Variables related to class were of primary interest in
the study from the outset. Social class was conceptualized
as a defining factor of family life and contributes to the
interpretive framework of socialization into the
workplace. Questions probing for class background were
followed by questions related to the structure of work in
the home as well as the consequences of noncompliance to
work rules in the home. This allowed me to explore
additional factors related to family life, which influenced
particular responses to work.

Class Differences in the Family Work-Related Values.
In the area of family life, middle class adolescents were
more likely to identify opportunities for learning
self-development in their family work environment than were
working class respondents. Working class girls valued
learning about the necessity of maintaining some kind of
gainful employment. They report a sense of primary

financial dependency on gainful work that is not often present in the reports of middle class adolescents. This finding is most consistent with research which indicates that working class parents are more likely to value the obedience, neatness, and cleanliness whereas middle class parents value curiosity, happiness, consideration, and self-control (Duvall, 1946; Kohn, 1977, p. 21). Further, working class parents' values center on adherence to external prescriptions, middle class values on self-expression. My research indicates that these values, embedded in the conditions of the lives of people of different social strata, are carried over into the workplace and are a determining factor in the judgments made about work. Thus, working class workers emerging from homes in which obedience, etc. are emphasized report that these tools were helpful in mastering work tasks. Likewise middle class workers were more likely to identify the learning of skills conducive to self-development, e.g., consideration of others feelings, when judging the usefulness of family lifestyle in work adaptation.

CONCLUSIONS

One aspect of the study which is important to address
here is the question of the importance of present class
position over that of the family of origin. Kohn found
that present class position is substantially more important
in determining values and orientation than are class
origins (Kohn, 1977, p. 138). This has implications for
the outcome of my study in some important ways. As stated
above, Kohn found that his working class interviewees were
more likely to judge jobs by their extrinsic aspects than
were middle class workers. I found, as categories were
identified through content analysis of responses to the
questions about the training period, that respondents
commented about specific intrinsic aspects of the work,
e.g., hours of work per week, break time allotment.
Substantially broader attention to the extrinsic aspects of
the job lead to some speculation about the importance here
of present class position. These respondents are all
employed in working class jobs, e.g., working at
McDonald's. Thus, extrinsic values are for them generally
more salient (though not yet entirely assimilated among
middle class respondents) than intrinsic values. One
important aspect of the orientation period for middle class

adolescent workers may be socialization into the working class. This revamping of values may not be an easy task, however. The tenacity of the values acquired through class origins is substantiated by the observation that despite the impact of present work conditions our middle class adolescents entering the work force maintained strong class distinctions as, for example, the finding on perceived closeness toward management illustrates (class x intman). As Kohn's research suggests, class matters more in determining whether workers are forced to focus on the extrinsic than in determining whether they are free to focus on the intrinsic (Kohn, 1977).

I was not able to judge, of course, whether these same effects would be obtained with class comparisons of male adolescents or in a comparative study of other types of workers. The tendency for both our middle class and working class adolescents to emphasize cooperation in describing interactions with co-workers does suggest that gender effects may override social class effects in this area.

It may also be that the shared experience of fast-food work does promote a capacity for group solidarity, quasi-independently of family background, and that this would be true for males and females. However, this emphasis on cooperation and mutual support was also a more tenuous stance for our middle class adolescents. The findings presented here underscore the importance of

attending more closely to social class as a determinant of social cognition in adolescence and as a mediator of intragender differences.

Although the data were consistent with one of my initial predictions, there were a number of surprising results. The first of my two initial hypotheses seems to be unfounded in the results of this study. Adolescents from working class families were expected to be more cooperative and adolescents from middle class families more competitive in their stances toward co-workers. This outcome disconfirms my first prediction. Other surprising findings include a striking lack of consistent social class differences in the adolescents' perception of their own importance vis a vis the management (see question 21, Table I) or in their rationale for the absence of unionization among workers in McDonald's franchises (See question 41, Table I). It seems likely, in retrospect, that the absence of social class differences in some of the comparisons may be due to the fact that for most of the adolescents there are very clear barriers to upward mobility in the fast-food industry as a whole. This factor, built into the structure of the work may limit working class and middle class workers differentially. Also, most of the women interviewed were not considering a career at McDonald's. It is possible that this sample characteristic removed any need for the women of any class

to be competitive with each other. That is, thinking in terms of the structure of the workplace I might have predicted no significant difference.

