CLASS, STATUS AND GENDER

A Comparative Study of Perceptions of Class
and Status in an Inner London Borough

by

Ailsa Madeline Froude

ABSTRACT

THESIS:

<u>CLASS, STATUS AND GENDER</u>

This study of thirty mothers of young children and their respective
partners examines the salience of class, gender and local status groups
as subjective categories in social identity and attitudes, in order
to discover the extent to which people are politically conscious in
terms of these three parameters. The research was undertaken in
Stamford Hill, a poor and culturally mixed inner London district which
is gradually becoming 'gentrified'. The sample was stratified into
three sub-categories: ultra-religious, Jewish people; people of
Afro-Caribbean origin; and white, non-Jewish, English people. It was
found that variations in attitudes could be correlated more readily
with status group membership than with either class or sex. Few people
were politically conscious in class terms, fewer still expressed
feminist views; but the ultra-religious, Jewish community is
self-consciously acting politically on its own behalf. The West Indians
have begun to do so. Education and relationships with significant
others were found to be crucial in raising both political and religious
consciousness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For my father

CONTENTS

CONTENTS (contd)

CONTENTS (contd)

INTRODUCTION

Why is it that people tolerate gross differences of material wealth and condition, and why have they not come to form a 'class for itself' in Marx's terms? Do women, who suffer additionally from sexism, see the social world in a very different way from men? Do members of so-called 'ethnic minorities' perceive inequalities differently from indigenous white Christians and differently from each other?

In order to answer these questions and to find out what people _were_ thinking if they were not politically conscious (and few seem to be), I decided to conduct fairly long (over an hour), structured interviews with open-ended questions with people from three obvious local status groups in a given location. The location was Stamford Hill, a faded but gradually gentrifying district at the northern end of the London Borough of Hackney. Forty-seven people were interviewed, ten women from each of the three status groups and as many of their husbands or male cohabitants as would be interviewed. Five men and one woman refused, for a variety of reasons including shyness, inadequate English and plain busyness. My identity as a white middle class woman was also relevant, as Chapter Four discusses.

For brevity in the text those respondents who are of Afro-Caribbean origin, either born in the West Indies themselves or of parents who were born there, are referred to as 'West Indian'. White, non-Jewish respondents born in Britain are referred to as 'English' (although it must be conceded that two of the men were born in Scotland). The ultra-religious Jewish respondents, all but two of whom were members of a Hasidic sect called the Lubavitch Community, are referred to as 'Jews'.

I am aware that these categories are not of the same order, one referring to a constellation of closely related geographical nationalities, one referring to a part of the United Kingdom, and one being a religious category of individuals of (potentially) many nationalities. However, although these categories may not be logically of the same order, empirically they are

recognisable as Weberian status groups in the geographical area of study. The validity of the use of the concept status is discussed in Chapter Eight.

Chapter One gives an account of rival versions of how 'class' is to be conceptualised, and the briefest of outlines of the material inequalities suffered in Britain. In Chapter Two there is a review of the literature concerning the ideology of class. Rival explanations for the failure for the development of a 'class for itself' are mentioned. Chapter Three tackles the literature on gender, examining the concept and the difficulties of integrating women into models of class analysis. Methodology is discussed in Chapter Four. There follow three chapters of data on the consciousness of and attitudes to gender, class and local status groups respectively. Chapter Eight concludes the thesis.

CHAPTER ONE:

THE CONCRETE REALITY OF CLASS OTHERNESS

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the concrete material reality
of class divisions in Britain, consciousness of which is the principal
subject of the empirical research reported in later chapters. It is a
necessarily colour-, culture- and gender-blind account here, although
the ways in which consciousness of class inequalities are amplified or
cross-cut by colour, culture and gender divisions are discussed in later
chapters. This chapter begins with a discussion of the competing
theoretical accounts of class divisions in a late capitalist society,
and of an attempt at a reconciliation and synthesis of these
conceptualisations. The second half of the chapter presents a description
of a very few of the multitude of ways in which class inequalities are
manifested in contemporary Britain.

First of all, however, something must be said about the usual distinctions
drawn between 'material' and 'ideological' or 'objective' and 'subjective'
aspects of class, and with which, as the chapter headings suggest, I have
fallen into line. In dividing the theoretical section of the thesis in
this manner, I am not engaged in building a definitive model of class
realities for the purpose of testing it out on our hapless respondents
in order to see how 'accurately' their perceptions reflect them, element
by element. Logically, however, unless it is being suggested that people's
social consciousness is a complete fantasy, it must have some object, even
if it is clear empirically that fantasy comes in to distort or embellish
awareness. An example of such fantasy might be the consciousness that
Kent miners and Scottish landowners have of one another. Each is likely
to perceive the other as 'other' than himself in class terms, but neither
is likely to have any direct knowledge of the other's economic power (or
lack of it) and so any 'knowledge' must be constructed from secondary and
not necessarily accurate sources. People's class or social consciousness
can only be understood as the product of their total class environment
together with their personal histories.

3

In speaking of 'classes', I hold the view that they have a materiality, a reality in the sense of 'a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognise as having a being independent of our own volition (we cannot wish them away)'[1]. Hence, a person's class position has an objective facticity beyond his volition-in-the-moment: he cannot become a landowner or a capitalist merely by an act of will. He has to possess economic assets for this to be true. The patterns of inequality of wealth and power in which he finds himself existed before his birth and are likely to outlive him.

Mere inequality does not in itself constitute class, however. It is perfectly possible to conceive of a mode of production wherein surplus in one commune is distributed to others. We choose to be selfish. Classes arise as the outcome of the sum of the decisions 'WE and not those Others will enjoy the benefits of this accumulated wealth' and of the passing of the possession of wealth to chosen individuals (especially sons and daughters) and not to the widest collectivity. Once the wealth and power of the parents to whom an individual is born is able to affect his life chances in predictable ways, we can speak of a class society.

Marxists recognise the act of choice that led to the creation of class society, and that deliberate ideological activity on the part of the ruling class perpetuates it [2] (ie ideology has material consequences), but they do not acknowledge that the meanings individuals attribute to phenomena other than the relationship to the means of production, such as sex or race, have implications for a class society. For instance, unbridled racism in South Africa may have resulted in the extraction of a huge surplus for white capitalists to date, but has already and will increasingly require the taxation of that surplus to pay for the repressive state apparatus needed to maintain the status quo. On the other hand, 'bourgeois' sociology sees class society as having an inevitability arising out of industrialisation. For holders of this view, it is 'the natural order of things'. The acts of volition in relation to the possession, accumulation and transfer of wealth are beyond question, although acknowledged historically as the laissez-faire economic doctrine, are seen as manifestations of human nature. Questions of subjective meanings therefore do not arise concerning the origins of classes. However, in discussing class membership, they recognise and accept that the

subjective meanings of individuals can play a part in that membership.
A man is free to 'work his way up', buy a new lifestyle and have his
claim to being middle class accepted. The point being made here is that
in any account of class, objective and subjective realities of class form
a tightly twisted rope. The strands lend each other strength and form.

For many years, sociologists have been wrestling with the ghost of Marx
and with his descendants for control of the concept of 'class' and its
definition. The battle concerns more than mere philosophical purity,
the academic refining of conceptual schemes, and is more than the competition
of claims to empirical validity - all of which go on. Marxists and
neo-Weberian sociologists, as ideologically influenced and influential
actors in capitalist societies, are also consciously or otherwise involved
in praxis. They publish texts which reach beyond the already committed;
they act as consultants to survey agencies which serve capital and state;
they teach generations of students - future sociologists but also those
for whom sociology is a side-dish: teachers, social welfare workers,
psychologists, management trainees etc. In this way, the intellectual
climate in which the concept is understood has been and is being formed.
The struggle between the dialectical, relational Marxist version and the
unitary stratified sociological one may take place in the academic medium
of article, lecture and book in the first instance, but the outcome as
manifested in the social consciousness of a capitalist state's subjects,
has real consequences for the stability of that state.

Exploitation or Mutual Benefit: Cui Bono?

The fundamental aspect of Marxist analyses of class is the tenancious
understanding of the nature of the material relations between 'Us' and
'Them' - the classes. It is seen as unequivocally one of exploitation
by one class of another. The expropriation of the surplus value produced
by labour is the never-forgotten underlying fact in any Marxist account.
Hence, in Rosemary Crompton's examination of the development of the
white-collar workforce in late capitalism, she observes:

> As the capitalist mode of production becomes ever more sophisticated
> and productive, so will the mass of the surplus rise, and with this
> a whole army of white-collar workers to administer the growing surplus.' [3]

5

Similarly, Nicos Poulantzas, seeking to define the boundary between the working class and the petty bourgeoisie, writes:

'... productive labour, in the capitalist mode of production is labour that produces surplus-value while directly reproducing the material elements that serve as the substratum of the relation of exploitation: labour that is directly involved in material production by producing use-values that increase material wealth.' [4]

The explicit acknowledgement of the underlying economic reality of capitalist societies is not confined to analyses of class relations. [5]

In neo-Weberian analyses and studies, classes are seen not in relational terms but as strata, and while none seek to demonstrate that those in the most disadvantaged stratum benefit from the status quo, neither are the existence and purposes of those at the top of the heap cited as connected in any way with the plight of the poor. It would appear then that neo-Weberians reject exploitation as the essence of the Us/Them class division. Instead, I would suggest that they see class relations in terms of mutual interest: this is implicit in the concept 'market'. 'Market' brings to mind rosy-cheeked peasants bringing into town fresh, wholesome produce, returning home at nightfall with a purse bulging with gold coins. It suggests a free and equal exchange, an impartiality and inevitability untainted by a permanently distorted power relationship between the partners to the bargain.

An example of this is to be found in a study of Blackburn and Mann's 'The Working Class in the Labour Market' [6]. They stress the 'natural sectionalism' of the working class: the skilled versus the unskilled, men versus women, natives versus immigrants, young versus old. Intra-class conflict is the norm within capitalism, they suggest. The concentration on the division between worker and worker diverts attention from that between worker and capitalist (or his agent). It blames these divisions on the operation of an impersonal, impartial market mechanism. The underlying assumption is that since employers need workers and workers need jobs, the relationship is one of mutual benefit. The pattern of ownership and power is left out of the equation.

Frank Parkin sees class relations a little differently, as characterised by economic competition for scarce resources. This calls forth one of two strategies for claiming control of the resources: exclusion on the part of the privileged, and solidarism or collective action on the part of the unprivileged. [7] While this conception explicitly refutes the notion

6

of classes being in a relationship of mutual benefit, and suggests the possibility of conflict, the unfairness of the ground rules of the competition is not at issue.

Alternative Versions of the Form of Class Society

The expansion of the relatively prosperous but (in terms of their relationship to the means of production) propertyless sections of society common to most Western industrial countries has been a development which Marxists seem to have had some difficulty in integrating into Marx's original dichotomous structure. The question is where do the salaried clerks and managers belong in class terms? In other words, how many classes are there? It seems that most Marxists would agree that those manual workers directly making physical goods which are the property of capitalists are members of the working class. Disagreements arise over who else belongs there.

Poulantzas's conceptualisation[8] delineates the working class in the most exclusive terms. He suggests certain distinctions which locate classes:
1 Between productive and unproductive labour. Productive labour makes material things that form an addition to capital. Hence labour employed in 'service' functions such as clerks, hairdressers or civil servants, are 'unproductive' labour.
2 Between mental and manual labour. Poulantzas argues that the existence of non-manual 'experts' serves to exclude workers from knowledge of the workings of the productive process, and they are thus implicated in the continuing domination over the working class.
3 Between supervisory and non-supervisory labour. While it is conceded that supervisory staff may be involved in making things, politically they are involved in the subordination of the working class.

It follows from all this that for Poulantzas the working class consists only of manual, non-supervisory, productive labour. Clerks, supervisors, civil servants and unproductive manual workers all belong in what he calls the new petty bourgeoisie. Wright criticises[9] these distinctions, especially that between 'productive' and 'unproductive' labour, and for the anomalies it throws up. The major difficulty is the exclusivity of the

working class category. In the USA, for example, non-supervisory, manual wage-earners in the productive sector constitute less than twenty per cent of the labour force.[10] This would not make for a 'viable socialist movement', he observes.

Wright himself analyses classes in terms of ownership, and distinguishes three powers of ownership: the control over the physical means of production; control over labour power; control over investments and resource allocation.[11] The capitalist class controls all three aspects; the proletariat is excluded from all three; and there are others who are in 'contradictory' class locations, such as managers, supervisors, skilled employees, eg researchers who have some control over their work conditions. These latter groups may have some degree of control over one or more aspects of the powers of ownership. Crompton describes the position of white-collar workers as 'ambiguous' in class terms, as they perform both 'capital' and 'labour' functions[12]. Braverman, on the other hand, examining at length the position of clerical workers[13], comes to the conclusion that in terms of the mechanicalisation of office work, there was little to distinguish it from the position of factory workers. He states:

> 'The apparent trend to a large non-proletarian "middle class" has resolved itself into the creation of a large proletariat in a new form. In its condition of employment, this working population has lost all its former superiorities over workers in industry, and in its scales of pay it has sunk almost to the very bottom.'[14]

Braverman recognises that the middle levels of administrative and technical employment receive their 'petty share in the prerogations and rewards of capital, but ... also bear the mark of the proletarian condition.'[15] He declines to remark on their precise location in the model of the class system under monopoly capitalism.

There is an evident lack of agreement among Marxist writers about the size of the working class and how to account for those in 'contradictory' or 'ambiguous' class positions. Particularly unsatisfactory is the failure to account for those large numbers who work in the public services sector - medicine, education and government administration. Crompton argues that 'because the state *is* an integral part of monopoly capitalism, the class situation of state employees parallels that of employees in the private sector'.[16] On the contrary, it could be argued simply that the public sector is engaged in dialectical relationships with both capital and employed labour in its demands for funding out of taxation. It seems

8

particularly difficult to sustain the notion of exploitation (extraction of surplus value for the benefit of the few) in relation to the National Health Service, Europe's largest employer. This is not to deny that there are miserably rewarded workers in the NHS[17], but it is difficult to identify who gains most by this situation.

Neo-Weberian sociologists have a much easier task in categorising and accounting for groups and classes as their heritage is a pluralist conception involving ownership of property (of different kinds) and the degree of monopolisation of marketable skills. Clearly, this allows for an infinitely subtle taxonomy, but as a number of writers have recognised[18], it does not explain how variations in market power determine classes as <u>social</u> categories. Lockwood sees this happening in terms of three types of experience - in market situation (economic), work situation (power relations at work) and status situation (social honour people attach to each other's work). Giddens[19], on the other hand, distinguishes two types of process operating in the formation of classes. Firstly, there is mediate structuration, which operates through the restriction of access to market capacities. People acquire these principally through the medium of their families of origin - by the inheritance of property, by the kind of educational or technical qualification they obtain, and by the possession of manual labour power. This yields a basic three-class system. I would want to add to the category education the notion of cultural capital. This would include the ambitions, values, attitudes and social savoir-faire fostered in the family. In the market place, such attributes distinguish the merely technically competent candidate from the 'well-rounded' one with the 'right attitude'.[20]

Secondly, Giddens distinguishes proximate structuration, or 'localised' factors which condition or shape class formation. These are three in number: the division of labour in the workplace (the allocation of tasks); the authority relations in the workplace; and common patterns of consumption, which Giddens terms 'distribution groupings'. The most obvious manifestation of the latter, and the most interesting for our purposes, are 'working class' or 'middle class' neighbourhoods.[21] Giddens' analysis has implications for class consciousness which I will examine in later chapters. It is perhaps sufficient to note here that it yields a threefold class structure, one that is generic to capitalist societies, he argues.

Goldthorpe and Llewellyn[22] identified seven separate classes, but collapsed them into three basic clusters - two non-manual and one manual - thus preserving the manual/non-manual divide traditionally favoured by sociologists and perpetuated in the Registrar General's categories.[23] As Hill remarks, even using neo-Weberian criteria of market and work situations, many white-collar jobs are on a par with manual work. He continues:

> '... many of the more obvious cases of convergence between manual and low-level, non-manual occupations are ignored, because the white-collar jobs concerned are done by women. Women are thought not to count in class analysis.'[24]

We will see in Chapter Three, below, how true this has been. The point being made is that neo-Weberians' adherence to the manual/non-manual divide persists, despite evidence that it is no longer meaningful.

Hill describes a number of ways[25] in which modern Marxist and Weberian accounts of class resemble one another. Firstly, both deal with class in economic terms, one in terms of the ownership of capital, the other in terms of the division of labour. Secondly, both give work a central place in class analysis. The nature of the labour process and the quality of the social relations of production are significant aspects of the class structure of both accounts. Thirdly, that the two accounts provide broadly similar descriptions of the objective placement of groups and class structuration. His final point is more contentious: that both Marxists and Weberians 'have an interest' in inter-class relations and conflict. This interest is based on irreconcilable versions of the nature of class relations, as we have seen: Marxists see it as one of exploitation and conflict, Weberians as one of mutual benefit or, at its strongest, competition.

The Material Reality

What forms does inequality take in material reality? What specifically does inequality mean in terms of wealth, income, work, how people spend their time and money, and how does inequality perpetuate?

A word must be said about the operationalisation of the concept of social class. It will be seen that the following examination of the material differences between the classes draws on a number of sources. It is

10

certainly the case that different criteria have been used to delineate the classes in the various studies[26], but we would suggest that for our purposes here, any discrepancies are not important. The aim is to give as rich and varied an account of inequalities between people in modern Britain as is possible in the space available. The studies quoted have it in common, with exceptions that will be annotated accordingly, that they are not Marxist and are not using Marxist categories.[27] It cannot be assumed that this reflects the writer's predelictions: it is simply that Marxists have not produced much empirical research in Britain.

1 Wealth, Work and Income

No-one knows precisely what is the distribution of wealth and income in Britain. Such knowledge is of profound political significance and, to protect it, clouds of secrecy have been blown around any institution which holds even a fragment of the truth - banks, the Inland Revenue, Customs and Excise and private firms. Companies with a public shareholding are required to publish details of major shareholdings. There are no such stipulations on private companies, which are only required to publish the names of their directors. Bourgeois values encourage secrecy. It is regarded as very vulgar behaviour to boast of one's wealth and there are powerful taboos on asking others about theirs. A person's wealth is only displayed nakedly after his death with the publication of estates. Even this is not an accurate account in many cases, as much care is taken to avoid the payment of death duties by means of inter-vivos gifts. Reluctance to divulge income, never mind capital, is expected of respondents by any researcher in the field of social sciences. This reluctance is by no means confined to the rich. Sensitivity on this matter on the part of the elderly poor has been recognised as one of the main obstacles to their claiming Supplementary Benefits.[28] It is against this background that the following estimates of the distribution of wealth in Britain must be seen.

1% of the population own 29% of the wealth
5% "   "   "   " 53% "   "   "
10% "   "   "   " 69% "   "   "
25% "   "   "   " 93% "   "   "   29

11

Berthoud comments that these figures may be inaccurate, but they probably underestimate the degree of concentration of capital. It is clear that 'a very large proportion of the population must have no wealth at all'.[30]

Shareholdings in private enterprise show an even starker picture. In 1970, only 6.6% of adults owned any shares, and the 5% wealthiest individuals held over 96% of all personally owned shares.[31] It has been suggested that the people who participate in the strategic control of 'big business' in Britain are even smaller in number than the richest 1% alluded to above:

> 'If the outer limits of the monopoly sector in the 1980s are taken to include the one thousand largest companies and their associates, then the number of directors, top executives and principal shareholders would, together with their immediate families, number between 25,000 and 50,000 people.'[32]

Recent Government statistics[33] suggest that there may have been some decline in inequality of wealth. In 1983:

The most wealthy 1% of the population owned 20% of the wealth
      "   "   "   5% "   "   "   "   40% "   "   "
      "   "   "   10% "   "   "   "   54% "   "   "
      "   "   "   25% "   "   "   "   78% "   "   "

However, as Atkinson remarks of a similar change during the 1960s: 'there are reasons for believing that this reflects in part the rearrangement of wealth within families rather than distribution between rich and poor families'.[34]

There w e r e profound changes in the pattern of ownership of land and productive capital during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which have had the effect of obscuring knowledge of who owns what. The days of the mill owner living in the big house on the hill, as visible as the mill itself, have long passed. Scott comments that the historic attachments of the entrepreneurial and landowning families have become loosened from their base companies (and land, to a lesser extent) and have come to adopt a business style similar to that of the finance capitalist, building up a wide portfolio of interests.[35] Interlocking directorships, shareholdings and loans between companies further obscure the picture. The fragmentation of shareholdings in companies strengthens the hands of the few.

When we turn to an examination of the distribution of income from wealth, it appears to be even more unequal than the distribution of wealth itself. The following figures[36] for 1959 are before tax:

Percentage of income tax units	Share of total income from wealth
Top 1%	60%
Top 5%	92%
Top 10%	99%

I have been unable to locate more recent statistics on income from wealth.

The distribution of all types of income is difficult to compute from Inland Revenue sources because of tax avoidance by those well enough off to be professionally advised in its intricacies, and because of tax evasion by all who fail to declare income for tax purposes. Nevertheless, estimates for 1967 are as follows[37]:

The richest	1% received	5% of total income
"	" 5% "	15% " " "
"	" 10% "	24½% " " "
"	poorest 30% "	11½% " " "

Gross weekly earnings of adult full-time male employees
in selected occupations, 1971

Occupational Groups	Median gross weekly earnings £
Managers, general and divisional	69.2
Company chairmen and directors	66.5
Managers, personnel and training	47.1
Teachers in further education	41.5
Engineers, scientists, technologists	41.4
Foremen, senior	38.1
School teachers	37.1
Technicians, draughtsmen	33.2
Clerks, senior grade	32.1
Welfare workers	30.3
Manual workers, skilled	29.8
Manual workers, semi-skilled	27.7
Clerks, intermediate grade	25.0
Manual workers, unskilled	24.3
Clerks, routine and junior	21.4
Shop salesmen and assistants	20.4
Agricultural and related workers	19.9

These figures[38] for gross weekly earnings in various occupations are also imperfect. They are likely to understate earnings more at the top of the socio-economic scale than at the bottom, 'since sizeable fringe benefits are a common feature of the pay of business executives especially'.[39]

Government statistics[40] of gross weekly earnings of male full-time employees in selected occupation groups for 1984 are difficult to compare with Westergaard and Resler's above. Top of the earning league would appear to be doctors, who received an average £381 per week, twice the average of £209 per week for all male non-manual employees. The average for manual employees (male) was about £160 a week. The only group of male non-manual workers quoted who earned less than this were nurses and midwives (£140 approximately). There are no figures shown for managers of company directors, unfortunately.

The differences in rewards do not end with the amount of weekly or monthly remuneration. Occupational schemes for the benefit of employees during sickness have traditionally favoured those in professional or intermediate categories (Registrar General's categories I and II), although legislation has made it compulsory to provide a certain level of cover. This still falls a long way short of the sickness arrangements that civil servants have enjoyed for many years, for example. Manual workers are still at a disadvantage compared with non-manual workers.[41] Similarly, all employers are now required to provide either an occupational pensions scheme, or contribute to the state scheme. Again, this compares unfavourably with civil servants' non-contributory pensions scheme.

When we look at the length of time that male non-manual and manual workers spend at work, a startling difference appears. Sixty-one per cent of manually occupied males work over forty hours a week, while only nineteen per cent of non-manual males were similarly employed. At the other end of the spectrum, almost five per cent of non-manual employees worked thirty hours or less, but no manual workers worked less than this.[42]

Interestingly, despite all these differences, lower skilled and manual workers do not appear to be any less satisfied with their present jobs than do the highly skilled and well paid.

% of Persons in each Social Class reporting themselves
'Very Satisfied' with Present Job[43]:

Social Class

	1	2	3	4	5	6	All
Very Satisfied:	49	56	72	46	53	58	52

The fact that class 3 seems to be most satisfied is accounted for by the fact that women are over-represented in this category (intermediate and junior non-manual occupations). Women are generally more satisfied with their jobs than men: 61% are 'very satisfied' compared with 47% of the men.

There have been substantial shifts in the forms of occupations in Britain over the last fifty years: away from manual occupations and towards white-collar jobs.

Major Occupational Groups as a Percentage of Total Occupied Population[44]

	1931	1971
Employers and proprieters	6.7	2.6
White-collar workers (all)	23.0	42.7
a) Managers and administrators	3.7	8.6
b) Higher professionals	1.1	3.8
c) Lower professionals and technicians	3.5	7.7
d) Foremen and inspectors	1.5	3.0
e) Clerks	6.7	14.0
f) Salesmen and shop assistants	6.5	5.6
Manual Workers	70.3	54.7

It is self-evident that some industries are predominantly non-manual, and others manual. Hence in insurance, banking, finance and business services, 87% of the employees fall into (Registrar General's) categories I, II and III(n). In mining and quarrying on the other hand, 91% fall into Classes III(m), IV and V. 1% of employees in mining and quarrying fall into class V, while in the building and construction industry, the figure is 14% out of a total manual workforce of 86% of the industry[45]. Clearly these are likely to be among the starkest of examples, but they point to the tendency for those with particular

15

kinds of occupation to be clustered within certain industries. Taken together with the inequalities of income and conditions, this is likely to have implications for social consciousness, whether or not one accepts the Weberian basis of the Registrar General's 'social classes'.

When we look at the regional distribution of classes, the picture is complex, but certain tendencies are visible. The South-East of England, wth 32% of the economically active males, has 42.6% of the class I men living in Britain, and 26.8 of the class V men. The North, on the other hand, with 6% of Britain's economically active men, has 4.6% of Britain's class I males and 7.6% of its class V males[46]. Local distribution shows strong evidence of residential segregation, as a walk through any town or city will confirm.[47]

2 Consumption

Given that there are substantial inequalities in wealth, income and working time, it is hardly surprising that there are sociologically significant differences in the way that people choose to spend their money and time. Type and tenure of dwelling is arguably the most important item in the area of consumption, not only in terms of the amount of income it disposes of, but also in its implications for the quality of life afforded their occupants. In 1971, 49% of dwellings were owned by their occupants, 31% were in Council tenancy, and the remaining 20% were privately rented[48]. These proportions are likely to have altered during the 1970s and early 1980s, as legislation governing private tenancies and the sale of Council houses has taken effect. The result has been a relative increase in the proportions of owner occupiers and private tenants. As Reid says, the statistics show that 'all social classes live in all types of houses, and use all types of tenure'[49]. However, there are variations along class lines. For instance, 85% of class I heads of household are owner occupiers compared with 21% of class VI. Conversely, 56% of class VI households live in Council property compared with 3% of class I households[50]. 49% of class I households live in detached houses compared with 4% of class VI, while 40% of class VI live in terraced houses, but only 10% of class I. Reid comments: 'The higher the social class the more likely the household is to live in a house as opposed to a flat, and the more likely the house is to be detached rather than terraced, and the household to own or be purchasing it.'[51]

16

These statistics suggest that social classes tend to segregate themselves geographically to some extent. The mechanism of the housing market gives the appearance of doing this impersonally, regulating the 'natural competition' for the scarce good quality housing. This has the effect of making mutually less visible the lifestyles of the poor and the better off, a fact not necessarily lost on the actors concerned. This has implications for social consciousness, but these are by no means straightforward. On the one hand, this rigidifies the reality of social class differences, turns it into bricks and mortar, and makes the possibility of identifying themselves with a particular area and of differentiating from others, providing a basis of categorising 'Us/Them'. On the other hand, it is possible that this tendency towards geographical segregation, coupled with the tendency for people to make friends in similarly prestigious occupations means that the opportunities for people to interact intimately actually to compare their different lifestyles directly, are limited. It is quite well established that working-class people are less likely to entertain non-relatives at home[52]. They do not actually see the interiors of the homes of those of very different wealth or incomes, and so the realities of the lifestyles can only be imagined. This makes it difficult to form a coherent picture of the 'other'. It is true, of course, that window cleaners, plumbers and cleaners get to see how 'the other half' live. Several of the Jewish respondents had regular cleaners and were aware of the exposure that involved[53].

Ownership of consumer durables follows a similar pattern (the higher the class, the more likely to possess), except in the case of television, where there is virtually no difference between the classes[54]. Television viewing has significance in a number of ways. It would appear to have become the major leisure activity of British families and could be said 'to constitute the hub of a family and home-centred pattern of leisure'[55]. There are class-related variations. The middle classes watch on average approximately 16 hours a week in winter and 12 in summer, 3 hours less than working class people[56]. The point about television watching is that it is home-based, passive and essentially isolating. The religious Jewish people I interviewed did not possess television sets[57].

17

The middle classes are much more geographically mobile in their leisure pursuits generally. Activities such as theatre, opera, ballet and orchestral concerts are attended predominantly by middle-class people[58], and they are more likely to join clubs or organisations[59]. They also play more sport. Middle-class housewives are more mobile than working-class wives. Hannah Gavron[60] found that 47% of the working-class wives she interviewed had not been to the West End of London in the year prior to the survey, whereas all the middle-class women had been within the previous six months. All lived within two miles of the West End.

Interestingly, there is little variation between the classes in drinking in pubs, although manual workers are more likely than others to drink in clubs. Class I are much more likely to drink regularly at home than anyone else, and also most likely to drink in restaurants and hotels[61].

3 Sociability

Following on from above, we should not be too surprised to discover substantial differences in the patterns of sociability of the social classes. Stewart, Prandy and Blackburn provide some interesting data on this subject. They asked their sample of 1,918 male non-manual workers for the occupations of four people with whom they were friendly out of work. In the first place, there seems to be an inverse relationship between stratification position and the failure to name four friends[62]. On the other hand, Goldthorpe and Lockwood report that 70% of their manual-working sample could name no regular leisure companions at all and a further 36% shared only one or two between them[63]. Unfortunately, similar figures are not quoted for the white-collar sample, but other data[64] reveal a confusing picture. 43% of manual couples reported no more than two regular spare-time companions, while 50% of white-collar couples reported similarly. Stewart et al found that in terms of friends' occupations, it appeared that the manual/non-manual divide remains, with the exception of foremen, guards and warehousemen, who find themselves separated from the more traditional white-collar groups. There are also divisions 'between low and intermediate white-collar jobs such as clerks, draughtsmen and

and their supervisors on the one hand and managers on the other'. This may help to explain the apparent discrepancy between the two studies: Goldthorpe and Lockwood's white-collar workers may have included a smaller proportion of managers and professionals. Stewart et al noted also that there seemed to be divisions between those in managerial jobs and professionals[65].

An alternative source of data on friendship patterns is the Oxford Social Mobility Group's enquiry of 1972. Anthony Heath's analysis of this[66] confirms the tendency for people to choose friends from their own social class. He found the tendency strongest at the two extremes, but there is also considerable friendship choice across class boundaries:

> 'The picture is certainly not one of rigid class boundaries with socially exclusive groups rejecting outsiders. In relational terms, at least, there is no distinct cleavage between the classes.'

So, it would appear that the strength of the identification with social class as revealed in friendship patterns is by no means clear-cut.

Information about women's friendship patterns is scanty. Goldthorpe and Lockwood's white-collar wives reported fewer spare-time companions than the manual workers' wives[67]. On the other hand, smaller scale studies of housewives suggest that working-class mothers are more socially isolated than their middle-class counterparts[68]. The difference could be accounted for by the possibility that unspecified proportions of Goldthorpe and Lockwood's female respondents worked outside the home.

4 Families - the Perpetuators of Class

Leaving aside for the time being the question of the propriety and logic of using the nuclear family as the unit of analysis in discussions of class, especially in relation to the class situations of women[69], it remains the case that it is through the medium of the family that privilege and disprivilege are transmitted from one generation to the next. Culturally, the family is where human beings first begin to develop a social consciousness in its widest form. However, perfect class endogamy is by no means what we find when we look at the class origins of married couples. Anthony Heath shows that, while there is a tendency for men to marry daughters of men of the same social class as

themselves, this tendency is not equally distributed throughout the social hierarchy. It is strongest in the highest and lowest categories. Hence 42.2% of class I respondents had Class I fathers-in-law, while 29.8% of class VII respondents had fathers-in-law of the same social class. The tendency is very much weaker in classes II to VI. Heath concludes that the marriage interchange between the social classes is 'very extensive'[70]. On the other hand, Reid quotes other evidence which leads him to the view that there is 'a marked persistence of homogamy'[71]. Interpretation seems to depend on whether one is looking from a social mobility or a static perspective.

In my researches among a mixed population of English, West Indian and Jewish people[72], of the twenty-three women who were or had been married or who were currently living with a man, only four could be clearly described as having partners in a different class from their own fathers - one West Indian and three English. However, education was the means of (upward) mobility for each of these women rather than a 'good marriage'.

While education has been and remains the most accessible means for upward social mobility, the public schools remain pupilled by over 85% children of fathers in social classes I and II[73] and they supply a hugely disproportionate number of judges, bishops, professors, major company directors and Members of Parliament. For instance, while 80% of High Court Appeal judges and directors of clearing banks were educated in public schools, only 2.6% of 14-year-olds were being educated in such institutions[74].

When we turn to higher education, we find that the class of a person's family of origin remains a highly significant factor in the likelihood of his being admitted to full-time education.

'Nearly half (46%) of full-time students aged 18 to 24 in Great Britain in 1984 had fathers in the professional, employers and managers socio-economic groups compared with 26% of the general population aged 18 to 24. Conversely, while 12% of full-time students had fathers who were semi-skilled or unskilled manual workers or in personal service, the corresponding proportion for the general population aged 18 to 24 was 19%.[75]

20

The inevitable conclusions to be drawn from this are that the existence of private education remains a device for social closure and that the economic status of a person's father remains relevant in his chances of securing a higher education. However, there are other, perhaps less obvious, ways in which cultural privilege is passed on. A family environment in which reading, concerts, theatre and foreign travel are regular features is much more likely to produce a young person who can get himself accepted by a potential employer or admissions tutor than someone whose family did not afford these luxuries. Add to this the crude class markers of voice (accent, vocabulary and grammar) and, to a lesser extent, dress, then class appears as a quality of that person, on which he or she can be favourably or unfavourably evaluated[76].

Social Mobility

As the preceding section suggests, a static account of the distribution of wealth, income and occupation is on its own an inadequate description of the material reality of class in Britain. Such an account would leave the impression of rigidity of structure, inevitability, 'given-ness', and would be an oversimplification. The statistics quoted above on marriage point to the fact that there is movement of individuals between categories on this basis alone. Sorokin, writing in 1927, was one of the first to point to the fact that there has never been a class-structured society in which the (social) classes were so closed that no movement was possible[77]. Even in such a rigid society as India, some movement is possible.

There is inevitably disagreement between Marxists and non-Marxists on the subject of social mobility. It could hardly be otherwise when they represent (as we have seen) such fundamentally different theoretical bases to the formal reality described.

There are a number of British writers, arguing necessarily from a non-Marxist position, who suggest that the formation of social classes derives from an absence of social mobility. Giddens argues[78] that the structuration of classes is facilitated to the degree to which mobility closure exists in relation to any specified form of market capacity. He goes on to make the point that complete mobility closure is not legally sanctioned, and that a

certain level of mobility is intrinsic to capitalism. Frank Parkin sees occupational order as 'the backbone of the class structure' in modern Western societies and treats mobility as a determinant of structure, action and conflict. He points to a dichotomy in opposing strategies of closure by social classes against inferiors ('exclusion'), or 'solidarism' by inferiors[79].

Similarly, John Goldthorpe, in a major recent study of social mobility in Britain[80], sees the occupational order and mobility as central to the question of (social) class formation. He uses measurement of intergenerational social mobility to test the existence of social class formation. He found that the experience of mobility was far from being evenly distributed throughout the population as a whole. In particular, what he describes as the three intermediate classes, comprising rank and file white-collar and lower grade technical occupations, small proprietors and self-employed artisans and manual supervisory occupations, there is 'mobility of a frequent and often disorderly kind'. What these rather disparate-looking classes have in common, Goldthorpe suggests, is their tendency to generate mobility because of their marginality in relation to the two major forms which underlie the occupational division of labour-bureaucracy and the market.

It can be seen that these writers all see social mobility as intrinsic to the formation of (social) classes. Even the Marxists Westergaard and Resler, examining the empirical work of David Glass, acknowledge that these data are sufficient 'to dispel any notion that Britain is a society in which individual position in the hierarchy of inequality is fixed at birth'. Capitalism here, as elsewhere, allows - indeed, in some respects encourages - a fair degree of fluidity of circulation.[81] However, while they see questions about social mobility as not unimportant, 'they concern the recruitment of people to classes, not the brute fact of the existence of class. It is that which is primary.'[82] They also make the point (as do non-Marxists) that mobility may be 'fluid', but it is not 'free'. In other words, a person is many times more likely to be in a privileged class position if he is born into a class than if he is not.[83]

Goldthorpe's findings[84] are instructive on the question of 'fluidity' versus 'freedom' of mobility. He found that absolute mobility rates, ie the number of people socially mobile, were higher than had been previously established; that much mobility has been long range, from the working class

22

into the 'upper' class or 'service' class; that membership of the upper class and the intermediate classes is quite fluid. The explanation for these changes is the alteration in the occupational structure since the second world war - the increase in white-collar jobs such as managers, professionals, clerks, technicians etc[85]. Lower fertility on the part of the upper class made recruitment from the working class necessary. Goldthorpe made an analysis of the data which allowed for this structural change and found that if it had not occurred, little social mobility would have occurred. The system would have been stable and lacking in openness.

We have seen that there are substantial material inequalities between groups of people in Britain and that these result in unequal life chances for them and for their offspring, to an extent which solidifies inequalities into classes, although mobility between classes is not uncommon. I have also seen empirically, among my respondents, how education may still be the most likely means of social mobility. Nevertheless, the exclusivity of public schools and the better private schools, together with the higher education privileges which accrue, form an obstacle to freedom of mobility. In the end it is wealth, in the form of the ability to pay for an expensive education, which is protecting itself against unrestricted social mobility. The brute force of economic realities prevail.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1   P Berger and T Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality. p13

2   J Habermas, Legitimation Crisis; L Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' in Lenin and Philosophy

3   Crompton, R, 'Approaches to the Study of White Collar Unionism', p 415, Sociology. vol 10, no 3

4   N Poulantzas, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism. p216

5   Jock Young, in a foreword to Frank Pierce's Crimes of the Powerful. a study of the relationship between crime, capitalism and the state, observes 'There is a criminal involvement in the maintenance of the extraction of surplus value; and organized crime, like the police force ... must be understood in this context.' Similarly, Joel Kavel, in 'The American Mental Health Industry', examining American psychiatry from a critical position, argues that it has a vital ideological role in late capitalism: 'In early capitalism, the quantity of labour time extracted in the production process was the critical variable, and the ideological apparatus of society, although crucial for the preservation of its order, was, strictly speaking, otherwise ancillary. In late capitalism, however, what is qualitative and ideological enters alongside labour time as an immediate constituent of the accummulation of capital.' The exploitative nature of class relationships is again specifically acknowledged here.

6   R M Blackburn and M Mann, The Working Class in the Labour Market. ch 10

7   F Parkin, 1974, 'Strategies of Social Closure in Class Formation', in F Parkin (ed) The Social Analysis of Class Structure

8   N Poulantzas, op cit

9   E O Wright, 'Class Boundaries in Advanced Capitalist Societies', New Left Review. no 98

10   E O Wright, op cit, p21

11   Ibid, p 30

12   R Crompton, op cit

13   H Braverman, <u>Labour and Monopoly Capital</u>, ch 15

14   Ibid, p 355

15   Ibid, p 407

16   R Crompton, op cit, footnote 38, pp 425-6

17   This is widely recognised. Many of the respondents in this study cited
     nurses as an example of a group of employees who are inadequately
     rewarded. See chapter 7 below.

18   For example, D Lockwood, <u>The Blackcoated Worker</u>; G Salaman, <u>Work
     Organizations</u>; S Hill, <u>Competition and Control at Work</u>; A Giddens,
     <u>The Class Structure of Advanced Societies</u>

19   Op cit, pp 107-110

20   A number of the people I interviewed recognised the importance of this.
     See below, pp 163; 171; 176; 177

21   The 'class' of the neighbourhood studied was not its principal feature
     for the people who lived there. Moreover, there was not agreement among
     those who did mention class as to what that class was. This clearly has
     implications for the proximate structuration of class relationships in
     the area.

22   J H Goldthorpe and C Llewellyn, <u>Social Mobility and Class Structure in
     Modern Britain</u>, Ch 9

23   See I Reid, <u>Social Class Differences in Britain</u>, 2nd edition, pp 38-43,
     for an account of the Registrar General's categories

24 S Hill, op cit, p 179

25 Ibid, pp 233-235

26 I Reid, op cit, pp 38-56, is an excellent guide to most of the
    alternative modes of operationalisation in use.

27 For an account of a Marxist operationalisation, see E O Wright and
    L Perrone, 'Marxist Class Categories and Income Inequality', in
    American Sociological Review, 1977, vol 42, pp 32-55

28 Instructions to Supplementary Benefits interviewing staff dealing with
    claims from the elderly used to point this out to stress the sensitivity
    required in interviewing some elderly people.

29 R Berthoud, The Disadvantage of Inequality, p 45

30 Ibid

31 W Westergaard and H Resler, Class in a Capitalist Society, p 158 (Marxist)

32 J Scott, The Upper Classes, p 124

33 'Distribution of Wealth', Social Trends, 16, HMSO 1986, p 92

34 A B Atkinson, Unequal Shares, p 24

35 J Scott, op cit, pp 133-137

36 A B Atkinson, op cit, p 36

37 J Westergaard and H Resler, op cit, p 40

38 Ibid, p 78

39 Ibid, p 77

40 Social Trends, 16, p 80, HMSO, 1986

41 See for example, I Reid, op cit, p 104

42 Ibid, p 101

43 I Reid, op cit, 1st edition, p 90

44 R King and J Raynor, The Middle Classes, p 81

45 I Reid, op cit, 2nd edition, p 87

46 Ibid, p 84

47 Ibid, pp 84-87

48 I Reid, op cit, 1st edition, p 156

49 I Reid, op cit, 2nd edition, p 192

50 Ibid, p 193

51 Ibid

52 For example, J H Goldthorpe, Lockwood et al, The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure, p 107

53 See below, p   229 for example.

54 I Reid, op cit, 2nd edition, p 199

55 I Reid, op cit, 1st edition, p 161

56 R King and J Raynor, op cit, p 178

57 See below, chapter 7.

58 I Reid, op cit, 1st edition, pp 218-219

59 I Reid, op cit, 2nd edition, pp 280-281

60 H Gavron, <u>Captive Wife</u>, p 99

61 I Reid, Ibid, p 276

62 A Stewart et al, <u>Social Stratification and Occupations</u>, p 36

63 J H Goldthorpe et al, op cit, p 103

64 Ibid, p 107

65 A Stewart et al, op cit, p 52

66 A Heath, <u>Social Mobility</u>, p 230

67 Goldthorpe et al, op cit, p 88

68 A Oakley, <u>The Sociology of Housework</u>, p 89

69 H Gavron, op cit, pp 94, 99

70 A Heath, op cit, pp 111-114

71 I Reid, op cit, 2nd edition, pp 165-167

72 See p 1   for precise definitions of the categories of respondents

73 I Reid, op cit, p 227

74 Ibid, p 226. Statistics for job-holders were collected in 1971, for schoolchildren in 1967.

75 <u>Social Trends</u>, 17, p 65 (Source of statistics, General Household Survey, 1984)

76 The nuances of this can be detected in the following current London playground joke:
    Boy: Pass the bu'er, Mum
    Mum: It's 'butter' not 'bu'er'
    Boy: Pass the butter, Mum
    Mum: That's be'er.

77 P A Sorokin, <u>Social and Cultural Mobility</u>, p 139: 'First proposition.
There has scarcely been any society where strata were absolutely closed....'

78 A Giddens, op cit

79 F Parkin, 'Strategies of Social Closure in Class Formation', in
F Parkin (ed), op cit

80 J H Goldthorpe et al, <u>Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern
Britain</u>, p 141

81 J Westergaard and H Resler, op cit, p 298

82 Ibid, p 280

83 Ibid, p 299

84 J H Goldthorpe, op cit, especially chapter 3

85 See above, p 15.

CHAPTER TWO:

THE SUBJECTIVE REALITY OF CLASS

Given these obvious areas of inequality, why are people not more conscious, resentful and unified in their response to them?