In terms of the exploratory predictors, job need (whyjob) and age, the lack of significant results suggest that, as one possibility, the sample was not sufficiently heterogeneous to produce differences. Most of the young women working at McDonald's are not working there because they really wanted to work in the fast-food industry. Their motives for seeking employment were as a group based on needing the extra money for something. In addition, the age range studied here was not wide (16 years to 19 years). Had the study focused on a more heterogeneous group in either or both of these considerations the outcome may have been more impressive.

A number of methodological obstacles common in field studies of this kind may have contributed to the lack of significant results. First, there was the problem of forming an interviewing alliance with the respondent. Opportunities for gaining the trust of the interviewee were limited to the initial on-site introduction, a subsequent telephone contact to arrange a time and place for the interview, and the interview itself. Despite care taken to convey a sense of the confidential nature of the interview, the obtrusiveness of a tape recorded interview, may have contributed to a less than frank relationship with me.

Secondly, the interview was lengthy and may have become tiresome for the respondent toward the end of the interview. I was aware of my own fatigue both with regard to the length of each interview and to the duration of the entire study. Future studies of this kind will require more careful attention to these factors: weighing the benefits of the consistency of a single interviewer against the problem of interviewer fatigue, and the importance of interviewer rapport.

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APPENDIX A

INITIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following six research questions underlie the interview schedule. The primary aim throughout the study was to determine how teenage workers conceptualize their work experiences. The following questions served as a guideline for the formation of the final interview schedule.

1. What expectations do young people have for the work they are applying to do.

2. What are the worker's perceptions of the work they are supposed to do?

3. What are the workers' perceptions of what their managers do, including different levels of management.

4. What are the workers' perceptions of the intrinsic rewards of work?

5. What are the workers' perceptions of why work is structured in the way it is? Can they conceive of alternatives?

6. What values/attitudes acquired within the family contribute to responses to work discipline or forms of resistance?

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

All participants were required to consent to be tape recorded. Participants under 18
were required to verify parental consent. The consent form is printed below.

Dear McDonald's employee,

We are asking for your participation in a study being conducted by Dr. Jan Haaken and a
graduate student, Joyce Korschgen, from the Department of Psychology at Portland State
University. This study will explore the experiences and concerns of teenagers who work
in the fast-food industry. We are also interested in family experiences which influence
responses to the workplace.

Your contribution to this study is of extreme value. Although people have written books
and articles on teenage employment, very little attention has been given to how teenagers
understand and feel about their work experiences. Therefore, your participation will
contribute to a new area of study.

Your participation in this study will involve being interviewed by Joyce Korschgen. The
interview will be tape-recorded so we can accurately transcribe what you say and will
take approximately one hour. You may select a comfortable place to be interviewed
outside of the work setting. In the interview you will be asked a series of questions
about your work experiences within your family and at McDonald's.

Of course, your participation in this study will be kept entirely confidential. Your
name will not be tape recorded and this informed consent form will be kept separately
from your interview. While you may not directly benefit from participation in this
study, it has been our experience that interviews of this type can be rewarding for
participants.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Janice Haaken, Ph.D.   Joyce Korschgen

Employee   _____
Signature   _____
Parent (if under 16) _____
Signature   _____

CATEGORY DEFINITIONS OF RESPONSES WITH MINIMAL VARIANCE

Background

Q3: How did you choose McDonald's for work?

The most frequent response to this question indicated that the job search was based on the hiring frequency of the enterprise. Less frequently, respondents mentioned a perceived low level of skill required of the work, geographic mobility/proximity, or the flexibility of work hours.

Q4: At the time you applied, what choices did you have for work?

All indicated that they had few or no other choices for work.

Q6: At the time you applied, what did you expect it would be like working there?

Responses were generally mixed among positive and negative expectations. Positive expectations included thinking they would get a lot of hours of work in per day, that the work would be fun, fast-paced. Negative expectations centered around the embarrassment of working in fast-food, that the work would be extremely difficult, boring, dangerous, and/or stressful.

Tasks and Training

Q8: Describe the order of tasks that you learned during the training period.

Responses to this question were grossly similar. The order of learning was always described (nearly verbatim) as follows. "First, I watched video tapes about the lot and lobby, then they put you out there (in the lobby) for the rest of the day. The next day you watch the video on fries, then counter, cash register." Girls are rarely trained initially for grill work.

Q10: What was your first assignment?