As I have indicated elsewhere[1], much of the literature on ideology and images of class has been concerned with the analysis and illustration of why workers have not come to form a 'class for itself' (ie self-conscious and ready to revolt). The research is an attempt to contribute to the question 'what do people think?'. In other words, what is the nature of the identification of position, membership or interest that is held by a particular inner city, multi-ethnic population?

Theories of the ideological stillbirth of the working class are of two types[2]. Firstly, that the working class has been indoctrinated by a dominant ideology that distorts class consciousness. This originated with Marx and Engels, who asserted that the ruling class has a grip on the mental life of society because it controls the apparatus of transmission of ideology. Secondly, the working class is not homogeneous and this affects the potential unity of class perceptions.

The Dominant Ideology

Althusser is a direct descendant of Marx in stressing the significance of the ruling ideology[3]. He goes further, treating ideology as a condition of the existence of a mode of production. He does not regard ideology as determining structure - economy is determinate 'in the last instance'. Althusser argues that ideology is an objective form which arises out of the structures of the mode of production: he is not arguing that it is self-consciously generated by one class for the subordination of another, but it has just those consequences. He traces the reproduction of working class acquiescence to 'Ideological State Apparatuses' - eg churches, educational institutions, political parties, the mass media, trade unions and the family (and to the 'Repressive State Apparatuses' - government, army, judiciary, prisons, police and civil service).

Michael Mann[4] develops a modified form of the dominant ideology theses in examining the revolutionary potential of the Western ruling class. He argues that the Marxist theory of the dialectical progression of class consciousness does not work. He isolates four elements of that progression:

1 Class identity: the definition of oneself as working class
2 Class opposition: the perception that the capitalist and his agents oppose one enduringly
3 Class totality: the acceptance of 1 and 2 as defining characteristics of (a) one's own total social situation and (b) the whole society in which one lives
4 Alternative social conception: the goal towards which one moves in a struggle with an opponent.[5]

Mann says that Marxism provides a theory of escalation from 1 to 4, but that empirically, these are separable and can occur in varying degrees without the others. Hence, for instance, it is possible for a worker to be aware that there must be possible a less alienating mode of production without being aware of his (objective) opposition to his employer. Mann finds,

> Whatever other industrial attitudes they may hold, workers show unmistakable signs of conscious deprivation which we may well wish to term "alienation".... Yet alienation does not express the worker's total consciousness or explain his behaviour fully. Indeed at every turn we have been confronted by a profound dualism in the worker's situation and his consciousness. Co-existing with a normally passive sense of alienation is an experience of (largely economic) interdependence with the employer at a factual, if not a normative level. Surges of class consciousness are continually undercut by economism.... (6)

However, he continues:

> 'Among manual workers in traditional industries a realistic appraisal of alternative structures is lacking even among the most class-conscious workers in the most explosive situations.' (7)

There is a lack of fit between these elements of consciousness. Moreover, the organisations purporting to further the aims of the working class also display dualism - an over-concern with economistic goals and insufficient attention to wider goals of control over work design and environment - the wider conditions of existence. Above the maelstrom of such confusion, the interests and ideology of the ruling class hold sway.

31

Frank Parkin is another exponent of a dualistic conception of class consciousness[8]. Parkin sees normative order as the outcome of the battle of a number of competing meaning-systems which seek to interpret material reality. These are:

1   The dominant value system. This has as its source 'the major institutional order', fragmented as this may be into various elites. The culture, grammar and values of the dominant class tend to become the standards of what is considered objectively 'right'. These evoke in the subordinate class either a deferential response, most typically among those living in small towns and those who have regular face to face contact with their employers, according to Parkin. Aspirational responses, on the other hand, are most likely to be found among the downwardly mobile and those whose occupations are somewhat marginal to the working class, eg foremen and policemen.

2   Subordinate value system. This derives from the local working-class community and is essentially accommodative, emphasising modes of adaptation rather than endorsement or opposition. For all the 'us/them' class imagery and resentment at officialdom which may be harboured, this is confined to interpersonal relationships - it is not politically radical. Fatalistic pessimism is its quality. Parkin describes it as a negotiated version of the dominant value system to which they are constantly exposed through education and the media.

3   Radical value system. The source of this is the mass political party based on the subordinate class. It promotes an oppositional interpretation of class inequalities. An enfeebled radical value system leads to more of a reliance on the subordinate value system. Dissatisfaction persists in one form or another.

The 'dominant ideology thesis' is the subject of a very thorough critique by Abercrombie, Hill and Turner[9]. Their major criticisms are fourfold: firstly, that no adequate description of the content of the dominant ideology has been produced by the proponents of the thesis; secondly, that the dominant class is not itself homogeneous and does not share the same interests; thirdly, that some parts of the ideology do not gain support even from those who disseminate them; and finally, that the effect of the ideology on the working class has been exaggerated. We will look at each of these in turn.

In the absence of a coherent exposition of the elements of the dominant ideology elsewhere, Abercrombie et al suggest four components. Firstly, the ideology of private property is, they argue, increasingly undermined by the concentration of capital in large corporations and by state capitalism. I would argue that this apparent concentration of capital obscures rather than challenges the legitimacy of a complex pattern of private ownership, and is no more egalitarian-looking that it ever was, pension funds notwithstanding. State ownership of industry is almost entirely dependent upon the whim of the government of the day. The recent privatisation of the hitherto state-owned corporations such as British Gas, British Telecom, British Airways and the Trustee Savings Bank have taken place without any effective public criticism having been raised. The mixed economy of the last forty years is being consciously and deliberately transformed into a 'share-owning democracy', for those who can afford it. It remains to be seen how widespread share-owning will become among the working class, but I would suggest that the rhetoric has already become part of the ideology seeking dominance. Unfortunately, these developments occurred after I had completed the main survey. It would have been interesting to see the respondents' reaction to them.

It is true that transfer of property is limited by capital transfer and inheritance laws, but it is hardly correct that the right of disposal of property is 'increasingly challenged', as they suggest. The laws governing the rights of tenants and employees were changed during the Labour government of 1975-79, but the two subsequent Conservative governments have sought to extend home ownership by the sale of Council properties to tenants and by the removal of exchange control regulations which enable the free international movement of capital. The former can particularly be seen as a self-conscious attempt to trumpet the almost moral obligation to own: 'if you don't buy, you must be either very poor or feckless' is the message.

The second suggested element of the dominant ideology is the 'managerial' ideology.[10] This justifies income inequality in terms of the operation of an impersonal market for labour. It serves thereby to conceal the inheritance of privilege and makes mobility seem possible. It is certainly the case that mobility has been possible, as we saw in the last chapter. The 'impartiality' of management and the concept of the firm as a community of shared interests are other features of the managerial ideology, according to Abercombie. While

33

there have been highly publicised industrial disputes down the years
concerning the rights of control in the workplace, these have been few and
far between. Perhaps the most spectacular of recent months was that
between Rupert Murdoch's News International group and the sacked workers
of The Times and Sunday Times. This concerned the introduction of new
technology and redundancies, and while it can certainly be said that the
length and ferocity of the dispute argues against the effectiveness of a
dominant (managerial) ideology, the vast weight of newspaper opinion was
against the workers throughout, and they lost the dispute in the end. This
has undoubtedly given an enormous ideological boost to 'the manager's
right to manage'.

The 'neutrality of the state' is another: the notion that the state
inhabits neutral ground in a liberal democracy, even-handedly balancing
the interests of a plurality of competing institutions.

Finally, bourgeois culture itself is suggested to be an element in the
dominant ideology. This is rather loosely defined by Abercrombie et al
as 'empiricist' and 'traditionalist' and is most concretely seen in
individualism in management, ideology, literary and artistic artefacts
and the justification of 'consumption rights', such as the right to buy
private medicine and education. All this serves to muddle the thinking of
the working class and makes easier their incorporation.   I would suggest
that this currently crystallises in the potent concept of 'freedom'. What
reasonable man could possibly object to 'freedom'? Apart from the
consumerist freedoms already mentioned, there is a concealed attack on
the collectivism of the working class (wherein lies its power) in the
assertion of the 'freedom' of the individual not to join a trade union.

Abercrombie et al argue that there are inconsistencies between elements of
the ideology. They rightly point out that the 'rights of capital
accumulation' and 'meritocracy' are contradictory. They do co-exist,
however, the attitude on the part of the subordinate class being on the
lines of: 'If I had been born into a family with money, or made a lot myself,
I would want to keep it. Since I haven't, I'll do the best I can through
education and company career structures.' In any case, we must pose the
question of whether internal consistency matters. Ideology is a dynamic
phenomenon and features such as traditionalism may disappear in time to

34

be replaced by 'new' elements such as 'freedom'. It is perfectly possible for human beings to hold contradictory opinions simultaneously. 'Freedom' and 'equality' are conceivably contradictory elements in the declarations of the Rights of Man in both the American and French constitutions. It is this capacity which makes it possible to have dualistic conceptions of the realities of class.

The second criticism they make about the dominant ideology thesis as a whole is that the dominant class is not homogeneous, it does not share the same interests and that accordingly it has conflicting credos. It is therefore misleading to speak of 'the' dominant ideology with its implied singularity of generation and purpose. There is, for instance, a conflict between on the one hand large business which favours welfare policy in order to create social stability and to socialise the cost of providing a high quality labour force, and on the other hand, small businesses which are hostile to interventionist legislation generally. I would argue that such divisions are not crucial. To the extent that such a tension exists, it is unlikely that the working class is aware of it and, if they were, the situation might only serve to strengthen the illusion of the 'neutral state', and make the dominant class less visible.

The third criticism is that some disseminations of the dominant ideology pay only lip-service to it. This is probably true, but surely this serves to confirm the conspiracy theory held by hard-line proponents of the thesis. The examples quoted by the authors are of managers expressing 'trust' in their workers, and of businessmen espousing 'social responsibility' (eg in the matter of environmental pollution). Even if these statements are cynically regarded by workers, the message received is quite likely to be: 'Look what we are prepared to concede', implying 'We need not concede anything. We'll go along with this because it is expedient. We still have the rights of property.' In a sense, the rights of property and management are strengthened by (cosmetic) breast-beating on less vital issues.

The major criticism uses data produced by a number of empirical studies which show that the working class does not swallow the dominant ideology whole, and that its effect is exaggerated. Much research shows that they are indeed dissatisfied.

It is interesting that Abercrombie et al can come up with only one study having a bearing on the ideology of ownership and accumulation - Moorhouse and Chamberlain's study of working-class tenants in Barking[11]. Tenants were found to attack the right to own property (eg to own more than one house). They also thought that human need should be the basis of economic life rather than profit. These were obviously live issues for these tenants, who were at the time involved in a rent strike. The right to own and accumulate productive capital is not specically threatened[12].

The legitimacy of the occupational structure does not appear to have been found weak among respondents in research hitherto. It will be interesting to see how the challenge of high unemployment to the ideology is countered. There is evidence that the need to counter it is perceived, and the answer being suggested is that it is the fault of the unemployed and 'greedy' workers - 'they are pricing themselves out of a job'[13]. It remains to be seen whether this will 'take' in working class consciousness. It if does, no more telling proof will be needed for the existence of the dominant ideology thesis. On the other hand, the concensual view of industrial relations (the firm as a team) does not appear to be widespread. People seem to recognise conflicts of interest, and relationships between management and workers are often characterised by low trust, avarice and rejection of the special competence claimed for managers.

The evidence for the existence of a widespread belief in the neutrality of the state is very much less clear cut and is wide open to conflicting interpretations. On the one hand, Abercrombie et al regard agreement with statements such as 'big business has too much power' or 'one law for the rich, another for the poor' as congruent with the working-class tendency to see society as comprising two classes (which it is), while Mann says these ideas represent simple-minded and populist responses to slogans which co-exist with more conservative political values[14]. It is surely significant that the only prolonged political campaign which challenges the legitimacy and sovereignty of the British Government and which has involved at times violently illegal means of protest has not had as its target the ownership and control of the means of production, but assertion of national (British or Irish) identity. But it is equally clear that where local values are threatened and jobs and the future of communities are at stake, as in the 1985 Miners' Strike, people will adopt strong and even violent methods, and put the blame on the government. It did indeed seem

for a time that these communities and their supporters were 'class conscious' and the government's role was visibly interventionist. Nevertheless, enduring support for leftish revolutionary parties remains marginal.

Evidence concerning the permeation of bourgeois values seems generally to run counter to the dominant ideology thesis. There is the study by Willis[15] in which values running clearly counter to hierarchy, deference, authority and individualism were found, together with the awareness that labour has only commodity status. Similarly, McRobbie's study[16] of adolescent schoolgirls reveals class-conscious attitudes expressed in terms of rejection of (bourgeois) school values in favour of precocious femininity. Beynan[17] found a collectivist, oppositional culture, institutionally embodied in trade unionism in his study of Fords. I would argue that it is perfectly possible for all these findings to be valid, but at the same time, that elements of bourgeois culture may be present in sufficient strength to prevent the formation of a coherent class consciousness in the sense that all four of Mann's elements of class consciousness[18] were not present. Hence, for instance, McRobbie's girls may have been hostile to bourgeois school values, but their objectives were not collective but individualistic - the getting of a boyfriend. Individualism was a notable feature of many of the West Indian women interviewed. They held these views alongside a predominantly proletarian class consciousness[19].

So if we accept, for the sake of the flow of argument, that the dominant ideology thesis is invalid (and there is no reason why we should, as all the evidence so far is compatible with the notion of dualistic conceptions of ideology), how do Abercombie et al account for the evident lack of revolutionary consciousness? They see the social order as hanging together in the absence of powerful concensual values firstly because of the compulsion of economic relations, secondly because of the absence of a radical belief system as an alternative model, and thirdly because the subordinate classes are riven by internal divisions.

The first point is difficult to counter. There is no doubt that a rational appraisal of self-interest leads most people who do not own productive capital to the view that one has to work in order to live. The relative acquiescence of the Labour Movement during the recession is one indication of this stance. If the past is anything to go by, pragmatic apathy is

likely to continue to be the prevailing mood of the working class, with the increasing automation of productive process by means of micro-chip technology. Nevertheless, it can be argued that such a development carries with it the seeds of an alternative consciousness if new jobs do not arise. There will have to be a careful balance struck between paying sufficient social security benefit to enable increasingly large numbers of people to subsist without being starved into insurrection on the one hand, and on the other, forcing a diminishing workforce to pay for this without questioning the logic of paying people not to work. This would seem to me an inherently unstable situation.

Related to this, the absence of a coherent alternative radical belief system means that there is no popular utopia on offer, no widely held feeling that a better life could be had for the mass of the people under a different system. As Abercrombie et al point out, the Labour Party has been largely reformist, and the model of the USSR is repellant. This can be regarded as a serious failure on the part of the Left, who seem far more concerned with means than ends. 'Utopian' for them is a term of abuse. Nevertheless, Abercrombie et al cannot have it both ways: the existence of oppositional attitudes, which they have been at pains to expose as proof of the weakness of the dominant ideology, can also be seen as evidence of consciousness that some other way is possible, however vaguely or indistinctly perceived this is.

The final argument, that the working class is internally divided and that this is reflected in the lack of a common consciousness, is on shakier ground, and is demolished by Stephen Hill elsewhere[20]. While the hypothosised divisions do not seem to have empirical validity and therefore do not help to explain working class quiescence, they are still interesting and worth a brief examination (below), as much of the empirical research conducted into social consciousness in Britain during the last twenty years has made reference to them, if not used them as a specific point of departure.

Divisions in the Working Class and Its Consciousness

I have dealt at length with the dominant ideology thesis and its criticisms and counter-criticisms. While I have by no means argued for the untarnished nature of its validity, I would say that its existence has not been disproved and that I would expect to see elements of it in the data produced by my

38

survey. However, the survey is <u>not</u> seeking simply to prove or disprove the dominant ideology thesis. The existence of a dominant ideology is certainly not inconsistent with Abercrombie et al's arguments about the compulsiveness of economics, the internal divisions in the working class or the absence of a radical belief system. Indeed, it may be precisely this latter which may currently be an important part of the answer as to why the working class is quiescent. The individuals whose views <u>are</u> extreme assume a particular importance among the respondents for that reason. <u>How</u> did they come to have these views? Chapter Eight below holds clues.

In his article, 'Sources of Variation in Working Class Struggles of Society', David Lockwood identifies three types of workers: 'traditional', 'affluent' and 'deferential'. 'Traditional' workers are those with strong attachments to a work community. They have a collectivist, class conscious, oppositional view of society ('us' versus 'them'), seeing the basis of class as power, and typically work in heavy industries and live in isolated communities. Examples would be coalmining, steel production and shipbuilding. 'Affluent' workers were individualistic and regarded work instrumentally as a means of making a living rather than as also involving community. Typically, they were thought to be found in mass production industries. Their attitudes to trade unions were instrumental towards securing monetary gain rather than collectivist for their own sake. They lived 'privatised' lives, ie not necessarily among their colleagues, and they saw 'money' as the basis of class - ie differences in spending power. 'Deferential' workers, working in a closer face to face relation with their employers, such as in small businesses or farming, deferred to employers and those they saw as superior. They saw society as a status hierarchy rather than as based on power or money.

Much evidence has been stacked up against divisions on these lines. Howard Davis's steelworkers, as 'traditional proletarian' as one could wish to find in terms of work and culture, exhibited 'no aggregate of attitudes or perspectives which amounts to a view or image of society as a whole'[23]. The steelworkers had a very strong sense of occupational identity, but 'this developed form of proletarian or class consciousness has not taken root among the steelworkers. It has been arrested at an earlier stage which has not yet transcended the occupational characteristics of work, to identify the nature of work as something more than personal destiny.'[24]

Davis goes on from this to conclude that the more homogeneous, inward-looking and unchanging an occupational community is, the stronger the sense of a group identity will be, but the weaker will be the sense of opposition and the image of society.

Rather a different criticism of the ideal type traditional proletarian comes from Cousins and Brown's research[25] on shipbuilding workers. They found a considerable variety of class perspectives. Attitudes to a number of political and industrial issues were not unambiguously proletarian, although 'latent proletarianism' was found, ie the workers saw themselves as being in the lowest class and distinguished from those with wealth, authority, titles or land.

In his study of London dockers[26], Stephen Hill found some features of their social consciousness were very like that of 'affluent workers'[27]. For instance, he found economic instrumentalism in their support for unions, but the collectivism did not extend to uniting within a wider political or industrial movement. Both dockers and 'affluent' workers were found to perceive 'the opposition of interests and latent social conflict in industry' and both reported that the actual social relations between men and management remained peaceful while their instrumental demands were satisfied[28].

The 'deferential worker' supposedly found in farming communities was not found there in large numbers by Newby[29]. Farm workers were dependant on farmers for jobs and houses, so their quiescence need have nothing to do with their class perspectives. Indeed, most were found to have proletarian outlooks. On the other hand, Batstone found that those employed in small plants were typically less class aware and did not have models of society based on power, but they did not demonstrate any great tendency to be deferential to a (quasi) hereditary elite[30].

Looking at the working class as a whole, however, there are a number of writers who argue that there are no significant divisions in terms of class imagery. Moorhouse's review of the literature on class attitudes and relationships[31] leads him to the view that the 'money model' and the 'power dichotomy' are one and the same, expressed differently. 'Money is rather the way inequalities of power and status can be succinctly symbolised or expressed. Statements about money are statements about power'.[32]

Roberts et al[33] found that the proletarian model (power and conflict) was the one to predominate among manual workers. While approximately a quarter saw themselves as middle class[34], significantly, they also found that low level male clerks whose pay and status is similar to that of manual workers had an oppositional and proletarian outlook on class[35]. A number of writers[36] make the point that those working class men who identify themselves as middle class are much more likely to have social relationships with non-manual workers than those who have a proletarian class attitude.

A summary of these writers' findings indicates the following elements in proletarian class attitudes:-

1   Identification of oneself as 'working class' or as being in the less privileged of two classes, ie 'I' as part of a working class 'we'
2   Recognition that 'money' or 'power' is the basis of class divisions
3   Recognition that the interests of the ruling class are different and oppositional to one's own class's interests
4   Fatalistic acceptance of the status quo.

It is frequently characterised by low salience - it is not uppermost in the person's mind and he or she does not readily categorise people in these terms.

A radical social consciousness is identical in items 1 to 3, but number 4 is replaced by an alternative vision of the social and economic structure of society and a desire that action should be taken to put this vision into practice. It is important to note that this is frequently held by those who, in Weberian terms, would not be classified as working class. This was certainly the case among our respondents.

How are we to categorise bourgeois social perceptions? One of the earlier British researchers in this field, Elizabeth Bott, identified three which were held by those who saw themselves as middle class, or at least as only equivocally working class[37]. In all three, although to varying extents, prestige was seen as the basis of social classification rather than money or power: 'Various criteria of class membership were used, but all were aimed at defining those similarities of taste and interest that would determine the boundaries of social equality and possible friendship.'[38]

Classes were seen as categories rather than groups with common economic interests, and no relationship was mentioned between classes, nor was conflict between classes alluded to. Some people thought in terms of three classes, others perceived more. Yet others had an unstable intellectualised notion involving both power and prestige.

Roberts et al's study of men's class perceptions[39] sees middle class perceptions as splintering into three kinds, held typically by different sections of the middle class. The first were those who perhaps correspond most closely to a traditional middle-class, self-employed, professional, small entrepreneurs and those managers who had 'come up the hard way' as the result of long service. They see themselves as middle class, but that class is perceived as small, and weakened by the domination from above and the threats from below. Interestingly, they frequently name the working class as 'most powerful'. It is not made explicit what the basis of class is seen to be, but it would appear that power and money rather than social prestige is recognised. Moreover, this small middle class is perceived as being in opposition to and competition with the other classes. It is not just a category[40].

The most commonly held bourgeois social perception was that of the middle mass. As the name suggests, there is seen to be a large middle class positioned between a small, rich and powerful, upper class and a small lower class of extremely underprivileged people. It is not seen in relational terms. It is an amorphous mass without any sense of common interests. 'It is essentially a collection of individuals enjoying similar privileges and lifestyles.[41] This kind of class perception was found most commonly among middle-rank employees of large organisations.

The other type of social imagery that Roberts et al found was a finely graded hierarchical model of society, like a ladder. Movements occur by means of individual effort and ability. Classes here do not have clear-cut boundaries, nor are classes seen to be in any oppositional relationship with each other. The intergenerationally upwardly mobile 'intelligentsia' were most likely to hold this view of society[42]. The one person in my research to hold such an image fits this description perfectly[43].

42

Howard Davis's sample of insurance company white-collar workers expresses the image somewhat differently[43]. A person's place in the social system is seen as the outcome of their personal striving and talents, and the system provides for this. They tended to see society as a system of action rather than as a collectivity of social groups or as an object of blind technical or economic forces. Asked what makes a class a distinct category, one worker replied: 'I would think it's basically the environment you're brought up in and educational standards. You can arrive at your own social level.' Davis comments: 'This was the dominant understanding of social class.' Their interpretation did not make social class a basis of collective identity. It looks remarkably like Roberts's and Bott's 'prestige hierarchy' mentioned above.

For all the fragmentation, there are common elements in most of the bourgeois conceptions of class:

1   Identification of oneself in a class above the lowest one
2   A playing down of power or money as the basis of class (except Roberts's 'compressed' middle class). Occupational, educational or social prestige is recognised, as are lifestyle and 'cultural capital'.
3   A lack of the sense of common economic interests in relation to groups with opposing interests. (Again, Roberts's 'compressed' middle class is the exception.)
4   Satisfaction with the status quo.

It must be stressed that class may have low salience for most middle class-identifiers, but in the literature there are fewer references to 'low salience' in relation to middle-class perceptions than to working-class consciousness. If this is the case, it is functional to stability, of course.

The descriptions above are in the nature of ideal types and class images in reality are much more complex and fragile than these 'types' appear to allow for. Nevertheless, they serve as a useful device for pointing out how far removed bourgeois images are from Marxist class consciousness. If working class-identifiers feel dull resentment, they at least recognise opposition of interests. Middle class-identifiers identify with the status quo.

Most of the research done into class consciousness and images of class
has been conducted on men. Women have been explicitly excluded from some[45]
and allowed a token presence in others[46]. Only Bott's study[47] is truly
even-handed, and Pauline Hunt's book on the impact of gender on class
consciousness[48] is the only one which has an all-female sample. As we
have indicated elsewhere[49], Bott's remains the only published material
which shows how women perceive the realities of class.

Hunt's work addresses the construction of gender-identity and how this
interferes with the conception of self as worker. She points out that
women are less class conscious[50] (than men, by implication), but argues
that they return to work after caring for children with a greater sensitivity
concerning capitalism's capacity to transform workers into the means to
profitable ends. Those full-time housewives who had had industrial
experience were found to express views most coherently, but generally a
political backwardness was found, due to the narrowness of the home-based
world[51]. Hunt does not tell us how her respondents see the social world
- how they identify themselves and others in class terms, and what they
see as the basis of class. Half of the working women she interviewed
regarded themselves as 'working women who also run a home', in contrast
with the media image of a woman's family role being her total status[52].

Bott's study[53], and Davis's self-classing statistics[54], and our previous
research all indicate that women are less likely to be class conscious in
two respects: that they are less likely to identify themselves as working
class or they are less likely to recognise the money or power and relational
basis of class relationships. Of course the numbers involved in these
studies were very small. It is our intention here to test out these
hypotheses on a rather larger sample of men and women, and also to test
out the distribution of the other elements of working class and bourgeois
consciousness within a given social and geographical area. How do people
see their social world, given that the local environment is perhaps more
obviously divided racially than in class terms? Does consciousness of
racial differences merely serve to fragment the apparent unity of the
working class consciousness?

This brings us to the final point in this chapter - how do members of racial or strong religious and cultural communities themselves see the world in class and status terms? It was my decision to study class consciousness in a racially and culturally mixed location, Stamford Hill[52], which led directly to the extension of the research into this question. In what ways, if at all, does these communities' members' class and social consciousness vary from that of the native born, white, non-Jewish community? Previous studies in industrial and class perceptions have been colour blind and, with only one exception[53], have not addressed the issue of religion and cultural heritage. The only exception I have found is an historical study by Robert Moore of the links of Methodism with trade union activities between 1870 and 1914 in mining communities in Durham. His conclusions were that the values shared by Methodist union leaders and mine owners may have caused a resistance to the growth of radical working class unionism and (later) labour politics in these communities.

So we have here the two parameters of comparison which will operate in this research: gender on the one hand and local status group (in Weberian terms) on the other. The validity of the concept 'status group', as applied to the Hasidic Jews and West Indians in Stamford Hill is discussed in my concluding chapter.

NOTES ON CHAPTER TWO

1   A M Froude, 'Women's Perceptions of Class', unpublished MSc (Econ) dissertation, London School of Economics, 1982

2   S Hill, Competition and Control at Work, ch 10

3   L Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in Lenin and Philosophy

4   M Mann, Consciousness and Action in the Western Working Class

5   Ibid, p 13

6   Ibid, p 68

7   Ibid, p 59

8   F Parkin, Class Inequality and Political Order, ch 3

9   N Abercrombie, S Hill and B S Turner, The Dominant Ideology Thesis, ch 5

10   Ibid

11   H F Moorhouse and C W Chamberlain, 'Lower Class Attitudes to Property', in Sociology, 8, 1974, pp 387-405

12   Several of the respondents were asked about their opinions on the principle of ownership of second houses. Not being involved in housing disputes themselves, they did not object to the principle, even Pete Whittaker, a communist. Housing as a class issue is discussed in the concluding chapter below.

13   Nigel Lawson, speaking at the Tory Party Conference on 10 October 1984, said: 'The main cause of unemployment today - and it's the same in the rest of Europe - is the determination of the main political trade unions to insist on levels of pay that price men out of work all together.' Guardian, 11 October 1984. Respondents in the survey reported in Chapters five, six + seven below were asked whether they agreed with the proposition that the young were pricing themselves out of jobs. There was little affirmation of it. See below, p199.

14 I would endorse Mann's view on this. I included a question to evoke a
    response to the idea 'there's one law for the rich and another for the
    poor'. Only three   out of forty-seven respondents disagreed, and
    some with otherwise very conservative values agreed with it. See below,
    Chapter Six P.98

15 P Willis, <u>Learning to Labour</u>

16 A McRobbie, 'Working Class Girls and the Culture of Femininity' in
    Women's Studies Groups (eds) <u>Women Take Issue</u>

17 H Beynan, <u>Working for Ford</u>

18 See p 31 above

19 See Chapter Six

20 S Hill, op cit, ch 10

21 Reprinted in <u>Working Class Images of Society</u>, ed M Bulmer, pp 16-31

22 H Davis, <u>Beyond Class Images</u>, ch 6

23 Ibid, p 142

24 Ibid

25 J Cousins and R Brown, 'Patterns of Paradox: Shipbuilding Workers' Images
    of Society', in Bulmer, op cit

26 S Hill, <u>The Dockers</u>, footnote 29, p 191

27 J H Goldthorpe et al, <u>The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure</u>

28 S Hill, <u>Competition and Control at Work</u>, p 221

29 H Newby, <u>The Deferential Worker</u>

30 E Babtone, 'Deference and the Ethos of Small Town Capitalism', in
    M Bulmer, op cit, p 117

31 H F Moorhouse, 'Attitudes to Class and Class Relationships in Britain',
    Sociology, Vol 10, No 3, 1976

32 Ibid, p 47

33 K Roberts et al, The Fragmentary Class Structure

34 Ibid, p 55

35 Ibid, p 140. West Indian respondents with class 4 occupations similarly
    tended to have such outlooks. See below, Chapter Six, pp 159-160; 169-193

36 S Hill, op cit, p223; K Roberts et al, op cit, p 56

37 E Bott, Family and Social Network, pp 174-179

38 Ibid, p 176

39 K Roberts et al, op cit

40 Ibid, pp 111-116

41 Ibid, p 138

42 Ibid, p 157

43 See Chapter Six   , p 178   below, Wendy Moore

44 H H Davis, op cit, pp 166-173

45 Ibid; K Roberts, op cit; studies in M Bulmer (ed), op cit; R Sennett
    and J Cobb, The Hidden Injuries of Class; P Hiller, 'Nature and Location
    of Everyday Conceptions of Class' in Sociology, vol 9, pp 1-28

46 T Nichols and P Armstrong, <u>Workers Divided</u>. 20% of his sample were women.

47 E Bott, op cit

48 P Hunt, <u>Gender and Class Consciousness</u>

49 A M Froude, op cit

50 P Hunt, op cit, ch 3, p 172

51 Ibid, ch 2 p 99

52 Ibid, p 136

53 E Bott, op cit, pp 174-179

54 A F Davies, op cit, p 88

55 A M Froude, op cit

56 A description of the variety of the origins of the people living in
   Stamford Hill is given at the beginning of Chapter Seven.

57 Robert S Moore, 'Religion as a source of variation in Working-Class
   Images of Society' in M Bulmer (ed) <u>Working Class Images of Society</u>,
   pp 35-54

CHAPTER THREE

ON BEING THE 'OTHER'

We have seen how material inequalities, transmitted from one generation
to the next by means of the family and enshrined in the law and an
appropriate ideology, have come to form a class society, and how this
tends to be manifested in the consciousness of the working and
middle classes.[1] In this chapter, we will look at another major division
between people - that of gender. We are using here the generally understood
definitions of 'sex' and 'gender'.

'Sex' refers to the biological division into female and male; 'gender' to
the parallel and socially unequal division into 'femininity and masculinity'[2]

From the biological point of view, being a man or a women appears to be
a much simpler matter of identity than being 'working class' or 'middle
class'. This conventional view conflates sex and gender. It has been
suggested that transexuals, people who feel they have been wrongly sexed
or born with the wrong set of genitals, are victims of the view that
sex equals gender identity[3]. No matter what the material privileges - or
lack of them - surrounding a baby's birth, the first attribute that the
midwife will describe is almost invariably its sex. It is the first thing
parents, family and the world at large wants to know. As we will see, from
this division flow many consequences beyond the biological. Sex is the
master (sic) status par excellence.

In precisely the same way that simple material inequality does not of
itself make a class society, sex does not sui generis account for the
gross inequalities of power and status that men and women have acquired.
Women have become negatively privileged in a system of values in which
the capacity for the production, selling, maintenance and disposal of things
(which have increasingly become described as the province of men) are valued
more highly than the production and nurture of human beings. There is
no substantive reason why the conception, bearing and giving birth to
another human being should not be the most highly valued of human

achievements and why, in consequence, women should not be the most privileged of individuals. There is no substantive reason why women, as principal bearers of the species, should not be the category of human beings who make the decisions about the material and spiritual needs of the species. The status quo is the outcome of a myriad of choices, not the product of pre-programmed 'human nature'. In the same way that 'class' relates to inequality of material condition, gender is the package of material and ideological privileges and deprivations chosen and institutionalised on the basis of a division in biology.

One writer who sets out to account for the subordination of women on biological grounds is Randell Collins[4]. He argues that, as males are generally bigger and more sexually aggressive than femals, who are made vulnerable by bearing and nurturing, male ownership of females became the dominant mode:

> 'The basic feature of sexual stratification is the institution of sexual property: the relatively permanent claim to exclusive sexual rights over a person.' (5)

This basic mode has become modified by forms of social organisation affecting the use of force, and those affecting the market positions of men and women, Collins goes on to argue.

The problem with this is that the variations in social organisation and their connection with the sexual ownership of women is left unexplained. Why should men have 'given up' the 'right' to force sexual possession? Features of the marriage laws relating to non-consumation and adultery are as available to women as to men who wish to free themselves on these grounds. Collins fails to explain how men came to make laws which so restricted themselves. As Eichler points out:

> 'There seems to be little doubt that women are superior to men in strictly biological terms if this can be measured by a longer life expectancy and immunity to certain diseases, or rather a great susceptibility of males towards a number of physical afflictions.'(6)

We repeat: biology is not in itself an adequate explanation of sexual stratification.

Michelle Barratt argues that any biologistic theories can be challenged on the grounds of empiricism - they assume that differences in social behaviour are caused by the observed biological differences with which they correlate. They are also reactionary.[7]

In Chapter One, I made the point that the objective facts about class and the subjective realities of it form a tightly interactive process. I took the Althusserian view that material condition is ultimately the determinant of social arrangements and consciousness, but that ideology plays a crucial role in the reproduction of the relations of production. In relation to gender and its attendant inequalities, I would argue that ideology has a much more powerfully deterministic role. The choice of a pink or blue pram blanket can hardly be said directly and materially to affect the well-being of an infant, but as the signifiers of membership of the oppressed or dominant sexes respectively, they have immediate implications for the way in which the child is treated[8]. These initial contacts with the rest of humanity set the scene for the rest of the child's life. Selected on the basis of an internalised and, until recently, unrecognised gender ideology, clothes, toys, games and books form the child's material reality and the framework of his or her subjective reality.

Unlike the arguments surrounding the concept of class, the conduct of the academic debates about gender are carried out principally among the negatively privileged themselves. This gives them a much fresher and angrier quality then those employed by people who manage to include themselves in the oppressed class only by creating the category of 'ideological vanguard'. The arguments here are not between those who seek radical change and those who would keep things as they are, but between two tendencies, both of which see fundamental upheaval in existing social arrangements as necessary. All such work can therefore be seen as praxis. This is not to say that rearguard actions are not being fought with those (usually male) researchers in genetics and experimental psychology who seek to stress 'innate' or 'biological' differences between females and males.

In her review of the research into genes and gender, Ann Oakley adds a number of caveats to evidence of differences summarised[9]. These are: that the search for sex differences serves to magnify them; that socialisation processes are sufficient to account for most of the observed and 'documented' sex differences; that much of the research is conducted on the assumption that conclusions about human behaviour may be drawn from studies of animal behaviour, which ignore the importance of learning, the complexity of humans' verbal communication and humans' ability to manipulate their environment; that biology is not a cultural constant; and that the status quo that much scientific research on sex differences claims to discover is

52

one that legitimises the social inferiority of women. Similarly, in their review of the psychology literature relating to women, Fransella and Frost found 'innumerable' studies seeking to demonstrate early differences between boys and girls at play and at work. 'The results add up to a resounding "lack of differences" between boys and girls in a psychological sense.'[10] The only exceptions were aggression in boys and verbal ability in girls.

In this chapter, we will examine the question of who benefits from the oppression of women, the difficulties surrounding the conceptualisation of women's class positions, the facts about women's employment, wealth, education and the sexual division of labour within the family. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the importance of 'femininity' as an ideological blind against gender and class consciousness, and a review of how women see themselves in relation to work, the home, their identities and class.

Cui Bono?

The following case study[11] clearly illustrates some of the difficulties in establishing who benefits from discrimination against women in the field of employment. In 1964, at a time of relatively full employment, fourteen women were employed in one of Chemco (Cem)'s factories to fill bags with cement and glue the bags shut. Initially, they were very poorly paid, but by 1972 their basic rate had risen to £22 per week from less than £7 and the impending prospect of equal pay legislation meant that by 1974, the shortfall with men's pay should have disappeared. Unemployment had risen to over a million in 1972, and so from management's point of view, the incentive to employ women had disappeared.

A productivity deal introduced in 1970 made the employment of women look like an absolute disadvantage, however. The object of the deal was to cut down 'resting' time by enabling foremen to switch people from one task to another, and thereby reduce the number of workers needed. The problem was that many of the tasks were too heavy for the women to perform. All they could do was fill bags, glue them and sweep the floor. Only six women remained in 1972, compared with the original fourteen. The productivity deal contained a redundancy clause, but the women felt that their position was insecure. They did not want to leave their jobs voluntarily because the wages were good by the standards of unskilled female employment. They

also felt they ought to collect redundancy payments if the management did want them out.

Two major issues of conflict arose between the men and the women. Firstly, the Factories Act stipulated that after an eight-hour shift, women must be given half an hour's break before starting overtime work. While men could work during this break, it is less efficient for them to do so, and while the women are filling the bags, men need to be at the other end of the conveyor belt to load the filled bags onto lorries. The management decided that the men on overtime must work and rest at the same time as the women when they did overtime. This half-hour rest-time was not paid. Reasonably enough, the men preferred to work straight through and get home earlier. Consequently, the women were most unpopular when they worked overtime.

The second issue concerned the heaviness of the work, especially loading. Loading was a job which put severe strain on men's backs, and the productivity deal with its 'flexible' job rotation made it seem that no-one would be compelled to do more than his fair share of lifting. Because women could not load, men who worked with them had to do more loading than if it was an all-male shift. The women were therefore seen to deprive them of the full benefits of job rotation.

Armstrong comments that other things being equal, the men would have been better off if the women were replaced by six men: overtime conditions would improve and they would have to do less loading. Nevertheless, it was almost certainly the case that they would have been replaced by fewer men and the benefit they imagined would not therefore materialise. The women and the men were doing the same job as before the productivity deal. It was only after the deal with its promise of fair shares of loading that the women came to be resented. Understandably, the women deprived themselves of the right to make their views known at works council meetings, ostensibly because of the 'bad language' used, but it is more likely that they feared that they would not be sympathetically heard. The same fear probably excluded them from seeking the protection of their union.

The employer's part in these sources of conflict became obscured by the apparent battle between the sexes. Management could have paid for the half-hour rest before overtime. Their purpose in introducing the productivity

deal was to employ fewer people. It was the employer who benefited from
using cheap female labour initially, and the job rotation scheme, working
perfectly, presupposed the removal of the women. It is by no means clear
that the male workers would have benefited from the removal of the female
workers, and similarly, it could hardly be claimed that the husbands of the
married women would benifit from the drop in income. In this *case*
:, therefore, it would seem that it is the owners of capital rather
than men who ultimately benefit from discrimination against women. This
works, as Nichols and Armstrong showed, by the exploitation and aggravation
of divisions within the working class.

When we turn to the domestic sphere - the 'family', 'the home', or what
Michelle Barratt prefers to call the 'family-household system'[12], the
question of who benefits becomes more tangled. Such a system performs
certain functions: the reproduction of labour day to day, the reproduction
of labour intergenerationally[13] and the maintenance of those unable to work
because of infirmity or old age. It remains the fact that women perform most
of the work within the family, and this is the case whether or not the man
is working outside the home.[14] The conclusion of an important new book on
fatherhood[15] is that, despite the hopes generated by the Women's Movement
and an apparent increase in men's willingness to involve themselves in
domestic matters, the New Man is a myth.

'Conservative' functionalist sociology such as that of Talcott Parsons
would argue that all participants benefit from the functions of 'the
family'. Children are maintained and socialised, (male) workers are
serviced and provided with emotional comfort by the 'expressive',
'affective' role of the woman, while she in turn is freed by the men from
the 'instrumental' role of earning money. As Barratt points out, such a
thesis reproduces conventional attitudes and denies the economic significance
of the family household[16]; the ideology of the stay-at-home mother and the
providing father would have been at its strongest during the post-war early
1950s when Parsons was writing about the family.[17]

The massive feminist literature in psychology, philosophy and politics, as
well as novels, poetry and plays, bears witness to the fact that many women
themselves no longer unequivocally feel that such a system benefits them[18].
Barratt makes the point that campaigns fought by middle-class women in the
various areas represent an onslaught on the principle of the bourgeois

55

married women's dependence[19]. Of the campaigns she mentions, however, divorce, contraception, abortion, the right to control over children after marital break-up, and political rights, are of direct benefit to all women, and as such attack all married women's dependence. Nevertheless, economic dependency remains the norm among substantial numbers of married women with dependent children[20].

Do the children benefit from the privatised nurture afforded by the nuclear family? Materially, it may be preferable for the child born into a middle or affluent working-class family, but it is unlikely that the children of the poor or the unemployed experience much material benefit. Moreover, for older children, regardless of class, financial dependency is legally defined and enforced by means of employment legislation and the school minimum leaving age. Those who go on to higher education in Britain have long been aware of the extension of dependency such a course of action entails. The horrors of dependency to be endured in modern childhood are vividly sketched by Shulamith Firestone[21]. Add to these the likelihood of losing one of your parents in divorce[22], of being sexually abused by one of your parents[23], or being scapegoated into schizophrenia[24], or of finding yourself with a psychiatrically disturbed mother[25], and the family-household can hardly be said to be an unqualified benefit for children.

Men certainly benefit from the domestic labour of women[26]. Ann Oakley's research among London housewives found that: 'Only a minority of husbands give the kind of help that assertions of equality in modern marriage imply. Fifteen percent have a high level of participation in housework and twenty-five percent in childcare.'[27] She is scathing about Young and Willmott's finding that 72% of husbands do tasks other than washing up.[28]. She says:

> 'The seventy-two percent sounds impressive, but when one considers how it was arrived at it immediately becomes less so. A man who helps with the children once a week would be included in this percentage; so would (presumably) a husband who ironed his own trousers on a Saturday afternoon.' (29)

56

Moreover, any change in the amount men do around the house appears to be very slow. This research found that men were not contributing much more to housework than their fathers or fathers-in-law had, except perhaps in their willingness to look after children[30]. I had expected them to be doing substantially more.

However, it is also true that the breadwinner role locks men into wage labour with considerable pressure to remain docile in order to protect their jobs and hence provision for their families. Furthermore, as Michelle Barratt points out, men themselves are beginning to feel dissatisfied with the extent to which their working lives keep them away from their children[31]. Against this, it must be protested that there is precious little evidence that men are demanding a shorter working day to make this possible. Nevertheless, it must be conceded that the current division of labour is only a qualified blessing on men.

In just the same way that, on the face of it, men unequivocally appear to benefit from the nuclear family arrangement, the case that it is the bourgeoisie that benefits seems initially unassailable. As I mentioned above, the system provides a supply of fed, clothed, serviced workers day to day, provides the next generation of workers, and also - but perhaps less reliably - looks after previous generations and those who are currently physically or mentally incapable of selling their labour. Barratt remarks that she is not convinced that this is the most efficient structure for capital, and cites a system of migrant labour as more efficient, in that intergenerational reproduction costs are met in the homeland[32]. While it is true that the family-household system may not be the most efficient means of producing labour, it _does_ benefit capital, however imperfectly.

An analagous criticism Barratt makes about Engels' view that legitimacy and established paternity are required for the reproduction of capital. is that these are not in fact necessary. I would agree. What _is_ necessary is that predictable individuals of the next generation are named and preferably prepared for the role that the ownership and control of capital involved. A system of inheritance modelled on the Howard Hughes Estate - with many people staking competing claims - can hardly be efficient.

57

Other economic benefits flow. One such is in the sphere of consumption[33].
Millions of households consuming the ever increasing paraphenalia of
household equipment represents a massive market for capital's produce.
Socialised living would radically reduce this. Another is the weakening
and thereby stabilising effect of the family-household system on the
working class. This is functional to the long-term collective interest of
the owners of capital.

To conclude, the family-household system appears to benefit men, but some
men - middle-class men - get more out of it than others. It benefits the
owners and controllers of capital as a class, but some - the men - more
than others. It is significant that so many of the critiques of the system
have originated among middle-class women, who are increasingly asserting
their right to independence through work. If the status quo is so beneficial
to them, why are they clamouring for change?

Women and Class

If men's and women's material interests appear to differ, it would follow
that their relationship to the class system may not be identical. As we
saw in Chapter One, men are conceived of as belonging to classes either
in terms of their relationship to the means of production or in terms of
their place in the labour market. The means by which a subsistence is
acquired are what the various writers on class are pointing to as determining
man's class. Marxists, feminists, sociologists and the Registrar General
have variously dealt with the question of where women belong in class
terms. It is misleading, perhaps, to speak of 'women' as a category here,
as there are large, significant sub-categories of women, such as single
women, whose class positions we can conceptualise without difficulty[34].
Problems arise over married women and formerly married women.

In official statistics, the practice has been to classify households
according to the occupation of the 'chief economic provider'. Until the
1981 Census, this was always taken to be a man, if there were both sexes in
a household. The relationship assumed was therefore one of a woman's
dependency on a man[35]. The obvious inequity in this practice was that
it denied that women living in households containing a man were themselves
agents in the class system by virtue of their own paid economic activity.

The substitution of a system of categorisation which allows for either a male or female chief economic provider will not rupture this principle in those households classified by a man's occupation. Moreover, men whose wives are now deemed as chief economic provider find themselves liable to be no longer regarded as agents in the class system. All this would not matter if there were not significant discrepancies between men's and women's occupations measured in terms of the Registrar General's categories. 44% of wives classified in groups I and II have husbands whose social class classification is different from their own, and the figures for women in social classes II and IV-V are 75.2% and 90.2% respectively[36]. Men's occupations are generally not an index of women's, although among the respondents interviewed in this study, there was a considerable degree of congruence[37]. Nevertheless, it remains true that for those wives who are not at first hand engaged in economic activity - earning subsistence by whatever means - it is their husband's occupation or relation to the means of production which most significantly affects the household in material terms. The practice of classifying in terms of the (male) 'head of household' has become the conventional mode in market research, opinion polling and most sociological research.

Another way of conceptualising women's subordinancy is to regard them as a status group or caste. Superficially, the concept looks promising. Status is fixed at birth - there is no possibility of social mobility. Moreover, sexual stratification has also until recently been 'a system of value characterised by the legitimacy it accords to social inequality'[38]. Such features are typical of status groups or castes. Notions of purity and pollution are also of relevance here. The symbolic barrier protecting women's purity can be seen in the chador worn by Muslim women[39]. The idea that a young woman should not indulge in sexual intercourse until after marriage or at least until she has found her putative marriage partner are still common currency, it seems[40]. The 'polluting' qualities of menstrual blood are still widely believed in[41]. It is particularly worth noting that the taboo on sexual intercourse or even touching of menstruating women still exists among certain sects of Orthodox Jews, including one studied in this research, the Lubavitch community. A wife must visit the mikvah or ritual bath after each menstrual period in order to purify herself for sexual relations. The notion of sex codes in this context may be helpful in explaining in cultural terms why there is resistence to change in the relations between the sexes.

59

Nevertheless, we cannot push this concept of 'caste' too far. Sexual castes can hardly be said to be endogamous. Although there are indications of distinct female and male cultures - fashion, interest in people and mutual supportiveness on the one hand and sport, drinking and competitiveness on the other - there is a vast area of shared culture - literature, music, art, the media, jobs. As Margrit Eichler points out: 'There are shared cultural subdivisions along lines other than sex, such as economic positions, ethnicity, religion, urban-rural distinctions etc.'[42]. Another objection to the application of the concept to the sexes is that it is simplistic and fails to take account of the multitude of exceptions to the rule that men enjoy a higher status than women. Class, ethnicity and religion all play a part in the construction of status hierarchies. This same objection applies to the notion of men as a dominant group and women as a minority group[43]. These concepts are not capable of explaining the variations and sources of power within the castes or status groups and are therefore unhelpful for our purposes.

A number of writers have suggested that it is possible to conceive of women as a class. Margaret Benston was probably one of the first[44]. She argued that the roots of the secondary status of women are economic and that women stand in a definite, different relation to the means of production. This arises from the responsibility that women as a group have for household production. Household production produces not commodities, which also include exchange-value, but simply use-values. Hence, 'women' as a group stand in a different relation to production than the group 'men':

> 'The material basis for the inferior status of women is to be found in just this definition of women. In a society in which money determines value, women are a group who work outside the money economy. Their work is not worth money, is therefore valueless, is therefore not even real work. And women themselves, who do this valueless work, can hardly be expected to be worth as much as men, who work for money. (45)

In this respect, women can be seen as serfs or peasants, she comments, whereas in the industrialised sector they function as a reserve army. Margrit Eichler, applying Ossowski's general criteria for social class, suggests that women could reasonbly be regarded as a social class:

1   Women and men are in a hierarchically ordered relationship in which men are superior with respect to a definite system of privileges and discriminations.
2   The distinction is relatively permanent and has resulted in different interests for the sexes.

3   Sex identity can be regarded as a form of class consciousness.

4   There is social distance between the sexes, even within marriage.[46]

D H J Morgan makes use of the concept of women as a social class in analysing the family[47], which he sees as the major arena in which the sexual class struggle takes place. The advantages of this are that it emphasises the dynamic nature of the relationship as opposed to the static nature of a prestige or status group model; it reminds us of the subordination and exploitation of the relationship; and it emphasises the pervasiveness of the relationship. Morgan draws from the concept of women as a class the implication that the class relationship is experienced through various contradictions as being one of exploitation, eg between the role at home and that in wider society. It follows then that consciousness and organisation will arise in time to bring about the sexual class revolution. This seems even less likely than a class revolution in Britain.

Despite such apparent advantages, the concept of women as a class is not comprehensively developed by any of these writers, but with good reason. There are several resounding drawbacks to such a conception. Firstly, as a sexual class, all women do not stand in a common position to all men. Some women are single (or widowed or divorced) and living quite independently of men. Married or cohabiting women are not identically placed. Their own direct relation to the means of production, their fecundity, religion or ethnicity, all play a part in the degree of oppression suffered. Above all, perhaps, the disposition and whim of the man concerned is a powerful variable factor - how free is the woman of the threat or reality of marital violence? Eichler describes control over one's own well-being, which includes freedom from the threat of personal injury, as a fundamental variable: 'Any stratification approach which does not incorporate into the analysis such a basic variable does not adequately reflect the nature of extent of sexual inequality.'[48] Ann Oakley comments: 'The truth is that the oppression of women can be said to consist in this dependance on the way individual men treat them (whether or not this is a material difference, or merely a difference in levels of awareness among women of their oppression).'[49] Morgan points out that this variety of conditions has implications for sexual class identity. A woman's sexual identity may be affected by her roles in the local community and membership of voluntary associations[50]. There is evidence among the Lubavitch community in Stamford Hill of women organising many activities separate from the men. While it is in no sense 'feminist', it nevertheless has

61

implications for the prestige of the women within the community[51]. Another criticism of the argument that women are a class is that it tends to dispute the centrality of their own relations to the means of production. It is not the same relationship to the means of production as men, tending to be concentrated in specific low-paid (white collar) jobs, but that is no reason why it should be ignored, Oakley argues[52]. Another objection to the notion of men as oppressers comes from Morgan[53]. While he raises the suggestion that both sexes suffer from over-rigid sex-role typification, he goes on to concede that such an argument falls down when it is challenged with the fact that women suffer more than men under this system, and that it tends to lead to a relatively facile and non-specific attack on 'the system'. In my experience, a similar metaphysical argument proposes that in a master-slave relationship, it is the master's humanity which suffers more than the slaves', and he is therefore more to be pitied, is ultimately more oppressed. The difficulty with this argument is that responsibility seems to evaporate all together, and it can be used all too easily in support of the status quo.

There have been other attempts to integrate women into class analysis. One, starting from the premise that 'women still have to await their liberation from the family; it remains the case in the capitalist societies that female workers are largely peripheral to the class system'.[54] Giddens goes on to characterise women as the 'underclass' of the white collar sector. He suggests they 'monopolise' poorly paid, insecure jobs which lack fringe benefits and chances of promotion, a most inapt turn of phrase. (With what economic muscle can women be said to impose a monopoly over a second-rate job?) Such employment in the secondary labour market comes about partly as the result of sexual disqualification (given equal market capacities otherwise), the result of social prejudice and interruptions to employment caused by marriage and childbearing[55]. He is criticised by Oakley for the logical absurdity implied by, on the one hand, assigning women to the 'underclass' of the middle class, while at the same time arguing that society cannot be becoming middle class because women have their class defined by the family[56].

An interesting analysis and one that in some ways resembles part of Giddens', is that of Elizabeth Garnsey. Analysing women's employment within a (Weberian) labour market model, she argues that it is crucial to recognise

62

that limitations are placed on women's employment opportunities and their bargaining power in the labour market is weakened on account of the division of labour in the household:

> 'For women, bargaining capacity is likely to change over the life-cycle, and this in itself will influence the occupational positions that they are able to take up and the market situations in which they are thereby placed.' (57)

She argues that the organisation of work and internal labour markets demand that workers have to meet certain requirements to remain in what she calls the 'protected sectors' of the labour market. These requirements are: (a) long-term, uninterrupted employment; (b) full-time work; and (c) geographical mobility. These are extremely difficult for women to meet because of the demands of their work in the household and family. By the same criteria, women are well suited to the 'secondary labour market'. Garnsey's analysis very effectively incorporates women into a market or Weberian conception of social class. The exigencies of the reproductive life-cycle on women's market capacity, whether actual or predicted in the individual case, have implications for the expectations of women in relation to their work performance. In contrast, her prescription for the removal of sexism from the assignment of individuals to classes is fraught with difficulties.

She suggests that the family should not be regarded as the exclusive unit of analysis of class[58].

Sheila Allen questions whether the family is the most useful unit of analysis in relation to class[59]. She questions whether women derive their class and status from male kin, and women's dependency on men. Of marriage, she says: 'Marriage contracts do not bestow educational or professional qualifications, nor do they transfer, in any mechanical or permanent sense, social or politically powerful backgrounds or any of the other ascribed statuses to those who do not possess them in their own right.[60] The extent to which marriage partners derive attributes from one another is thus not known.

One approach to the question of how women's relation to class should be conceptualised, which looks promising, is suggested by Jean Gardiner[61]. She points out that, while more women work now, the dependence on marriage has also increased. Particularly, there has been a growth in women working

part-time, and since wages are still generally lower than men's, their
dependency on their husbands is maintained. She posits that women have a
dual relation to the class structure:

> 'We should recognise that women, on account of their position in
> society as houseworkers, child-bearers, childcarers and dependents
> of men have a dual relationship to the class structure. On the one
> hand there is the direct involvement in wage labour which most women
> now experience throughout the length of their adult lives and on the
> other there is that aspect of their relationship to class which is
> indicated by the family, dependence on men and domestic labour.' (62)

She goes on to analyse the sexual division of labour, pointing out how
the division of labour which originated in the family has been extended to
the social labour process. Women are concentrated in low paid jobs without
authority and in certain occupations and industries which have come to be
thought of as feminine or feminised[63]. This underpins women's
subordination to men in society as a whole, as well as perpetuating
divisions in the working class, thus maintaining its political subordination.
Gardiner does not develop the concept of a dual relationship very far,
however. Her difficulties in doing so are explained by Eichler in a
critique of class analysis generally[64]:

> 'Class analysis is not able to incorporate family structure, and ...
> sex relations and sex stratification cannot be adequately dealt with
> unless we discuss the family structure. The social position of a woman
> is to a large degree determined by the family structure in which
> she finds herself.' (65)

The personal dependency of women cross-cuts the various male classes.
The hitherto insuperable problem is that class analysis is premised on
one set of economic relationships - the capitalist mode of production -
whereas relationships within the family (still economic) are best described
as quasi-feudal. This can be seen in a relationship in which the wife
receives shelter, food and clothes in exchange for personal services
- caring for children, housework and sexual availability. She has no right
to a wage, although in law a husband is liable to 'maintain' his wife[66].

Eichler examines the relationship of spouses to the means of production in
two situations - the two-job and the one-job family. In the two-job family,
it is very likely that the husband's job is better paid and enjoys higher
status than the wife's. In such cases, it does not make sense to treat
them as belonging to different classes as legally they are treated as a
unit, and they are very likely to enjoy the lifestyle their joint salaries

afford. But neither does it seem reasonable to assign one person a relationship with the means of production on the basis of his or her relationship with another person, whose place in the means of production is deemed determining of the other's. On what basis can this be chosen? Even where spouses have equivalent jobs, the wife is likely to carry the burden of the housework and so receives less money for more labour. In one-job households, his relationship to the means of production is direct, hers is indirect. They are fundamentally different. The view of the household as a consumption unit has facilitated the misconception that they are not different.

Housework produced use-value. Meals are cooked, clothes and household cleaned and looked after. If performed by a housekeeper, money in the form of wages changes hands and exchange-value is also created. Performed by a wife, it is presumed that no exchange-value is produced, as no wages are paid. These concepts, applicable in a capitalist mode of production, cannot be applied in a different (feudal) economic system. Similarly, no surplus-value can be said to be generated in this situation (defined as that money capital retains after the exchange has occurred and costs have been accounted for). This is not to say housework has no value - it has use-value, but not surplus value. There is nothing in the production process that makes it non-productive (ie not producing surplus-value), but simply the producer's marital status. Eichler is not so much arguing about the productivity of housework in Marxist terms, but pointing to the circularity of the argument: that only what is paid for can be productive; therefore, if something is not being paid for, it must be unproductive.

She argues therefore that class analysis cannot incorporate sex stratification because its internal logic makes it a closed system. She sees sex stratification as universal, therefore more fundamental. She sees patriarchy and capitalism as co-existent but independent variables. Can we then rescue the dualism argument?

For our purposes, the discussion highlights the fact that the relationship of women to class is by no means straightforward. Eichler thinks we need to reconceptualise our entire stratification model. The problems thinkers are having is that existing stratifcation models did not take women into account. A paradigm shift may be necessary. For our purposes, we need to remember only that the relationship is problematic in various ways, and

that this has implications for consciousness.

The Material Reality of Women's 'Otherness'

1   Women, Work and Income

It was not until 1882 that the Married Women's Property Act enabled a
wife the legal ability to hold property in her own right. Before this Act
was passed, the property could only be held by a trustee (usually her
husband). Even when this principle was established, it did not make much
difference in practice for some time. Only scanty information is available
to show the relative holdings of wealth between the sexes. Inland Revenue
statistics for 1971 show that 34% of women aged 15 or over and 59% of men
aged 15 and over owned 'wealth'. This particular definition of wealth omits
many small holdings such as savings certificates, but also jointly held
house property. The estimated values were £44,100 million and £68,600 million
respectively, but of this £14 million was attributed to life assurance
policies held by men but generally enjoyed by women[67]. More recent
statistics (1986) indicate that 55% of share ownereship is held by men,
45% by women[68]. The inequality becomes greater when it is recognised that
in 1985 there were 27.6 million men in the United Kingdom and 29 million
women[69].

One explanation might be that many wealthy families handle their wealth
jointly in trusts. If this is true, neither men nor women will show up
in such statistics as 'owning' anything. The question becomes instead, who
makes the decisions and who is consulted about the acquisition, use and
disposal of trust wealth - men or women?

An indication of the extent to which women are accustomed to handling
stocks and shares and being involved in financial affairs can be glimpsed
from the fact that it was not until the early 1980s that women were admitted
as members of the London Stock Exchange. This fact hints at a wide discrepancy
between the work and rewards of men and women in the UK. Closer
examination bears this out. One old myth is that working women are a new
phenomenon. The proportion of the employed labour force which was female
in 1850, 1911 and 1951 were identical: 31%. The estimated labour force
in Great Britain in 1981 was 26.3 million, of whom 10.4 million were female.

The myth has probably grown out of the fact that there was an increase of about 70% in the number of married women in the labour force between 1961 and 1976 (now around 6.7 million)[70]. Another myth is that women work for 'pin money'. Ann Oakly reproduces the following table[71]:

Reason for working between first and second live births in
four different time periods

Worked because:	1956-60	1961-65	1966-70	1971-75
Really needed the money	52	51	48	47
Wanted extra things	27	25	27	27
Liked it	16	19	20	22
Other reasons	5	5	5	5
	100%	100%	100%	100%

A National Opinion Poll survey conducted in 1977 showed that three quarters of the employed women interviewed said they would work 'even if they did not need the money: they would get bored stuck at home'.[72]

So how are men and women employed? The latest year for which statistics are available is 1985[73]:

Economic status of the population of working age, 1985. Percentages

Economically Active	Males	Females
Employees, full-time	46.3	31.0
Employees, part-time	4.0	23.7
Self-employed	10.5	3.9
Out of employment	12.4	6.8
Economically Inactive		
Looking after home	0.5	21.0
Full-time student	14.1	3.4

The average weekly hours worked were for people working full-time: 35.7 for women, 40.9 for men; and for those working part-time: 16.8 for women and 15.6 for men[74]. These are the shortest hours worked in the EEC and, interestingly, there has been a reduction in hours of male full-time workers in the UK between 1979 and 1981 of nearly 3 hours.

In 1982, of those working in manufacturing industry, 4,107 thousand were men, and 1,645 thousand were women. However, within the manufacturing sector, women's employment is concentrated in a small number of trades and industries. Hence, more that $5\frac{1}{2}$ million out of $9\frac{1}{2}$ million women workers were employed in three service industries - the distributive trades (shops, mail order, warehouses) 1,500 thousand; professional and scientific (typists, technicians, secretaries, doctors, teachers, nurses etc) 2,599 thousand; and miscellaneous services (laundries, catering, dry-cleaners, hairdressers) 1,518 thousand[75]. Women were very poorly represented in some industries, for example 18/326 thousand in mining and quarrying, 33/295 thousand in metal manufacture, and 68/340 thousand in gas, electricity and water, whereas men were outnumbered in only four sectors and not by such wide margins - 248/616 thousand in textiles, leather and clothing manufacture; 1,206/2,706 thousand in the distribution trades; 1,169/3,768 in professional and scientific services; and 1,036/2,554 thousand in miscellaneous services[76]. The point must be made that in industries where there are higher concentrations of women, they are to be found amongst the lowest paid or at the bottom of the middle-paying grades[77].

Let us look at women's employment sector by sector in a little more detail. In 1911, just under one third of all manual workers were women[78] and today the proportion remains roughly the same[79]. However, in 1911, 24% of the women were skilled - now the figure is 14%, while the percentage of unskilled women has almost doubled from 15% then to 27% today[80]. Women seem to be inheriting a growing share of the unskilled work in an industrial society. One handicap that women have had to suffer in competition with men at work has been protective legislation. This residue of Victorian philanthropy and benevolence has resulted in women being thwarted from doing night-work and, as we saw above, overtime, on the same basis as men. It may have the reputation of being simply a humanistic measure designed to safeguard the health of women workers, but its effect was to reduce competition with male workers. The halo around the reputation

may be dimmed by the knowledge that legislation was introduced in areas of competition rather than in all areas of work[81]. Service industries are not covered, so cooks, cleaners and nurses can cook, clean and nurse until the cows come home.

That much of office employment has become de-skilled, routinised and mechanised is generally acknowledged[82]. Secretarial workers seem willing to perform all manner of personal domestic tasks for their bosses. In a survey conducted by the Alfred Marks secretarial agency, 80% of the secretaries interviewed were willing to run errands, 74% were willing to do the shopping, and 75% felt it was part of their job to protect their boss from trouble if possible[83]. Tasks such as cleaning the boss's false teeth or plucking out his grey hairs are not unknown[84]. It is also indisputably the fact that the 'white collar' sector of employment has grown enormously over the last sixty years. The 1971 Census revealed that there were 7 373 00 secretaries, shorthand-writers and typists - 'by far the largest group of skilled women'. Only 1.4% of the secretarial workers were men[85].

As we have seen, women have taken a disproportionate share of jobs in these industries and occupations. It is suggested that women represent part of the 'reserve army' of labour, a passive pool of workers to be drawn on when (male) resources are under strain, to be consigned to unemployment or the home when no longer needed[86]. Now, while it is the case that women have taken employment in the expanding sector of the economy, this is not a sufficient phenomenon to dub them 'reserve army'. If women, and especially married women, have in large numbers taken to work, it is obvious that they would obtain employment where there are vacancies, in an expanding sector where there is not a long history of male monopoly. What do women themselves feel about white collar work? A study of temporary clerical workers by Fiona McNally revealed that: 'The vast majority of female temps are engaged in strategies which enable them to counter or to overcome a wide range of constraints. In some cases, these strategies involve a flight from the oppressive features of domesticity; in other cases, they involve an attempt to establish a sense of control over the work situation.'[87]

When we turn to the professions, the historical pattern seems to be one of women slowly and in the face of much discrimination moving into the elite professions of law and medicine. It is a history of exceptional individuals

rather than a movement of large numbers of women. There is still an
astonishing scarcity of women in this area. Hence Mackie and Pattullo
report that women formed 4.3% of the membership of the Royal Institute of
British Architects in 1974; in 1975, 27% of doctors and 12% of consultants
were women; in 1974, 4% of practising solicitors were women; and in the
universities in 1973-4, 11% of teaching and research staff were women, but
only 1.7% of professors and 6.3% senior lecturers and readers[88]. However,
when we look at primary schools, where women have predominated numerically
for many years, there are still more male than female headteachers -
13,521 men as against 10,128 women in 1973. In the Civil Service, where
there has apparently been equal terms of service for men and women for many
years, the rule against employing married women in established, pensionable
jobs was *abolished only*. in 1946.   The situation in 1980 was that in the
non-industrial Home Civil Service, 80% of the lowest grade clerks (clerical
assistants) and 65% of the next highest grade were women, but there were
no female permanent secretaries (the highest grade) and only 2.5% of Deputy
Secretaries were women[89].

The appointment of magistrates is not so unequal. In 1982, of 25,000 magistrates,
9,500 were women[90], but there is clearly a margin for improvement. Despite
the fact that 40% of Labour Party members and 50% of Conservative Party
members are women, between 9 and 10% of Parliamentary nominations are women.
In the 1979-84 Parliament, women MPs were 3% of the total[91].

It is beyond our scope here to detail the reasons for women's gross under-
achievement, but one is undoubtedly the legacy of the return of the men
after the second world war, seeking jobs and displacing women who had done
the work during the war. The ideology of the time offered women the choice
- family or work? An option increasingly for many married women is part-time
work. In 1985, 24% were in part-time employment, compared with 2% of men[92].
Where such a choice cannot be made by a women, whether because her domestic
responsibilities are such that she cannot delegate them to others, or
because she finds herself unable to compete in the labour market, home
working is the answer. It is here that the very worst exploitation is
found, particularly in light manufacturing and the clothing trade. Up to
date and comprehensive figures are not available - part of the reason the
exploitation probably continues unabated, but it emerged that four fifths

of homeworkers in the toy industry were paid less than the legal minimum for piece work[93].

I would not wish to give the impression that men have all the good, interesting, powerful, high status and well paid jobs, while women have all the jobs lacking these qualities. The truth is more that women have relatively few of the good jobs and rather a lot of the bad ones. This can be seen most clearly in relation to pay. In 1974, the average gross weekly wages for non-manual (including overtime) work were £79.70 for men and £48.80 for women. The figures for manual workers were £63.90 and £39.40 respectively. In 1983, male non-manual employees earned an average £175.00 per week gross, while females earned £104.90. The figures for manual workers were £130.50 and £80.10 respectively[94]. Of course, it must be the case that some women 'lower their sights' in occupational terms and do jobs of lower status than they could, as a trade-off for more leisure time or time at home. This could be a 'supply' factor in market terms which may help to account for lower wages. In this sense, women are not an inert mass to be manipulated.

As we saw above, there are distinct differences in the jobs men and women do. The Equal Pay Act of 1971, which finally became operative at the end of 1975, has done little to improve matters. Employers went to elaborate lengths to redefine jobs in such a way that 'the work' comparisons could not be made and restructuring grading systems to leave women in the lowest grades. In this, unions were actively in collusion.

What effect do these facts have on the general distribution of income? In the first place, households are twice as likely to have a low income if headed by a woman[95]. However, sex inequalities do not cross-cut or negate class inequalities on the whole. Indeed, it is Westergaard and Resler's view that they sharpen class divisions[96]. They found that: 'On the whole, the gaps between men's and women's earnings within similar occupations are smallest in the higher paid groups, and wider down the scale of jobs and pay.' We should be warned off looking at women's white collar work through rose-coloured spectacles:

'The concentration of women in lower white-collar work of "intermediate" status works to the disadvantage not benefit of women as a whole. To think otherwise would be a kind of middle-class "ethnocentrism" which saw white-collar work as intrinsically superior to manual ones and which failed to recognise that women's exclusion from skilled manual work, from those jobs which command the greatest pay, power and respect within the working class community, constitutes another disability attached to their sex.' (98)

71

The perception of these occupations as working class is one largely shared by the women who do them[99].

2   Families and Households

In what kinds of households are British women living? 78% of people still live in families headed by a married couple, as against 82% in 1961. Whilst almost 2½% of people in households were lone parents with dependent children in 1961, this figure had grown to almost 5% in 1982. The percentage living alone has more than doubled since 1961 from 4% to 9%, principally because of improved mortality[100], *more particularly among women.*

As we have already seen,   in 1985 nearly 21% of women of working age were 'keeping house', compared with only ½% of men[101]. The conventional bourgeois household mode of nuclear family in which nearly all of the domestic labour is performed by the captive wife is a relatively recent invention[102]. There is an almost complete lack of social production in this sphere - houses are cleaned, clothes laundered, young (pre-school-age) children cared for, meals cooked in the household, and the work is done substantially by one houseworker within each family. Hence in 1982, 43% of three and four year olds attended nursery schools or special schools for some part of the day. This is an enormous improvement on the situation in 1971, when the proportion was just over 20%[103]. This has not enabled a large number of mothers of young children to work, however. For the years 1980-1982, 73% of married mothers and 77% of lone mothers of children under five did not work outside the home. For mothers of dependent children of all ages, 49% of married mothers and 53% of lone mothers had no paid employment[104].

Recent studies of the lives of housewives (or, more properly, 'houseworkers') were most useful contributions to a previously scanty academic knowledge about what houseworkers actually did and how they felt about it. Standards of household management and work are highly variable, but the trend is towards higher standards. Technological innovations tend to have the effect of raising standards rather than shortening hours of housework. Indeed, research by Vanek indicated that hours spent houseworking have actually risen with the invention of new household appliances[105]. Ann Oakley's interviews with British housewives revealed that 30 out of 40 of them worked at housework for 70 or more hours a week[106]. The average man worked 41.6 hours a week in 1982[107]. No data are available to show how long British men spend doing housework, but a Canadian study of dual-worker

72

couples revealed that whereas wives spend on average 33.6 hours a week on household tasks, men spent 8 hours. Research in France, Poland, USA and USSR showed that in none of these do employed men spend more than <u>half an hour a day</u> on housework[108]. The seemingly infinite amount of housework to be done is by no means fairly shared.

It is not just long hours that women suffer as full-time houseworkers. There is an inherent contradiction between high standards in this area with responsibilities in another: childcare. Young children and their play are inherently untidy and messy and their encouragement almost inevitably acts contrary to the maintenance of high housework standards. Isolation is another acute problem for many mothers of young children[109]. Hannah Gavron reports that 25% of the working-class wives she interviewed had no friends at all[110].

3   Education

Legally, there are no distinctions made between the education of girls and the education of boys. Both are required to be educated until the end of the school term in which they achieve their sixteenth birthday and both are subject to the same curriculum stipulations. Despite this, the educational achievements of the sexes differ very significantly.

At primary school, 'there is much evidence from past studies that girls are more successful than boys in the primary schools. In reading, writing, English and spelling, the average eleven-year-old girl beats the average eleven-year-old boy.'[111] It has also been noted that as the primary school is a highly feminine teaching environment and that girls excel in subjects that are taught by women and boys in those that are taught by men, consequently it is perhaps not surprising that girls perform better than boys in primary schools[112]. The expectation on the part of teachers that boys will be lazy, rough and hard to discipline and that girls are more often described as 'nice children' may operate in the favour of girls at this stage[113]. This 'necessitated' discrimination against girls in the allocation of grammar school places in some areas.

It is in secondary schools that girls begin to under-achieve, in mathematics, geography and science. 'By the age of 15, the sex difference is well established and boys surpass girls overall in their school performance.'[114] Progressively, girls drop out of maths and science, so that by O Levels 28% of girls obtained O Level maths passes and 33% of boys. In physics the figures were 10% and 22% respectively[115]. Interestingly, however, 34% of boys and 46% of girls leaving school in England and Wales in 1984/85 held a GCE O Level grade A-C or CSE grade 1 in English[116]. Girls' verbal ability seems to remain in a state of advantage. Moreover, in history, biology and French, higher proportions of girls than of boys left school with high O Level passes[117].

The long term trend does seem to be for both girls and boys to be acquiring more qualifications, but the improvement in girls' performance is much more dramatic.

Percentages of economically active persons not in full-time education
Great Britain 1979 and 1980 combined who have no qualifications (118)

Age	Women	Men
25-29	34	33
30-39	50	40
40-49	62	48
50-59	(	58
60-69	(74	65

Looking at British school leavers in 1981/82, a higher proportion of boys left without any GCEs or CSEs - about 15%, compared to 10% of girls. About 17% of each sex left school with 2 or more O Levels[119]. The proportions of girls going on to further and higher education also seem to be growing at a much faster rate than those of boys in most categories:

Destinations of School Leavers. Percentages

	1970/71		1981/82	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Degree	5.3	9.0	6.7	9.1
Teacher training	5.1	1.1	0.7	0.2
HND/HNC/OND/ONC	0.2	1.3	0.4	0.8
A Levels	1.1	1.6	3.7	3.0
O Levels	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.7

Destinations of School Leavers - Percentages (120)

| | 1970/71 | | 1981/82 | |
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Degree	5.3	9.0	6.9	9.1
Teacher Training	5.2	1.3	0.7	0.2
HND/HNC/OND/ONC	0.7	1.3	0.4	0.8
A Levels	1.1	1.6	3.7	3.0
O Levels	1.1	1.7	1.9	1.7
Catering, nursing, secretarial, other full-time	10.8	4.7	19.1	8.9
	24.1	19.5	32.8	23.8
Those seeking work	75.9	80.5	67.2	76.3

At university, the exclusion of women from the pure and applied sciences
becomes much more acute. Only 35% of university undergraduates and 26% of
postgraduates are women. In the economically active adult population aged
25 to 69, the proportion of men holding a degree or equivalent rose from
5% in 1971/72 to 9% in 1979/80. For women, the increase was somewhat
higher - from 2% to 4%.[121]

Girls have to struggle with common societal attitudes towards their education.
Once beyond primary school, these are rarely helpful. They range from the
ancient and grotesque - Dr Edward H Clarke's opinion that education caused
the uterus to atrophy[122] - to the subtle and apparently innocuous - that
girls' work is 'neat and tidy'. The exodus of girls out of physics and
chemistry at puberty seems to have to do with notions of femininity and
masculinity. Textbooks probably contribute to the continuation of these
attitudes with careless use of gender pronouns which reinforce old
stereotypes. Families' attitudes to truancy in girls and boys may differ
too. Whereas boy's truancy may be looked upon as a masculine prank, or
something to turn a blind eye to, girls' truancy is sometimes actively
encouraged or demanded by severely disadvantaged families where there are
younger children to be cared for in the absence of the mother.

Among girls themselves, awareness of their future reproductive role and its
hitherto practical incompatability with full-time continuous employment

leads to decisions about education which qualifies them for spheres where part-time work is possible. Scientific and engineering jobs are not notably among these.

4   Sociability: Activities Outside Work

In view of the 'work plus housework' statistics referred to above[123], it is surprising to learn that women are more likely to get involved in voluntary work than men: the General Household Survey of 1981 revealed that 24% of women as against 21% of men had done voluntary work during the twelve months before the interview[124]. Interestingly, people with dependent children were more likely to do voluntary work than other men and women[125]. Women are less likely to be involved in committee work than men (24% and 36% of volunteers respectively) and more likely to be involved in fundraising (40% as against 22%)[126]. Men are more likely to be found giving advice and practical help to individuals whereas women are much more likely to help at playgroups[127]. Trade Union membership statistics show that membership has grown more quickly among women than men since 1961, although men are still more likely to belong to one. In 1981, 59% of male employees and 38% of female employees were trade unionists[127]. Women's unequal share of the domestic workload and the masculine culture of most unions are two of the reasons why female participation remains low[128].

Indoor and outdoor sporting activities are more likely to be participated in by men. About 38% of men and 24% of women were involved in outdoor sports in 1980 and 33% and 15% respectively in indoor games[129].

All the information about social contacts and friendships available so far concerns housewives. Ann Oakley found that loneliness was a frequent complaint and that most of the women who were dissatisfied with housework reported a low level of social interaction[130]. Dorothy Hobson's study of isolated working-class women revealed that television and radio were seen by women as the only relationship they had with the outside world. Relationships with husbands and friends form part of the 'family world'[131]. Hannah Gavron found that: 'There is not the clear division into man's world and woman's world that is part of traditional working class life.'[132] 43% of working-class wives had both parents living within a mile of them and of these 28% saw their mothers every day - 15% of the working-class sample.[133] 25% said they had no friends at all, 40% had 'one or two' friends and 35% reported having lots of friends[134]. The picture is brighter for middle-class women.

31% of wives lived within a mile of their parents and 54% of these saw their mothers more than once a week[135]. The telephone was used a lot to keep in contact. 67% reported having lots of friends and 84% entertained friends at home regularly during the day and evening[136]. 50% said they were on 'very good terms' with at least one of their neighbours[137] and whereas only 2% of working-class wives had contact regularly with neighbours, 69% of middle class wives reported contact[138]. Isolation seems to bear more heavily on working-class housewives.

Women and the Ideologies of Class and Gender

The extent of women's disadvantages, if not downright oppression, can hardly be in doubt. How does this manifest in women's social and class consciousness? How do women see the class system from the particular material perspectives in which they commonly find themselves? In interpreting the signs of the social and class systems in economically or socially productive spheres, they must be subject to the same range of ideologically significant factors as men. Hence a working-class woman is just as likely to be subjected to the dominant ideology as men may be, and just as much the victim of the fragmentation of the working class in terms of skills, geography etc. However, as we have seen, there are significant differences in the jobs women have and, above all, the experience or prospect of a quasi-feudal subordinate position within the family and the difficulties of meshing together the two parts of their lives is likely to have significant consequences for social class consciousness and on how women create categories of 'we' and 'other' - in short, where they situate their identities socially and in class terms.

Consequently, I would argue, there are additional ideological pressures on women which have their origins in women's actual or potential dual relationship with the capitalist mode of production.

The Dominant Gender Ideology

I would suggest that a dominant gender ideology operates, having the effect of obscuring the nature of women's oppression and enabling both sexes to

be comfortably locked into existing sex roles, thus stabilising 'patriarchal' late capitalism. There are various elements in this ideology.

Firstly, there is the 'ideology of the nuclear family'. This has come to be seen as the 'natural' and invariable family form, as much beyond question as the notion of private property. It consists of the view that the ideal household arrangement is that headed by a married couple, either with dependent children or older children, and that all others are to be regarded merely as aberrations.

Secondly, there is the complex of views that hold that 'the sexes are different but equal'. According to this perspective, a women's place is in the home and a man's place is at work. Anything concerned with the running of the home - its cleaning, minor maintenance, cooking, laundry, shopping and the care of dependent children, and light gardening, are all regarded as exclusively 'feminine' tasks, whereas earning the 'family income', driving, cleaning and maintenance of the family car, heavy gardening and 'difficult' or 'dirty' home maintenance jobs are seen as being 'masculine' tasks. With each partner doing what she or he is best at, the argument goes, maximum happiness and efficiency ensues. Anything serves as 'evidence' for this view - anecdotes concerning the proponent's grandmother ("poor as a church mouse, ten children, spend all her time cooking and cleaning and never a cross word"), women's greater life expectancy, a rising juvenile crime rate - have all been attributed to women's contentment with housework, or their 'incomprehensible' retreat from it.

A contemporary subvariant of this is the view that there is equality between the sexes throughout society, and there is nothing to stop women entering any employment sector they choose. Equal pay and equal opportunities legislation is cited as 'proof' of this general rule. The impartiality of the labour market is an underlying assumption.

The public semblance of state adherence to the ideal of equality between the sexes was certainly given a powerful boost by the sex discrimination and equal pay Acts of the 1970s. It is probably true that the supporters of the legislation thought Parliament were sincere in introducing measures which (it was thought) would have the effect of leading public opinion and shifting

attitudes towards a more egalitarian position. Nevertheless, the
legislation left untouched existing legislation which involved
discrimination on grounds of sex. Most notable, perhaps, is social security
legislation. The ideal of Man the Breadwinner is enshrined in laws
governing the payment of supplementary benefit, unemployment benefit and
sickness benefit, and widow's pensions[139]. A women attempting to claim
these benefits in her own right is disqualified if she is married or if it
is thought she is being supported by a man[140]. No such constraints apply
to men[141]. There has been criticism of the lack of confidentiality
concerning married women's tax returns. Men can keep knowledge of their
incomes and capital from their wives, but the same privilege does not apply
vice versa. A married man can give consent to his own sterilisation, but
a married woman has also to get the consent of her husband.

The final element in the dominant gender ideology I would describe as
'macho culture'. This glorifies anything deemed 'masculine' in behaviour,
attitudes, tastes and relationships, and denigrates all that is 'feminine'.
Its emphasis is on complete exclusion of one sex from the other's
attributes and doings[142]. Only 'wimps' or 'humourless lesbians' have
anything to say against macho culture, would say its locker-room proponents.

Now, of course, there is plenty of evidence that the dominant gender
ideology is weakening. Households are becoming less nuclear-family based.
For instance, the proportion of households consisting of married couples
plus children (dependent or independent) has shrunk from 48% in 1961 to
37% in 1982 - as proportions of total households. The proportion of lone
parents with children has grown from 6% to 8% over the same period, and
there has been a growth from 4% to 8% in the number of people under
retirement age living on their own[143]. More married women are demonstrating
the 'contentment' to be had from full-time housewifery by going out to
work, even if part-time[144]. There is not much evidence that men are
substantially and increasingly becoming involved in housework and child-care,
although it does appear that they are at least beginning to pay lip-service
to the idea that they should 'help'[145]: 'Overall, husbands emerge as
strikingly progressive in their <u>attitudes</u> to women's rights and role ...
but husbands are far less willing in their <u>actions</u> to share home and family
obligations equally.'[146] The notion that women enjoy equal terms at work
may be true according to the letter of the law, but it is plainly nonsense
in terms of women's experience, as we saw above. It is in this area, I

would suggest, that ideology plays such a powerful role. Women undoubtedly do recognise that they are not fairly treated at work, but the power of the 'woman as housewife' ideal is such that resentment quickly becomes overlaid with guilt that they are 'neglecting' their homes and families[147]. For young unmarried women, this translates into the view that the job is only temporary anyway[148].

This illuminates the problem with gender ideology. It may or may not have a material basis. If people behave as if it is true, it must be said to have a materiality of its own. I agree with Margrit Eichler that 'In order to overcome the sexual double standard, we need to show that sex is an irrelevant basis on which to make those distinctions which today are still being made between the sexes, and from there to let each person develop as he or she wishes to, without worrying whether this falls on the so-called masculine or feminine side of some fictitious continuum.'[149]

So what do people believe about women's role in the nuclear family, work etc? There certainly seems to be dissatisfaction with it. Oakley describes the distribution of identification in her sample of housewives as 53% strongly identifying with the role, 43% having medium identification and 5% having low[150]. Fourteen out of her sample of forty mentioned housework as one of the worst things about being a housewife[151]. Having sole care of children does not seem to be unequivocally fulfilling for very many women.

When we turn to women's role at work, we find that studies conducted in France, Poland, the United States and Norway[152] reveal that women are consistently more approving than men are of women being employed. Perhaps not surprisingly, as their back-up services and opportunities are greater, middle-class women are generally more in favour of it than working-class women[153]. Although interestingly, in Harriet Holter's Swedish study, she found egalitarian attitudes correlated positively with education rather than class[154]. She also found that women were less ambitious at work and less likely to identify with the company[155].

Stereotypes are not just descriptive but prescriptive[156], and such is their force that long after women have rejected the image of themselves as 'just a housewife', the idea that they ought to be lingers on. Concluding their

book, Fransella and Frost comment: 'The evidence adds up to the conclusion that women have, by and large, 'bought' the stereotype of themselves.'[157]

There are grounds for cautious optimism that this will gradually weaken, however. If education does have the effect of raising consciousness, as Holter's findings suggest, the increasing trend for girls to seek more and achieve higher qualifications is promising. The radical consciousness in feminism, as in socialism, is the product of education as well as of material position. So the trend for women to have children and set up households with them on their own is also encouraging. Nevertheless, the findings do not point to the existence of a widespread feminist consciousness, the feeling of 'we' as an oppressed group with other women, sharing common interests. The atomisation of society into nuclear families makes this difficult to perceive. Sex-role stereotypes and socially constructed sexual identity[158] tyrannise both sexes.

Women's Class and Social Consciousness

If it is the case that married women have a dual relationship with class, a direct one experienced through their own employment or ownership of the means of production and an indirect one via the family, this must have implications for women's class consciousness and 'their involvement in class struggle will take different forms'[159].

Research by Marilyn Porter[160] has some interesting findings. She interviewed ten shop stewards and ten rank and file workers in a fibreboard packaging factory where there was a strike, and also their wives. The question she addressed was whether the wives were a conservative force or was their consciousness a passive reflection of their husbands'? She found neither hypothesis confirmed overall. The union involved in the strike had little history of militancy, and so the shop stewards condemned strikes generally and had difficulty accounting for their own. The stewards' wives were found to be very conservative, articulate and hostile to the strike; they knew more than other wives, but felt excluded from the husbands' experience. The rank and file of the striking union, on the other hand, were critical of the union and the handling of the strike. They supported other workers'

81

strikes but were cool about their own. Their wives felt frustrated by
ignorance of what was going on and some were supportive, others were
apathetic or mildly opposed. As husbands did not strongly identify with
it, neither did they.

The other union was not involved and, indeed, officially opposed the strike.
This union's members had shown a disposition to militant action previously
and were generally radical. They were personally ambivalent about the
strike. Their wives had little information about the strike, but were
consistently more radical on general issues than their husbands were. The
conclusion to be drawn from this is that women's views cannot simply be
read off from their husbands'.