Responses to this question were quite invariant. Workers are trained initially to attend to cleaning the parking lot and lobby area. Many mentioned the feeling of isolation that they experienced during this period.

APPENDIX C (continued)

Q12: What kinds of decisions can you make about the work?

Responses to this question indicated that all respondents searched
for some means of control through decision-making at work.
Decision-making efforts were described in several different ways.
However, the theme of making decisions that would help reduce the
stress of the work was nearly universal, i.e., managing emotional
reactions to the pace, trying to stay calm. Not infrequently, this
response was accompanied by references to technical control and/or
resistance to managerial control, i.e., changing the order of tasks,
timing oneself against another worker, setting up game strategies,
slowing the pace, giving away extra sauce.

Mobility

Q14: How far up do you want to move?

Results of this probe were as follows: 28 respondents reported no
interest in moving up; 5 reported some interest, and 4 reported high
interest in moving to a higher position at McDonald's.

Q16: Can you tell me anything you remember about your early feelings
about the other employees?

Themes similar to those of question 15.

Social Organization

Q19: What do you know about how the company is set up and how this
store relates to the corporation?

Most didn't know or give vague answers. Some discussion of corporate
inspections and tight control by owner. Respondents often made
reference to management's emphasis on petty details.

Q20: How do the owners influence what goes on in the store.

Most have vague impression of owner. He is the one that signs the
checks. Aware of tension when owner comes around. Owner tends to
demonstrate the mechanics of french fry preparation.

Q22: What differences are there between the in-store manager and the
franchise supervisor?

Most did not know how to answer this question, who the franchise
manager was, and/or that there were any differences other than
divisions of power and authority.

APPENDIX C (continued)

Q24: Can you tell me anything you remember about your early feelings about the franchise supervisor?

Most reported reluctance to approach the franchise supervisor or did not know who he was.

Q25: What is the store manager's job?

Mostly general descriptions of technical tasks and keeping order or helping out crew. Some reference to the freedom the manager has, e.g., "The higher up you go the less work you do."

Q26: Do you think there is a need for a store manager?

All see managers as necessary but give different reasons and some express a degree of ambivalence. A few respondents felt that the store could be run by the workers alone. There was some criticism of the extensive layering of management, i.e., too many managers or too many levels of management.

Q29: How do they get people to do things?

Most frequently, respondents said that the managers "just tell you to do it--and then you do." This response was sometimes accompanied by references to some vague injustice or discomfort with subordination.

Q30: Are there incentives the company offers you to work harder?

Most identified "pay raises" as the typical incentive. Occasionally a respondent would mention the "employee of the month" program, frequently with some degree of contempt for the program or embarrassment about having been a chosen "winner" of the award.

Resistance

Q33: What kinds of things do you do after work?

Responses varied according to the time at which the worker got off work. Workers who worked the late shift tried to relax and sleep while those who worked mornings or evenings did homework, prepared meals, or watched TV. Trying to relax was the most common theme.

Q34: Do employees have an organized way of talking about their concerns away from the managers?

APPENDIX C (continued)

Most commonly, respondents refer to the "crew meetings" set up by and attended by management. This response does not really answer the question of whether employees are encouraged to have meetings away from management. My further occasional probes for information specifically about such worker organized meetings found little evidence of any sustained or consistent organization. So-called "crew meetings" were irregular, infrequent, and according to respondents nonproductive. The distribution of responses was as evenly split between those who said that meetings were theoretically part of the job but that during their employment no such meeting had taken place and those who said that there had been a meeting once or twice per year. No respondent indicated that the meetings were frequently or regularly scheduled.

Q36: Do you think the pay and benefits are fair?

The wage was characterized by 13 respondents as unfair and/or inadequate. Fourteen girls said that the wage was acceptable since they were young people not supporting a family, four respondents felt it was fair considering they had no plans to continue working in fast-food or considering they worked only a few hours. There were numerous references to the incongruity of working to a "maximum," i.e., to exhaustion, and being paid "minimum" wage. Occasionally, a respondent would include a reference to "pay raises" noting that the raises were also at a minimum ($.05-.10/hr./increase.) Increases, they report, are wholly too infrequent and many feel the performance reviews are systematically delayed by management to avoid having to increase wages.

The reference to any employee benefits was met with curiosity by a few workers and laughter by others who wondered what I meant by employee "benefits." There are few employee benefits at McDonald's but the sole example given, if any, was the food allowance of $.35 to .45/hr. For every hour worked the employee is allowed this amount toward the purchase of McDonald's food, to be eaten on the premises. This benefit is not transferable or cumulative.