Pauline Hunt's book, Gender and Class Consciousness[161], examines how gender
ideologies and socialisation affect women's and men's orientation to the
work situation, and how this in turn affects their social consciousness.
She concluded that the private sphere of the family remains the prime
motivating factor in a woman's life. The family-based, private nature of
ambition manufactures an individualism which inhibits collective identity
and action, and divided men and women[162]. One interesting finding[163], which
demonstrates the strength of gender ideology, was that childless women
tended to regard themselves as failures, and blamed women's lib rather than
look realistically at their own situations and condemn the ideology. Hunt
comments that personal practice can contradict the prevailing ideology
without seriously weakening its hold. A 'variety of ideological tendencies'
was expressed by the full-time housewives, but they were found to be generally
rather politically backward owing to their narrow, home-based world. Not
surprisingly, the women with the most industrial experience expressed
their views most forcefully and cogently. Hunt's sample of housewives
who had returned to work on the one hand seemed to feel drained of confidence
in the early days: 'After 15 years toil behind the scenes it feels almost
insolent to walk out onto the stage.'[164] On the other hand, being less
adequately socialised into seeing themselves as wage-earners above all else,
they return to work with a greater sensitivity concerning capitalism's
capacity to transform workers into the means to profitable ends. Hunt is
optimistic - she thinks women can be more politically assertive than men as
they do not see home as a haven in the same way that men do[165]. However, she
does not substantiate this and I remain unconvinced. Women's relative lack
of involvement with trade unions - for various reasons - may make them

82

potentially more unruly and anarchic if a dispute occurs, but full
participation in unions and collective struggle is in the last analysis what
is needed for effective action.

Nevertheless, Hunt comments that this is unlikely to occur as there is a
dissociation of interests perceived between family interests and collective
class interests[166].

An alternative view of working-class women's class consciousness comes from
Marilyn Porter. She notes that women do express resistance based on
perception of their oppression as a sex. This was written at a time when
there was rapid inflation, and it was as consumers that women felt
collectively oppressed. 'Women may be freer to act through the dominant
interpretations but this does not necessarily make them critical, and
certainly does not of itself allow them to make an alternative interpretation.
In addition, they are inhibited by their conviction that the public world
is not "theirs".'[167]

Three kinds of resistance arise in response to this feeling of oppression,
Porter notes. There is the retract into wishful thinking; there is the
desire to have no part in men's world as the women's sphere is superior
('collusionists'); and there are those who may be 'coherent resisters' but
who, because they have been brought up to expect nothing for themselves,
feel nothing can be changed. Interestingly, Porter's women were not in
practice opposed to unions or the Labour Party[168]. Porter concludes that
it is women's tendency to include in their sphere the whole area of moral
values which makes them vulnerable, together with their tendency to see
consumption as the pivot of oppression, rather than production.

My own research into women's class images[169], based on interviews with two
married couples, suggested that the women (both parents and full-time
housewives) were less class conscious in that they failed to identify money
or power as a determinant of class. They tended to see the divisions in
society in terms of prestige or status of other kinds - eg race or lifestyle.
Class had minimal salience for the working-class woman, who had only worked
for a few months before the birth of her first child. These findings
were consistent with previous research which had indicated that women are

probably less class conscious[170], more likely to see themselves as middle class[171] and to see social divisions in prestige rather than 'power' (or class) terms.[172]

This research will address in more detail the nature of the dual relationship women are suggested to have with class. Just how little salience has class for these women in their own working lives (if they work)? Which is more decisive - direct or indirect experience - and why? Is the class composition of the local neighbourhood projected onto the society as a whole? How closely do married women and men perceive class relations and status groups? How strong is the gender trap of the nuclear family in ideologically affecting how women and men see the social world and their own place in it? Who is 'I', 'we' and 'others' in terms of the local and societal spheres?

It is in order to study the effect of the quasi-feudal institution of the nuclear family at its most acute phase on women's social and class consciousness that the decision was made in this research to confine the sample to the parents of children up to the age of eleven, when the dependency of the children is strong compared with other children. Both married and unmarried women were interviewed.

NOTES ON CHAPTER THREE

1   The social and class consciousness of the upper or ruling classes has
    not been investigated by sociologists, unfortunately.

2   A Oakley, Subject Women, p 42

3   M Eichler, The Double Standard, ch 3

4   R Collins, 'A Conflict Theory of Sexual Stratification', in H P Dreitzel (ed),
    Family, Marriage and the Struggle of the Sexes, pp 53-79

5   Ibid, p 59

6   M Eichler, op cit, p 92

7   M Barratt, Women's Oppression Today, pp 12-13

8   A Oakley, op cit, p 96

9   Ibid, pp 60-62

10 F Fransella and K Frost, On Being a Women, p 57

11 Taken from T Nichols and P Armstrong, Workers Divided, pp 85-97

12 M Barratt, op cit, ch 6

13 Two of the three vital needs provided by domestic labour mentioned by
    Wally Seccombe in 'The Housewife and Her Labour under Capitalism', in
    New Left Review, no 83, 1974. He sees the third as ideological -
    socialising children into the appropriate place in the division of labour.

14 Lydia Morris, 'The No-Longer Working Class', New Society, 3 April 1987, p 18

15 Charlie Lewis and Margaret O'Brien (eds), Reassessing Fatherhood

16 M Barratt, op cit, p 189

17 Family, Socialization and Interaction, written with R Bales, was
    published in London in 1956.

18 The myth persists, however. Hence Arianna Stassinopolis and the Society
    for the Feminine Woman.

19 M Barratt, op cit, p 216

20 This was largely true among the married respondents, but not entirely.
    See Chapters Five and Six below.

21 S Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex, pp 90-102

22 One in three marriages in Britain end in divorce. Reginald Beech,
    Staying Together, p 5

23 R Porter (ed), Child Sexual Abuse within the Family, p xv

24 R D Laing and A Esterson, Sanity, Madness and the Family

25 G W Brown and T Harris in The Social Origins of Depression, p 57. It
    was found that 17% of a randomly selected sample of women living in
    Camberwell were psychologically disturbed during the year of study, and
    a further 19% were considered borderline cases. Women having three or
    more children under the age of 14 were found to be more vulnerable to
    depression than others. pp 179-189

26 See below, Chapter Five

27 A Oakley, The Sociology of Housework, p 138

28 M Young and P Wilmott, The Symmetrical Family, p 95

29 A Oakley, op cit, p 164

30 See p 132

31 Barratt, op cit, p 217

32 Ibid, p 221

33 Ibid, p 222

34 The entities 'women' and 'men' are criticised by Parveen Adams and
    Jeff Minsen in 'The "Subject" of Feminism', m/f, 1972, vol 2, pp 43-61.
    They argue that their use presupposes that the categories are
    unproblematic, and that the 'interests' of the categories can be taken
    as given.

35 In the 1981 Census, it was made clear for the first time that a woman
    could be declared as the head of a family.

36 Census 1971, Household Composition Tables, Table 52

37 See below, Chapter Six , p 15

38 A Beteille (ed), Social Inequality, p 263; also D H Morgan, Social Theory
    and the Family, p 154

39 In Purity and Danger, Mary Douglas observed that when the principle of
    male dominance is applied to the ordering of social life but is
    contradicted by other principles such as female independence, then the
    notion of sexual pollution is likely to flourish. It is in this context
    that the imposition of the chador in Iran after the overthrow of the
    Shah, and the current efforts to make it compulsory in Pakistan, must
    be seen.

40 See for instance Rhona Trezise, <u>Nurse Helena's Romance</u>, p 154; and
    Carole Mortimer, <u>Untamed</u>, pp 137 and 189. It seems that the heir to
    the British thorne was under pressure to marry a virgin, as well as a
    woman of the correct 'breeding' and religion.

41 A colourful review of the anthropology and literature relating to menstrual
    taboos is to be found in P Shuttle and P Redgrove, <u>The Wise Wound</u>,
    especially pp 60-70.

42 M Eichler, op cit, p 96

43 Ibid, p 95

44 M Benston, 'The Political Economy of Women's Liberation', <u>Monthly Review</u>,
    September 1969, pp 13-27

45 Ibid, p 16

46 M Eichler, op cit, pp 103-104

47 D H J Morgan, <u>Social Theory and the Family</u>, ch 5

48 M Eichler, <u>The Double Standard</u>, p 99

49 A Oakley, <u>Subject Women</u>, p 290

50 D H J Morgan, op cit, p 164

51 See ch 7 below, pp 222-223

52 A Oakley, op cit, pp 290-291

53 D H J Morgan, op cit, pp 157-160

54 A Giddens, <u>The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies</u>, p 288

55 Ibid, pp 219-220

56 A Oakley, op cit, p 291

57 E Garnsey, 'Women's Work and Theories of Class Stratification', Sociology, vol 12, no 2, 1978, p 236

58 Ibid, p 226

59 S Allen, 'Gender Inequality and Class Formation', Social Class and the Division of Labour, ed A Giddens and G Mackenzie

60 Ibid, p 141

61 J Gardiner, 'Women in the Labour Process and Class Structure', A Hunt, ed Class and Class Structure

62 Ibid, p 159. She continues: 'Because of this dual relationship, women's consciousness of class will be distinct from men's and their involvement in class struggle will take different forms....'

63 See below, pp 68-70.

64 M Eichler, op cit, pp 105-115

65 Ibid, p 105

66 Supplementary Benefits Act. Note also that a wife is similarly liable for her husband, but this is rarely applied as usually it is the wife who gains custody of the children on separation and finds herself in need of state benefits.

67 Social Trends, no 5, p 24

68 Social Trends, no 17, p 100

69 Op cit, p 29

70 A Oakley, Subject Women, p 145

71   Ibid

72   Ibid

73   Taken from Table 4.4, Social Trends, 1987, p 71

74   Social Trends, no 14 p 64

75   Ibid, p 61

76   Ibid

77   L Mackie and P Pattullo, Women at Work, p 41

78   Mackie and Patullo, op cit, p 40

79   Social Trends, no 14, p 61

80   Mackie and Pattullo, op cit, p 40

81   S Alexander, 'Women's Work in Nineteenth Century London', p 63, in
     Mitchell and Oakley, The Rights and Wrongs of Women

82   See, for instance, J Westergaard and H Resler, Class in a Capitalist
     Society, p 292; H Braverman, Labour and Monopoly Capital, ch 15

83   Mackie and Pattullo, op cit, p 75

84   F McNally, Women for Hire, pp 70-71

85   Mackie and Pattullo, op cit, p 74

86   There is validity in this argument in times of war. During both the
     first and second world wars, middle class as well as working class women
     were urged to contribute to the war effort by taking employment in
     agriculture and engineering manufacture.

87   F McNally, op cit, pp 186-187

88   Mackie and Pattullo, op cit, p 74

89   A Oakley, op cit, p 155, quoting Civil Service Department Statistics

90   Social Trends, no 14, 73

91   A Oakley, op cit, p 188

92   Social Trends, no 17, p 72

93   Ibid, p 185, quoting ACA's report into toy manufacturing wages

94   Social Trends, no 12, p 224

95   A Oakley, op cit, pp 301-302

96   J Westergaard and H Resler, Class in a Capitalist Society, ch 6

97   Ibid, p 101

98   A Heath, Social Mobility, p 118-119

99   See below, Ch6, p 159

100   Statistics from Social Trends, no 14, p 29

101   Social Trends, no 17, p 71

102   A number of contemporary writers have described this, eg Ann Oakley in
Housewife, ch 2; Mackie and Pattullo, Women at Work, pp 9-15.
Harry Braverman paints a most colourful portrait of the activities of
American pioneer women in Labour and Monopoly Capital, ch 13.

103   Social Trends, no 14, p 43

104 Ibid, p 34

105 J Vanek, 'Time Spent in Housework', <u>Scientific American</u>, Nov 1974, p 116

106 A Oakley, <u>The Sociology of Housework</u>, p 111

107 <u>Social Trends</u>, no 14, p 64

108 A Oakley, <u>Subject Women</u>, pp 249-251

109 D Hobson, 'Housewives: Isolation as Oppression' in Women's Studies Group, ed, <u>Women Take Issue</u>, p 79-95

111 H Gavron, <u>The Captive Wife</u>, p 142

112 A Oakley, op cit, p 131

113 Ibid

114 Ibid, p 127

115 <u>Social Trends</u>, no 17, p 62

116 Ibid

117 Ibid

118 Adapted from Table 6.3, General Household Survey 1980, p 124

119 <u>Social Trends</u>, no 14, p 48

120 <u>Social Trends</u>, no 17, p 65

121 Ibid, p 121

122 A Oakley, op cit, p 127

123 See pp 72-73.

124 Social Trends, no 14, p 153. 'Professional' women were most likely to
     do voluntary work - 48% - whereas unskilled male manual workers were
     the least likely - 12%.

125 It is interesting to see how active the Jewish women respondents are
     in both committee and fundraising work. See below, ch 7.

126 Social Trends, no 14, p 154

127 Ibid, p 155

128 For a full discussion, see A Coote and P Kellner, op cit.

129 Social Trends, no 14, p 145

130 A Oakley, The Sociology of Housework, p 182

131 H Hobson, op cit

132 H Gavron, op cit, p 88

133 Ibid, p 89

134 Ibid, pp 91-92

135 Ibid, pp 94-96

136 Ibid, pp 96-97

137 Ibid, p 98

138 Ibid, p 99

139   If she has paid only the 'married woman's' National Insurance
      contribution, a woman does not qualify for these benefits, nor for a
      full retirement pension. It is being phased out now, although women
      can still elect to pay only the smaller contribution. This in itself
      acknolwedges the assumption of the 'marginality' of women's employment.

140   In practice, the mere presence of a man in the house overnight has
      been taken as evidence of cohabitation.

141   A man who is married to or cohabiting with a woman who earns a
      sufficiently large wage may not qualify for supplementary benefit, but
      he is not regarded as her dependant. If she became unemployed, she
      would be regarded as his dependant.

142   Contemporary features of macho culture, dressed up as humour, are
      described in Bruce Feirstein, Real Men Don't Eat Quiche, eg 'In the
      past it was easy to be a Real Man. All you had to do was abuse women,
      steal land from Indians, and find some place to dump the toxic waste.
      But not any more. Society is much more complex today.... Women are
      demanding things like equality and respect.' (p 15) 'Among Real
      Men, there has always been one simple rule: never settle with words
      what you can accomplish with a flame thrower.' (p 20)

143   Social Trends, no 14, p 31

144   See above, p67.

145   C Lewis and M O'Brien, ed, Reassessing Fatherhood

146   A Oakley, Subject Women, p249, quoting The Sunday Times (27. 2.1977)

147   P Hunt, Gender and Class Consciousness, ch 2

148   Anna Pollert, Girls, Wives, Factory Lives, ch 6

149   M Eichler, The Double Standard, p 71

150 A Oakley, The Sociology of Housework, p 117

151 Ibid, p 44

152 F Fransella and K Frost, On Being a Woman, pp 27-35

153 Ibid

154 H Holter, Sex Roles and Social Structure, ch 2

155 Ibid, p 145

156 Fransella and Frost, op cit, p 49

157 Ibid, p 200

158 M Eichler, op cit, ch 3

159 J Gardiner, 'Women in the Labour Process and Class Structure', in A Hunt, ed, Class and Class Structure, p 159

160 M Porter, 'Consciousness and Secondhand Experience' in Sociological Review, vol 26, 1978, pp 263-282

161 P Hunt, op cit

162 Ibid, p 34

163 Ibid, p

164 Ibid, p 104

165 Ibid, p

166 It could be argued that the 1984/85 miners' strike demonstrates how women and men can put aside immediate short-term family interests in favour of long-term, family, community and class interests.

167   M Porter, 'Worlds Apart: The Class Consciousness of Working Class Women',
      Women's Studies International Quarterly, 1978, pp 175-188

168   Ibid, p 188

169   A M Froude, Women's Perceptions of Class, MSc dissertation presented
      on 15.9.82 to the London School of Economics

170   P Hunt, op cit

171   G Gorer, Sex and Marriage in England Today, p 285;   A F Davies,
      Images of Class, p 89

172   E Bott, Family and Social Network

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to examine how certain social and material
disadvantages are experienced and responded to by people living in an
inner city area occupied by a very heterogeneous population. More
specifically, the problem can be stated: how do men and women living in
an area where there are   working class and middle class people, a
large religious Jewish community, Black people, white people and Asians,
see this social reality and where they fit into it? What are the important
categories (if any) people use in describing themselves and others?

The interview was clearly the appropriate mode of data collection for what
was basically a survey of attitudes in potentially quite intimate and
sensitive areas such as ethnic status, racism, class, snobbery, gender
and feminism. The breadth of the topics covered rendered diary-keeping
inappropriate on the one hand, and the notorious slipperiness and subtlety
of attitudes in these areas made self-completed questionnaires unsuitable
on the other. The number of questions which it would be necessary to ask
meant that a large sample was beyond the resources of a solitary, unfunded
researcher.

1   Sampling

I decided to interview thirty women who were currently living in Stamford
Hill or who had recently lived there and still had regular 'organic' links
(there were two in this category), plus as many of their husbands or male
cohabitants as possible. A pilot survey of ten women conducted in 1984
indicated that a particular schedule of questions yielded approximately an
hour of tape-recorded interview of an appropriate quality and richness.

Certain questions were omitted and some added to the final interview schedule as the result of the pilot study, and a sharpening of. the focus of the research achieved, so that the overall length was thereby slightly increased. A predicted sample size of around fifty persons seemed likely to produce a sufficient amount of richly illustrative data to satisfy the purpose of the research. No attempt is to be made to generalise from this data to class, gender and ethnic status attitudes in Britain, or even London, as a whole. Stamford Hill is unique in its composition, its large ultra-orthodox Jewish population, its smaller West Indian, Asian and Cypriot communities and its progressively gentrifying, although largely still working-class, indigenous population.

I chose to sample from the three largest and most visible communities - the Jewish, the English and the West Indian. It is fully conceded elsewhere[1] that these categories are not of the same logical order, but empirically they form very recognisable local status groups. They are subjectively 'real' for the inhabitants of the area[2]. Jews, West Indians and working class English people can all be seen as negatively statused groups in Britain. The same might be said of the other ethnic minorities in Stamford Hill, but they are much less numerous. It would have been very difficult to obtain sufficient English-speaking women in the appropriate category (women with at least one child under the age of twelve) in these communities. It is also interesting from a theoretical standpoint to compare with an indigenous white, nominally Christian sample people who have a strong, coherent, ancient, non-Christian culture on the one hand, and on the other, Black, nominally Christian people whose African culture has been distorted by slavery[3].

The sample was accordingly divided into three. Ten women were white, born in England and non-Jewish; ten were either born in the West Indies or had at least one parent who had been, and were Afro-Caribbean rather than Indian-Caribbean; finally, ten were ultra-orthodox Jewish women, all but one of whom were born in England. I interviewed seven partners out of a possible eight of English women, nine out of a possible ten of Jewish women, but only one of a possible three of West Indian women. The reasons for the failure to persuade West Indian men to be interviewed are discussed at length below[4].

98

In order to maximise the likelihood that differences in attitudes between
the sexes would be visible, I decided to interview women who had at least
one child of primary school age (under twelve) or younger. It is when
their children are young that men and women are most likely to be found
acting out traditional sex roles, in order to meet the needs of their
children. Even if the traditional vision of labour - woman at home with
total responsibility for the children and the home, man in full-time
employment - is not strictly adhered to (and indeed most of the couples
did not), the issue of responsibility remains a factor in one partner's
power in the labour market. None of the couples I approached to be interviewed
turned out to be involved in radical role-swapping. Seven of the West
Indian women did not have their children's fathers living with them and two
of these were living with their mothers. This is an interesting finding
in its own right, but it does have implications for the symmetry of the
sample. In terms of class composition, seven out of ten West Indian women
were working class, six out of ten English women, and three out of ten
Jewish women.

2   Approaching Potential Respondents

This was done mainly in three ways and places. Most of the English and
West Indian women were approached in casual encounters outside the
Sir Thomas Abney Primary School in Fairholt Road, Stamford Hill. Others
were contacted via the Grasshopper Playgroup in the St Andrews Church Hall
in Fairholt Road. The Lubavitcher[6] Jews were contacted on my behalf by one
of the Jewish respondents (I have more to say about this in a moment). The
Litvish[7] Jewish woman, Hannah Krausz, I contacted via the Aguda[8] Community
Centre in Stamford Hill. She and another woman (who refused to be interviewed)
were suggested by one of the Aguda community work's directors. Zipporah Roth,
a member of the Ger[9] community, is the neighbour of a non-religious Jewish
friend of mine. Beyond the fact that these two women were both born abroad,
in Sweden and Switzerland respectively, their histories and attitudes were
not markedly different from those of the Lubavitcher women.

As a non-Jew and a total outsider to the Jewish community in Stamford Hill,
the problem of contacting ultra-religious Jewish respondents seemed
formidable to begin with. What organisations were there to be approached?

How many sects were there? Which are the largest and most representative
(if any)? Where does one find them? How does one recognise them? An
orthodox friend living in Hendon offered me a contact in the Lubavitch
community, a young single man. Before I got to see him, a neighbour in the
street where I live introduced me to Aaron Levenberg, also a member of the
Lubavitch community. This was a piece of pure good fortune, as not only
were he and his wife willing to be interviewed, but Aaron also offered to
ask others in the community on my behalf. I asked him to approach men
whose paid employment was outside the Lubavitch community as well as those
within.

While I was and remain extremely grateful for this ready-made sample, there
are certain observations which must be made about it. Firstly, there must be
a lingering suspicion that I was introduced to the most impressive spokesmen
for the community. Indeed, it would be surprising if it were otherwise.
People such as the Blooms, the Teffs and the Friedmans[10] lecture and talk
to groups and individuals outside their community regularly in order to arouse
and persuade further contact on the part of non-religious Jews. The benefit
one gained was that they were excellent, communicative respondents. I
expressed my concern to Aaron Levenberg and he did introduce several
quieter and less public members of the community.

Secondly, the class profile of the Jewish sample is undoubtedly more middle
class than is the ultra-orthodox Jewish community as a whole, and indeed
more than the Lubavitch community itself[11]. Thirdly, I relied on Aaron not
to tell potential respondents too much about the research, so that the
validity of the tests for salience was maintained[12]. While I was able to
ask husbands and wives not to talk to their partners about the interview
before both had been through it, it is difficult to escape the suspicion
remaining that there may have been some discussion between several of the
women on certain questions, most notably that seeking respondents' opinions
on the causes of the Tottenham riots. All of these reservations about the
sample may have had the effect of over-emphasising the admirable and cohesive
elements of the Lubavitch community and also the consistency of the
Weltanschauung presented. On the other hand, the two non-Lubavitch women gave
very similar interviews to those of the Lubavitch women.

3   The Difficulties of Obtaining West Indian Respondents

I remain in no doubt that most of the West Indian respondents I interviewed were extremely reluctant to give interviews. No less than six of them either cancelled at short notice or failed to turn up at least once. One woman did this three times. None of the Jewish or English respondents did this. Unfortunately, the need to protect the spontaneity and validity of salience sought in the interview meant that I could not be as open about the nature of the questions and the purpose of the research as I would have liked. This necessary evasiveness led to irreparable damage to the rapport I thought I had with one potential male respondent.

He was a law student at the North London Polytechnic and being involved in academic study himself, likely (I thought) to cooperate in my research. His principal objection seemed to be that I sought to 'steal' his story. He was intending to publish his autobiography and saw this research as poaching. It was to no avail that I argued that it was a selection of his attitudes and experiences that I wanted to use rather than to present his life story as a mainstay of my thesis. He said he regarded this research as 'a whip to lash my backside'. He was extremely angry and confused about the use of the term 'ethnic status group', which he equated with 'ethnic minority', a term he loathed as it suggested aberrance, like 'prostitutes', 'homosexuals', 'disabilities', 'subnormalities'. His argument is: 'One of my aims is to destroy "ethnic minority" as a term, so that people aren't trapped in a category, labelled, because it suits the interests of (white) groups.'[13]

While I have no doubt that this individual was somewhat oversensitive, the two other male partners of women in the survey also proved to be 'unavailable for interview'. I approached one in person no less than six times after he had agreed, somewhat reluctantly, to be interviewed. On each occasion he was too busy, and likely to be too busy for some time. The other was the partner of Marcia X, who had refused to give me her surname. She said she wanted to be referred to as 'Marcia X'[14]. Marcia said it was abolutely no use asking him because he would refuse. I suggested that I ask him myself, but she stonewalled. She has carefully avoided catching my eye in the street ever since. This feels uncomfortable as my impression of her interview was that she expressed herself freely and did not hesitate to talk about her anger at racism.[15]

Relating these stories to Vadnie Bish, a social work student at North London Polytechnic, she commented: 'I'm not surprised, darling.' Her opinion as a Black person approaching academic material is to ask first: 'Who did the research, when, how and for what purpose? It should not be assumed that studies are conducted for the good of the people studied.' What seems to be emerging is the suspicion that I am 'taking away' people's stories for my own benefit. Wade Nobles has characterised white research on Black people as 'scientific colonialism', as follows:[16]

Comparative Colonialisation

Colonialism manifested by	Political Colonialisation	Scientific Colonialisation
1) Removal of wealth	Exportation of raw materials and wealth from colonies for the purpose of 'processing' it into manufactured wealth and/or goods	Exporting raw data from a community for the purpose of 'processing' it into manufactured goods, ie books, articles, wealth etc
2) Right of Access and Claim	Colonial power believes it has the right of access* and use for its own benefit anything belonging to the colonialised people	Scientist believes he has unlimited right of access* to any data source and any information belonging to the subject population
3) External Power Base	The centre of power and control over the colonised is located outside of colony itself	The centre of knowledge and information about a people or community located outside of the community or people themselves

* emphasis in original

While Nobles had in mind particularly social anthropological studies conducted in Africa, its relevance here is clear. Black people, and to a lesser extent working-class people, hearing a request for an interview think: 'What's in it for me? What do I get in exchange for revealing my thoughts and history?' A white middle-class potential respondent faced with a white middle-class researcher is much more likely to have an educational background and confidence that his or her thoughts will be heard with understanding, as the researcher is judged likely to have a similar history.

102

Such people, I would suggest, identify with the research process on some level. They are more likely to express interest in its aims, being more confident that they will understand the explanation given by the researcher. They are also more likely to ask to read the research report afterwards[17].

A Black or working-class person, on the other hand, experiences negative status in various ways in everyday life. His or her speech is recognised as different from those with power in money, both in accent, vocabulary and syntax. Clothes are recognised as different and subject to positive and negative status evaluations. Lack of savoir-faire, or what I have termed 'cultural capital' is felt, recognised. On an existential level, people know these are symbols of 'prestige' and 'worth'[18]. To be Black in a racist society, with daily reminders of this, is analogous to this. How much more difficult it is, then, for a Black or working-class person to speak and be confident that he or she will be heard with understanding by a white researcher. To be asked, as my potential respondents were, to answer questions about their 'work histories', 'who does what around the home', 'experiences of living in an inner city' (ie racism), plus 'certain simple political questions', is understandably alarming. This necessarily vague description of the research (necessary to protect salience) would do little to build confidence or desire to be interviewed.

I would suggest that the difficulties in obtaining male West Indian respondents, together with the (at the time) astonishing incidence of forgotten and delayed interviews with the West Indian women, while frustrating and destructive to the symmetry of the design of the research, nevertheless amounts to data in its own right. These women's lives were no busier than those of any of the other respondents, nor were their memories defective. Whether these failed appointments were 'really' forgotten or not is immaterial. The effect, and I would suggest the cause, were the same: a reluctance to 'reveal all' to a white, middle-class woman.

4   Ethics

I was under no illusions that unwillingness to reveal at the outset the purposes and questions of the research was subject to criticism on ethical grounds.

'Ethical practice requires the invesigator to inform the participant of all features of the research that reasonably might be expected to influence willingness to participate, and to explain all other aspects of the research about which the participant inquires."(19)

Cook continues:

"Experience of researchers indicates that if they operate according to this ... version of informed consent, they will find that most research participants are concerned about what will happen to them in the research, how long the research will take, and any inconveniences or risks that are involved. In contrast, most participants are unconcerned about the nature of the research question being asked and are as likely to be willing to answer one kind of question as another.'(20)

It was my experience that respondents were generally satisfied with the admittedly vague account I gave of the research and its purpose. For that minority - about eight - the assurance that the precise purpose of the questions would be revealed at the end of the interview sufficed.

In order to 'balance the cost' to respondents, one of the criteria I carefully considered when designing the interview schedule was its coherence and potential for increased self-understanding as an experience for the respondent. Several people volunteered that they had enjoyed the experience, and no-one complained afterwards about the content of the questions. One or two did complain about the length of time the interview took[21]. Ultimately, to undertake the research at all, I believe that knowledge about what people think and feel about themselves and others, uncovered in good faith and presented as impartially as is possible by one individual, does outbalance the cost of a mildly unethical element in the methodology.

5   The Questions

The interview schedule at Appendix 1 [22] is set out precisely as in the copy I used in the interviews. It will be noted that the questions are largely open-ended, and that the precise wording is not specified in some cases, eg 'possibility of social mobility?', 'how - education, money?'. The reasons for this were, firstly, some questions had to be asked using the words used by the respondent. Hence the social mobility question might have been phrased 'do you think it is possible for a person to move from one class/level

to another?'. If it was clear that their conception of class was purely
based on money and power, 'how - education, money?' would have been phrased
'do you think it is simply money that enables a person to move from one
class to another? How about education?'. A certain flexibility in question
form was necessary to accommodate and respond appropriately to previous
answers and to respondents of very different experiences and intelligence.
Secondly, I wanted all the questions on one side of A4 so as not to alarm
respondents, and to keep the complete interview schedule in my view throughout.
The occasional change of order brought about by a respondent anticipating
later questions could be more easily responded to handling one piece of
paper. Finally, working as a sole researcher, the precision in wording
which would be required for a team of interviewers was unnecessary.

a) Ideological orientation and other attributes

Wade Nobles suggests that while there is a relationship between the kinds
of questions asked and the kinds of answers you will get, there is a stronger
one still between one's guiding beliefs or philosophy and the kinds of questions
one will ask. Accepting a priori assumptions, your questions predetermine
the realm in which your answers must fall[23]. What he is suggesting here
is that the researcher must be as self-aware as possible of where one
comes from - theoretical orientation, certainly, but beyond that one's
political, philosophical and religious positions and tendencies. Beyond
that again, I would argue that the researcher should be mindful that his
or her sex, class, skin colour or age may be factors which exert a biased
ideological influence on the design of an interview schedule. To take two
simple examples, the sex of the researcher is likely to be highly germane
to the questions that get asked in a study of male violence against women,
but not in a study of English anti-semitism.

It is a difficult task for the lone researcher to be aware of all these
factors as not only may the nature of his or her ideological orientation
be only dimly perceived at the outset of the research process, but it may
well develop and change as the research proceeds. It has been particularly
difficult in the conduct of this research because it touches on so many
theoretical fields - gender, class, race and religion. As a middle-class,

non-Jewish, white woman, I have been forced to consider how my being affects the questions I ask. Similarly, my ideological orientation is that of a feminist, Weberian, Labour-voting, white liberal who has rejected her Protestant Christian upbringing, and rather more 'humanistic' than 'mechanistic'[24] in sociological orientation.

There are three questions (and possibly more) where my ideological orientation and concrete social being have caused lacunae in the data. Firstly, I failed to ask whether the four closest friends respondents had were men or women. My underlying assumption as a woman whose four closest friends are female was that people stick to their sex for confidants, apart from spouses or lovers. To know the extent to which respondents had close friends of the opposite sex may well have added significantly to the data on identification with one's own sex[25]. Secondly, I asked women whether they felt disadvantaged on account of their sex, but not men whether they felt disadvantaged on account of their sex. This would have yielded interesting comparative data. Finally, I asked whether there was much prejudice against Jews and West Indians, but not whether respondents ever saw English people suffering this. As a middle-class white, I have never experienced this myself, but others may be more aware, for instance concerning the impact of equal opportunities policies in Council recruitment.

Another deficiency which perhaps is not evident in the interview schedule concerns my questioning of all respondents about their racism. I should have specifically asked all West Indians whether they didn't feel angry with white people; I should have asked the same of Jews concerning non-Jews; and my probing of English racism and anti-semitism should have been more searching. This failure was probably caused simply by white liberal reluctance to hear it straight or to uncover repellant attitudes. On the other hand, it must be said that feelings did emerge, and a direct approach may have led people to lie or conceal their feelings. It does lead to the question, again ethical, of whether anti-social sentiments should be consciously courted in surveys. In this case it was my moral instinct rather than cool appraisal of methodological ethics which supplied the answer.

b) The Ten Statements Test

This is denoted 'identity test' in the interview schedule (Item 1). Before the tape recording of the interview began, I handed to the respondent a small

106

index card headed '(name): Who am I? What am I?' and asked him or her to
write down briefly descriptions of themselves, who they are, in ten ways.
This was a very difficult challenge for most respondents, placed at the
outset of an interview with few clues concerning what it was about. Not
surprisingly, most asked for help. I answered - 'How would you describe
yourself to someone you had not met before? What are the important things
about you?' I would urge them not to agonise too much, just to put down
what came off the top of their heads, while at the same time saying that
there was plenty of time and to relax into the task. In one or two cases
where I felt literacy might be a problem, I offered to do the writing, saying
that people sometimes found it easier to talk rather than write it down.
It did help in these cases.

c) Difficulty of questions

Other questions in the list proved difficult for some respondents. I
consciously kept these to a minimum and placed them in the second half of
the schedule to allow maximum time for respondents to relax and loosen
their tongues. The most 'difficult' questions were: 'Describe British
society and its divisions as if to a foreign visitor'; 'Is the wages
structure fair?'; and 'Are young people pricing themselves out of jobs?'.
These were the questions which had most often to be rephrased or explained.
I would not have included any more than this number of difficult questions
in the research. I dropped one or two after the pilot study. Nevertheless,
they had definite purposes within the research and, in the case of the Ten
Statements Test, proved to extremely fruitful and valuable. Moreoever,
it can be argued that to ask a small number of questions which stimulate
effort in thinking adds to the enjoyment of an interview, providing
respondents are encouraged and not left miserable with a perceived 'failure'
to answer. There were in fact very few 'don't know' answers.

d) Order of questions

As can be seen from the schedule, the questions were in five main sections
headed Biographical, Gender, Status, Class, and Political and Personal. While
there was a risk that seeking biographical data first might seem too abrupt

107

it seemed that the difficulty of the Ten Statements Test was followed in most cases by a grateful willingness to talk. The question 'In what ways does your life differ from that of your mother/father?' proved to be an excellent device to elicit biographical data in a natural, comfortable manner. The interview proper thus started on a personal note which the respondent himself or herself could control to some extent.

The ordering of the gender, status and class questions was chosen because I thought political questions about voting ought to come near the end, as people are sometimes sensitive about revealing this. The class questions naturally led into the political ones. It will be noticed that at the end of each of these three substantive questioning sections, there is an apparently more lighthearted and flip question. This served to mark the end of each section for respondents, so that they were not faced with two serious or difficult questions on very different topics one after the other. This, I hoped, would help to diminish 'interview fatigue' on a very long schedule.

The placing of questions at the end of the interview which sought respondents' major turning points in life and their hopes for the future brought the interview a full circle, back to the personal and biographical. It was this, I considered, which allowed for coherence and sense to arise for the respondent in the interview - 'the payment', the chance to review and look forward. (It was also fruitful from the research point of view[26].)

6   The Interview

The interviews were tape-recorded on a domestic radio/cassette recorder with a mains supply. I decided against batteries because of reliability problems. As most interviews took place in respondents' homes, and one could not rely on power points being located conveniently, I took an extension lead so that the recorder could be placed as close to the respondent and as appropriately as possible. In the vast majority of cases, respondents appeared to forget about the recording. I was at pains to stress the confidentiality of the recording and that no-one else would listen to it. The importance of this latter point was vividly illustrated in the case of one of the West Indian

women, whom I had inadvertently forgotten to reassure on this point. Her interview was short and halting, and it was clear that she was uncomfortable throughout. In conversation afterwards it emerged that she had thought a panel of people would be listening to it at the Polytechnic.

a) Myself as interviewer

There can be little doubt that I was at a disadvantage as a lone interviewer in this research, as the following quotations from an early work on interviewing in social research[27] indicate:

> 'We have clear evidence that the presumed impersonality of the interview situation does not overcome the reluctance of Negroes to express their opinions freely to whites.... White interviewers obtained substantially different results from Negro interviewers on most of the individual questions.... (Black people) were more reluctant to express to white interviewers their resentment over discrimination.'(28)

> 'Sex differences among the respondents were small when interviewed by the opposite sex, large when interviewed by their own sex.'(29)

> 'Opinions reported by the working class interviewers (on working class respondents) were consistently more radical than those reported to the middle class interviewers, particularly on labour issues.' (30)

On the other hand, '... non-Jewish people with anti-semitic prejudices will express these more readily to gentile than to Jewish interviewers'[31]. Moreover, it was an advantage not to be Jewish interviewing the Jews (unless I had been a Hasidic Jew)[32], as several of the Jewish respondents expressed the view that educated non-Jews were less likely to be hostile to Hasidim than non-religious Jews.

So, in order to maximise validity, a large team of interviewers would have been necessary - West Indian, English and Jewish, male and female, working and middle class. This was not possible. On the other hand, as a 'college-educated woman aged between 35 and 44' with a 'tendency to introversion and low social adjustment' and with 'an aesthetic and theoretical value orientation' rather than 'an economic, political or religious' one, I fit the profile of the 'most likely to be successful' interviewer[33].

b) Interviewing alone

I decided before the interviewing began that respondents should be interviewed separately and alone as far as possible. The wisdom of the first point was amply illustrated by one of the Jewish couples whose business lives meant that the only way I would get to interview them was if I interviewed them together. It was chaotic. I omitted to ask all the questions; the wife occasionally referred questions to her husband for his opinion, saying they were too difficult for her (although she was probably more intelligent than he was) and, worst of all, he kept interrupting his wife's answers. While not all couples would have behaved in this way, it confirmed my view that it was preferable to interview partners separately.

The presence of small children was an inevitable feature during many of the interviews. They were rarely a problem, and a ready willingness on the part of the researcher to pause and switch off the recorder to allow any needs to be met is, of course, essential. Interviewing in the respondent's home was a clear advantage in these circumstances.

c) Existential bursts

There were a number of occasions where respondents became quite unexpectedly and suddenly agitated while answering questions. I will not name them even using pseudonyms, in order to protect their identity. The quality of the affect is not always visible from the words written in the transcript. I had asked one of the Jewish respondents whether the situation of a male breadwinner and woman at home was ideal. Both he and his wife worked, she part-time: '... all these things have stood the test of time.... It doesn't work well in the households where they try it the other way round. I must admit I would feel slighted if my wife earned more money than me. I think I'd be dishonest to say otherwise. One of the problems you must have is whether people are honest or not. I don't get enough to keep the family going anyway, umm - '
Wife: 'Exactly, exactly.'

The underlined sentence was said with some force, and I experienced it as an attack. His wife's soothing interjection indicated she was supporting her

110

husband in a very painful situation, viz that he wanted to believe in the traditional division of labour, but could not act on it because he could not afford to. The attack on the honesty of other respondents was a deflection from his own discomfort. This same respondent accidentally knocked over a glass of orange squash just after (rather indiscreetly) mentioning the relationship between the Lubavitch community and one of the other sects. Another Jewish woman's outburst of anger at the bad relations Jews had with West Indians was also notable. Basically, she found it incomprehensible as Jewish plantation owners had been particularly kind to slaves. She became more agitated talking about it and I sensed a certain embarrassment, possibly as she realised the weakness of her argument. She had revealed her underlying feelings clearly.

The incidents which caused either the respondent or myself discomfort among the English sample were to do with class. One woman, a socialist, asked me anxiously if I thought she was middle class. One of the men took quite a long time at the outset of his interview justifying his having chosen a manual job when he was qualified to do a white collar job. It felt as if he was seeking my approval.

Among the eleven Black respondents, four were defensive, and I felt uncomfortable interviewing them. (One of these was the woman I had failed to reassure about the tape recording.) One interview felt so tense that I was moved to ask: 'Does it feel difficult answering these kinds of questions to a white woman?'
A: 'Ummm, some of them, because they're very direct questions.'

It did not help to relax her, but points to the existence of her defensiveness. That four Black women seemed defensive indicates that something was amiss with the interview or interviewer rather than these individuals, I would suggest. Uncertainty and guilt about the existence of my own racism may have triggered these reactions.

These existential 'bursts' or situations can be a tremendous bonus to the researcher who is quick to note them and skilled enough to work with them at the time. In respondents they can indicate or vividly illustrate subterranean feelings of some force, and have the supreme virtue of honesty. Experienced as discomfort by the researcher, they can indicate some unresolved ideological or theoretical problem. In either, they are a resource[34].

111

d) Game-playing

Another, altogether more dubious element which can enter into interviews
is 'game-playing'. Here the respondent invites the interviewer to collude
with him or her in creating an Interesting Respondent. Both are aware of
what is going on and it is extremely difficult for an interviewer to back
out without damaging 'rapport'. It is, in fact, a false, artificial rapport
whose purpose is to 'protect' the respondent. There were two flagrant
game-players - Pam Dixon and Richard Pryce - and one who drifted into it
later in his interview by progressively overstating his views - Abraham Bauer.

Game-playing is seductive because it is enjoyable, but it can be a menace.
Respondents can start to feel that any acceptable-sounding or interesting
attitude will do, whether they hold it or not. These should be challenged
by calling the respondent's bluff: 'Oh, come on, you're playing'.
Richard Pryce was amenable to this tactic[35]. The game he was playing was
'Intellectual Equals'. Pam Dixon, on the other hand, was playing 'The Ideal
Survey Respondent', squirting out bland, acceptable answers like toothpaste
from a tube. I felt that probing her attitudes would be a waste of time. I
must here agree with Herbert Hyman:

> 'The belief prevails too widely that the richer and deeper and lengthier
> the remarks of the respondent, the more likely is this to be the genuine
> picture of the attitude. Interviewers are encouraged to keep probing
> and to question the validity of a thin answer. Certainly there is much
> truth in this point of view and we may miss the full complexity of a
> deep, tortuous attitude structure in a given respondent by not
> pursuing the answer far enough. But conversely, we may distort the
> situation just as much if we forget that there are some people in this
> world with no hidden depths and only superficial attitudes on certain
> issues. In such instances, repeated probing may only suggest dimensions
> that were never operative in the first place. (36)

'Never mind the quality, feel the width', says the game-player.

e) Length of interviews

In fact, some of the most interesting and honest interviews were very long.
The accolades for length (he shares them with others for quality) goes to
an English man, Tom Hetherington, with a staggering two hours and fifty
minutes. The average was about an hour and five minutes. The averages for
the various categories were as follows:

112

West Indian women	65 minutes
West Indian man	85 minutes
English women	64 minutes
English men	72 minutes (55 without Tom Hetherington)
Jewish women	69 minutes
Jewish men	96 minutes

Interestingly, fatigue was not an issue in the Jews' very long interviews and was not noticeably so in more than one or two others.

7   Processing the Data

Interviews were transcribed by me largely verbatim. The exceptions to this were strictly observed. These were firstly that some of the biographical information which came at the beginning of the interview was shortened and reported rather than quoted. Secondly, gross repetitions were not recorded. These were the only exceptions. Omissions were marked in the transcripts with dots (....), pauses with 'pause'. Laughter was recorded and hesitations ('ummm', 'err'). It was a laborious process, taking about ten times the length of the original interview. The temptation to edit was enormous but resisted because I felt (rightly) that many unpredicted patterns and similarities between respondents would emerge in the course of analysing the data, and that to edit transcripts would be to throw away a lot of what might prove to be important data.

A summary sheet was attached to the front of each transcript to speed analysis, or at least to help locate answers. These summaries certainly did not remove the need for re-reading transcripts, or sections of transcripts, at least once in many cases. Analysis then proceeded using large sheets of paper listing the respondents and their answer to a question (often summarised to a single word), together with a reference to the page number in the transcript, asterisked for particularly quotable passages.

Once the research is completed, the tapes, transcripts and summaries will be destroyed to protect confidentiality. This assurance was given to respondents.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1   See above, p1

2   See below, p255.

3   I am aware that it is argued by some Black academics that a strongly
    resistent African culture remains, albeit 'underground' in the West
    Indies, and as a white, English person I may be unable to recognise it,
    but the elements of such a coherent culture have not been described in
    the literature, to my knowledge. See E Lawrence, 'In the Abundance of
    Water, the Fool is Thirsty', in The Empire Strikes Back,
    for a defence of West Indian culture.

4   See below, pp 101-103.

5   See chapter six, pp156-7 for operationalisation of social class.

6   See chapter 7, pp217-9 for an account of the subdivisions of the Jewish
    community in Stamford Hill.

7   Ibid

8   Ibid

9   Ibid

10 See Appendix 2 and chapters 5 to 7

11 See chapter 7, pp 218-224 on the Lubavitch Community.

12 See below, pp103-4 for a discussion on ethical considerations.

13 On the basis of material in chapters 6 and 7 below, I would argue that
    if West Indians could self-consciously behave as a pressure group
    based on their ethnic identity it would benefit their community
    immensely. See chapter 8, pp 298-299.

114

14 'Marcia' is not actually her first name. This, along with all respondents' names, is a pseudonym.

15 See for instance, chapter 7, p 252

16 W W Nobles, 'Extended Self: Rethinking the so-called negro self-concept' in R C Jones (ed), Black Psychology, p 100

17 One West Indian woman, one English woman, one English man and four Jewish men asked to see the completed thesis. All except the English woman (an individual with notable and secure self-esteem) were middle class.

18 See chapter Six below, eg pp 163; 176; 177. Several respondents alluded to these class 'markers'.

19 Stuart Cook, chapter 15 'Ethical Implications' in L H Kidder, Research Methods in Social Relations, p 382

20 Ibid

21 See below, p 113

22 See below, p i

23 W Nobles, op cit, p 101

24 The terms 'mechanistic' and 'humanistic' are contrasted by Schatzman and Strauss in Field Research (p 4). The former 'leads to a search for explanations of social forms in processes independent of human definition', the latter 'focuses primarily upon man's symbolically shaped cognitive processes and sees in these processes the keys to human understanding and explanation'.

25 See below, chapter 5, pp 118 - 120.

26 See chapter 8, p 302

27 H H Hyman, Interviewing in Social Research, 1954

28   Ibid, p 159

29   Ibid, p 164

30   Ibid, p 167

31   Ibid, p 162

32   See chapter 7, pp 217-9 for definitions

33   H H Hyman, op cit, p 292

34   See R Sennett and H Cobb, <u>The Hidden Injuries of Class</u>, for superb examples of the conscious use made of existential 'bursts'.

35   See especially chapter 6 for his views on class, pp 163-165

36   H H Hyman, op cit, p 24

CHAPTER FIVE

GENDER CONSCIOUSNESS

The Respondents [1]

Forty-seven people were interviewed: thirty women and as many of their partners as would be interviewed - seventeen. Ages ranged from 21 to 45. Jews were the oldest respondents, on average 36 years 9 months (women) and 30 years 10 months (men); the English were next oldest - 34 years 6 months (women), 37 years 10 months (men); West Indians were youngest - 27 years 6 months (women) and 31 years (man).

The Ten Statements Test

Most of the data were obtained through open-ended questioning, but in order to establish the extent to which respondents thought of themselves spontaneously in gender-specific terms and to test simultaneously the salience of race, class and religion in respondents' self-images, at the outset of the interviews people were asked to try to give ten answers to the question (name): 'Who am I?' or 'What am I?'. The Ten Statements Test proved impossible for only one person, Vera Hall, although she eventually attempted it with the help of a friend present at the interview. Many articulated their difficulty with the task and several expressed this in highly abstract, metaphysical terms.

Care was taken not to lead by giving examples and the only help given was to recast the question in such terms as 'Describe who you are, as if to someone you were meeting for the first time', or 'What are the important things about yourself you would say to someone you were meeting for the first time?'. Respondents were asked not to put their answers in order of importance, only as they occurred to them.

117

	English women	English men	West Indian women	West Indian men	Jewish women	Jewish men	Middle class	Working class
	n = 10	n = 7	n = 10	n = 1	n = 10	n = 9	n = 26	n = 21
Proportion giving 10 answers	40%	66%	40%	100%	50%	66%	54%	40%
Average number of answers per person	7.3	8.0	7.5	10.0	8.3	9.3	8.5	7.4

The average number of answers per person for all respondents was 7.84.

It can be seen that, overall, men seemed more able to make statements about their identity than women, middle class people found it easier than working class people, and Jewish respondents were more able in this respect than the other two groups. This may reflect the class proportions of the sub-samples, as the Jews were overwhelmingly middle class and the numbers were too small to permit meaningful analysis on this point.

Gender Identity

1 Women

Respondents' answers to the Ten Statements Test were examined to see the extent to which descriptions which concretely specified their sex were used. Words such as 'mother', 'father', 'sister', 'brother', 'female', 'male', 'daughter', 'son', 'woman' and 'man' were regarded as indicating gender specificity. Others such as 'secretary', 'nurse' or 'engineer', while highly suggestive of the sex of the individual, would demand sexist assumptions in the analysis.

Three of the ten West Indian women did not mention their sex at all in describing themselves. One mentioned it five times in her ten answers and three mentioned it twice. Two women gave just one specifically feminine answer. Six used the word 'mother' and three 'female' and three 'women'. Of those using the word 'mother', four put the word first or second on their lists. Two of the three married women used the word 'wife'. The other was

118

separated from her husband. Only three of the ten women put a gender-specific description first on their lists. 'Sister' and 'daughter' were mentioned once.

Four of the ten English women did not mention their sex overtly. One mentioned it five times in ten answers, two mentioned it three times and one twice, and the two remaining women mentioned it once each. All six who described themselves in terms of their sex used the word 'mother' and put it among the first three items on their lists. Two used the word 'woman' and two 'wife'. Of these latter, interestingly, one - Louise Cooper - was not in fact legally married, although she put the word in inverted commas. Five of the six who used specifically feminine terms to describe themselves put one first on their lists. Other descriptions used were 'female', 'lady', 'daughter' and 'housewife'.

All ten Jewish women mentioned their sex overtly at least once. Three gave four such answers, one three answers and six two answers. All ten used the word 'mother' and seven gave both 'wife' and 'mother' in their answers. All but one put these words in the first four items on their lists. 'Woman', 'grandmother', 'sister', 'working mother' and 'career woman' were also used.

To summarise, 16 out of 75 answers given by West Indian women were overtly gender-specific (1.6 per woman); 15 out of 73 answers from the English women were such (1.5 per woman) and 27 of the 83 answers given by Jewish women were gender-specific (2.7 per woman). These findings suggest that the Jewish women identified with their feminine roles most strongly and that there is not much difference between West Indian and English women in this respect. This is congruent with the importance that religious Jews attribute to the role of mother. These findings suggest that this importance is absorbed into how these Jewish women see themselves. It is not just ideological window-dressing.

2   Men

Four of West Indian Eric Clarke's answers were gender-specific - 'male', 'father', 'son', 'companion to my wife'. Of the seven partners of English women, three did not use gender-specific descriptions of themselves and the other four all gave two such answers. All four described themselves as 'fathers', three as 'husbands' (including one who was *not* legally married)

and the other as 'male'. The three who described themselves as husbands and
fathers each put these descriptions among the first three on their lists.
Eight of the nine Jewish men described themselves in gender-specific terms
and all eight used the words 'husband' and 'father'. All but one listed them
among the first four items on their lists. Other words used were 'Englishman',
'son', 'man' and 'male'.

Here again it seems to be the Jewish respondents who spontaneously use
gender-specific elements in describing themselves, although the absence of
West Indian men interviewed makes analysis very difficult[3]. 24 of the 85
answers given by Jewish men were gender-specific (a slightly lower proportion
than Jewish women), 9 out of the 57 answers given by English men were
gender-specific and 4 of the West Indian man's 10 answers were such.

Employment

All of the respondents interviewed had at least one child aged eleven or
younger (ie of primary school age or below). This sampling criterion was
chosen to maximise the likelihood of finding people whose gender roles
were likely to be at their most distinct because of the needs of their
children. The method and site of approaching most of the potential West
Indian and English respondents in casual encounters outside a primary
school in Stamford Hill, and in a neighbouring playgroup, made it less
likely that the women would be working full-time, so it is not being claimed
that these women were representative of all mothers of young children in the
area. They were mostly a sample of women who had made a choice to take and
collect their children to and from school and playgroup, with all the
adjustments this might imply in other parts of their lives.

In order to encourage respondents to talk freely in the interview and to
begin to elicit biographical material, they were asked how their lives
differed from that of their mother (or father). Most of the information about
employment emerged in this questioning. At the time of the interviews, 8
out of 10 West Indian women were working; similarly, 8 out of 10 English
women and 7 out of 10 Jewish women had some kind of paid employment. Of
the 7 non-working women, 3 expressed the intention of working again in the
near future, either when their babies were a bit older or when a suitable
job turned up. Gem Bailey said she intended to go to college the following
September to re-train: 'I'm into men's subjects. My dad's a painter and

and decorator. I settled for typing because they put me down for it. I passed the test. I prefer mechanical subjects. I'm thinking of going back to college to learn mechanical engineering.'

Only 3 did not want to return to work in the near future. In Vera Hall's case, this was because of her homelessness and the disorder which this had inevitably brought to her life. Her main concern at the time of the interview was to get a decent flat to live in. The other two women had made a positive choice not to work. Hephzibar Levenberg, on being asked whether she intended working when her children were older, replied: 'Well, I'm hoping, please God, to have more children. Looking after children will take quite a few years. Unless I had to for financial reasons, I wouldn't choose to work. I don't want to. I'd sooner be at home looking after the children.' Similarly, Zipporah Roth said she would probably work when her youngest child went to school at five. Nevertheless, it was clear that she was not necessarily intending her youngest child (then a year old) to be the last. Asked how many children she had, she answered: 'Four. And how many do I intend to have? One hundred and six. Don't ask. This is one question I won't answer.' She went on to say that, although her ambitions were 'a little bit dormant at the moment ... I know that in ten or fifteen years' time I am definitely going to go to work... I am totally against leaving my kids with somebody else.'

Similar feelings about their responsibility for their children were expressed, more or less explicitly, by three of the English women who worked at home. Mary Baker, mother of two boys aged nine and five, works as a machinist at home: 'Since I've had the children, I've always worked at home because it's not easy to go out to work with children in case they're ill.... I'd much rather go out to work, but it's not possible.' The other two working at home are childminders. Geraldine Pusey, whose youngest son is nine, was asked whether she preferred to work at home: I don't know. It's been so long since I've been out to work, I don't know what it would be like. You get out of the routine. I do it for financial reasons but because it fits in with my life and the children and school hours. If I went out to work, they'd be latch-key children. No way.'

Karen Corrigan, mother of seven and a child-minder, remarked: 'I could say "I'm going out to work. When you come home from school you can all have keys." I couldn't do that. It's not in me to do that sort of thing. I'd rather be here for them to come home to.'

Most of the women who worked outside the home did so on a part-time basis, or had jobs with hours which could be arranged to accommodate responsibility for children. The two playcentre workers were able to take their children with them. Only one of the thirty women was relying regularly on someone who was not related to her children. Respondents' mothers, their children's fathers, sisters etc all helped to care for the children. This care seemed to be kept within the family and is still seen to be the mother's responsibility. Sandra Green speaks for many: 'I don't like to rely on people. I've got my family but they can't do it because they work themselves. You ask people, they're willing to help, then all of a sudden something happens and they can't pick him up and I don't like that sort of aggravation.'

All but two of the men worked (one was unemployed and one a student) and all of these had full-time jobs. Three of the Jewish men were teachers, two based in a school in Stamford Hill, but far from enabling them to look after their own children after school hours, their jobs were so loaded with extra-curricular activities, administration and social work, that they were less able to share the work at home than many of the others. Soloman Teff was typical: 'I would like to spend more time their (at home) than I do. I try to give quality time. I try to be at home a couple of hours in the evening when the children are running around.... When I am home, I do try to give what I can to my family.'

While most men 'helped out' with children when they were at home outside of working hours, only one, Philip Grossman, was described by his partner as making exceptional efforts during working hours. For a while, Philip had come home at lunchtimes specifically to look after one of the babies. As he does not work locally, this was difficult. Even when male respondents' working hours were not cast in stone, perhaps because of self-employment, this did not seem to be allowed to alter the conventional working hours of most of these men. This is true even of those with the most impeccably liberationist attitudes such as Tom Hetherington, whose working pattern as a tenants worker enabled his hours to be self-determined. His partner, Louise Cooper, has

122

full responsibility for collecting Duncan, aged 8, from school: 'We were talking about whether he'd be able regularly to pick him up from school one day. It would make it easier for me to do this new arrangement with the tutoring. It's very hard and he's loath to say not, but at the same time, because he's got appointments and meetings and has to fit in all kinds of things, it's hard for him to say that ....'. Asked whether his work load was really so enormous a burden or whether he was using it as an excuse to avoid domestic responsibilities, Tom replied: 'The amount of time you give to work is geared to how much time you can give to it, and if you are not taking any responsibility in other senses, then more and more of your time is taken up by your work, and so it becomes self-fulfilling. I think if I'd developed more of a relationship with domestic things, then I wouldn't have had that time. I wouldn't have been able to give it (to work). Once given, it can't be taken back, in a sense.'

Among these respondents, it still seems to be the women's working hours which are adjusted to take childcare into account.

Identification with Paid Occupation

An analysis was made of the answers to the Ten Statements Test to see whether people identified with their work. Among the ten women who were not working outside their homes (including the childminders), there were only five references to work or to activity outside the home: 'hardworking' (Mary Baker, homeworking machinist), 'childminder' (Karen Corrigan) and 'community worker', 'taking part in tenants association' and 'contribute positively to the community' (Zipporah Roth). None of the non-working women expressed any sense of a loss of identity. For instance, Sheila Stevens, who has had a number of shop and office jobs: 'No, I don't think that's important to me. I'm a person in my own right anyway. I don't need someone else's label to know who I am.'

Among the twenty women working or studying outside the home, four of the eight Black women mentioned their occupation, four of the five English women and five of the seven Jewish women. The two Black students, both of whom were studying for professional qualifications, were unequivocal in their expressions of the importance of work identity. For instance, Beryl Clark had not mentioned 'student' or 'teacher' among her ten statements, but asked why she worked she answered: 'Well, money, that's the underlying one, but

also for myself as a person, not just as Dean's mum or Dionne's mum, or Mr Smith's daughter. I'd like to be myself really.'

Similarly, Marcia X, who had described herself as a secretary, said: 'It gives your ego a boost. (Laughs) At least it says you're qualified for something.'

Similar sentiments were forcefully expressed by Caroline Pryce, a State Registered nurse: 'I was never academically very bright. I got my three O Levels and got to Great Ormond Street, just about the best children's hospital in the world and I did pass my SRN. I do feel very proud of myself and, God, nobody else tells you, so you might as well be proud of yourself.' Three other English women liked their work identities but, unlike Caroline, hadn't missed it when they were not working. For instance, Louise Cooper: 'It depends what you mean by work. I could not be doing housework all the time, but I could find an infinite number of things to do with the tenants association that wouldn't be paid. I don't think "A Job" is crucial. It depends what other things are going on.'

Among the Jewish working women, only Felicity Bloom worked in an institution totally separated from the local Jewish community. The other women all worked as teachers, counsellors, community workers or librarians within the Lubavitch community. It was Felicity who was most definite about the sense of identity she derived from work. She described herself as 'teacher', 'academic', 'writer' and 'reader' and, on being asked whether this indicated that work significantly added to her sense of her own identity, said: 'The answer to that is short and simple - yes!' Two others agreed that work identity formed part of how they saw themselves. Hannah Krausz said she felt work gave her confidence and through that a sense of her identity. Others did not so clearly identify with work. Ruth Friedmann flatly denied it and Rachel Grossman, describing herself as 'working mother - librarian', said she usually put herself down on forms as a 'mother'. This she saw as a very broad occupation involving many skills. Lois Diamond, who had been a researcher in tropical medicine before her marriage, felt that her work identity as a social worker now had far more to do with her religion: 'I wouldn't say I have a work identity that relates to a discipline. The nearest thing you are asking is I am a Lubavitch. Our philosophy operates at many different levels, and it certainly includes the role in the community and the role in the wider society. Lubavitch is both a work and a personal

124

identity.'

It seems that few of the women interviewed strongly identified with work, and those who did, not surprisingly, tended to be those who had gone through substantial or professional training. Professional qualifications in themselves were not sufficient to ensure the continuance of what seemed to be quite a fragile element in these women's identities. Wendy Moore, who was a deputy headmistress in a girls' comprehensive school until shortly before her marriage six years ago, was delighted to give up work to look after her child. She felt forced to go back because of financial pressure. 'I was permanently exhausted and I found I just didn't have enough interest in my job and I always had put a lot into it.... Somebody else should be doing the job.' Q: 'Did you feel any loss of identity during the time you were not working?' A: 'No!'

In contrast, her husband, Andrew, the one unemployed man, described himself as 'unemployed' (first on his list) and 'manager' (fourth). All but three of the remaining fifteen men gave at least one description of themselves in terms of work. However, only two men mentioned their occupation among their first three answers. A similarly small proportion was found among women (five out of twenty-three workers).

Eric Clarke, a production-line worker in a car factory, did not mention his occupation on his card and was doubtful whether he'd miss his identity as a worker if he lost his job. Similarly, Andrew Moore's description of himself as 'unemployed' did not mean that he was suffering loss of identity: 'No. I suppose the reason I want to work has to be money. I've got to the stage where I'm not really interested in work per se.'

Ronnie Baker, a telephone engineer, was the only other man who'd suffered a period of unemployment. He said of it: 'One feels out, somehow. Apart from everyone. Everyone else I knew had a job of sorts, and I wasn't. There was that sort of attitude. One feels slightly downgraded.' Richard Pryce, an accountant, agreed that his 'trade' or 'craft' was a significant part of him. He said that if he'd been a painter he'd have put that down among his answers. However, 'I really can't think apart from the fact that I enjoy quite a lot of what I do, but in terms of fulfilling great intellectual needs, there's a certain preoccupation with my time, my life. It's not as if I'm composing a symphony or anything. It's not like trying to complete the magnum opus before I die.'

Pete Whittaker, a communist and computer project officer with the local
Council, clearly felt more comfortable and happier with his work identity
than he had done working for a large building firm: 'I'm aware now that
I'm working for things that have a wider conception.'

Two of the men in the 'English' subsample felt tension and discomfort with
their work identities that were derived from class, albeit for opposite
reasons. Graham Stuart, a postman, did not mention his occupation
explicitly, among his ten statements, but described himself as 'not
ambitious enough career-wise'. He took some time near the start of the
interview to explain how he came to be working for the Post Office, even
though he was a qualified draughtsman: 'For me, not that I'm snobbish about
jobs, I believe in doing what you want to do. It if brings you the money
you want, it doesn't matter what you do. A job's only a name, isn't it?'
The thought of unemployment appalled him. Conversely, Tom Hetherington,
another man with a very mixed background of manual and white-collar jobs and
now a tenants worker funded by the local Council, felt in 'no way' middle
class, even though he had a white-collar, managerial job: 'Yes, yes. It's
a parasitical job. I'm very aware of that. In many ways it's a job which
shouldn't have to exist, right? My class consciousness has developed with
my involvement with the tenants' movement far more than it did as an active
member of a trade union in the car factory....' He was scathing about many of
the people purporting to work for tenants: 'They're all using the
predicament of tenants to secure their own status and their own lifestyles
but doing it on the basis of "helping people".' These are not the words of
a man comfortable in his work identity.

The Jewish men overall showed less identification with their work, although
most had mentioned it among their statements of who they were. Three of the
men were teachers in or for the Lubavitch community, three worked for local
authorities, one was a student of homeopathy, two managed or owned businesses
within the wider Jewish community, and one was a computer consultant for a
large multinational company.

Paradoxically, one of the people who seemed least to identify with his job,
Isaac Friedmann, not only put 'teacher' first in his ten statements list, but
also expressed enormous ambitions in the job he was doing. Asked whether his

126

work identity was as important as this suggested, he merely answered: 'That came to mind first after a hard day's teaching.' His motives and ambitions at work were couched in impersonal terms, eg 'the primary motive in this job was to try to create channels of communication with Jewish children....', 'We've been looking for a long time at ways of being able to communicate....', 'The second purpose of this work is that it offers an opportunity for talking about Jewish culture on a wider scale....', 'I want to see the work expand over a wider field....'. He himself distinguishes these work ambitions from his personal ones: 'I'm ambitious in a more personal way. I'd like to produce a lasting memorial to posterity. I'd like to write.'

Abraham Bauer more explicitly rejects his work identity: 'It's something that I do twelve hours a day. If I was in Yeshiva (religious college), I would say that rather than businessman. But I'm not the businessman you see in the films or some want to be like. That's a profession. I wouldn't like to identify myself with what it appears to be. I wouldn't like to appear like one.'

Emanuel Diamond felt about his work identity 'not a great deal, only in the sense that one likes to be needed.' Aaron Levenberg, the student of chiropody: 'I don't think the job itself is what I see as the important part of my identity. I think the lack of a job might make me feel I wasn't fulfilling my role as protector to my wife and children.'

For Ishmail Jacobson, a librarian with a neighbouring London Borough, there was no doubt that libraries were important, although less the one in which he earns his living than the community library which he set up and runs in his spare time. He says: 'I think my idealism in librarianship as a profession has waned considerably, although to a large extent I've transferred it to here.... My ambition, my real ambition, I suppose, is to give up normal librarianship and find some way of financing myself here, which is my life's work. This is it. I've put a lot of my spare time and effort into this and have built up a good reputation.'

On the other hand, another worker for a local authority, Moishe Schmool, a systems analyst, while recognising a contradiction between work on the one hand and his home and religious life on the other, regarded it as an apparent rather than a real contradiction, and agreed that 'systems analyst'

is part of his identity: 'Yes, I do talk quite a lot about my work and the ups and downs of management. They do form part of my life. I don't think it's too much of a contradiction. I'm not ashamed of my religion in my work, and I'm not ashamed of my work in my religion. I talk to people, I say I'm a systems analyst. They say I'm a rabbi because I look like a rabbi, whatever that's supposed to mean. I say "no, I work in computers". That soon stops the conversation. (Laughs) There's no contradiction. Judaism has perhaps even more relevance in the secular world. It's very easy to do within. There's the parable of the two tribes. One sat and learned and the others were the businessmen, and he fed the other. One's just as important as the other. You can't have one without the other.'

Interestingly, all three men working for outside organisations used anglicised forms of their names at work.

The two other teachers were the Jewish men who seemed most wholeheartedly and completely to fuse and integrate their work identities and their personal and religious ones. Mordecai Bloom had not explicitly described himself as a teacher, but: 'Yes, right. I didn't write it in the sense that you can't be a teacher unless you're a pupil and when I wrote "Jew" as the second item, by "Jew" I mean the sun and the moon. The moon imbibes light from the sun and the sun gives light. In fact, in every human being that is our quality, to take in radiance and to impart radiance to others. That's what our task is as men and women.' He meant that Hasidic Jews have the responsibility to use their spare time to either learn or teach.

Solomon Teff was asked whether work helped him to have a sense of who he was: 'All ten things written on the card are defined by and help to define my work, since that is the work I am meant to do now. That is the work I am doing after consultation with my Rebbe, my spiritual head. That is the way I became fulfilled.'

Of all those interviewed, male or female and all communities, these two had the most integrated work identities. They 'were' teachers. For all the others, work was in a different category in their lives.

128

The Domestic Division of Labour

All of those living, or who had lived, in households with adults of the
opposite sex were asked who did the laundry, cooking, shopping, cleaning and
looking after children. They were also asked the extent to which the
arrangements differed from what they had observed as children in their
parents' households. Respondents were not asked about the specific
frequency with which tasks were performed, only for the broad picture. With
this qualification in mind, however, it must be said that there was agreement
between partners about who did what. Men did not overestimate their
contribution, although a number of those whose households were run on
traditional lines (ie with the women doing most things) were at pains to
explain and qualify the impression they thought they were giving. No less
than five of the Jewish husbands sought spontaneously to stress the fluidity
of their domestic roles, a fluidity which accommodated the ages of the
children and the size of the family. Hence, Solomon Teff answered
typically for these five the question who does what: 'She does soup to nuts
and puts up the wallpaper. I'll give a serious answer. I've been married,
thank God, for almost twenty-three years. At different stages, I've done
different things. With a lot of younger children around, I did a lot of
shopping and other things. As the children grew older, I was able to
share responsibilities with them.'

So who does what in the households of the three communities? An interesting
finding in its own right is the fact that only three of the ten West Indian
women interviewed were currently living with a marital or sexual partners, as
compared with eight out of the ten English women and all the Jewish women.
Another four West Indian women had lived with husbands or boyfriends in the
past. At the time of the interviews, four were living entirely alone with
their children, two were living with their mothers, and one (Vera) was living
with a divorced white woman and her children on a temporary basis until the
local Council offered her suitable accommodation. Domestic chores and
childcare were evenly and flexibly shared between these two women. These
responsibilities did not seem to a source of friction in a relationship
that was otherwise highly volatile.

Of those‚ West Indians‚ who had ever lived with men (seven), only two could be described
as having had traditional arrangements. Philomena Johnson's husband used

129

to do the gardening while she did cooking and everything else. He was (and is)
quite involved in looking after the children. Diana Maine's experience
left her angry:

Q: 'Who did what around the house when you lived with a man?

A: 'I was the woman, I was the one doing everything while he went out to work.'

Q: 'Everything?'

A: 'Yes.'

Q: 'Is this an ideal situation?'

A: 'No! It's not an ideal bloody situation! I think a woman should have
something for herself not just be at home! I think the whole family
should join in and do things together.'

She now lives with her mother.

Amongst those who share or shared tasks with their partners (five women), the
one exceptional task tends to be laundry. Three reported that they preferred
to do it themselves. For instance, Beryl Clark: 'I still do the washing.
It's a matter of trust. I'm sure my husband would mix things up. So I do
it for my own satisfaction.'

Eight of the English women were living with men at the time of the interviews.
One of the other two had been married. A rather smaller proportion of these
couples share or shared domestic tasks - five out of nine. Another woman
reported that her husband shared chores far more when she worked. The others
did 'all' or 'most' around the house. Karen Corrigan blamed this state of
affairs on her husband's very traditional upbringing in Ireland. His
involvement with their seven children was minimal. Both Karen and
Geraldine Pusey (now divorced) were adamant that their sons were not being
brought up the same way. Karen: '... as the boys grow up I make them see
that they have to do just as much. It's not just girl's work doing dusting
and cleaning. They've got to fend for themselves. The day will come when
they'll have to. There's not always going to be a woman around to do it
for them. If they do get married, they shouldn't expect her to do everything
- the world is changing.'

It was not simply working class couples who tended to operate on traditional lines
and middle-class couples on a more equal basis. Mary and Ronnie Baker, Judy Jones
and Graham shared a lot of tasks, the latter being particularly interesting
in that his attitudes about a woman's place are very traditional[4] but he
enjoys sharing tasks without being asked. Conversely, Louise Cooper and
Tom Hetherington as socialists both recognise the issue of women's equality

130

(albeit subsumed under a wider class struggle), but have a very traditional division of labour within their home. Tom does the gardening and Louise does everything else. Louise says she does it because Tom does not have time, whereas he says she is choosing the role: 'I think that Louise, although politically she does not accept the role play, she does through her own upbringing. I quite naturally when we were first together used to do cooking, washing up. I found constantly a sort of put down - "you're not going it properly". I've washed so many dishes in my life. I was told I wasn't doing it properly, so I stopped doing it.'

Again, laundry seemed to be the one job which tends not to be shared. Three of the five couples who share most domestic chores drew the line at washing and ironing. Why is this? Beryl Clark's point about not trusting her husband not to mix things up hints at an unwillingness to relinquish control - an issue expounded at length by Tom Hetherington: 'If one person is going for instance to do the washing, and this is where I find it difficult, then when you go to get a pair of socks it's "Oh, you haven't got THE pair of socks". (Laughs) I find it very difficult having somebody else controlling one part of my life. I find that difficult because I don't want to control somebody else's life. So I have no desire to wash Louise's clothes. That's where family and culture come into it. If I was doing the family wash, obviously I'd do them, but I feel that Louise does have a desire to wash my clothes, right? I get the feeling that it's the way women are brought up to have influence over their partner, right? It's almost like their way of having an involvement in your life. Do you know what I mean? And it is amazingly controlling. I'm not advocating that everyone do their own, individual bit of washing, but the deep-rooted motivations we're given, I felt Louise's motivation and I don't think she actually likes some of the things that she does in the home, but <u>I feel it's much more her reluctance to give those up to me than it is me not wanting to do it</u>.' (My emphasis)

Women's collusion in their own domestic life is also suggested by Judy Jones, talking about her ex-husband: 'Sue's father was fanatically tidy when I got married. I was the untidiest person you could ever meet. It was a clash. I couldn't do anything right. He used to do things, but moaned about them. Nothing I did was right. He used to do things, but not enough to do any good. I ended up doing most.'

131

The Jewish women, all of whom were living with their husbands, were those who seemed to be performing the housewife role in the most traditional way. At the time of the interviews, only one couple could be said to be sharing a wide range of tasks (again except for laundry). The Shmools shared to some extent but Moishe Shmool said his wife did most, including all the DIY tasks. Also, perhaps not surprisingly, five of the Jewish women volunteered that they employed cleaners. Several of those with older children relied on them to help with younger children and occasionally cooking, but this almost invariably fell on the girls. This was not necessarily because of sexist attitudes within the family, but because boys have much longer hours at school. Hannah Krausz, who belonged to a different non-Hasidic (but still ultra orthodox) sect[5], said that her two sons aged 12 and 14 came home just before 7 pm most evenings. The men were said to be active in looking after the children. They are required to be involved in their religious education.

So in terms of what the people interviewed actually did in dividing domestic responsibilities, the Jewish couples seemed to fall into traditional roles most frequently, Black couples least frequently, with the English coming somewhere in between. Most men were said to be very involved in caring for their children. People were asked the extent to which they thought the sharing of domestic roles followed a similar pattern to that they had witnessed as children with their parents. Interestingly, four of the West Indian women reported that their mothers had separated from their fathers quite young and had brought up their children on their own or living with their mothers. There were two women among the English sample whose parents had divorced during their childhoods, but both mothers had remarried. One Jewish woman's mother had been divorced, and she emigrated to England to be with her parents. Of those women with relationships to compare, 8 out of 20 reported that their fathers had done about the same as their husbands, seven said their fathers had done less, but five actually said their fathers had done more household chores, although the three Jewish women qualified this by saying their husbands were more involved with the children than their fathers had been. No pattern emerged to show whether domestic divisions of labour are inherited or reacted against. It is the conjunction of past experiences and expectations on partners together with the exigencies of the current situation in terms of working hours which determine how people make their domestic arrangements.

Childcare and Gender Role Ideology

a) West Indians

Immediately after the questions on the division of labour actually operating in people's houses, respondents were asked whether they thought the situation where there was a male breadwinner and a woman at home was ideal for the raising of children, or whether other ways could be as good. This evoked some very interesting answers on how people saw gender roles in the abstract and illustrates part of the enormous gap between the Jewish Weltanschauung on the one hand and those of the Black and English neighbours on the other.

The West Indian women were unanimous that a strict division between the sexes of this kind was not ideal. Six of them mentioned explicitly the importance for a woman of getting out of the house and doing something. This was explained not just in terms of the negative - boredom at home - but for independence and the opportunity for making friends. Both of Gem Bailey's parents worked when she was little: 'It doesn't matter which way.' Several thought it was best left up to the individuals and mentioned that some men had much to offer children. For instance, Chloe Sylvester said: 'No. I think there's a lot of men can do the job better than women. I think who prefers to work and who can earn the most money should go out to work. If the woman prefers to work and can bring in a better salary than the man, she should go out to work if that's the way they both want it. If men don't want it, I don't think women should be totally stuck at home. There's a lot of women who are quite happy doing that, because that's what they've been brought up to believe. They should just have children, stay at home, clean, basically have no other kind of outside life. I feel very sorry for people like that because it gives them no chance to broaden their horizons at all.'

Susan Fellows: 'I wouldn't say it isn't ideal to have two parents because it would be in terms of each parent offering different things. I'm talking about emotionally.'

Beverley Williams mentioned the advantage to men themselves: '... it's giving him the chance to know a bit about the kids. What men do know that much about kids really? They help a bit, go to work, then when they come in, they're sleeping so the mother knows more about the child than the father.'

133

Also: 'Now if a woman go out to work and the man she's living with cannot find a job, I think that she should. It's like your family, you're trying to bring your family up, so each of you should be able to help.'

Eric Clark acknowledged a need for young children to have a parent at home: 'Only in the early, pre-school days. In my view it doesn't have to be the woman ... whoever is capable of earning the highest income should take preference in the job market. If one day she can earn more money than me, I've no objection if we have other younger kids me taking the role of looking after them. In my view that's what a partnership's all about. Now if she can earn more than me, at the end of the day it's money that counts. If it's the wife who works, doesn't affect me, doesn't in any way affect my feelings of my masculinity of nothing, like.'

b) English

There was not quite such a degree of unanimity among the English. Most disagreed with the proposition that the male breadwinner/female childcarer situation was ideal - eight of the ten women and five of the seven men. Two, Andrew Moore and Louise Cooper, felt that work and home roles should be shared equally. Andrew: 'No, no. Ideally I would think both part-time working and sharing the tasks.' Louise: 'I like the role of mother, but I think it's a role that's best if it's not all you're doing. The idea of being just a housewife would drive me crackers.'

Ronnie Baker and Geraldine Pusey both thought that whoever has the better job should work. This view was surprising in Geraldine's case, as she identified so closely with being a mother, woman, etc. I asked her whether she thought women were not uniquely talented in looking after children. She responded: 'I think they are in their own way as mothers. We are born not necessarily to be wives but to be mothers, that's our natural role, isn't it, in life, but I don't see why you can't do both.'

Judy Jones and Pam Dixon had both experienced problems of disapproval when they had been single parents. Pam felt as long as there was a stable situation in the home, that was what mattered rather than who was there and who worked. Debbie Longman and Pete Whittaker, who live communically with Debbie's estranged husband and his new partner, thought that a communal situation had many benefits. Pete: 'I was never in one (a nuclear family) at home, and

134

it was always fraught and bitter and twisted. Frankly, I don't see any
particular advantage in it. Emma has four adults she can identify with. Her
behaviour is very adult. She speaks very well. There are advantages for
us too. The load is considerably lessened. We don't have so many things
to worry about. Somebody else will do the shopping or cooking. You've got
the babysitter laid on. Burden is not lifted, but very, very much reduced.'

Sheila Stevens thinks sharing is a good idea, '... but I think women have to
learn to let go. There must be millions of men out there that would like
to stay at home with the baby when after six weeks the women go off to work,
but deep down, how many women are prepared to let go? I'm not sure I
would, if I'm really honest.'

The two women who thought the traditional model ideal were not unequivocal.
Caroline Pryce said: 'I know a lot of families chop and change and reverse
the roles and things. I don't really understand how it would work really.
I think it's the best way, mum at home with the children. You can do
part-time work. A lot of my friends do part-time work.' Mary Baker's
views were rather muddled: '... when a girl gets married it has to be the
husband who supports the family.'
Q: 'So is it best if the man goes out to work?'
A: 'No. I think the woman can. I think it's a good thing. But if they
    get married and have children, then the woman obviously can't go out. She
    has to wait until she can go back to her profession.'
Q: 'Some go back to work after babies.'
A: 'It's good if they've both got a profession, but if there's only one,
    I think it has to be the man because he's the one who always has to
    go out to work.'

Tom Hetherington's childhood home had been characterised by 'the greatest
level of strife' caused by the fact that his father wanted his mother to
stay at home. 'One of the reasons she went out was because she couldn't stand
the "women's dutiful tasks".' I asked him whether he shared his father's
ideal. 'Um, no, err, well in some ways, inevitably, you can't help that.
You're brought up with certain images of yourself of a comfortable family
and the right surroundings, what have you. They're sort of dream images
which in reality I don't think there's that level of truth in it.' He then
went on to talk about the importance of orderly provision for needs in the
home and the 'control of laundry'.

Graham Stuart was the person who stated his traditional views most clearly.
His are, also, as we will see, the attitudes most like those of the ultra-
religious Jews. Asked the male breadwinner/female childcarer question, he
answered: 'Basically yes. I'm slightly chauvinistic, but not 100%. I
believe it's a man's place to go out and earn a living for his family. I
believe a man's the head of the household because he ultimately has the
responsibility. You should bring children up together, but I always think
a man's got the ultimate responsibility. That's my way of thinking.'

Q: 'Couldn't it be shared?'

A: 'It could be, but I like to be the man, I like Judy to be the woman and
   I don't like Judy working. I prefer her to be at home with the children.'

Q: 'Does it bother you when she does childminding?'

A: 'That's not so bad because she's at home. It's a different kettle of
   fish.'

Q: 'What is it you don't like exactly. The fact that she's out of the house?'

A: 'Yeah. I like a woman to be with the children. I think the children
   miss a lot when the woman's working. I think most children are brought
   up by their mother. If you've got a mother, you'll have a good child,
   if they're taught properly.'

c) **Jews**

Only two of the Jews gave negative answers to the breadwinner/childcarer
question and these answers were heavily qualified. For instance,
Felicity Bloom, who works full time as a lecturer in history, answered as
follows: 'Oh dear. (Pause) I think it's wrong that a woman should feel
obliged to stay at home if that doesn't suit her. I think it suits most women
but not all women. I think it's possibly more wrong if a woman has to go
out and take an active role in the supporting of the family if she finds it
too much for her. There's loads and loads of societies where that's the
natural thing. That's even more horrible. (Laughs) I quite like, I
fully subscribe to the Jewish laws on this point that a man is obliged to
support his wife at home if that's what she wants. Otherwise, if she wants
to go out to work, she should play a more active role.'

Abraham Bauer, an Israeli whose wife does everything around the house, said:
'No. I don't think it's an ideal. I'm just lazy. I don't think there is
an ideal thing. It depends on the personalities of the two people. I have
no theory that man should, I'm not a male chauvinist. I am, but not by
ideology. I don't agree with that....'

Three others gave reservedly positive answers. For instance, Isaac Friedmann:
'I don't know whether one can generalise on this. I would say to a very large
extent it is a desirable situation, but I can't see it is exclusively
desirable....' He went on to say that although women tend to be more
sympathetic to a child's needs, it is not necessarily the case, and that a
kind and gentle man would be a more suitable person to look after children
than a 'strident career woman'. Rachel Grossmann thought it was important
that if a wife was at home, her husband would understand her needs and
acknowledge her need for time to herself.

Three of the men expanded Felicity's point about Jewish law - that there is
nothing against women working and that the choice is hers. Of these,
Felicity's husband Mordecai goes even further and stresses contradictory
Jewish values: 'In this community there are two contrasting facets, which
is the ideal that there is the woman looking after the children in a very
devoted way, and indeed the man inasmuch as he is able to, but at the same
time there is a contrasting ideal of being involved with the world that
means that there is a sense of a need to communicate spiritual values to
society through organising schools, through writing and various kinds of
activities, so you can have here the contrast that the same woman will
be the headmistress of a school, which takes up her time, and at the same
time believes that a woman's time is best spent with her children. So as
a man's time also. There's an ideal of being in two places at once. (Laughs)
That pervades life all through.'

Similarly, Emanual Diamond: 'According to strict Torah laws, there's nothing
against women working. She's expected to do some activity if she has spare
time, the Torah advocates doing something, whatever that is, as long as it's
a modest occupation, does not over-involve her in going to meet members of
the male sex outside the home, for instance. That would be deemed to be
immodest.'

137

A number of people felt that the arrangements had worked for a long time, so why change? Ishmail Jacobson said it plainly: 'The present trend seems to be that whatever we've done in the past, we'll do the opposite today. On the other hand, all these things have stood the test of time. It doesn't seem to be working very well in the households where they try it the other way round. I was talking about the divorce rate. It's just not working ....' He went on to say: 'I must admit I would probably feel slighted if my wife earned more money than me. I think I'd be dishonest to say otherwise.'

Aaron Levenberg felt that a system of shared roles was untested as yet, 'and it's yet to be seen that one could build stable communities and stable societies on that'.

The most common argument in favour of a traditional breadwinning/childcare split, mentioned in one form or another by almost half the Jewish respondents, was that it is 'natural'. All but one of those making this point were women. Rabekeh Teff: 'I must tell you that my remarks are coloured by what I teach. I teach Jewish subjects. I'm teaching straight from the Bible. It's quite clearly stated. Men were created whereas woman, there's quite a different word used for the creation of woman. In fact, the Hebrew word for the creation of women was that <u>woman was built</u> (original emphasis), not that she was created, or made, or formed, but built... The Bible commentator remarks that she was constructed like a granary, narrow at the top and wide at the bottom so that she could bear children, and she can bear the responsibilities of home and family, where a man.... Woman can carry a baby on her hip, there's a prominent hip bone there, and every single aspect of a woman - her breasts are there for feeding the baby, she was totally constructed to bring up children to a certain age. Beyond 5 or 6 ....'

Two or three others made the same biological point, but most simple argued that the maternal instinct made women more fitted to being at home with the children. Lea Jacobson and Zipporah Roth felt it would be unnatural for their husbands to be at home with the children while they worked full time, thus making much the same point. Lois Diamond argued that there had to be one person who took responsibility for the children and the home and that women by nature were better suited to it. While agreeing that both men and women have nurturing instincts, she demurred when asked whether

138

they did not also have intellectual capabilities which need to do and create and be out in the world: 'To be honest, it's not very fashionable, but I think the most creative thing a woman does is to bring up a family. There's an awful lot of twaddle. We're into this phase now when a woman can only be a person if she's out in the wide world. But there's no doubt in my mind that the most creative input she can have to society and probably the most enjoyable thing a woman can do is have a home and a family. It's got a negative image, but it will change, I'm sure.' Her feelings had obviously changed over the years as, asked whether she'd ever felt at a disadvantage as a woman, she replied: 'Mmm. I think when I first became religious, slightly because I liked the learning very much, so the fact that, possibly when I first had children, I felt a little bit torn that I couldn't learn as much, I couldn't do as much, but I think my ideas have changed a lot since then.' Lois was a sociology graduate who had worked abroad researching in the field of tropical medicine.

Rebekeh and Solomon Teff both felt women's major life fulfillment came from children. Rebekeh: 'A lot of frustration is caused by the fact that women do opt to plan their families, right? Then they have two, or two point one, and that's it. When they see a child or a baby, they want one, it's a natural instinct of a carer, of a woman. So they get more and more frustrated as they go on.' Solomon went on to see it in characteristically cosmic terms: 'This is a special function, which is a blessing and one sees it. One doesn't see it so much in a thirty-year-old woman, but in a forty-year-old woman and certainly in a fifty- or sixty-year old, in terms of a life of fulfillment that a woman gets. It answers any doubts that society today gives us. It's got nothing to do with gender roles, husband and wife, sexism; it's got to do with a broader background which is "What is man on this planet? "What is life about generally?" As part of that world I have a contribution to make to that world. Within this context it becomes the most sensible and dramatic thing that could possibly be!' He went on to argue that the role was no longer imprisoning with so many gadgets and many Lubavitch women worked outside the home.

While the ideology is not without its internal contradictions, and despite the fact that tensions arise at the personal level, the Jewish people I interviewed all expressed great happiness and joy in their large families. I witnessed enough encounters with their children to be convinced that this was not

merely flying the ideological flag. At the end of my interview with him, Mordecai Bloom leaned over his desk and asked earnestly and tenderly: 'Madeline, why don't you have more children?' (I have two.) As his wife has nine and has a full-time academic job, this was difficult to answer.

Attitudes towards Women and Their Roles and the Impact of Feminism

In order to bring out people's evaluation of the general status and lot of women, and their opinions and reactions to the ideas of feminism, respondents were asked whether they thought women generally were undervalued and what their attitudes were to feminist ideas and feminists themselves. In addition, the question was posed: 'Which is the worst disadvantage in Britain - to be poor, to be Black or to be a woman?' This question was put towards the end of the section on community and race relations and after the questions on gender. Is is then perhaps all the more remarkable that there was almost complete unanimity among the respondents that to be poor was the worst disadvantage. Not one said that being a woman was the worst disadvantage and several remarked unprompted that it was not a disadvantage at all.

a) West Indians

All ten West Indian women agreed that women in Britain were undervalued. Several went on to give examples, such as Beryl Clark, 'in every respect, as mothers, as wives, even work, the lot'. Chloe Sylvester: 'I think a lot of things go on because men want it that way. I even think a lot of laws are made because men want it that way, they want women to be in a particular role. They don't mind you getting a job, but they only want you to get to a certain level.... The majority of women still don't know what their rights are.'