Change

Q40: How do you think a change like you just mentioned would happen?

Most respondents felt that fundamental changes were quite unlikely, e.g., larger working areas, pay increases "across the board." Changes of this nature would require something bordering on revolution, e.g., "we'd probably all have to threaten to quit or something." More minor changes such as cotton uniforms, different

APPENDIX C (continued)

kinds of music, longer breaks, were approached through management but even these methods were generally seen as unpromising.

Q42: Do you think these kinds of jobs are good for teenagers?

All respondents answered affirmatively. Commonly, they referred to the usefulness of learning to get along with people, adjusting to the world of work, making new friends, learning to handle money. The discontinuity of responses to this question vs. responses to other questions measuring "satisfaction," e.g., question 35 (above), is noted. Apparently, for some of the respondents job satisfaction is unrelated to or inversely related to the overall benefits of teenage employment.

Q43: What do you think teenagers learn about authority in their work?

1. Focus of response on the realized authority of the management:

   a: Power of the management position: Recognition that someone is in a powerful position, feels threatened and intimidated by authority. "They can fire you any time they feel like it." Management is non-benevolent. "You just have to learn to take orders."

   b: Familiarity/benevolence of authority figures: Mentions to possibility of being frank with managers, open and friendly. "He's just my brother--I like him a lot." Being in a special position in the managers eyes. Sees managements position as respectable and attractive. May be critical of co-workers hostility toward management.

2. Focus on the realized authority in themselves:

   a: Being in charge of the drawer, controlling the money. Views the job as an opportunity to induce authority in her "presentation to the public," or her ability to sell. Being in charge of the new people. Learning to control the use or misuse of authority.

   b: Preparatory: Learns to be a responsible, hard worker. May mention being able to take another job easier than someone who has never worked. Learning to take criticism and rigid demands.

Drug Use

Q44: Do you think there is a greater use of drugs and alcohol among teenagers that work?

APPENDIX C (continued)

Most teenagers indicated that there was little chance that drug use
was a problem while teens were on the job. Most, in fact, qualified
responses with the suggestion that the job required too much top
speed energy to do "stoned" or drunk. Very few references were made
in the entirety of the interviews to substance abuse (other than
nicotine). In the responses to question #33, What do you do after
work?, only one person indicated drug use or activity after work.
Interestingly, there was a consensus of opinion on the increase of
cigarette smoking among teenagers that work. All indicated that the
chances of starting to smoke while working were substantially
increased primarily due to the stress of the job.

Family Life

Q46: How do you think your parents feel about their jobs?

Responses here were variable. Many felt their parents were quite
satisfied, others that parents were quite unhappy with their work.
There were few identifiable themes in the responses. One possible
theme concerns the respondent's views of their mothers. Many have
positive views of mothers' capabilities. Sees mothers as having been
deprived of opportunities or mothers having had to fight for their
rights. Further questions about the respondent's interactions with
their mothers might be useful.

Q47: What about the way you were raised influenced how you handle
your job?

Responses invariably followed along the lines of learning to take
orders or learning to manage time properly. References to learning
to clean things well were noted.

Q48: What kinds of jobs or responsibilities did you have at home?

Most respondents had considerable responsibility for household
tasks. There was a common mention of taking care of their brothers.

Q50: Is there anything you would change about the rules for work at
home?

Most report no significant change desired.

Q52: What do your parents want you to get out of the experience of
working as a teenager?

The response to this question was consistent. Most respondents felt
their parents wanted them to work in order to prepare themselves for
future jobs.

APPENDIX C (continued)

Q53: What do you imagine yourself doing when you are older?

Various responses either describing full time involvement in family
life or working outside the home part or full time.

Q54: In what ways do you see McDonald´s preparing you to do that?

Most often respondents saw no preparation inherent in the work they
were now doing other than learning to work with the public. There
were no references to skilling of any kind.

Q55: What do your parents expect you´ll be doing as an adult?

Consistently, "Whatever I want to do." Or "Whatever makes me happy."

APPENDIX D

RESULTS OF RELIABILITY STUDY

QUESTION #	KAPPA
5	.82
7	.62
9	.73
11	.71
13	.72
15	.80
17	.76
18	.89
21	.74
23	.91
28	.74
31	.90
32	.85
35	.95
37	.74
38	.81
39	.85
41	.62
49	.89
51	.92