Philomena Johnson: 'There was this woman on telly who had to stay at home and look after her mother. They were going to pay a man but they wouldn't pay her. I think that's wrong. To me that's discrimination.'

Marcia X attributed discrimination to ideology: 'Yes. (Laughs) I think so. In terms of wages and other things. I think it's due to the attitude that men should be out at work and women at home. It hasn't really worn off.'

140

Three others mentioned men's greater physical strength, but felt that was used as an excuse to pay women less. Beverley Williams: 'The rate they're paid is because they're a "feeble" woman. They don't get paid the wack they should get paid. The way I look at it men and women are equal to one another, it's just the structure of the body....'

Interestingly, one man and one woman drew a contrast with how women are regarded in the West Indies, for instance Gem Bailey: '... like in Jamaica everyone's equal. If you've got a job, you're lucky, it doesn't matter what you are, man or woman. Over here, they'd rather give the man the job rather than the woman.'

Eric Clark: 'I've always thought men and women was equal. Growing up in the West Indies you see women working just as hard as men. Coming to England, women don't work. The average woman can leave school with quite a good education, stay at home, never go out, go crazy, whereas in the West Indies or Third World countries, women work just as hard as men.'

Susan Fellows thought that women colluded in their own oppression by assuming total responsibility for childcare. Conscious acknowledgement of or agreement with the ideas of feminism was less common than the view that women had a raw deal. Five described themselves as 'not interested' or not knowing much about it. Two of these had never heard of the Greenham Common protest. The others described themselves as supporting the idea of equal pay and sympathetic to the Greenham women, although none of them were active in the women's movement, for instance through membership of a women's group. Chloe was pessimistic about the possibility of change: 'I like the idea of equality, but it's still a long way off. The suffragette movement is years old. Ideals, it'll take a lot to change them with the basic education of very young children. It's going to be like an impossible task really.'

None of the West Indian women were hostile to feminism or feminists. Not so Eric Clark: 'I think it's a waste of time myself.... Women themselves have to actually realise that men and women are different. No getting away from that.... Various stages of development teaches us that different things appeal to women. I mean like in caveman terms, various studies have shown that it was the brutish man who always had his way and as education became better, women tended to go for the more educated man. Women have always had a choice but they don't know it.... They're looking to be a man .... It's your attitude towards yourself.'

141

English women were much more ambivalent about feminism and not even unanimous that women were undervalued. Three women disagreed. Karen Corrigan said 'I wouldn't say so on the whole, because women won't stand for it. They've got their jobs and keep them. They won't let the men be top dog.'

Mary Baker had never recognised sexist attitudes or discrimination against herself and couldn't see a problem: 'It all depends on yourself, really. You can't just sit there and expect everything to be given. You've got to go out there. If you value yourself, it's most important.'

Caroline Pryce, in answer to the question 'are women undervalued?', answered: 'I don't think they are. We've got a woman Prime Minister.'
Q: 'They aren't many women MPs.'
A: 'Well, I don't think women are undervalued. It depends on your personality. I haven't any hangups at all, no.'
She had previously observed: 'I know on the ward where there were a lot of women, the sister and I used to say "Oh, not another female doctor". We really liked to have a few men around the place.'
Q: 'Why?'
A: 'You're with a lot of women and it's just super to have a few male housemen around. They're part of the team as well.'
Q: 'It's not that you look up to them?'
A: 'Oh no, it's not that. We had some lousy male JHOs and we told them so too, and fantastic female JHOs and Registrars.'

Two of the women who agreed that women were undervalued also remarked that women's undervaluation of themselves was part of the problem: 'Yes. And I think the worst for doing that are they themselves. They do undervalue each other. I think it's a great pity. When I worked on the playbus they thought they could help each other a lot more collectively, but sometimes it just doesn't happen. I think they believe the myths put about that women are bitchy, women are this and that. I've met some pretty bitchy men, and I've noticed, I don't know if you've noticed, but the more you get to know a woman the better she gets. As you get to know a man, you think "what have I got here?".' (Laughs) (Sheila Stevens).

Wendy Moore probably states the relative situation of married men and women most cogently: 'I think the amount of back-up that women put into a home and the effects it has on the family and their men and how they are able to

go out and achieve in their careers with that level of backup behind. Clean clothes, not having to shop in the lunch hour - just to have all that taken away from you and purely concentrate on the job. It's unbelievable, isn't it? It's not even like being a career woman, you've got to do things for yourself. And I think there are many areas where the cards are so stacked against women, especially in the commercial field, banking. Women are still very poorly regarded.'

There was also less wholehearted support for feminist ideas and feminists among the English women. Only two could be described as unreservedly pro-feminist, Debbie Longman, who got into feminist politics at university in 1971, and Wendy Moore, whose mother told her: 'Don't you ever learn to type. Be in a position where you're telling the typist what to do.' Wendy went on: 'She wanted me to have a career, but they didn't push me academically. Everything I got I had to do on my own. I had no heater in my bedroom to do my homework. I used to go up to Stoke Newington library and work.'

Caroline Pryce was unreservedly anti-feminist, although she wasn't clear what feminists were. Asked whether there were any feminists among her friends, she said: 'What are feminists?'
Q: 'People who are concerned about women's rights.'
A: 'No, my friends are like me. Struggle on. Make the most of what you've got.'
Q: 'What do you think of women's lib, then?'
A: 'I don't know anything about it,Madeline. Is that the sort of thing where you walk on the outside, um, no, where the women go out and earn the money and the men stay at home and look after the children? Is that it?
Q: 'Well, like the Greenham women.'
A: 'Oh, I've got no time for all that. I mean, if you feel it's important to fight for something, that's all right as long as you don't interfere with anybody else, cause a major disturbance.'

The others, for the most part, liked the idea of equal pay and rights, but had reservations about the 'extreme behaviour' of some feminists (eg bra-burning) or the loss of courtesy shown towards them as well. Typical is Judy Jones: 'I think some of their ideas are right, like just because you're a woman you shouldn't get the same pay as men and same job opportunities as men, that's wrong. But I think they've cut their own throats. I've got to stand on a bus now.' (Laughs)

143

Q: 'How about the Greenham women?'

A: 'I admire them, to be quite honest. To live like that for something you believe in, I admire that.'

Louise Cooper felt that the women's movement was middle class and therefore not of much relevance to working-class women. She saw the role of mother as badly devalued, however. She shared her views very much with her partner, Tom. He, like all the English men, acknowledged the undervaluing of women. Of the domestic sphere, for instance, Andrew Moore said: 'Since I've had children myself, it's particularly come home to me how much women work in terms of physical work to keep the home together with the child clothed, fed and of course amused.'

Ronnie Baker stressed women's contribution at work: 'During the second world war, the whole of industry depended on women. I think really everyone knows how valuable women are, but it's never been admitted as such. So it's this old thing "man goes out to work and the woman stays at home and looks after the children". Totally untrue, of course. Always has been. As soon as men came home, women were thrown off the trams, the coalmines.' Again, this demonstrates a clear recognition that ideology contradicts what people actually do.

Apart from Tom Hetherington, who thought that class liberation for people rather than women's liberation was the relevant goal, all the men seemed mildly in favour of feminists, but disliked what they perceived as aggression in some feminists. For instance, Richard Pryce, surrounded by 'dominant' and 'lively' women as a child, never regarded or treated women as repressed, he said. He consciously recruits as many women as he can. However, ... 'because I've had this attitude, I've never understood the need for the more aggressive, it's the <u>assertiveness</u> that I respond to. I'd rather it was more subtle and not so much of a movement, more on an individual basis.... What I find strange is that most of their campaigns are against us men, but most of their problems are of their own making of the mother/daughter relationship. That's the mould you fit into. That's where the sterotyped views are promoted. Just as an observer. As for feminism itself, I'm all for equal opportunities, all forms of equality.'

Andrew Moore: 'Looking at it from the yin and yang point of view, it seems to me that there are two principles: the dynamic male one and the conservative female one. These principles are in all of us. No man is purely male. So in some ways, I think the more militant feminists are picking holes in their own argument. Sometimes they shoot themselves in the foot with the strength with which they try to put over an argument. I largely agree with it. I don't have to be put down.'

Graham Stuart was also pro-feminist, perhaps surprisingly, given his views on women's role in the home[6]. He distinguished 'soft women's libbers' from 'political' ones: 'Basically they're not talking about women being liberated, they're talking about politics, which I suppose in a way if a woman's not being paid the rate for the job, it _is_ political, isn't it, but people like that Germaine Greer, I can't stand listening to people like that.' He admired Greenham Common women for their dedication, but disapproved of their leaving their children.

c) Jews

Jewish respondents, with only one exception, sharply distinguished the esteem and place of women within the religious Jewish society, on the one hand, and in British society on the other. The exception, Philip Grossman, saw women as undervalued and put down neither in British society nor within the religious Jewish sphere. Everyone else saw British society as denigrating and discriminating against women, whereas the role and value of women in Judaism is codified in Jewish law.

In Britain as a whole, the Jews saw the role of mother as particularly denigrated. Typical of both men and women, in answer to the question 'are women undervalued?', Felicity Bloom said: 'In British society, good heavens, yes. Their roles as mothers - it's completely zero, isn't it. A child's upbringing is seen as a matter of mere domestic slavery, cleaning, washing etc. A mother as a moral and spiritual guide is non-existent.'

Rachel Grossman: 'I read a magazine article where it said if you took a baby into a restaurant in Italy, the waiter will make a fuss of you, serve you first, whereas in this country, people will look at you as if you've brought some object in - "what are you doing here with that?", they seem to say. If you bring a dog in, you're all right, but if you bring a baby that's very different.' (Laughs)

145

Solomon Teff blamed the materialism of British society: 'In a nutshell,
they're looked upon as objects. It's the way men look upon themselves as
well, and able to accumulate physical or human objects. That is the basis
of it, that is, the consumer society. People spend a lot of money and time
discovering how to tickle the fancies of people to get them to buy things.
People are conditioned to thinking whatever this image is, is success.'

Emanuel Diamond said he thought there were definite and different class
attitudes in this matter: 'Our cleaner has more than once commented on the
way she feels she's treated by her husband and the way my wife is treated
by hers. She doesn't harp on it, but she's made enough comments about the
closeness of family life, communication between husband and wife. I think
that's possibly a working-class thing. She'd class herself and I'd class her
as working-class, and I think perhaps the middle class has improved a bit -
the definition of roles in the middle class are such that there'll be more
sharing.'

Within the Hasidic Jewish community, on the other hand, the woman is seen
as a 'working princess' or a 'queen'. These terms were used by several
respondents. The reason and logic for the different tasks for men and women
and women's lack of role in the synagogue were especially succinctly described
by Rachel Grossman: 'I don't think they're undervalued in the Jewish community.
That may seem controversial to you, they're not allowed to do things in synagogue...
but among religious Jews, it's not necessary for women to do these things
because a woman has these capacities without the physical rituals which
constantly remind men and bring them back to ideas.... A women is free of
them because she has the biological role of having the children. She's
supposed to be on a higher spiritual level. She doesn't need these, she has
her woman's intuition.... A man who moves out into the outside world
constantly has to be reminded - "come back, come and pray", whereas a woman,
she has a spritual depth without a lot of these ritual things. You can't
leave a small baby to cry while you go and pray. You can't leave them
hungry while you do it. That's not the ultimate. So it's on a very
practical basis rather than this thing of not being allowed to do anything.'

Several people mentioned the value of religious laws as standards, even if
not everyone keeps to them always. Husbands and wives are seen as two halves
of a unit rather than two individuals. Two aspects of Jewish law and practice
relating to prayer are particularly interesting, as they seem on the face of
it to be directly negative where women are concerned. These matters were

146

raised with a few of the respondents only. Constraints of space are most unfortunate here, as the forms and styles of the various replies are wonderfully descriptive of the variety of forms and styles of the individuals and their religion as a whole. Bearing this in mind, the two specific issues were an early morning prayer in which a man thanks God for making him a man (but there is an equivalent prayer for women) and the injunction against the recitation by a woman in synagogue of the Kaddish (when someone dies, mourners recite this in synagogue).

Mordecai Bloom gave a luminous, poetic but long answer on the nature of male and female in answer to my question about men's morning prayer, but finished it with an analogy: 'Time is seen as emanating from womanhood, and there is a sense in which she, just by being, is. Whereas a man can't do that. There has to be an activity, a, um, um, struggle. Now, if you imagine man and woman together as an army, right. You have the commanders in the army, the important people in the army, sitting at home in Whitehall in their armchairs, smoking a pipe. And you have the commanders out in the mud, crossing the Seine, with some sort of ammunition, so what is the commander thinking as he walks through the mud and it's pelting with rain and he's hiding from the Germans? What's he thinking? He's thinking it's the best thing in the world to be a commander. (Laughs) You know, that's the sense. So the blessing that thanks God for making one a man is saying "look, here we are in the struggle, we're happy to be in the struggle." That's the atmosphere.'

Concerning the Orthodox injunction against the recitation of the Kaddish by women, and thus by implication against the possibility of women rabbis, Isaac Friedmann summarised a hundred years of the history of this, describing how the recitation of the Kaddish by women became permissable in stages until around 1850, when there was suddenly made "the most amazing statement" in the Response Literature of that period. It said that because a Reform Movement threatened serious deviation from recognised Judaism, women should not be allowed to recite the Kaddish. They dug their heels in and turned the clock back a century. To this day, no woman recites the Kaddish. There are provisions in the classical Jewish literature for women to do many, many things that they're not doing, and in Orthodox circles, they could be doing them. Now, I think the reason they're not doing them is not, as these very strident women's libbers say, because women are undervalued and underprivileged. I don't think it's that at all. I think it's the reaction to this very rapid change and reform beyond recognition of what they understood Judaism to be.

Rabbis and Jewish thinkers are forced to dig their heels in to call a halt, to say this is where it stops. I think that is very sad. Women could have been playing a much more vital role had it not been for the reform movements turning the clock back.'

So it seems to be caution and conservatism in the way change happens in ultra orthodox practice which is the reason for the prohibition rather than an underlying belief that women should be kept out of the synagogue.

It must be said that there was a certain sensitivity on the part of the respondents when these questions were asked, and concerning the role of women in the synagogue generally, more especially among the women. This usually took the form of 'oh, not that old chestnut again', or more forcefully, 'garbage' -(Felicity Bloom).

Attitudes to feminism among the Jewish respondents were by no means universally hostile. Some seven out of the nineteen interviewed expressed some support for the feminist enterprise, even if this was heavily qualified in some cases. The three women who could be described as pro-feminist were the three who had been to university, as had three of the four men who had such attitudes. Lois Diamond is typical of the women: 'I actually have quite a lot of respect for them because they are people who are thinking and they're trying to find a way. I haven't too much respect for what they've achieved so far, as in most things exploring you have to go a long, long way before you find some way that works. I think they're in the mire. They've challenged everything, found the negative and not really found a way forward that is positive and really utilises the contribution of a woman in a positive way.'

Aaron Levenberg felt sympathetic, recognising the problems of the average British housewife - 'the breakdown of community life, social isolation, undervaluing by husband and children, she is judged in materialist rather than spiritual terms'. Felicity Bloom said she felt a bit like a character in Elizabeth Gaskell's novel, 'Cranford': 'There's a very formidable lady who said she was very startled to learn of the existence of women's movements claiming that women were as good as men because she'd always assumed they are superior.' She attributed this to being surrounded by 'exciting' and 'impressive' women in her childhood and going to a blue-stocking girls' school.

148

Mordecai Bloom saw a type of feminism as operating in the Hasidic community: 'Here in the Hasidic community, for instance, women have a community like, a whole communal organisation of their own. They're now fighting with Hackney Council to get a women's centre here. There's a very great sense of womanhood as something in itself and each woman is a person in herself with her own dynamic, not at all in a shadow of the man. That's not the picture at all. And also a feeling that women can be friends with women. You don't have to have a male society around for a thing to be interesting. It is interesting, women are interesting, women are exciting.'

Those opposed to feminist ideas felt that roles were dictated by biology and God's laws and that feminists basically did not accept their own sex and its destiny. For instance, Rebekeh Teff: 'No. I think they've got it all wrong. They're looking for total equality for women, but we're not equal, we are totally different. How can you have two things equal when they've totally different? I think they might be right in asking for certain rights they don't have. I don't feel in any way I have no rights. I think the way they go about it is totally wrong. They're trying to be like men and they're not.'

Zipporah Roth: 'I don't know what to tell you on that, because our lifestyle is so different that I just don't think it comes into it. Different way of life. I think they're egoists, really, think more of themselves than anybody else, and I think if God created men and women, they've both got to be in this world.'

Ruth Friedmann regarded feminism as 'a load of baloney'.

On the whole, men's arguments against feminism were similar, stressing differentiation of sexes and roles. The few people I asked were convinced that feminist ideas were not having much impact on the young in their community. For instance, Solomon Teff, who as a teacher of girls is in a situation where he might see it, said he hadn't especially noticed it: 'I think their education and what they see is hopefully attractive enough and secure enough in them....' Certainly people's reactions to this question were not on the whole defensive or hostile.

One aspect of feminism, expressed as a criterion by four people (two men, two women; one West Indian, two English, one Jewish; and a mixture of pro- and anti-feminists and neutrals) was that it had associations with lesbianism. Sheila Stevens puts it best: 'The basic ideals are tremendous, but I think it's a great shame it's been taken to extremes by perhaps lesbians. I think that's a totally different area. When you become extreme in anything you alienate the average. The people who could benefit most from the ideas of feminism are the average working-class women. Once you become too extreme, they won't listen – "oh that crap, load of queers" and do <u>not</u> listen, so the rudiments of it, which are really tremendous, don't reach them because they've stopped listening. You can't blame them.... I think it's a great pity.'

Satisfaction with one's own sex

Women were asked whether they had suffered any disadvantages directly as a result of their being women. That a similar question was not asked of men must be acknowledged as something of a lacuna, but as the focus of the research was how people deal with what are materially or in common perception social handicaps (albeit of a very broad and diffuse kind), neither at the stage of drawing up the interview schedule, nor during the interviews themselves, did it occur to me to ask the question. This may highlight a prejudice or bias on the part of the researcher, as men do suffer from sex stereotyping too. For instance, there is 'men are strong', 'men don't cry' (an English speciality), 'it's a man's job to earn the money/clean out the drains/ investigate the noise downstairs in the middle of the night'. I regret that I did not ask men this question.

There was very little difference between the three cultures in terms of how disadvantaged they *had* personally felt as women. Six Jewish women, five English women and four West Indian women denied they *had* ever felt disadvantaged as women, although of these most agreed when asked that they would *not* walk out in the streets by themselves at night. Three of the English women who had answered 'no' specifically, mentioned their work - teaching, nursing and specialist fur machining - as not having raised these problems for them.

Fear of physical attack was mentioned by most of those who had felt disadvantaged. Two of the English women volunteered that they had been followed by men who had exposed themselves to them; another had had her bag

150

stolen in the street; one of the West Indian women had been threatened by youths as a schoolgirl, but she perceived this as racial in origin. The West Indian women generally had much less fear of physical attack at night than the other women. Four specifically said they were not afraid to go out by themselves. One said she was. In the other groups, of those asked, not one said she would be happy to walk out on her own. Despite the incomplete data here, these are interesting findings. Of the four Black women who expressed willingness to walk out at night, only one could be described as tall. Indeed, two of them expressed as disadvantages physical aspects of womanhood - the pain of giving birth and difficulty in hanging wallpaper and moving furniture. So it is not that these individuals were notably confident in their size and strength. Beverley Williams: 'Oh, I'm not a person like that, I'm not frightened. Even when I was younger and I used to walk down this road, this car pulled up, "£10 in the car, £20 in your flat", and I used to tell them to piss off. Being round here for fourteen years, you get used to it, don't take any notice of it, but for someone moving in, it's a frightening area.'

Is it simply familiarity with the area which breeds such confidence? Certainly three of these four young women had lived in the area for substantial proportions of their lives, but the fourth had not. Also, several of those expressing fear had lived in the area for several years. While the data are incomplete, this does suggest that there might be a racial dimension to the fear that a lot of women have, but against this, it was not made explicit or even alluded to tangentially in what the frightened women said. Even the woman angriest about it, Hannah Krausz, made no such allusion. Asked whether she'd felt at a disadvantage as a woman, she answered: 'No, as a woman. Oh yes, in the matter of safety, I'm terrified of walking the streets of Stamford Hill. I think the woman is not protected from the animal male.... I've no word to describe how I feel about not being allowed to walk the streets of your neighbourhood, not allowing your children out after seven in the evening.'
Q: 'Are you angry about it?'
A: '<u>Very</u>. There's nothing I can do....'

Almost the next question Hannah was asked was in what terms she would describe Stamford Hill. Her answer amounted to 'poor and deprived' rather than 'mixed' or 'Black', and she did not regard Black youths as more of a threat than white, and so on this evidence she did not seem to have a <u>conscious</u> racial fear. The findings cannot be explained by the data here, and further

151

enquiry would be needed.

Other disadvantages mentioned by women were the sexual double standard, the
pain of childbirth, and 'in so far as some people relate to me, yeah? I
tend to throw it back at them when I want to use it to my own advantage',
said Susan Fellows of what she perceived as sexual harassment. So it seems
to be <u>physical</u> problems these women have encountered rather than
discrimination or prejudice.

'If you were reincarnated and had the choice, would you choose to come back
as a man or a woman?', people were asked. Not one woman unequivocally said
she _would_ want to be a man, although one said she _would_ like to be able to swap
and change as the mood took her. The question was included to allow people
to relax and let their imaginations wander and to encourage the expression
of more 'unorthodox' or deeply seated ideas people have about their sex.
Two women (one West Indian and one Jewish) mentioned the pain of childbirth
as a disadvantage, and another (West Indian) said she would come back as a
woman and not have children, but go for a career. Two English women said
they enjoyed 'using feminine wiles' and enjoyed being 'weak and defenceless'.
Relatedly, but more positively, Diana Maine imagined the difficulty of
being a man: 'Too much burdens on their shoulders. Women have burdens but
men have to live up to a certain image. Women, they've already put us in a
category. A man has to live up to. It's bad enough when a woman's not womanly,
but when a man's not manly, it's worse. Do you understand. It stands out
more to me. Even if a woman's a failure, it's because of a bloody man. The
men are not backing them up. If a man's a failure, it's really bad, isn't it.'

Interestingly, four men (almost a quarter of the sample) said they'd like
to come back as women, three Jewish and one English. The Englishman said
he _would_ want to know everything he knows now, then he _would_ put everything right.
One of the Jewish men said he was embarrassed at his answer because of what
it implied about his sexuality. Another cheerfully acknowledged his 'strong
feminine tendencies' and said he used to like to knit. The third was
interviewed at the same time as his wife. 'I've often thought I'd like to
be a woman actually, I don't think women are so disadvantaged. I think
most women know how to get round most men.'
Q: 'That implies men are the ones with the power.'
A: 'No it doesn't. 'It implies women are the ones with the power. They're
    more subtle and know how to use it. (Laughs). I think in our family,

I'm certainly a bit heavy-handed. I tend to demand my own way very often. My impression of other people is that many, many men are totally subservient to their wives. I'm not sure feminism doesn't totally misunderstand the whole situation.... I think I get my own way basically although we tend to discuss things at great length, don't we?'

Wife: 'I normally tend to give in to him to stop him arguing. It's not worth the bother. (Laughs)

Husband: 'But I feel this tremendous need to get her to agree.' (Laughs)

Of those who would come back as men again, three admitted 'it was a man's world' and 'men have a better deal'. Graham Stuart said he enjoyed sport and being able to go into pubs where women could not go. Andrew Moore was clearly amazed at the experience of childbirth, but would return as a man.

Summary

We have seen in this chapter that women appear to identify with their gender roles more than men do, as evidenced by the Ten Statements Test. Whether it is possible to argue that sexual identity has more salience for women than for men on the basis of this one test is questionable. Much more subtle psychological testing would be required to determine this. The findings here suggest a hypothesis to be tested. No definitive claim is being made. Nevertheless, there were observable differences between the three sub-samples: the Jews described themselves in gender-specific terms much more readily than either the West Indians or the English people. The Jewish respondents were also more likely to have a sex-differentiated 'traditional' way of organising childcare and domestic tasks, as well as being much more supportive of the ideology underpinning it. As the West Indian women were (in seven out of ten cases) not living with a man, their relatively low identification with their sex and their unanimous belief that a strict domestic/wage-earning division of labour was not ideal were congruent. They also unanimously felt that women in Britain were undervalued.

Most of the women were in paid employment, mostly part-time, and all but two of the men (all full-time). Not surprisingly, men identified with work more than women, but only two people, both Jewish teachers, could be said totally to identify with their paid employment.

Most people thought that women in British society suffered prejudice, discrimination and a lack of recognition, particularly in their role as mother. On the other hand, the Jewish respondents regarded the Hasidic Jewish attitude to women as entirely positive and building of self-esteem, even though to outsiders it may seem limiting. Asked whether they themselves actually felt disadvantaged as women, rather more West Indians felt this than English or Jews, but the West Indian women seemed to feel physically safer. Again, the West Indian women were most expressive of ideas and attitudes sympathetic to feminism, Jews were least sympathetic, with the English coming somewhere between. Only one women in thirty would choose to be a man (and then only part-time), whereas a quarter of the men would like to be women. This may be seen to confirm women's greater identification with their sex, or may be their conscious need to. Further investigation would be needed to establish this.

Conclusion

In answering the question 'who am I?', people are revealing what they see as the important things about themselves. The respondents clearly regard their sex, revealed through reference to their gender-specific roles, as having great salience, women more than men and Jews more than West Indians or English. While most agreed that women suffered prejudice and discrimination, this only seemed to have salience for the women themselves in the matter of the threat of male violence. That more West Indian women felt disadvantaged, while at the same time more of them felt physically safe, indicates one way in which race as a category cross-cut gender at the level of social perception.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1   See Appendix 2 for a list of the respondents and brief biographical details of each.

2   See chapter 4, pp/06-7   , for a methodological discussion of the Ten Statements Test.

3   See chapter 4, pp/0/-/03 concerning the difficulties encountered in obtaining West Indian respondents.

4   See below, p/36

5   See chapter 7, pp 2/7-2/9 for a description of the Jewish sects in Stamford Hill.

CHAPTER SIX

CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

Introduction

It will be recalled from the last chapter that work seemed to have greater salience for men than for women[1], measured in terms of answers to the Ten Statements Test. The importance of that for us here is that it suggests that in investing more of themselves in the economic sphere men are more likely to be aware of the economic basis of class in its proximate bases[2], as opposed to the evaluative, status aspects of it, than are women[3]. My purpose in this chapter is to examine the facts of the class situations of respondents, their knowledge of class as a phenomenon and therefore to reveal the salience class as a category actually has for respondents, and to find out how they react to it in terms of attitudes and political behaviour.

a) Respondents' class situations

I have operationalised social class in this study using a five-group modification of the Registrar-General's Socio-economic Group scale[4]. This in turn I have modified slightly to include in class 4 childminders and playcentre workers, as they are non-manual personal service workers of fairly low status, analagous to junior office staff.

This highlights one difficulty I encountered in applying occupational status scales to a sample of women: that scales have been largely developed to apply to studies of male populations. The scale used is as follows:

Class[*]	Descriptive Definition
1	Professionals, employers and managers - large establishments
2	Intermediate non-manual, employers and managers - small establishments
3	Skilled manual, supervisors, foremen
4	Junior non-manual, personal service
5	Semi-skilled, unskilled manual

[*] For an account of the distinction drawn between the middle class and the working class, see notes to Chapter Six, p 212.

This scale was chosen because it does not dodge the issue of the status of junior white-collar workers, placing them below skilled manual workers. In terms of economic rewards and skills, this seems to be a more valid ordering of occupational prestige[5]. The deeply ingrained tendency among sociological researchers to stick faithfully to the manual/non-manual divide is thus being resisted here. This is supported empirically among these respondents when we examine the classes of partners. Of the eight women in class 4 for whom information about current and previous partners is available, six had partners in classes 3, 4 or 5, and only two had husbands in classes 1 and 2. Both of these women were Jewish. Another way of looking at this is that of twelve middle class men interviewed, ten had middle class partners and two had partners in class 4 occupations. Furthermore, we will see below[6] that class 4 women tend to describe themselves as 'working class'.

Class Profile of Respondents

	West Indian		English		Jewish	
	Working Class	Middle Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Working Class	Middle Class
Women	7	3	6	4	3	7
Men	1	-	3	4	1	8

b) Social mobility

Eight of the thirty women were in a different class from their fathers. It must be conceded that there is no direct or indirect information about the class of five of the thirty women's partners and in another three cases, only indirect evidence. Of the eight socially mobile women, five were English, two West Indian and one Jewish. Three were downwardly mobile (to class 4). One was West Indian, one English and one Jewish. The West Indian and English women in this position were all very ambitious; however, the latter particularly so. The three upwardly mobile English women all had fathers in class 3 and were themselves educated at university or teacher-training college.

A similar proportion of the men were socially mobile, three out of the seventeen. Again, information about the class origins of two of the (Jewish) respondents was missing. The three socially mobile men were all sons of

skilled or self-employed fathers (class 3) but, unlike the upwardly mobile
women, only one (Jewish) had had higher education. Another had had
management training, but the third, having left school at fourteen, had
simply acquired a range of personal skills and a personal interest in the
field of his current work, tenants' rights. Both of these (English) men
had had very varied careers in manual and non-manual occupations.

c) Friends

People were asked for the occupations of their four closest friends. One or
two in each cell were unable to name four and no pattern of degrees of
gregariousness or intimacy was discernable comparing groups of the sexes.
Two men, one Jewish and one English, said they had no close friends at all,
and one West Indian woman said she had only one close friend. Two of the
English women named only two friends each as close.

Previous studies have shown that people tend to have friends with similar
class positions to their own. Among these respondents, however, it seems
that this tendency is rather more observable among the English respondents
than among the West Indians or Jews:

	West Indians	English	Jews
	n = 11	n = 17	n = 19
% having friends of another class	$5/11$ %	$5/17$ %	$8/19$ %

While the numbers are too small to enable firm statements to be made on this
basis alone, this finding would indicate that class as a category is more
important to English people in defining 'us' or 'people like me' and 'others'.
This is congruent with other data which emerged about class identity, as
we will see.

Unfortunately, I did not ask respondants which sexes their close friends
belonged to. While it emerged that a number did have close friends of the
opposite sex (including spouses and partners), there is insufficient data to
make a meangingful analysis. However, eight of the Jewish women, three of the
English women and two of the West Indians included at least one 'housewife'

158

among their close friends. Indeed, six of the Jewish women named at least
two of their friends as being housewives. This adds weight to material in
the previous chapter on identification with this role.

Knowledge of Class

a) Self-classing

As we saw in chapter 2 above[8], a necessary element in class consciousness
is identification of oneself as belonging to a particular class. Respondents
were asked a number of questions to reveal their abstract knowledge of class
and to evoke any personal experiences they might have had which could be
attributed to class. Having first described the classes as they saw them,
they were specifically asked in which class they would place themselves.
This revealed some very interesting differences between the three sub-samples,
and between men and women.

West Indian women's assessment of their class position agreed with mine in
eight out of the ten answers. All but one of those in class 4 occupations
(junior white-collar and service jobs) classed themselves as 'working class'
or 'poor'. Of the three women who had difficulty with this question, two
were the daughters of middle-class families. Susan Fellows, a law graduate
studying for her solicitors articles, said: 'I would say that according to
my upbringing I'd be upper-working to lower-middle-class. If there's going
to be boundaries between working class, middle class and upper class, I'd
put myself in the middle of working class and middle class. So I'm there.'
I asked her if she was reluctant to call herself middle class. She answered:
'No, because I'm not sure I'd class myself as middle class. If I had a bit
more money, maybe I'd call myself middle class.' This and other answers
she gave show that she is by no means ignorant of class and its status
implications, and so her unwillingness to describe herself as 'middle class'
is interesting.

This unwillingness was shared by a playcentre worker whose father is a social
worker - Chloe Sylvester. She clearly knew which class she belonged to, but
she would not reveal it to me:
Q: 'Do you see there being races with class structures within them, rather
   than a class structure divided by races? How do you class yourself?'

159

A: 'I'm not sure, but I still think it's there. Within the Black community,
it's there. It's been built into you. Not only can you tell, you know,
under which heading you come.'

Q: 'I think I was trying to trap you into saying you are middle-class and I
was going to ask you whether you are the same middle class as me.'
(Chloe smiled) 'Class is still important to a lot of people.'

A: 'Yes, class is still important unfortunately in the West Indies. They
may not say so, but they're heavily into it. You have to be wary when
you're there. I try not to get into situations where class would come
into it because although I'd be able to talk my way out of it, I don't
like the idea of class barriers.'

Beryl Clark's father strove from being a garage mechanic, through owning his
own small garage business to become an oil company representative. Beryl
saw her class origins as working class, but as a student-teacher, recognised
herself as socially mobile: '... the awful thing is that this course I'm
on, although I regard myself as working class, when I qualify, I'll be
regarded as middle class. Teachers are regarded as middle-class. There's a
bit of conflict there.'

This reluctance on the part of middle-class Black women to acknowledge the
middle-class status of their occupations or origins stands out. One
explanation is that they may have internalised the racist assumption that
all Black people are working-class so that claiming middle class status is
a betrayal of the people they feel most identified with. It was certainly
not the case that they were ignorant of the evaluative status element in
class. For instance, Beryl Clark was asked whether she actually saw and
thought of people as middle class: 'Yes, to a certain extent.I do. This
is only since I've been to college. There are people like me whose father has
had to slog and there are people who consider themselves middle class and
it's "daddy this" and "mummy that", and they're going to go skiing at the
weekend.'

Beverley Williams was able to classify herself, but regarded it as imposed
rather than how she saw herself. She too learned about it at college: 'I think
it's the white people dig more into the class thing. The most I've heard
about class was when I was at college or at school when I was doing psychology....
Things are bad, but I can survive, know what I mean. I never put myself
in class. If I'm at work and someone said to me "oh she's working class
or this or that", it's them who's put me into it, they've said it, not I....'.

160

Eric Clark, an assembly line worker, described himself as working class.

Among the <u>English women</u>, again a high proportion, nine out of ten evaluated their own class position in terms I would agree with. The two middle-class socialists, Debbie Longman and Louise Cooper, were reluctant to describe themselves as 'middle class'. Debbie's placing of herself fitted clearly with her picture of the classes and their bases: 'The vast majority of people are working class, perhaps a little bit saved but nothing significant. Probably quite a lot of those people don't think of themselves as working class. They get hung up on the idea that they ('the working class') only work in a factory and wear a cloth cap.... Middle class, private incomes, comfortably off, and enough money that it really makes a significant amount for them....' She expressed no apparent doubt or discomfort about her evaluation of her class position. Louise, on the other hand, did. To find out how she classed herself, I asked: 'Have you ever felt at a disadvantage because of your class?' She replied: 'It's funny, because I find the question of my class very difficult to define. By education quite clearly I'm middle class. Currently by occupation, I'd have to be middle class as well, but I don't think that. I don't know. How would you define class? You'd define me as middle-class, would you?'

Q: 'What I'm trying to do here is find out how people identify themselves[9].'

Later in the interview, she was asked whether she felt as a middle-class person her interests were in opposition to those of the working class. She replied: 'Well, I really do think it....' (Pause. Son interrupts. Question repeated.) 'No, because I don't think that I would not ... (Pause) ... because I work with and for and to working-class people and I don't like to call myself middle class, but I suppose somebody else would. I think if I'd said only I'm a home tutor, a community worker and I've got a degree, you'd say I was middle class, yes? Given that you're studying the whole issue of class. I would imagine you have ....' (Pause)

The emotional tone of these statements and questions was one of discomfort and mild anxiety. She was clearly aware that her own class position could be construed as at variance with her politics and her campaigning on behalf of (working class) tenants. Nevertheless, she sought on two separate occasions my endorsement of her middle-class status. As a socialist, her Weltanschauung (like Debbie's) could have included a large basically dispossessed working

161

class in which she and most of the population would have fitted. This was one of the few interviews where I observed class definition operating at an existential level as a problem of the moment.

Pam Dixon was interesting because she saw herself as having slipped in class terms. Asked where she put herself in class terms, she replied: 'I suppose I'm working class. I could consider myself middle class because my parents are middle class, so I don't really class myself as anything.... My mum was working class and worked her way up. Me, I don't really hold with this class business. To me you are what you are. If people don't want to know you, they aren't worth knowing. I know my parents wish I was a little bit better than I am, but that's the way it goes. I feel comfortable as I am, rather than pretending to be what they are. That's what they do, mainly - they pretend too much.'

Among English men, three of the four men whose occupations would mark them as middle class actually regarded themselves as working class - Pete Whittaker, Richard Pryce and Tom Hetherington. Of these, only Tom could be described as socially mobile. He and Pete Whittaker were both socialists. Like Debbie, with whom he lives, Pete regarded himself as part of the very large majority of people without power. Tom Hetherington saw a three class system of workers, managers and owners, and despite the fact that his job is managerial, regarded himself as working class. He was mildly tetchy when I pointed this out: 'Yes, yes. It's a parasitical job. I'm very aware of that. In many ways it's a job which shouldn't have to exists, right? My class consciousness has developed with my involvement with the tenants' movement, far more than it did as an active member of a trade union in the car factory. I wasn't so acutely aware of it being a class issue. A girl friend years ago said I was classless and I almost used to take that as a compliment. I don't think I would now.' (Laughs)

While it is not surprising that as socialists Tom and Pete would not want to categorise themselves as middle class, it is astonishing in the case of Richard Pryce, a partner in a firm of City accountants. I shall quote his interview at some length here[10], because it illustrates a number of points both theoretical and methodological.

Q: 'Is money the basis of class now?'

A: 'No. I'm afeared it will go progressively that way. (Pause) I don't know you can get away from it. I don't know any societies which don't have identifiable groupings....'

Richard contradicted himself here almost straight away, and had to find a way of recovering. He tried straight denial of class, continuing: 'In terms of working, middle class, I don't know any....' This was clearly unsustainable, so he went on: 'I regard myself as working class. There's no difference between me and Joe, my Jamaican friend, drinking beer and telling me about his problems and his work and mine. All his problems are paying bills and so are mine. Even his aspirations.'

This came over as an outrageous piece of interview game-playing[11] but, probed, Richard revealed a subtle and complex knowledge of class, status and structuration. I continued:

Q: 'There's a difference in education, presumably?'

A: 'Well, there's a big divide in that respect, but that doesn't mean to say we don't feel and look at life and try to cope with it in the same way. I mean, I - '

Q: 'You're not a snob, in other words.'

A: 'Oh, I probably <u>am</u>. I'm probably the worst snob of all, actually. I hope not. I probably am.'

Q: 'All you've said so far is steadfastly in the other direction.'

A: 'Yes, I actually believe that very sincerely.'

Q: 'So is it an internal struggle? The snobbish impulse and the desire not to be?'

A: 'Yes, yes. Of course. I do like going to Covent Garden and I'd hate to go there with someone who's eating fish and chips out of the paper on the main staircase. You may call that snobby. I don't call that snobby. I think it's a matter of people not knowing how to behave.'

Richard's laudable struggle not to allow class or skin colour to limit his relationship with his friend faltered on the matter of cultural capital[12]. I think this is one example (and there are several others in the data) which indicates the importance of cultural capital in the structuration of classes. I pressed him again on describing himself as working class. He replied: 'That's only because I work. You tell me, I could never tell the difference between - The trouble is people say there is no middle class left.'

163

Q: 'Do you agree with that?'

A: 'I don't know. I suspect all there is is those who don't have to work and those who do have to work. I slot into those who have to work. Now there are those who have to work who are very well rewarded, and there are those who work very hard and are not very well paid. I don't know if that's class. I think there are divides. There is the divide of money and there is the divide of education, but I don't think the divide of education is as great as people think it is, actually. I think the other one is the total parental influence: "You can't go out with... not our class, you know" - all that rubbish. I mean, really.'

Here he clearly acknowledges the ownership and non-ownership of capital as a fundamental class divide, although he doesn't use such 'dangerously Marxist' terms. He also acknowledges differences of income and in education as relevant in class membership. He abhors snobbery, however.

After the question about the fairness of the wages structure, I tried one more time to get him to 'come clean' about his class:

Q: 'Sorry to press you, but your definition of yourself as a working class person -'

A: 'No, I didn't say that. It's not on the card.'

(He had said it, but hadn't written it in answer to the Ten Statements Test.)

Q: 'You work.'

A: 'I work. I go to work every day. There's no difference between me and the lorry driver going to work.'

Q: 'Well there is, because you actually have a share in the business you work in.'

A: 'I try to wrest a share.'

Q: 'That is a material difference though, isn't it?'

A: 'Well yes, but most of the people I meet here in the pub work for themselves. My impression of one or two of them is that they make a lot of money. There's "Arfur down the pub" who's a roofer, but he flies his whole family to a villa in Spain for six weeks every year. If you're going to say the fact I'm acquiring an interest in the business I'm in makes me different, is there any real difference?'

His grasp of the materiality and status elements of class and how they can cross-cut in the spheres of ownership as well as consumption obviously allows him a lot of freedom to befriend whom he likes. Nevertheless, his four

closest friends were a solicitor, a financier, a manager and a money broker. He undoubtedly sustains these different spheres of friendship by keeping them separate. Finally, this necessarily lengthy account of my attempt (bluntly) to get Richard to 'tell the truth' (as I saw it at the time) illustrates the richness of an open-ended, qualitative style of questionnaire design and interviewing technique. The question 'what class are you?' with an unremarked recording of the answer would have missed so much. We get very close to what 'class' actually is for this man[13].

Two of the three English men classified as having working class occupations described themselves as such, but the third, Ronnie Baker, simply would not commit himself. After a number of questions in which he revealed a certain knowledge of the workings of the class system, I asked him whether he saw himself as working class. He replied: 'I don't really think about it, to tell you the truth.' I did not want to press him further[14].

To summarise, how the English men saw their own class position could not simply be read off or assumed from the class their occupation would indicate. This suggests that class consciousness is not purely the product of experience at work, even for men whose identities are bound up in their jobs[15]. In other words, mediate as well as proximate factors operate in the development of class consciousness.

When we turn to the Jewish respondents, we discover the astonishing fact that seven of the ten women and four of the nine men were unable or unwilling to class themselves at all. Of the eight who did categorise themselves in class terms when asked, only one was at variance with my assessment, Philip Grossman. His analysis of what class is based on is very interesting and is described below. The question thus arises, are these Jewish people ignorant about the class system and its impact on individuals, or are they aware but see themselves as separable and untouched by it?

Ignorance it isn't. As we will see later, almost all were able to give an opinion about the basis of class and, although these were idiosyncratic in one or two cases, they were clearly opinions which were not simply the product of the interview situation. The Jewish respondents knew about class but were not very interested in it for the most part. I asked Rebekah Teff whether she thought of herself as middle class. She replied:

'I think at one time I would have done, but I don't think we are any more. I don't know what slot we fit into.... There's more than one middle class. It's not clear any more. Maybe we're at the bottom end of the middle class, but then it depends what you mean by middle class. Are you talking about education? Are you talking about money?'

I remarked that a lot of the Jewish people I had interviewed were not interested in class. Did Rebekeh feel outside it?'

'No, it's not that we don't understand it. It's just that we aren't that materialistic. People you've spoken to probably aren't that materialistic therefore not that interested in being part of that society. It's not of prime importance for us to understand why a society works like that. What difference does it make to us?'

I asked Rachel Grossman whether she saw herself as belonging to a class. 'Not really. (Laughs) I think the ethnic groups escape classing. I think the attitude is that although there are middle class Blacks and working class Blacks, people say "they all look the same to me".'

Q: 'Are there working class and middle class Jews?'

A: 'I think where people have lost their Jewish identity ... and become exactly like the people around them.'

Q: 'But in your community, do these categories apply?'

A: 'I don't think so. There a solicitor will sit next to someone who's unemployed. It's because you're a smaller group, you all have to pull together. You don't have the time. People know that this one or that one isn't rich, but they're regarded as people.'

These answers are typical of the Jewish women - they reveal knowledge of class and status criteria (money and education) but also the assertion that religious, as opposed to assimilated, Jews are not classed persons. Several made the point that the religious Jewish community had its own scale of prestige[16]. For instance, Felicity Bloom, asked to class herself, said: 'Oh dear me. I think the Jews have to be outside the class structure. I mean, first of all, there's a fairly well organised and tightly knit sub-community, and within that community, there's a quite well defined status hierarchy.'

We will see in the next chapter the form this hierarchy takes.

Among the <u>Jewish men</u>, there was more of a variety of answers to the question
of how they'd class themselves. Two of the four who didn't class themselves
saw Jews as separate or classless. For instance, I asked Abraham Bauer,
an Israeli businessman, whether he felt middle class. 'No. I don't feel
myself nothing. Jewish. We don't have this kind of classes. Money doesn't
give you any right to anything more in the   religious community. We go
by different standards.'

The third, Ishmael Jacobson, felt confused and angry that ability and rewards
were not matched, and reacted by denying the existence of classes. He had
answered the question about the main divisions in British society in terms
of that of the rich and poor. I recast his answer and gave it back to him for
further comment.
Q: 'So class is the main division in Britain, between the rich and the poor?'
A: 'No, no. I said the division is between the rich and poor. I didn't
    say anything about class. I think class is an absolute myth. I think
class probably for a long time hasn't existed. After all, whether you are
rich or poor doesn't depend on class. My parents I don't think are poor
by any means. I think I'm poor and they're more working class than I am
because my father worked with his hands and I'm a professional and so class
doesn't come into it, doesn't exist. It's all wrong.'

Finally among those who denied having a class identity there was Solomon Teff,
an American.
Q: 'Do you think of yourself as having a class identity?'
A:' 'No. I don't like to think of myself... I mean I've trained myself to
think down middle class values.... Had them - I was brought up post-depression,
post second world war in a large family. We were not middle class economically.
We were poor, lower middle or upper working, even though my father was a
professional. To that extent, my own home is similar.... On the other hand,
there are middle class values, education is one. Children should have shoes,
travelling - we probably do a lot more travelling than most middle class
people. The choices one makes serve the interests of a philosophy.'

Solomon went on to point out the affinity of Jewish and middle class values
concerning education, something pointed out by a number of the Jewish men.
Two actually went as far as to say that the basis of class was the clustering
of values, and one of these - Mordecai Bloom - saw a basic two-class system
consisting of firstly those who purveyed ideology and secondly those who

consumed the output of the first. I asked him whether he saw himself as outside this system. He replied: 'Well no, I see myself as trying to impart something.'

The other three who classed themselves were rather more conventional in how they saw classes. There remained in one of these, Emanual Diamond, an unwillingness to be involved in it, despite having demonstrated an active awareness of it. He had spoken much earlier during the interview of the family's 'working class' cleaner. Nevertheless, when asked whether he would class himself as middle class, he replied: 'I suppose I'd have to. I don't identify with it very much, because the Jewish side of it is so dominant. It's the dominant factor.... I don't think about it. When I come across people like those girls, I laugh to myself. I don't laugh at working class people.' The girls he refers to were some public school girls he had overheard talking loudly on a tube train about debutantes' balls. It is clear that Emanual was very aware of class, its basis and its markers. He saw himself as separate.

To summarise, we have seen a picture of a predominantly working class West Indian group who see themselves as such, and whose middle class members are reluctant to claim middle class status. A similar reluctance was found among middle class English socialists (although not all of them). While English women were otherwise fairly predictable in their class identity, the men were less so overall. Over half of the Jews felt themselves quite separate from the class structure they observed, to the extent that they would not or could not class themselves.

b) Respondents' Images and Experiences of Class

The account of the data which follows has most in common with the extensive literature[17] on 'images of class' or 'images of society'. It breaks now ground in two ways: firstly by analysing[18] men's and women's data separately, and secondly by the discussion of comparable data from three different status groups within a neighbourhood. Again, it must be admitted that it is a matter of deep regret that only one West Indian man was interviewed[19].

The purpose here is to record how people saw class in the abstract and in their day to day lives. How many classes are there? What is their basis?

168

consumed the output of the first. I asked him whether he saw himself as outside   this system. He replied: 'Well no, I see myself as trying to impart something.'

The other three who classed themselves were rather more conventional in how they saw classes. There remained in one of these, Emanual Diamond, an unwillingness to be involved in it, despite having demonstrated an active awareness of it. He had spoken much earlier during the interview of the family's 'working class' cleaner. Nevertheless, when asked whether he would class himself as middle class, he replied: 'I suppose I'd have to. I don't identify with it very much, because the Jewish side of it is so dominant. It's the dominant factor.... I don't think about it. When I come across people like those girls, I laugh to myself. I don't laugh at working class people.' The girls he refers to were some public school girls he had overheard talking loudly on a tube train about debutantes' balls. It is clear that Emanual was very aware of class, its basis and its markers. He saw himself as separate.

To summarise, we have seen a picture of a predominantly working class West Indian group who see themselves as such, and whose middle class members are reluctant to claim middle class status. A similar reluctance was found among middle class English socialists (although not all of them). While English women were otherwise fairly predictable in their class identity, the men were less so overall. Over half of the Jews felt themselves quite separate from the class structure they observed, to the extent that they would not or could not class themselves.

b) Respondents' Images and Experiences of Class

The account of the data which follows has most in common with the extensive literature[17] on 'images of class' or 'images of society'. It breaks new ground in two ways: firstly by analysing[18] men's and women's data separately, and secondly by the discussion of comparable data from three different status groups within a neighbourhood. Again, it must be admitted that it is a matter of deep regret that only one West Indian man was interviewed[19].

The purpose here is to record how people saw class in the abstract and in their day to day lives. How many classes are there? What is their basis?

168

How can people change class? Is class or race the main division in society? Who benefits? These questions evoked answers of great variety - some were long and remained in the abstract, some were short and almost monosyllabic, and others brought in personal experiences. The ways and extent to which people include their own experiences and observations of class and how it is manifested could be analysed separately, but it seems to me much more interesting to ground abstract knowledge in the illustrations people volunteer rather than treat 'experience' as a separate category.

i)   West Indian women

The overwhelming impression that the seven working class and three middle class West Indian women gave was the 'proletarian' nature of their images of society, the clarity and coherence of their understanding and of the emotions the subject aroused in some of them. It will be recalled from Chapter Two that a synthesis[20] of a 'proletarian class consciousness', derived from the literature on images of class, had the following elements:

1   Identification of oneself as 'working class' or as being in the less privileged of two classes.
2   Recognition that 'money' or 'power' is the basis of class division.
3   Recognition that the interests of the ruling class are different and oppositional to one's own class's interests
4   Fatalistic acceptance of the status quo, and low salience.

We saw above how eight of the ten women described themselves as working class. How many classes did they perceive? No less than six saw two classes when the question of class was first raised, but two of these subsequently amended their answers to 'three' and 'four' respectively as they were thinking and talking about the subject. The final figures were:

Four women perceived two classes
Four   "   "   three "
Two   "   "   four   "

The latter two were Chloe and Beryl, both of whom had had difficulty in describing themselves as middle class. All three middle class women perceived more than two classes.

All ten agreed that money was the basis of the differences between the classes, although five thought other factors important as well. Typical of those who regarded wealth as the principal basis was Chloe Sylvester:

Q: 'Is it money that divides people, or is it how they feel, or education?'
A: 'I think their status in life has to do with wealth and money. It starts there and a lot follows. You look at them as what they have. Yet you could have a person who's not particularly well educated, articulate or anything, can still be middle class. The way we look at things is wrong.'
Q: 'Oh, money. But can't education help you to move classes?'
A: 'Not without money.'
Q: 'How about a good job, or is it still wealth in the bank?'
A: 'A job could help, but you still need that.'

The link between wealth and education[21] is one commented on by several respondents in different categories.

Marcia X saw a 'rich' class and a 'poor' class:

Q: 'So you think it's a matter of money?'
A: 'Yes. Money. If I had a decent job paying a decent wage, then I wouldn't have to worry about money.

All the West Indian women who saw money as the sole basis of class were working class.

Among the five who recognised other factors as well, three were middle class and two were working class.

Two women saw there could be a tension between a middle class economic status and how one felt subjectively. I asked Diana Maine whether money enabled people to change classes. She replied: 'No. I'd still be the same Diana, I'd still mix with the same people.... Just because I got a house, a business, doesn't mean I'm going to go and look for middle class friends....'

The fact that she mentions it in a rather defensive manner suggests that she recognises the ownership of a business and a house as elements in structuration, but she is here emphasising the subjective element in class, as had Beryl Clark[22]. Unlike Diana, Beryl had consciously conceptualised class in terms of both the subjective and the economic: 'The issue of class is

170

quite a dodgy one really. You can either divide it on how you think you are and how you see the world, or money.'

Philmena Johnson saw both the subjective, in the form of ambition, and education as important in being in the middle class: 'I know children who've come from the lowest class of parents turned out to be doctors and barristers. I think it depends on what you make of yourself, as well as education.... There are people you want to help and they don't want to know. They just like tramps.'

There were two other women whose understanding of the basis of class acknowledged factors other than economic ones. Susan Fellows: 'I think a lot of it has to do with education with regards your family, depending on I suppose your parents. You.could have money, you could say you were middle class, it might help, but it doesn't make you middle class. It might help you to start paying for your education and improve it for your children. How you behave towards your children. I think there's a basic difference between working class and middle class in how they treat children and all the influences around them....'
Q: 'So money does have something to do with it.
A: 'Yes, it does influence it, but I think it's also basic behaviour. They can be absolute slobs in their behaviour, then to me they're working class with money.'

Beverley Williams saw the tendency of people of the same class to cluster together where they live as a feature of class, what Giddens would term 'Neighbourhood patterns of consumption'[23]: 'Some high class people are not going to live in Stamford Hill. Something must have gone wrong if they put themselves in Stamford Hill or Stoke Newington or Brixton, understand what I mean? They're more likely to live in Hampstead or far out places with lots of land.' Nevertheless, when asked whether class was a matter of money, education or where you live, she replied after a pause: 'I think how class has been from the beginning to now is how wealthy you are. You're either poor, or this or that.'

171

Beverley was particularly interesting on the subject of class. She
described at length the life of an imaginary rich housewife living in the
country, and also her meeting and friendship with a girl backpacker who
turned out to be very rich. Her own aspirations were decidedly middle
class - to buy her Council house and send her son to a private school, if
possible.

Cui Bono?

Respondents were asked who benefited from the class situation. All but
two answered straight away in terms like 'the rich', or 'the upper class'.
Gem Bailey was angry about the arms race and the amount spent on research
into new weaponry. I asked: 'Who's benefiting?'
A: 'She is.' (Margaret Thatcher)
Q: 'Isn't it the people who own Plessey and GEC?'
A: 'Yeah. Them and her.... I'd love to marry a millionaire....'

Two women thought nobody benefited, then amended their answers. Sandra Green,
for instance, was asked:
Q: 'Who benefits? Or is it just how things are?'
A: 'I think it's just how things are. I don't think anybody's benefiting
   from it. (Pause) In a way they are.'[24]
Q: 'Say the people who own the clothing factory?'
A: 'If we weren't earning a certain level of wage, what would they earn?'

She went on to talk with some bitterness about her efforts to represent her
fellow workers in the non-unionised clothing factory she used to work in.

I asked Chloe Sylvester who benefits. She replied: 'I don't think
anybody benefits. (Pause) I feel it's unfair for a man to have millions to
squander while millions are suffering. That I'll never understand. For
a long time to come we'll have it. If a person makes their money, that's
all right, but for those born into it, for the last 500 years their family've
had x or y millions, and take another person whose family goes back and
have never had anything. That's very unfair.'

Two women specified that it was a white elite who benefit. As part of her
answer to the question 'describe British society and its divisions to a
stranger', Beryl Clark said: 'On the question of finance, there's a small
white dominance of a few people who control finance, own the land. Makes

172

me sound like a Marxist! (Laughs) And let me say that the laws in this society protect. And the rest.'

Diana Maine had been asked how many classes there were: 'Two, well three, but then there's no real Black upper class in this country, really, is there? So there's working class, middle class, and the rich whites, the extremely rich whites.'

Several questions later, I asked her how the upper class came to be there: 'By robbing the poor. (Laughs) Robbing the riches off people, living off people, making us Black people build up England for instance, building all these tall buildings in the city. They used us as slaves, I know all about that. They didn't teach us that at school. They went into slavery but not deeply. They didn't say "you slaves were treated poor", they just treat it as part of history. What was behind it all?'
Q: 'The upper class have exploited white workers too.
A: 'Oh yes, oh yes. They sent children to work all hours of the day. Terrible....'

What is interesting in these two women's answers is the recognition that class and race inequalities lay one on top of the other and are connected.

To summarise, it emerges that there is a definite tendency towards a 'proletarian' class consciousness among the West Indian women interviewed, not only in their identification of themselves as 'working class' but also in their recognition that money is the basis of class and recognition that the rich or upper classes benefit and that those interests oppose their own. It is notable, however, that of those who saw non-economic factors operating in class, three were middle class and two were very ambitious (Diana and Beverley). The question of their response to this and the salience it has for them is examined later in the chapter.

ii) **West Indian man**

Eric Clark had a lot to say about class. He had obviously thought about it and his class and social consciousness was very sophisticated. At first it seemed as though he saw three classes based on a mixture of subjective

prestige, education and authority relations in the workplace: 'Upper class, based on hereditary titles, whether titled or not, they look upon themselves as the apex - even life peers are not regarded the same. Then you've got what you'd term middle class, they're based on sheer greed ... and the lower classes is just sheer ignorance.... They've been told that they're low for so long they actually know no different. It's been my experience that if you tell a man something long enough, eventually he will believe it.... Although the odd one will struggle to get out, the average one has no intention of moving from where he is.'

A few questions later, however, he seemed to change his mind about the existence of the middle class: 'To me really, there ain't no middle class. It's perhaps a little dream some people have. A few of the greedy lower class, they say they're middle class, but to me, there isn't a middle class. You're either at the top or at the bottom, there ain't no in-between in the social set-up. You get the average man, buys his own house, can afford a couple of pints of beer and he talks about him being middle class. You get people who join the union, the union has fought for better pay, and these people turn round and say "but are the unions going too far?". They don't want to belong to the union no more. You get a lot of them with very, very short memories. They're the type who term themselves middle class - not just middle management, shop floor too. To me, it's only a state of mind.'

This seemed contradictory, so I asked him whether the basis of class was economic or what people thought of themselves: 'You've got upper class, lower class, then you've got rich, poor and in-between. In the economic sense you've got three classes. In the other sense, if you're born upper class, you remain upper class. You've got a long pedigree. If you've not, you're some kind of mongrel. You can have all the money in the world and they will still see you as a mongrel. Some people see it as economic, but not me.'

So Eric sees two class systems, one economic and one based purely on subjective assessments based in turn on 'pedigree'. He understood that the system benefits 'those at the top', and that there was a direct link between the 'market price' of labour and profits, thus of the oppositional nature of 'economic' classes. His class perceptions overall could therefore be described as both 'proletarian' and 'bourgeois'[25] in recognising social prestige. The overwhelming flavour and tone is 'proletarian' however, but

detached. This man is a keen observer. His views show up the shortcomings
of trying to force complex consciousness into ideal type boxes.

iii) English women

The four middle class and six working class English women were on the whole
much more elaborate in their answers about class than the West Indian women.
Although personal experience and observations seemed to permeate their
accounts to a much greater degree, their understanding of class did not seem
to be very different from that of the West Indian sample, except perhaps in
the number of classes perceived:[26]

    Two   women perceived two classes
    Four   "   "   three   "
    Two   "   "   four   "
    Two   "   "   six   "

These did not correlate in any way with the class of the women.

The size of the sample is not sufficient to draw any firm conclusions, of
course, but there seems to be a slight tendency for English women to be
less likely to see a two-class system. Nevertheless, most of the English
women (nine out of ten) thought money was a basis of class, if not the sole
one, and five thought that money or power was the only one basis. We will
examine first the four who thought that money was just one factor in class.

I asked Caroline Pryce to describe the classes in Britain. She replied:
'Well, I think there's the working class, that's one. I don't know much
about the different sectors but the working class go to pubs a lot and are,
umm, err, I don't know really and don't talk like I talk, probably don't
have some of the things I've got, even if they do have a coloured television
and go abroad once a year, they don't enjoy some of the other things I feel
are more important like, umm, a nice home. They might have just part of a
house, or a flat or a tower block thing, even if they can afford their smart
cars and their colour tellies, I mean, that's to me how they come over. Then
there is the middle class sort of person ... the two up and two down quite
comfortably off in their own little lot. I suppose I'd put myself in with
them, and then the county lot, the uppers who can afford to go around looking
like wrecks but somehow you can tell they've got pots of money. On the other
hand, they're sometimes hanging in jewels and things.'

175

So for Caroline, 'money' has less to do with power and control in the
production sphere, but is to do with the kind of lifestyle you can afford. I
went on to ask her whether she saw distinctions between working class and
middle class occupations. She answered not in terms of the division of
labour or authority relations in the workplace, but instead of the personal
qualities of the people: 'Somehow, it's all to do with education, not just
brain power, but education, the way you look after yourself, the way you
talk, behave with other people, your personality and how you impress other
people. Well yes, how other people see you, in fact.' She's speaking here
of education and cultural capital, and prestige. Her image of class is
of the two that come closest to the 'bourgeois' ideal type[27], and it is
clear she has derived it from direct comparison of herself and others.

Pam Dixon saw the unemployed becoming a class on their own. Then she saw
four classes - 'the working class', 'the upper working class', 'the lower
middle' and 'upper middle'. I asked her what the difference was beween
'upper working' and 'lower middle': 'The lower middles are the ones living
in their little semi-detached, things like that. The working class are the
ones living in Council flats. The middle class are the ones with nice big
gardens and all the rest of it. Their houses are a cut above everyone else's.
The other type are the sort you see in London. It's a house, two up two down
with a little patch of garden at the back. That's what I'd call the upper
working.'
Q: 'Has class got to do with the money you've got?'
A: 'I suppose so in the standing, and how you've been brought up and the
     sort of education you've had. I don't think it's just money that
     dictates what class. Well, you get some upper class, call them upper
     class if you like, they're as Cockney as everyone else. Just because
     they've got money, they think that makes them upper class. It's all to
     do with breeding, I suppose?'

Judy Jones also saw a lower working class, consisting of 'people out of
work, living rough, not educated at all'. I asked her what was at the root
of class, 'money, or education or what?'
A: 'Money, basically.'
Q: 'Not where you live or how you speak?'

176

A: 'I say that, but then I knew someone who'd been to grammar school who
had a big house and a swimming pool. Had bags and bags of confidence.
He used to entertain people in restaurants and pay by credit card and
not have a penny in the bank. If you'd gone in ... all gorblimey you
wouldn't have got in the restaurant in the first place.'

So Judy acknowledges cultural capital, education and lifestyle as elements
in class. Asked whether movement was possible between classes, she replied:
'They're terribly snobby these people. I know if you don't have Bally
shoes or crocodile skin, and if you wear acrylic jumpers you're really out.
You've got to know what to wear. It's second nature to them. But if you
go up you've got to learn the hard way.'

Q: 'Are you hurt or put out by this? Do you ignore it or does it get to you?'
A: 'No. It used to when I lived among these people. It didn't hurt me,
but it got on my nerves. I wasn't trying to be part of it. There's no
point in that, it only makes you look a bigger fool, that. "I'm not in
the right place", I used to think. One thing, I'm not envious of
anybody ... not at all, really.'

Judy was speaking of a time when her former husband was in the army and they
lived among army families.

Like Pam and Judy, Sheila Stevens also saw a lower working class, and like
Judy, saw herself in the one above it: 'I think there is one that is
definitely lower than the working class that are not like me, are not as
bright, have not had the advantages I've had. I was reading an article the
other day about malnutrition in children where they're being fed on bags
of crisps and Coca Cola. That isn't lack of money. That's ignorance! I
don't think it's intelligence. I don't think we're born with any more than
anyone else. I think once you're in a rut and your parents are in a rut
and no-one teaches you anything different. I think it's down to education.
I'm a bit concerned. They had this thing at school to go to the ballet and
Julie (her daughter) wanted to go. I think the _sad_ thing is _I've_ never been
to the ballet. Perhaps I ought to make the effort and take her, but I wouldn't
know how to go about it. I wouldn't know how to dress, I wouldn't know
where to go. I think it's so important for her to have gone, because that's
something we don't know.... At one time she wanted to be a cleaner. (Laughs)

I didn't want to denigrate cleaners, know what I mean. So I said "it's not very interesting, is it?". If you can be a little less narrow-minded, which I think is a problem of the working classes -'

Q: 'How different are the upper classes?'

A: 'I don't know many of them. Probably they are better educated and they have got more money. The more money you have, the more choices you have. I don't think it necessarily makes them better people....'

Sheila was particularly articulate about class and very aware of its injuries. Her self-esteem and assertiveness in the face of insensitive and patronising professionals (her GP and the headmaster of her children's school) are remarkable.

None of these four women give primacy to economic power in their images of the class structure. Wendy Moore went one further and denied its importance all together:

Q: 'Is it not a simple matter of money?'

A: 'No. Connections, lifestyle, religious background. I still think the Jews, no matter how much money they have still are not acceptable in some circles.'

Q: 'How do people get to move from one class to another? Can they?

A: 'Yes, through education.'

Wendy herself had moved upwards intergenerationally by means of education. Nevertheless, while she denies the importance of money, the top two rungs of her six-rung prestige ladder picture of the class system are 'old moneyed gentry' and 'nouveau riche'. 'Unwaged' come at the bottom. She has come across the upper classes: 'My husband's brother's a banker, lives in Hampstead. I find their two daughters very 'Hooray Henry'. (Laughs) Always off riding and things. Their mother's trying to bring them up in a very old-fashioned county way. Doesn't want them involved in the whole North London scene.'

Of the five women who saw money as the sole basis of class, three were working class and two were middle class socialists. (An identical class mix was found in the five who recognised other factors.) Typical of the working class women who saw money as the basis was Geraldine Pusey. I had asked her to describe British society and its divisions.

'Working class, middle class and upper class.'

Q: 'So you actually see it like that, rather than race?'

A: 'You were asking me from my own point of view. I was trying to portray
it as everyone else portrays it. (Laughs) It's like that, isn't it? No.
There's the poor, the - um - the well off, you can't say well of, and
the rich.'

Q: 'So the difference is money rather than birth or education?

A: 'No, I think it must be money, personally....'

Q: 'Does class matter more than race?'

A: 'Yes. I think so. Money is the root of all evil, don't they say?'

Q: 'Are there three classes?'

A: 'This is going back to how I look at it. I don't know. It's what
everybody says. Lower class, middle class ... it's always been in
categories.'

Q: 'Are you saying you personally don't think like that?'

A: 'I don't think so. I just see people as people.'

This denial of the validity of the personal evaluation that goes with class
we've seen in the replies of Sheila Stevens, Judy Jones, Pam Dixon and
West Indians Beryl Clark and Diana Maine. The latter's views[28] are
echoed by Mary Baker in very straightforward terms:

Q: 'What classes are there?'

A: 'I suppose there's only three, poor, middle and higher.'

Q: 'You'd see it in terms of money, then?'

A: 'It is, isn't it, the classes. If you've got more, then you think you're
better.'

Q: 'If you got more, you'd be middle class?'

A: 'No. I'd be the same as I am now. Money would make your life happier,
you wouldn't have to worry. I don't think it would make me a different
person. I wouldn't walk down the road and ignore the people I know.'

The two middle class socialists were Debbie Longman and Louise Cooper. Debbie
saw money, especially in the form of power or opportunity as the basis of class:

Q: 'So it's that rather than clusters of occupations?'

A: 'Well, a lot of say teachers are quite hard up but think of themselves as
middle class but "it's all about lifestyle, isn't it". I can't think
how having a certain kind of furniture or food makes you working class or
middle class. There's an enormous variety of lifestyles within the working
class and probably the middle class.'

179

Louise Cooper similarly saw economic power and control as crucial: '... an extremely wealthy section of society which controls the economics which are phenomenonally important, but like I suppose what it is the middle class in Hackney Council are controlling bureaucratically, which as an economic effect on people's lives. People in the DHSS have a tremendous economic effect on the average person, much more than the City does, it's a very much more direct relationship. Working class people in Hackney will be much less angry at the City of London than they will at the DHSS personnel, quite rightly because that's where the bureaucratic control is. But yes, of course the City financiers do. I don't actually think government controls very much. It's the economics, they call the tune.'

Q: 'The basis of class is power then, economics, over people's lives and their own....'

A: 'And over their own lives, that's very important....'

Cui Bono?

Unlike the West Indian women, the English women were not unanimous that it was 'the rich' or the 'upper class' which benefit from the way class works. For instance, Louise Cooper sees some benefits accruing to the middle class: 'The whole Council is geared very much towards the middle class officer and against the working class.... They laid off masses of the Direct Labour Organisation, they have cut their wages, and they can do that because their terms and conditions are much, much less beneficial than those of officers.'

Mary Baker saw who benefits but it didn't make her angry: '... like these guv'nors end up with Rolls Royces. How do they end up with Rolls Royces? If they can afford a Rolls Royce, I'm sure they can afford to pay the workers a little bit more. (Laughs) I'd rather be a guv'nor than a worker. I wouldn't like to be a guv'nor, too much responsibility.' (Laughs)

Geraldine Pusey thought everyone benefited: 'I think all classes benefit in their own way. The poor are no longer poor in the true sense of the word, so they must be benefiting....'

After the interview was over the the tape recorder was put away, Sheila Stevens talked indignantly about how people like her and her husband failed to benefit from some of the things the 'deprived' received - free

prescriptions, housing benefits, nursery places. She felt they were 'stuck in the middle' between the well-off and these sometimes undeserving poor. She was particularly angry that they would never seem to qualify for a Council house with a garden and that these always seemed to be given to single parents, people with very large families and those with social problems.

Karen Corrigan, on the other hand, was annoyed at the way the upper class benefits: 'They benefit every time, sure, that makes you angry. There's nothing you can do about it, but it makes you angry. I mean, budgets and things, you don't get nothing, but they do. If you've got the money you'll benefit from it tax-wise, relief-wise, any other way, but the ordinary working man will work hard for his money and see nothing for it. That's wrong really, there's something wrong there.' (Laughs)

To summarise, despite a lesser tendency to perceive two classes in society, like the West Indian women, half of the English women saw money as the sole basis of class, and half saw other factors operating. Of these latter, two were middle class and saw themselves as such, and two put themselves in a class above the bottom. The fifth, Pam Dixon, was very ambitious and the daughter of middle class parents. English women tended to bring more personal observation into their answers and were less likely to see the rich or upper classes as being the beneficiaries of the class system.

iv) English men

On the basis of my previous work [29], I was expecting to find overall a higher level of class consciousness among men, expressed in terms of a greater emphasis on the ownership and control of production, a greater awareness of who benefits and less of an emphasis on sugjective notions of 'prestige'. The findings were by no means clear cut and ran counter to these hypotheses in some respects. In terms of the number of classes perceived, the following picture emerged:

    One   man perceived two classes
    Four men   "   three "
    One man   "   four   "
    One man   "   five   "

Again, there were no correlations between these figures and the class of the respondents.

The man who perceived two classes was one of the three middle class men who
would describe themselves as socialists, and it is he (Pete Whittaker) who
was one of the two to see class purely in terms of ownership and power:
'I don't just mean the kind of class distinction which judges you by the
type of job you've got or the kind of furniture you've got. By class I
mean - I hope I'm a Marxist. I'd say there's still a deeply felt class
distinction... there's a massive gulf between the Establishment and the
mass of the people who are totally resigned.... But the Establishment in
this country has had power about as long as the Pharoahs, and it's incredibly
entrenched, and if people think it can be dismissed, overthrown, that's
just naive. It's a very, very strong state. And if you look at the levels,
all the levels of power, it's hardly ever invoked.... It's quite capable
of changing, adapting itself in a miraculous manner. I get tired of people who
keep talking about the terrible crisis of capitalism. I once went to a
meeting where Jimmy Reid was speaking. He said that if you were to watch
the people of this country walk past a post and measured their size by their
class position, you'd get for 45 minutes a whole procession of dwarfs:. For
about 10 minutes you'd get people who were between 12 and 15 feet tall, and
for the last few seconds, you'd see people who'd disappear right up into the
clouds. Their total length would be equal to that of the dwarfs. That's
more or less what he said ... and I think that's more or less right.'

Pete is undoubtedly an old-fashioned Marxist. Tom Hetherington, on the
other hand, recognises the existence and power of the middle class, and
acknowledges education, health and housing as part of the structure which
supports the perpetuation of the class system.
Q: 'Is class based on money, possessions?'
A: 'It's more than money, I think. If you're born in the right section of
    the system, the system is geared for your advantage, financially.
    Education, health, housing, all those things. The better off you are,
    the cheaper life is. It's done in subtle and undercover ways, whereas
    the bit that the worse off get is done very openly.'
Q: 'How many classes are there?'
A: (Pause) 'Three, I think. The working class, the managing class and
    the owning class. I think the class problem has to be addressed by the
    middle classes, because I don't think they understand the role that they
    play. I call them the 'butling classes'. I've worked with butlers.
    It's a strange thing. The butler of a stately home actually owns it
    because he handles and possesses in a sense on a loaned basis. He will
    be much more into the household and its possessions than the owner

will be. The relationship with the owner is very different. That's how I
see our society. The middle classes don't own our society, but they do so
insofar as they're put in charge of it. They try to protect that, and in
doing so, are protecting the ownership of it....'

It is clear from this that it is economic power, whether ownership or control,
and its lack which is seen as the basis of class.

Ownership was what Andrew Moore, the third socialist, seemed to be pointing
to, but he went on to modify it. Asked to describe British society, he
answered: '... 6% of the population owning 90% of the wealth. The kind
of people who, when a Socialist government does get in immediately move the
bulk of their capital outside the country....'

Q: 'Is class based on wealth?'

A: 'Based not so much on wealth but on the opportunity to acquire wealth.
I think there are three (classes) - those who have not, those who have, and
a volatile group in the middle who are on their way to having, or have
the potential to have, or the potential to fail.... A lot of it's to do
with education of course.'

Speaking of social mobility, he went on: 'If they are working class, they
must have the inherent ability to cross the class boundary. Body language,
the way they talk, lays the foundation, higher education or inherent
intelligence....'

Personal qualities and education are also important, he is conceding.

The other four English men see factors other than money, power or education
as being important. We have seen already how Richard Pryce counts 'cultural
capital' as important[30]. Ronnie Baker thought the world's view of British
society was of two classes, 'aristocracy or the working class'.

Q: 'Do you see it that way yourself?'

A: 'I don't know if you saw a programme yesterday talking about the
divisions in Whitehall. It seems that 80% or so are Oxford. It seems
in the upper echelons it's very much the old boy network. Without a
doubt. Not as much as it used to be.... Nowadays ... people are earning
the money to take them into that kind of society which was formerly
exclusively theirs.'

183

Q: 'Is money the basis?'

A: 'It's true, it's true wherever you go.'

Q: 'Do you see it as a two class system?'

A: 'Nnno. Can't be certain. Most of the so-called Lords are stoney broke anyway. They've had to degrade themselves and open their houses to the public.'

Q: 'Not clearly two classes. Three?'

A: 'There's a rising affluent middle class, yes.'

Q: 'How do people change, move class?

A: 'You move to an area like suburbia and assume the reality of the people around you. Buy the same cars, go to the same places.

Q: 'Takes money.'

A: 'Before the move.'

Birth, elite education, connections and common patterns of consumption all form part of Ronnie's view of class, although money still seems to be at the bottom of it.

Barry Stevens thinks similarly. Asked whether he was aware of class, he replied: 'Doesn't really bother me. If I got a lot of money, I wouldn't stay round here. I'd move to a nice place. That's what you call class. Once you've got the money, you go up a bracket. Mix with different people.'

Q: 'So class has to do with money?'

A: 'Yes.'

Q: 'Education?'

A: 'It matters a lot. Kids have got to learn. Some blokes at work can't read and write. I blame their parents. You've got to make your kids learn.'

He was annoyed at the way people sometimes 'take liberties' with him because of the way he dresses at work (he is a building foreman). He occasionally suffers condescension, he feels, because of his working clothes, and 'the richer they are, the worse they can be'.

Graham Stuart saw class as the result of a compound of factors, with money dominant: 'Middle class people tend to have come from a family background where there's been money involved, fee-paying schools, that sort of thing. For working class - I won't say lower class - there's state schools, Council houses, that sort of thing. Parents haven't had the sort of money these (middle class) people have.'

Q: 'Are there working class jobs and middle class jobs?'
A: 'Oh definitely, yes. I mean the sort of job I have (he is a postman) is
   a typical working class job, but the controller of Mount Pleasant, in
   charge of about 2,000 odd people, has been educated₀, is a college boy,
   educated specifically for the job, typical of what I was saying, fee-
   paying boarding school, that sort of thing. Never had to go through the
   ranks as I could do, step by step. I would take me about seventy-five
   years to get his job, whereas he's come from university and slipped into
   this kind of job.'

While the amount of money people have is one difference between the classes,
how they spend is another: 'I think there's a lot of working class people
earning very good money, but they also spend a lot of money, don't think
of the future. A lot of my friends are self-employed, earning very good
money. I can't understand why they won't put a minimum amount, say £20 a
week, into a pension scheme, look towards the future....'

Cui Bono?

We have seen already whom two of the socialists regard as principal
beneficiaries of the class system: Andrew Moore 'the rich 6%' and
Tom Hetherington 'owners and managers'. Pete Whittaker agreed that the
relationship between the classes was one of exploitation: 'Crudely, I'd
see it as such, although it may not be perceived as such, not noticed.
Sounds dogmatic, simplistic, but I can see that the nearer you are to the
point of production, the clearer it it.... Even in computers ... for example,
at George Wimpey's you were not allowed to join a trade union. You'd be
sacked. As an individual you could, but en masse, you couldn't....'

Richard Pryce dislikes the 'virtue' that seems to accrue with success: "... a
thing I don't like about the current political climate is this belief in the
meritricious elite. The ones who are the good people in society are the ones
who succeed, make it to the top. "Those are the ones who should be rewarded."
I don't mean to say that you shouldn't reward success. Society and commerce
do this automatically, but to labour that is (inaudible), because you have
to remember that for every person who gets to the top of the heap, there's an
almighty heap beneath him.'

The idea of beneficiaries including the socially mobile was echoed by
Ronnie Baker:

Q: 'Who benefits?'

A: 'The bosses, I don't know. Does anyone benefit? It's a question of
everyone moving up one more rung of the ladder.'

Graham Stuart saw the lot of the working class as having improved:

Q: 'Who benefits?'

A: 'I don't know if anyone ever does benefit. Since I've been born,
that's the way things have always been. Working class people now, we don't
actually work in work houses. We were suppressed, weren't we, working
class people in the last century. They were more or less serfs and slaves.'

Q: 'You don't see people benefiting and hanging on to it?'

A: 'I don't that. Anybody who has something wants to hang on to it.'

Like the English women, there was a tendency to recognise a wider circle of
beneficiaries of class inequalities than among the West Indian respondents.

To summarise, there were fewer men who regarded money as the sole basis of
class - two out of seven compared with five out of ten English women. I
think it is possible to discern more of a concern with the productive
sphere and less concern with patterns of consumption ('lifestyle') among
the men's answers compared with the women's. Again, personal observations
were more evident in the English men's answers than in the West Indian women's.

v) Jewish women

It became obvious very soon when the subject of class was raised with most
of the Jewish women that the subject held very little interest for them. Most
were able to talk about it and were quite knowledgeable in some cases, but
not all. One woman., for instance, interviewed at the same time as her
husband[31], said   'Oh let him answer these difficult questions', when I
asked her to describe British society. It was not lack of intelligence
which prompted this answer, but lack of interest and experience: 'I haven't
really thought about it much, to be quite honest. It's not really involved
me. I'm not going to be the next princess. It doesn't affect me, so I'm
not really aware of it at all.'

The other nine perceived class as follows:

    One perceived 'two, maybe three' classes
    Six   "   three   "
    One   "   five   "
    one   "   six or seven   "

There were no observable class correlations.

The consciousness of class which emerged among these Jewish women was very
much in the 'bourgeois' form. No-one attributed primacy to money or economic
power, even among the four who acknowledged money as having a part in class.
The remaining five women denied its function entirely. Among those who
did recognise money, education was also pointed out as an important determining
factor. For instance, asked to class herself, Hephzibar Levenberg answered:
'I'd say middle class. Partly as the result of education.'
Q: 'What is class based on - economics, lifestyle, education?'
A: 'Basically who your parents are....'
Q: 'What are the differences between the classes?'
A: 'Um. I'd say values first. Nebulous term - education.'
Q: 'What about money and economic power?'
A: 'Well, less so, I'd think. It's what's done with money. It used to
   be how much money people had, but nowadays....'

Lois Diamond was asked what class was based on: 'I think it's less based on
money than it was fifty years ago. The cost of labour has grown such that
unskilled labour gets as much as the middle class. The money is a bit
blurred. I'd say it was a combination of money, education. It's a long time
since I thought about class.' (Laughs)

Rebekeh Teff seems to have in mind a combination of lifestyle and cultural
capital here, as well as the manual/non-manual divide:
Q: 'Is race the main division in society?'
A: 'No, no, no, no. It plays a part, but only a small part.... No. I
   think there are strong divisions between the upper class, whoever they
   are, wherever they might be. I think there is a difference between the
   working people and the working class, not the working 'people', because
   I think everyone works, but I think there is still this division between

187

those manual workers who come out of the pub every night at 11 o'clock
or whatever it is and those that are more 'sophisticated' in inverted
commas. I think there's a very big difference.'

Rebekeh's answer is interesting, as she is one of only three[32] people in
the whole sample who regarded the manual/non-manual divide as significant
enough to mention. She did not think the difference was just one of money:
'I don't think so, not as much as it used to be, although money still talks.
I don't think about it much. I've got other things to think about.'

Turning to those who denied the role of money all together, Zipporah Roth,
describing herself as middle class rather than working class, did so 'not
because of our money, but because of our lifestyle'.

Q: 'Your education as well?'

A: 'Definitely, but our lifestyle. An engineer who came to do something in
the kitchen couldn't understand our lifestyle. Two ovens, two cookers.
"Why do you people have so much money?" I tried to explain to him we
have a completely different lifestyle. We never go to theatres, we
never go to restaurants. We don't have a television ... and these things
are necessities. We have a dining room, not for luxury, but because our
way of life demands a dining room. Saturday dinner, beautifully laid
table, nice crystal or silver. It's a lifestyle, yes. It would be more
than working class.'

She had remarked that an upper class person remains upper class even if he
loses his money: 'If you're used to having that lifestyle, it doesn't go
away because you happen to be poor.'

Rachel Grossman echoed this; asked whether class is based on money, education
or what, she replied: 'I think it's a variety of things. You can transcend
a lot with education. There was this jibe recently that the Cabinet was
made up of old Etonians and old Estonians. Schooling, there's still this
thing about the old school tie and the family seat in the country. Even if
it's impoverished, it can still be very aristocratic. Another person can
be very rich but still looked down upon.'

Q: 'In the end, doesn't ownership matter?'

A: 'No... (inaudible)'

188

Miriam Schmool also developed the importance of the subjective element in class. Asked whether class was based on money, education etc, she replied: 'I don't think money needs to divide people unless people, rich people are proud and don't want anything to do with poorer people, that's their decision. But I don't think money itself is a division.... A job or financial distinction is only like a small part of you. It's not something that encompasses your whole life from the minute you get up.'

Hannah Krausz acknowledged 'opportunities', environment and education as differences between the classes, but 'not money, definitely not money'. When I asked her how she would class herself, she said 'how would you class me?' and laughed. I answered 'middle class'. She asked what that meant.
Q: 'Maybe a range of occupations, education and incomes.'
A: 'I think it means to me an ability to communicate with whatever kind. It's an understanding between. I think you understand what I mean, and I understand what you're on about, so to speak....'

The only Jewish woman to bring in her own observations and experiences of class was Ruth Friedmann. Asked to describe British society, she answered: 'I'm not sure. I think although there's supposed to be equality, there isn't. There are still class distinctions. I myself am more attracted to the rough and readies, like hard-working,market people. I like people like that very much. And the more highly educated fancy families, perhaps titled English people I find less appealing. We do actually come across this crowd every year on holiday. I find them less sincere.'
Q: 'Is the basis of distinction one of money?'
A: 'I don't think so. A lot of these fellows I come across in Ridley Road
    market are going to Miami two or three times a year. They've doing very
    nicely financially, probably. There's a lot to do with education, lifestyle,
    social lifestyle. Even though they're wealthy, they're not into sort of
    culture, or concerts, or ballet.'

Asked later in the interview whether and how social mobility is possible, she answered: 'I think basically by seeing to it that they get a better education than that offered by circumstances, and by moving into an area where things are different. I don't know, I say that, but on the other hand, are you familiar with Frinton? It's where we've been on holiday for the last umpteen years, and you meet the most amazing, amazing people there (Laughs) ... who

189

even on the beach use champagne glasses. You mustn't use disposable cups.
I think if anyone wanted to get into that society, they'd have a very,
very difficult time. It's such an eye-opener. They're real Sloane Ranger
types. Unbelievable. Even the names. They stick to the same names
- Alistair, the biblical names, Henrietta, Charles.'

Cui Bono?

Faced with a sample of people so uninterested in class (on the whole), and
who see class not in terms of economic power or even differences in income
but in terms of education, culture, language, lifestyle (not necessarily
determined by income) and how you look at people, the question 'who benefits
from class, or is it just how things are, someone always has to be at the
bottom?' would have seemed nonsensical and irrelevent, so I did not ask it.
There are clues in one or two of the interviews of what the response would
have been. I did ask the question of the first Jewish woman I interviewed,
Hephzibar Levenberg, and she replied: 'I have to say that I think it doesn't
work that way in the orthodox community ... because everyone has a shared
value system, the divisions don't operate, everyone mixes in.'

In the middle of a long answer to a question about whether there was not a
difference between a factory owner and a worker in terms of life chances,
Miriam Schmool answered: 'We're in God's hands, we can win the pools
tomorrow. If we realise that we're all equal and that what we are and what
we have is not in our hands, it comes from God, then we'd be happy with what
we've got. I've got a saying on the wall - "Happiness is not having what
you want, but wanting what you have", "the grass next door may be greener,
but it's as hard to cut", "it's nice to be important, but it's more important
to be nice". These are all English ways of saying a Jewish philosophy,
which is that we have to know that what we have in life is because we were
born into that situation and this is what God has wanted, what he has given
us....'

I suspect the answers would either have been a look of incomprehension, or
'the rich, but so what?' with a shrug.

To summarise, the Jewish women see class, to the extent they look at it at
all, in terms of lifestyle, education, culture and values. Money is recognised
as a determinant by a minority and does not have any primacy whatsoever.

This is typical of the 'bourgeois' ideal type of class image. Personal experience of class rarely seems to touch them.

vi) <u>Jewish men</u>

The men's understanding of class gave very much more prominence to money as a determinant of class than their wives' did, although it would not be true to say this means their perceptions are 'proletarian'. Money is only one factor among several.

The number of classes the men saw were as follows:

    Two men perceived two classes
    Six men   "   three   "
    One man   "   four   "

One of the men who saw only two classes had himself a class four (working class) occupation, the only one among the male Jewish sample. The other saw class in terms of the generation and consumption of ideology, so his seeing two classes is not indicative of a 'proletarian' consciousness in any way. The two men who perceived two classes were also the only two not to recognise money or economic power as determinants of class.

We have already seen[33] how Ishmail Jacobson recognises material inequality, denies its significance in class terms and concludes by denying the existence of class at all. Nevertheless, he reveals the criterion he feels <u>ought</u> to operate when he said: 'I think I'm poor, and they're more working class than I am because my father worked with his hands and I'm professional.' He is pointing to the fact that the manual/non-manual divide no longer operates strictly in terms of reward, and as a white collar worker himself, he feels it should.

Mordecai Bloom sees the production and consumption of ideas and ideology as the basis of class. The ruling class he sees as consisting of rabble-rousers from 'the old boy set', big business, the 'educational and social service system' and the media. He sees television as the controlling force, and the one the idea-generators all want to use: 'A friend who's a TV producer who'd just graduated in psychology went to give a lecture on the

191

topic of why babies laugh. All these academics wanted to know was how they could get into television. (Laughs) So you have all these different power groups imparting different perspectives to others then you have the others who are the actual people, whether it's manual jobs or white collar jobs or out of work, whatever they're doing. They're receiving all this input, and I think it is not an input which makes people happy. It's on many different levels an input which does not help people fulfill themselves as men and women living in the world.

Q: 'So there's a group generating ideology and another receiving it? It's not based on economic power then?'

A: 'Economic power is just an example of this kind of leadership and it may not be relevant to ordinary people. It may not actually affect. You know the advertising is distasteful, all right, I suppose that's in the hands of big business, but big business is only responding to what people think about.'

Among those who recognised money as a factor in class, there were several who pointed to edcuation and 'home background'. For instance, Aaron Levenberg, asked to describe himself in class terms, said 'middle class, economically, educationally too'.

Q: 'What other classes are there?'

A: 'Upper middle/aristocratic - the main difference is financial. They have vastly more expensive properties and more capital and educational establishment. And working class, but that's becoming a bit of a misnomer because of vast unemployment .... Essentially, they don't own property, own their house. Sometimes they have large incomes but because of education they don't know what to do.'

Q: 'So it's not just size of income?'

A: 'No, no. That's important, but it's educational and family and values.'

Q: 'Is the important factor economic, or education?'

A: 'If one is talking about class, the most important thing is financial....'

This stress on the economic was not particularly shared by the others, and probably probably reflects Aaron's background as an academic economist. Perhaps more typical was Emanual Diamond, who saw blurring of class lines as a feature of the class system. Asked how many classes there were, he replied: 'I'd probably say three. There's the miners - I'm joking. There's the working class attitude, the white collar typing, blurring a bit with the upper class,

and the upper class. They're still definitely there, the Etons, Harrows, see themselves as a different breed, I'm pretty sure of that.'

He saw the middle class getting bigger because of automation and the growth of the service industries. Asked whether it was education or money which was the important factor, he replied: 'Education. Well, there are three factors - home background, attitudes, education, then whether they make money as the result of the first two.'

Israeli Abraham Bauer pointed to money and background as determinants in Britain, unlike the United States and Israel, where money was the distinction: (Here) 'You can be very rich, but you're not "in", you're not coming from the right background. You can be poor and still "in" because you do come from the right background.'

Isaac Friedmann, a teacher with a degree in the sociology of education, was not surprisingly very knowledgeable about class and its history. He was evidently acquainted with the Affluent Worker literature, and was no Marxist. He saw the power of capital as having been diminished by unions. Speaking of the ownership/non-ownership of capital, he said: 'People don't necessarily see themselves as manipulated by the owners of production in the way that they did a centure ago because they have powerful unions who can turn round and oppose very effectively. The owners of production have become restricted and limited by the united power of the workers.'

As a teacher, he saw very different values operating in middle class and working class homes vis-a-vis reading and learning: 'Verbal competence is a pointer to class distinction now more than bank balance, and other more subtle things. It's not as overt as it was.' He pointed out differences in dress, concluding 'white collar, blue collar'.

Philip Grossman's understanding of class was in many ways the most sophisticated and the product of a varied career in industry as an electrician and more recently as a manager: 'I think I see people split up into artisans and managers and professional people as far as working life goes.... Some live in private houses. That's one division ... and you've got the learners and teachers, those in universities and colleges. The housing front, the working front and the educational front are the three ways I explain it.'

193

Q: 'Do the owners form a class?'
A: 'The upper middle class.'

He pointed to proximate structuration factors - authority relations in the workplace and consumption patterns (housing) and mediate - capital ownership and education. He then promptly contradicted himself by saying: 'Basically, I feel everybody's working class. Whether you're working to be a manager, you're working to get a wage at the end of the week. It might be a different kind of job between a manager and a man who sweeps the roads, but he organises his job as much as the manager of a big corporation pro rata.'

This is denial of the significance of class again, despite knowledge of it from the inside.

Cui Bono?

The 'worldliness' of the Jewish men[34] made it possible to ask one or two of them who benefits from the class status quo. There was denial of the validity of class conflict: 'Perhaps it would be better if these attitudes didn't exist and people saw that they have a lot in common with people who are richer than them.' (Aaron Levenberg) There was also denial that anyone benefited: 'I don't think anyone does. Everyone, insofar as they let themselves be enslaved are enslaved. Insofar as they discover freedom, they are free.' (Mordecai Bloom) Only one man ventured to say who benefits and he wasn't sure: 'There's a large number of working classes and a small number of upper classes and the small number is making the best out of it. Whether it's true, what is the relative power, I don't know.' (Abraham Bauer)

To summarise, the Jewish men, as middle class people, had overwhelmingly 'bourgeois' images of class in Britain, with the heavy qualification that they were much more aware of the economic nature of class determination than the Jewish women: seven out of nine agreed that economic factors were important. Only one said it had primacy. They were most like the English men in this respect, and in the way they did not talk about lifestyle and culture much, but there was not much personal observation evident. There was an impression that the subject was one on the whole they were aware of but were remote from. This is confirmed by the following data on the salience of class.

c) The Salience of Class

We have seen above a sample of what the respondents knew about class - its basis, its form in society, who benefits and where they see themselves in relation to it. We have also seen some evidence concerning the amount of personal experience and observation which people brought into their answers to the questions about class. It is the English who seem most readily to use class as a category. Data from the answers to three questions gives additional evidence. Respondents were asked to describe themselves (in the Ten Statements Test)[35] Stamford Hill and 'British society', 'Britain' or 'the divisions in British society' as if to a stranger.

Analysis of the Ten Statements Test revealed only four individuals who used class as a category - one middle class West Indian woman, one middle class and one working class English woman, and one working class English man - Tom Hetherington. Descriptions in terms such as 'professional' or relating to occupation were not taken to denote class, only explicit class descriptions, except in the case of Tom Hetherington. After the interview was over, I remarked that I was surprised he had not described himself as 'working class' in answer to the test. He said 'born in Liverpool' was for him a description in class terms, as 'Liverpool' symbolised his working class background and the humiliations of his childhood with its dependence on National Assistance. None of the Jewish respondents mentioned class in answer to the Ten Statements Test.

Asked to describe Stamford Hill to a stranger, one West Indian woman, six English women, four Jewish women, six English men and three Jewish men used descriptions which suggested class - 'snobbish', 'one of the better parts of Hackney, a poor Borough', 'working class', 'quiet - the better part of Hackney', 'up and coming', 'area for professional people', 'poor', 'not salubrious', 'low class people', 'upwardly mobile middle classes', 'dilapidated', 'rough', 'once rich', and 'gentrification' and 'trendies', were typical of descriptions used. Four out of the five references there were to gentrification came from English respondents, both working class and middle class. Perhaps not surprisingly, the English working class respondents described the area in the least negative terms. Jewish respondents, on the other hand, (mostly middle class) used more derogatory terms - 'rock bottom', 'not salubrious', 'poor and dirty' etc.

195

Asked to describe British society and its divisions as if to a foreign visitor, four West Indian, five English and seven Jewish women mentioned class divisons, as did the one West Indian man, six English and six Jewish men. These findings tend to contradict the other two specific tests for salience mentioned above and also the self-classing data, in which (it will be recalled) no less than eleven Jewish respondents were unable or unwilling to class themselves, and also the weight of anecdotal or observational content in their answers. This question is perhaps more of a test of abstract knowledge of society and its workings, whereas describing oneself and one's neighbourhood inevitably involves one's own observations and experience, and one can have less recourse to shared or popular opinion. I am inclined therefore to ignore the answers to the question about British society as a test of salience.

To summarise, 'class' seems to have very low salience as a personal, subjective category for the West Indian respondents, despite awareness of their own class position, of the economic basis of class and of who benefits. Subjective class attitudes can impinge on their lives in hurtful ways, however. Chloe Sylvester described Stamford Hill as 'snobbish' and distinguished that from racism; and Diana Maine remembers unsympathetic teachers who were not so much racist as snobbish: 'If you were a little goody goody and came from a middle class background, I don't think they cared what colour you were. If you're not of a certain standard, people tend to look down on you - "she's not important".'

Education seems to be an important element in knowledge about class, but does not sui generis make it an important category in everyday life. For instance, I asked Beverley Williams: 'Do you plug into class yourself? Do you regard yourself as having a class? Or is it only white people?'
A: 'I think it's the white people do dig more into the class thing. The most I've heard about class was when I was at college or at school when I was doing psychology. The working class and the middle class, you know what I mean, all divisions in classes. I've never really thought to think what class I was in.'

Class has some salience for Jewish people looking at their local neighbourhood. For instance, Hephzibar Levenberg, asked who were the perpetrators of anti-semitic verbal abuse, said: 'Well, young people. A fair amount of it comes from West Indian kids and also white working class kids.'

Emanual Diamond referred to his cleaner as 'working class'. However, it seemed to have little to do with their personal identity. Hence Felicity Bloom (a former gentile): 'I think the Jews have to be outside the class structure.'

It does seem that class has most salience for English people, even if working class people tend to deny its importance as a form of self-protection. Hence Barry Stevens, patronised in his working clothes, answers. 'Doesn't really bother me....', when asked if he is aware of class; and Richard Pryce ('I regard myself as working class') would not go to the opera with his friends from the pub. He is not hypocritical, merely very aware of the subjective significance of class in the different social worlds in which he operates.

d) Class and Political Attitudes

How does the knowledge and salience of class (as well as their own class situations) manifest in respondents' political attitudes and behaviour? People were asked three questions to elicit their opinions on economic and social issues.

i) First of all, respondents were asked whether they thought the wages structure was fair and, if not, in what ways they saw it as unfair. The results were as follows:

'Wages Structure Fair':		NO	YES	EQUIVOCAL	DON'T KNOW
West Indian Women	n = 10	8	-	2	-
West Indian Men	n = 1	1	-	-	-
English Women	n = 10	10	-	-	-
English Men	n = 7	6	-	-	1
Jewish Women	n = 10	6	1	-	3
Jewish Men	n = 9	4	3	2	-

The two West Indian women who were equivocal on this question were both middle class. The greater tendency of the Jews to regard the system of rewards as not unfair perhaps reflects their middle class occupations. The three men who said it was fair stressed that it was the natural outcome of market forces, of

197

which they approved or saw as inevitable. Five people (three women, two men) volunteered that women were underpaid, and another woman pointed to cleaners and sweatshop workers as underpaid, both typically women's jobs. Three of the women pointing to sex discrimination in wages were West Indian and one English. Five women, three English and two Jewish, thought that there was a discrepancy between manual and non-manual workers, and that the former were inadequately rewarded. Three women were middle class, two working class. Seven people, five women and two men, all but two of whom were middle class, mentioned nurses as being underpaid. Other people described as underpaid were librarians, managers and teachers, described as such by a librarian, a manager and a teacher.

Two of the Jewish respondents, a man and a woman, each felt that people were denied a spiritual outlook on the rewards they should expect. Miriam Schmool felt 'everyone has to be grateful for what they are, to realise that they've been given to make the best of it'. Mordecai Bloom said 'I think it's on an educational level that people are really being denied because they're not being given a perspective on life which enables life to be enjoyed.' So it is perhaps important to recognise that the Jews' slight tendency towards support for the status quo materially may not simply reflect their own material situation, which is in any case precarious in a number of cases because of the size of their families, but has a religious underpinning.

ii) Secondly, people were asked to comment on the slogan 'There's one law for the rich and another for the poor'. It was not a fruitful question. Only two people disagreed, both middle class women, and one Jewish man (working class) said he didn't know. There was, perhaps, rather more indignation among West Indian women, and rather more of a tendency to shrug and say 'twas ever thus' among the Jewish respondents, but the differences were not worth pursuing. This question measures little of any significance[36].

iii) It will be recalled from Chapter Two[37] above that it had been suggested by Nigel Lawson (Chancellor of the Exchequer) and other members of the Conservative government that the young were 'pricing themselves out of a job', and that this represented an attempt to generate an ideology legitimising and stabilising in terms of the government's economic policy, and one which is unequivocally pro-capital, putting the blame on the unemployed youth themselves.

The findings are as follows. People who rejected outright the statement 'the young are pricing themselves out of jobs' were counted as giving 'no' answers, as were those who agreed with it but demonstrated that they rejected the legitimacy of the labour market which produced the situation. An example of this is Marcia X: 'I think it's true, if they accept very low wages, it's just that it's making the boss richer by paying people wages that are unqualified.'

'Young Pricing Themselves Out'	NO	YES	EQUIVOCAL	DON'T KNOW
West Indian Women n = 10	10	-	-	-
West Indian Men n = 1	1	-	-	-
English Women n = 10	5	2	3	-
English Men n = .7	7	-	-	-
Jewish Women n = 10	1	5	2	2
Jewish Men n = 7	4	2	-	2

The division in attitudes here falls not so much along gender or class lines, but on status group lines. The West Indians were the most certain that the statement was false, and very indignant in several cases, such as Diana Maine: 'She (Mrs Thatcher) is a bitch, isn't she. She needs someone to shoot her dead. God help me. (Laughs) She is thinking about herself and the people in her position. Why don't some of these rich people put some money into this thing if they're worried about the economy?'

The Jewish respondents were the most willing to agree with the statement, and the women very much more than the men. Several of the Jewish women pointed to state benefit as encouraging youth unemployment, eg Lois Diamond: 'Well, I imagine it comes down to the fact that on unemployment they can get almost as much as getting a job.' Young people's 'materialism' was also commented on.

The reason for these differences probably boils down to 'the brute force of economic reality' as experienced or observed by the respondents. The West Indian respondents are younger and in several cases have themselves struggled to find jobs. They are more likely to know or know of young people who are currently unemployed and thus are more able to resist ideological statements about youth unemployement. The Jewish women are older and many of their own older children go on to religious colleges after school, to seek work within

the community afterwards, in many cases. The one Jewish woman who disagreed
with the statement had a daughter who had tried to get a job and had been
offered a very low wage: 'When my oldest daughter was looking for a job, the
money she was being offered was ludicrous. It wouldn't even pay the rent on
the flat that they had.' This woman was also the only one working outside the
Jewish community - all the others had jobs within the community. Among the
Jewish men, three of the four 'noes' worked outside the Jewish community.
Among the 'yeses' and 'don't knows', three worked within or for the community,
one worked outside (the details of the other's business activities are not
known). This tends to confirm the rather obvious point that ideology is
least likely to take root where direct experience or observation provide
contradiction.or lack of validation. These Jewish women, as mostly middle
class people working in a very sheltered economic environment[38], are
consequently least likely to observe the economic world and most subject to
ideological influences.

iv) Data concerning respondents' voting behaviour will not be surprising in
the light of the above.

	Labour	Conservative	SDP/ Liberal	Green	Issues not party	Does not vote	Cannot vote
West Indian Women	7	1	-	-	-	2	-
West Indian Man	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
English Women	4	3	-	-	-	3	-
English Men	4	3	-	-	-	-	-
Jewish Women	1	2(+2*)	1	-	4*	-	2 ∅
Jewish Men	-	3	1	1	1	1**	2 ∅

* Two of the Jewish women who said they voted on Jewish issues revealed in
   further questioning to be regular Conservative voters in practice.
**Votes only in local elections.
∅ The four who could not vote were all foreign citizens.

The West Indian statistics speak for themselves, but do not reveal strength
of feelings. The Tory voter was middle class, had always voted Conservative
and liked Mrs Thatcher. There were no party members among the West Indians.
Nevertheless, several West Indian women were strongly anti-Thatcher and
anti-Conservative. For instance, Vera Hall, asked why she did not vote
Conservative, said: 'Because Conservatives are Margaret Thatcher innit and

200

she's letting everybody down, she is ... people voted for her, even Black
people and she let them down.' Diana Maine was typically even more forthright;
she has only voted once, but asked how she would vote, she replied:
'Labour, of course. I tell you why, they're meant to be representing the
working class people. I don't know if they are, but Blacks are voting Labour.
Why not vote for them. Not like that stupid woman on television: "I'm
Conservative, Black, British and proud of it." I said, "Yes, you bitch,
because you're living in some posh house, got a lot of money, so you're
condemning your own people now", instead of her helping her own Blacks, in
the Labour party or whatever. She's there, all the Conservatives clapping
their hands, smiling saying "yeah, you Black fool, look at you". I don't
know what she's got to be proud about, her big house up in Hampstead, maybe....'
Later she said: 'I would like to be with my people, with the working class,
if it's meant to be for the working class.' Marcia X said: 'I think Labour's
for the working people, whereas Conservatives look after the rich."
Sandra Green: 'I've always voted Labour. Why, I don't know, maybe because
it's working class....' The self-conscious links are very visible here in
being Black, voting Labour and being working class.

The English voting statistics were interesting in a number of ways. Six of
the eight Labour voters were middle class. These middle class Labour voters
comprised two Party members, two Communist Party members who vote Communist
when there's an acceptable candidate, and two who have thought about joining
the Party. The two working class Labour voters were not interested in Party
membership, although one was active in a trade union. The Conservative voters
comprised a middle class couple, a working class couple and two other working
class people (a man and a woman). This latter admired Mrs Thatcher as a
woman. Of the three other working class voters, one disliked Labour's
anti-nuclear policy, and the couple were most concerned about housing.
Barry Stevens: 'Well, Conservatives will give me the chance to buy a house,
Labour won't. I haven't got any social problems. If I did, Labour would
help me.'
Q: 'So housing is important?'
A: 'Yes that, and Conservatives don't like scroungers. They like you to go
   to work, whereas Labour are a bit soft like that.... Labour are too
   much for this minority business.'

One working class voter had voted for the National Front when she was younger,
but could not think why she had done it and was rather ashamed.

201

I would not wish to give the impression at this stage[39] that the Conservative voters were racist and the Labour voters were not. The working class Labour voters and non-voters were just as liable to express racist views. It was interesting that one of the working class Conservative voters said 'I've been dreading you asking me that' when I asked her who she voted for. She had clearly categorised me as a Labour supporter. Only one person, Richard Pryce, had been a Conservative Party member.

The three uncommitted non-voters were both cynical and confused. Typical was Pam Dixon: 'Tories are for the rich, but Labour are too extreme in their thinking and their attitudes, they're not really helping the working class, they're lining their own pockets.'

Judy Jones thought the Conservatives were 'making it awkward for the working class person' but felt we ought to 'go through this to get a better life in the future'.

The reference to class here is interesting. While the questions about voting behaviour did not allude to class at all, they were situated towards the end of the interview after the subject of class had been discussed. Consequently it is difficult to say conclusively that the link between class and voting is clear in people's minds at other times. The data do tend to confirm the view of the Left within the Labour Party currently that its policies should be much more consciously aimed at winning the support of the working class. Housing and the NHS were particular concerns. Interestingly, no-one mentioned unemployment as an issue.

The only question any of the Jewish respondents appeared to take exception to was the one about voting behaviour. A mild reluctance to answer[40] was perceptible among several of the women, and Rebekeh Teff said 'Oooh, that's a personal question', and laughed. It was funny considering the mass of detail about her life and opinions that she had already revealed during the interview. Others denied they were 'political', another admitted leaving the choice to her husband. All three voted Conservative or 'on the Jewish issues' (Conservative in practice).

There is little evidence of the remains of the traditional Jewish support for the Labour party among these Hasidic Jewish respondents. Only one person voted Labour, although several - particularly those with a university education - had been involved actively as students. One such was Felicity Bloom - 'once a real Leftie'. Asked why her interest had dropped away, she said: 'I found a better ideology, a more satisfying one.' She now voted purely on Jewish issues. Another such was Lois Diamond, who had voted for one Labour and one Conservative candidate in the previous local elections.

Others were definitely anti-Labour, despite having parents who had been Labour supporters. Maurice Schmool said his father and brother were Labour 'because the whole philosophy of Labour is caring, and the Jewish people want a better society', but he said that now the impression was that 'Labour is more interested in equality rather than quality'. The Thatcher Government's upholding of the family and traditional values was approved of by several. Labour's minority rights policies were less than popular, however. Ishmail Jacobson: 'We see the Mayor of Islington, his Lady Mayoress is another man; we see that the Labour Party is criticising their own victor in the Fulham by-election because he kept on having his photograph taken with his wife and daughters, and this is "heterosexist". We have all gone mad!'

It is undoubtedly the issue of education which accounts for most of these religious Jews' tendency to vote for Conservative candidates. This is partly because of the comprehensive schooling issue. For instance, Isaac Friedmann: 'The Labour Party's policy with its enforced comprehensivisation I see as utterly immoral.' Principally, however, the main issue locally seems to be the seeking of grant-aided status for the religious schools. Rebekeh Teff probably sums up education and voting behaviour most succinctly: 'We've been after state aid for our schools for some time. The Labour Party say they don't like single sex schools. Full stop. However, there was a landmark decision where this left wing council agreed to submit to ILEA (who had turned it down because of lack of money). But the one who's been campaigning most is the local Tory councillor. One the other hand, there's a religious Jew who's a Labour councillor. We tend to use political things for what we can get out of it, not to stick to one political party.'(my emphasis)

Emanual Diamond used a similar analysis with a materialist, class twist when I asked him what had happened to Jewish radicalism among this religious community: 'Jews started off in working class occupations, saw the Left as supportive of their welfare, and so voted Left. Obviously, that's going to change depending on who one identifies with.... There's a tendency to go to the Right with increasing wealth.'

Summary and Conclusions

A number of interesting findings have emerged from the analysis of the data
set out above. Firstly, there is self-classing - the class people put themselves
into when asked the specific question. There was a marked reluctance among
middle class English socialists and middle class West Indians to identify
themselves as 'middle class'. These people have it in common that they are
Labour voters and, apart from one West Indian women, all have had higher
education. It is readily explicable among the English socialists - their
world views were permeated with class as a category and their stance was
explicitly critical of the status quo. The West Indians were not involved
in politics, but I would suggest their experiences of discrimination and
prejudice have not predisposed them towards an identification with the
status quo that acknowledging oneself as 'middle class' might be taken to
imply.

Secondly and relatedly, most of the West Indian and English people with
class four occupations (junior white collar, non-manual and 'personal service'
jobs) did not identify themselves as middle class. Moreover, ten out of
the twelve men in classes one and two had partners in the same classes.
Only two had partners in class four. This suggests that the customary
sociological division between manual and non-manual occupations may be
weakening subjectively, congruent with the material mentioned in chapter one
above suggesting that it was weakening materially.

Thirdly, the findings suggest that, in terms of class consciousness, it does
not really matter whether people define social class in Britain as a two-class
or multi-class system. While it is true that rather more West Indians
than other categories of respondents saw two classes, two of the five
English socialists perceived two classes (the Communists), whereas the
others perceived three. Moreover, similar proportions of English and West
Indians saw class as based solely or mainly on money or power. This, I
would suggest, is one essential element in class consciousness as Marx
would have understood it. The number of classes perceived is less essential.
The rise of the 'butling class' makes the recognition of three classes
likely.

205

Related to this are people's experience and understanding of social mobility, and of the part that education plays in it. The upwardly mobile English and West Indian respondents had in all but two cases had higher education. Education was widely recognised among all respondents as one of the ways people move classes. Nevertheless, there was also the recognition among English respondents that it is money which buys elite education, whereas this understanding seemed to be less grasped by West Indian respondents. In Sennett and Cobb's American study[41] of the subjectivity of class, most of the subjects were acutely aware of the importance of education as a route to the middle class and were accordingly very ambitious for their children at school. The private school sector in the United States is very small and does not seem to have a significant impact on mobility chances. The recognition of the existence and importance of fee-paying schools which are beyond their means makes such ambition and optimism less realistic in Britain. The English respondents appeared to have understood it, the West Indians rather less so. As far as the Jewish respondents were concerned, the social mobility aspect of education was irrelevant to them personally in the wider context of society, although, as we will see in the next chapter[42], the acquisition of learning is itself a mark of prestige.

Housing emerged as another issue of class. It was spontaneously mentioned by at least a dozen respondents in all status groups, and surfaced in a number of ways. There were several references to gentrification and 'trendies' moving into the area; home ownership seen as a mark of middle class status and materially; and most painfully, the struggles that a number of the working class respondents had in obtaining or paying for the kind of accommodation they needed. Tom Hetherington, the tenants' rights worker, had much to say on the powerlessness of working class tenants. Vera Hall, who for two years had been living in bed and breakfast accommodation provided by the local authority, put it most plainly. I'd asked her which class she belonged to: 'Poor! (Laughs) If I was middle class, boy, I tell you I'd buy my own flat. I wouldn't wait on these Council people and them giving me dumps, not fit for a dog to live in.'

Cultural capital would appear to be a significant element in structuration. People recognise its importance in getting jobs, as an element in establishing friendships and, also, for the working class people who acknowledged it, as an element in self-esteem. Like conventional education,

cultural capital resides or attaches to the person in a way that wealth and
what it buys do not. It is this which acts as a brake on downward social
mobility when loss or lack of wealth or employment threatens.

One of the major questions I had set out to examine was whether men and
women perceived and understood class differently. The findings were by no
means clear cut, and again the lack of West Indian males is a lacuna. The
numbers of classes that men and women perceived showed very similar patterns.
Among English respondents, the women were more likely to mention money as
the sole or prime basis of class, whereas among the Jews, the women were
less likely to mention money at all. On the other hand, English women
talked about lifestyle more than the men, whereas both English and Jewish
men were more likely than their partners to discuss workplace relations.
That these proximate (localised) elements of class structuration should
be prominent in these respondents' consciousness of class is to be
expected: the men spent more time at work and were more identified with
it. The women spent more time at home and were more identified with home
life. This apart, there were no clear differences between the sexes in
the matter of class consciousness.

The major differences which were observed fell much more along status group
lines. What emerged clearly was that class had most salience for English
respondents, rather less for West Indians, and very little for Jews. This
was evident in a number of ways. Firstly, of the four people who mentioned
class in answer to the Ten Statements Test, three were English and one was a
West Indian who strongly identified with being British. Twelve of the
twenty people who mentioned class in answer to the 'describe Stamford Hill'
question were English, although seven were Jewish. Four of the five people
mentioning gentrification were English. The English were most likely to
have close friends of the same class, and the Jews least likely. English
respondents were most elaborate in giving more personal accounts of class
than did West Indians, but even more than the Jews. All six working class
English women and one man, two West Indian (one working class and one middle
class) and the man, but no Jews, spontaneously denied the validity of the
personal prestige evaluation that accompanies class 'just because you're rich
it doesn't make you a better person'. This suggests that for English
respondents, 'class' is recognised as the criterion of status, less so
among West Indians.

207

Their class consciousness is best characterised as 'proletarian'. They
were the most likely to perceive a two-class society, most likely to perceive
class as based primarily or solely on money, most likely to regard themselves
as working class, and most likely to vote Labour. The West Indian women
were least taken in by Nigel Lawson's diagnosis of the causes of youth
unemployment.

On the other hand, they were not involved in left-wing politics. They knew
something of the prestige markers of class, but did not talk about them
much. Prestige among young males appears to depend upon the ownership of
expensive gold jewellery, fast cars and designer-label clothes.

The Jews similarly knew about class, but they explicitly rejected it as
a criterion of status for themselves. They felt themselves apart from
the class system as an 'ethnic minority', and had instead a prestige
hierarchy based on religious learning, piety and activity in the community[43].
Jewish women were the respondents most likely to agree with Nigel Lawson,
and Jewish political attitudes generally led most of them to vote
Conservative most of the time. However, it is the issue of education and
the state support for Jewish schools which particularly causes them to vote
Conservative. Their involvement in local politics self-consciously seeks
to serve their own community.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1   See chapter 5, pp123-128

2   See chapter 1, p 9   above for a discussion of mediate and proximate
    factors in class formation.

3   This was the conclusion of an unpublished dissertation, 'Women's
    Perception of Class', submitted by the author to the London School of
    Economics in 1983 in completion of requirements for the award of the
    degree MSc (Econ).

4   Outlined in Ivan Reid, Social Class Differences in Britain, 2nd edition,
    1981, Open Books, p 46

5   A more detailed discussion of the forms of class society, including just
    this point about the difficulty of placing 'white collar' workers
    appears above, chapter 1, pp 7-10

6   See below, p 159.

7   For example, A Stewart, K Prandy, R Blackburn, Social Stratification and
    Occupation, 1981, Macmillan

8   See pp 41 and 43.

9   I was very careful in my explanations before and during interviews not
    to make explicit their focus and purpose. It was necessary to do so
    here to stop Louise going further in pressing for a 'definitive' answer
    about her class.

10 I indicate where I have edited the following account of this part of
    Richard's interview. Otherwise, all that is said is reported verbatim
    and in the chronology of the interview itself.

11 See above, chapter 4, p.112

12 See chapter 1, p 9.

13 I would not claim that all the interviews were as free and open or as
    successful as this one.

14 The contrast between this and the Richard Pryce interview is startling, and
    perfectly illustrates the problem of perceived differences in class
    between respondent and interviewer. See ch 4, p 109.

15 See chapter 5, pp 123 - 128

16 See chapter 7, pp 222-3

17 See chapter 2, pp 38-45 and note 45.

18 Elizabeth Bott in Family and Social Network interviewed both sexes but
    did not analyse her findings on class images along class lines. For a
    brief outline of such an analysis see the author's MSc dissertation,
    'Women's Perception of Class'

19 See chapter 4 , pp 101-103 for a discussion of this methodological problem
    and its theoretical implications

20 P 41 above

21 See chapter 1, pp 20-21

22 See above, p 160, Beryl Clark

23 A Giddens, The Class Structure of Advanced Societies

24 This illustrates the effect of a leading question.

25 See chapter 2, pp 41 + 43

26 See above p 169

27 Ibid. The other is Wendy Moore. See below, p 178

28 See above, p 170

29 The author's MSc dissertation (see note 18 above) found that men
    interviewed described the basis of class as economic, whereas the women
    saw it more in prestige terms. The sample was miniscule, however - two
    married couples - and so it is to be regarded as more the basis of a
    hypothesis than a statement.

30 See above, p 163

31 See chapter 4, p 110   , for an account of the methodological problems
    this raises.

32 The others were Ishmail Jacobson, see p 167 above, and Isaac Friedmann,
    p 193 below

33 Ishmail Jacobson, p 167

34 In that several of them worked outside of the Jewish community.

35 See chapter 4, pp 106-107 for a discussion of the methodological
    issues this raised.

36 See H F Moorhouse in 'Attitudes to Class and Class Relationships' for a
    discussion of the validity of and meanings to be derived from questions
    of this kind.
37 Ch2, note 13, P 46
38 All but one of the Jewish women who had paid employment worked for their
    communities as librarians, teachers, social or community workers.

39 See chapter 7 below

40 Alas, I did not pursue this. It was towards the end of what were very
    long interviews and it felt like dangerous ground. (I am led to the
    view that my appearance as a middle-aged, middle class sociologist asking
    questions about class caused them to categorise me as someone with
    different views from themselves.) See chapter 4, p 109   for a
    methodological discussion of this.

41   R Sennett and A Cobb, <u>The Hidden Injuries of Class</u>

42   See chapter 7, p 222

43   Ibid

* This table does present a problem for the theorist who wishes to talk about
  'middle class' and 'working class' as discrete and even contrasting categories.
  However arbitrary it may be, some kind of distinction has to be made. The
  division between the middle class and the working class is drawn between
  classes two and three. The distinction lies in a number of dimensions, but
  principal amongst these is economic success or the realistic possibility of
  such success coming about. This distinction can perhaps be seen most clearly
  comparing intermediate non-manual occupations on the one hand and skilled
  manual and junior non-manual occupations on the other. Junior and middle
  management grades have a career structure which ends at the top of the
  organisation, whereas this is typically not the case for skilled manual
  workers, supervisors, foremen and clerical workers. Similarly, the potential
  for the skilled, self-employed, non-professional lone worker is strictly
  limited, whereas a similar person who employs others is not so limited.
  Higher education is another dimension in this class divide, being typical of
  classes one and two, but not of classes three, four and five. What I have
  termed 'cultural capital' also divides fairly sharply along these lines.

CHAPTER SEVEN

STATUS GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS

The Area

Stamford Hill is a late Victorian suburb situated at the north end of the
London Borough of Hackney. It is bounded at the north by South Tottenham
(in the Borough of Haringey), to the west is Woodberry Down Estate, a very
large post-war Council estate formerly owned by the GLC. To the east is
Upper Clapton and to the south Stoke Newington. It is bisected north-south by
the A10, a road called along this half-mile stretch Stamford Hill. The area
itself is not much more than a half-mile square. The nearest underground
station is a mile to the east of Stamford Hill - Manor House - and there is a
British Rail station in Amhurst Park on the Enfield to Liverpool Street line.
There are bus routes north/south on Stamford Hill and east/west along Amhurst
Park and Manor Road. Buses are the most commonly used form of public transport
used by people living in the Stamford Hill area[1].

There is some purpose-built Council housing in the area, most notably several
pre-second world war six-storey blocks known collectively as the Stamford
Hill Estate. It is is situated on the east side of Stamford Hill. The other
blocks are on Manor Road at the south-west corner of the area.

The houses in the neighbourhood were built mostly between 1875 and 1905[2].
They are, almost without exception, terraced houses and are fairly large -
between four and six bedrooms. This size has lent itself to a variety of
kinds of occupation and tenure, beginning with renting or ownership by single
families in the early days of the area, with an increasing tendency towards
multi-occupation as time went on, with a concomitant deterioration of the
fabric of the buildings and in the upkeep of the gardens and streets. It
was probably the Rent Acts of the early 1970s which halted this tendency
as landlords were less able to set rents freely and evict tenants. There
has been a gradual return of owner-occupying families to occupy whole houses,
but this has not significantly altered the appearance of the area, which is

213

still rather seedy and run-down. Along with much of Hackney's Victorian housing, they were not well built in the first place[3].

The most significant inpact over the last five years, coinciding with the boom in house prices in London, has been the establishment of Housing Action Areas in a number of collections of streets in Stamford Hill. Under these schemes, grants can be obtained to renovate and repair houses up to a certain standard and, most significantly, to subdivide houses into flats. Developers are taking full advantage of this, with the result that the newest immigrants to the area are young and largely middle class first-time buyers. Hackney Council itself has bought and subdivided a number of terraced houses for rent and Housing Associations have done likewise.

Population Statistics

There is a lack of detailed neighbourhood statistics about the origins and ethnicity of Stamford Hill's inhabitants. In Hackney's population as a whole there is an astonishing diversity of countries of origin. In a research report on Black and ethnic minorities in Hackney produced by the Borough Council[4], there are no less than 82 countries named[5]. The interesting statistics as far as this research is concerned are that 15.1% of residents in Hackney originated in the Caribbean region, compared with 4.7% from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, and 58.2% from within the United Kingdom[6]. These statistics were based on the country of birth of the head of household. There are no accurate statistics about the size of the Jewish community in Stamford Hill. The size of the 'Orthodox Jewish Community' in Hackney has been estimated at 12,000[7]. To put this into context, some 26,000 of Hackney's 176,000 residents are recorded as 'Caribbean', and some 8,000 are from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan; about 100,000 are from within the UK[8]. It is undoubtedly the case that Stamford Hill and Upper Clapton house most of Hackney's 'Orthodox Jewish' community. So a picture can be glimpsed here of Stamford Hill as a very diverse area in ethnic terms with a large Jewish religious population. Personally I know of people from Cyprus, the Irish Republic, Poland, Nigeria and Turkey, as well as from the groups ennumerated above. On the streets, the very religious Jews appear most numerous.

Housing

According to 1981 census material produced by Hackney Council, 16.6% of
the Borough's households are in owner-occupied dwellings; 57.5% are in
Council property; 7.3% are in Housing Association properties, and 17.8%
are in privately rented accommodation[9]. The figures for Stamford Hill
itself are not available, but the proportion of Council property is likely
to be much lower and the proportion of owner-occupiers higher than for
Hackney as a whole.

In Hackney as a whole, a high proportion of those of Caribbean origins
live in Council property (65.5%) compared with English (60.5%), but
also, interestingly, they are more likely to own their own homes (19.6%
as against 13.3% of English households). It is illuminating to compare
these figures with those for Indian households, of whom 42.8% own their
homes, and 33% of whom live in local authority property. These statistics[10]
suggest that in terms of house tenure at least, West Indians have more in
common with the indigenous white population than with those originating in
the Asian sub-continent. Nevertheless, a very critical report was produced
by the Commission for Racial Equality in 1984, the report[11] of a formal
investigation into Hackney Borough's housing allocation policy. This found
that white homeless waiting-list and 'decent' tenants received better
quality property compared to Black tenants; newer, more houses as opposed
to flats, and flats on the ground or first floor of blocks of flats[12].

One measure that Hackney Borough Council has introduced in an attempt to
overcome racist practices in its administration is racial monitoring,
particularly in housing and social services. In particular, efforts are
being made to recruit and promote 'Black and ethnic minority' workers.
Latest statistics show that Black and ethnic minorities account for 30% of
the total workforce and 21% of officers graded at SOL or above[13]. This is
an improvement on previous statistics and undoubtedly reflects the Council's
equal opportunities policy.

Employment and Unemployment

In the Hackney population as a whole, the 1981 census indicated that the overall unemployment figure for the Borough was 13.7%; the rate among the Caribbean people being 19.3%, and among English 10.8%[14]. The figures for the 16-19 age group were even more stark: 26.3 of all Hackney's 16-19 year olds were unemployed and 21.6% of its English youth, but 37.5% of its Caribbean youth[15].

Socio-Economic Groups by Country of Birth of Head of Household[16]

	England	Caribbean	All
Professional	1.9 %	0.7 %	2.0 %
Employers and managers	7.4 %	1.8 %	7.2 %
Other non-manual	20.1 %	16.8 %	19.5 %
Skilled manual	24.3 %	29.1 %	24.9 %
Semi-skilled manual	16.7 %	29.7 %	19.4 %
Unskilled manual	7.7 %	10.8 %	8.0 %
Other	21.9 %	11.2 %	19.0 %
TOTAL	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %

The differences between West Indians and English seem to be widest in the proportions of professional and managerial people within the two communities. The West Indian community _is_ a more proletarian one, as the sampling and material in Chapter Six above indicate.

There is no available direct evidence about the unemployment rates and employment patterns of the very religious Jews in Stamford Hill, and of the Lubavitch community in particular. Neither the census nor Hackney's own statistics identify this group. It is likely that many links remain with the traditional trades of Jews in the East End such as clothing manufacture, jewellery, taxi-driving, wholesaling and retailing.

The Jewish Community of Stamford Hill

There have been Jewish people living in Stamford Hill since before the Second World War. The major period of immigration of Jews to England took place between 1881 and 1914, when over 100,000 migrated here from the Pale Settlement of Poland and Rusia[17]. On the eve of World War I about two thirds of the London Jewish population still lived in the East End[18]. As they became more prosperous, many moved to North London, Stamford Hill and Upper Clapton in particular.

Jews cluster in areas for a number of reasons[19]. In the first place, a local population has to be established in order to maintain a synagogue. Jewish law forbids an observant Jew to ride on the Sabbath, and so one has to live within walking distance of a synagogue. An established community then makes possible and viable the ancillary religious services such as the ritual bath (Mikvah), schools, butchers and other kosher food shops. Then it is undoubtedly the case that most immigrants tend to choose to live initially where there is an existing community of people of their own nationality or kind. They feel the need for a social community to make friends within and for their children to grow up amongst. The very strong tendency towards endogamy makes the latter point particularly important.

The more affluent Jews of Stamford Hill moved on in turn to Golders Green and Hendon, leaving behind the poorer but also more religious people. There was a further period of immigration from Europe during the 1930s and 1940s of people fleeing the Nazis. According to Sharot, the ultra-orthodox Jews of today are mostly the immigrants of this period who preferred to set up their own organisations rather than join the declining Orthodox organisations of the earlier East European immigrants.

Judaism in Britain is of three main kinds. Most liberal or anglicised is 'Liberal', 'Reform' or 'Progressive' Judaism, developed in response to what have been regarded as outdated orthodox practices and beliefs. Customs and practices are simpler and men and women may sit together in the synagogue. Then there is Orthodox Judaism, which has roots both in the long established Anglo-Jewish community and the Russian and Polish immigrants of the 1880s. The majority of synagogues in Britain are Orthodox, and Orthodox Jews vary

very widely in the number of laws they keep. Typically, congregations hold
decorous Orthodox services and the sexes are segregated, but a fully
Orthodox level of religious practice is not kept up outside the synagogue.
Finally, there are the ultra-Orthodox Jews, who keep as many laws as possible.
They refer constantly to the fundamental laws of Judaism to be found in the
Torah and to the Talmud teachings which amplify and illustrate the Torah.
The ultra-Orthodox are further divided into the Hasidic Jews and
non-Hasidic or Litvish, whom Hasidics are inclined to call 'misnagdish',
or opponents of the Hasidic tradition. Divisions among the ultra-Orthodox
date back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Eastern Europe.

In Stamford Hill, there are many Orthodox and Reform Jews living still, older
and quite anglicised in appearance. About half of the 'religious'
community of Stamford Hill is estimated to be Hasidic and typically it is
Hasidic men who are most obvious - side locks, uncut beards, traditional
Eastern European clothing (mostly black and white). Non-Hasidics tend to
be clean-shaven. The women, both Hasidic and Lutvish, are slightly less
obvious. Their dress is modest, quiet but not necessarily without style,
especially among the young. Essentially, their arms and legs must be
covered at all times. Married Hasidic women must conceal their own hair,
either under a large scarf, or shorn under a wig. The Hasidic community is
subdivided into the Lubavitch community, who are outgoing and 'evangelical'
in tone, Satmar, who are characterised as very withdrawn and 'hardliners', and
in between there is a constellation of small communities who also have their
own synagogues, schools and meeting houses. Such groups include Ger, Belz,
Bobov, Vishnitz and Skvir. They are far less endogamous than the
Lubavitch and Satmar communities, although marriages are not so uncommon
with members of the two bigger communities. Collectively, these small
groups organise with the non-Hasidic Litvish into the Aguda, who are
spokesmen politically and organise social and community activities, such as
a nursery.

The Lubavitch Community

Lubavitch was a village in Russia. The founder of the movement was
Schneur Zalman (1745-1812). He developed a carefully organised system of
thought - Chabad - which stresses that 'the feelings of the heart, however

important, are often ephemeral; they need to be stimulated, controlled and fixed by the powers of the mind'[21]. His is not a cool, rational religious system, however, but a systematised mystical philosophy, drawing heavily (like all Hasidic traditions) on the Cabbala. Schneur Zalman set about organising an effective school system, as well as economic and social projects on behalf of destitute Jews. He believed 'a hole in the body makes an even greater hole in the soul'. This spirit, and especially the stress on organisation, is visible in the Lubavitch community of Stamford Hill today. The current spiritual head, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, as well as the headquarters of the Lubavitch community, lives in New York. He is called 'the Rebbe' and his picture was to be seen in almost every Lubavitch home I visited.

The Lubavitchers I interviewed were highly educated for the most part, and their occupations reflected that. I was told that the community members are to be found in many occupations and trades, however, such as insurance, shopkeeping, taxi-driving, medicine, as well as business of various kinds.

The Lubavitch community does seem to be exceptionally well organised. It has a large building in Stamford Hill containing two schools, a library (used by many non-Lubavitchers), a nursery, as well as people organising a plethora of social work and other functions. People suffering the ups and downs of life - birth of babies, old age, bereavement etc - are all helped if they need it. Teams of volunteers are on hand to cook meals, look after children, do housework and generally perform the function of an extended family. Lubavitchers themselves look upon these activities in those terms. The community in Stamford Hill began post Second World War, and there are many converts from Orthodox and non-religious Jewish backgrounds who do not have an extended Hasidic family to depend upon. Many of the older people lost many members of their families in the war. Even marriages are arranged or at least suggested. Introductions are arranged between young couples. People introduced formally are not obliged to marry, but the expectation is that they will, barring violent personal antipathy. I was interviewing one of the teachers in the girls' school when he received a phone call from a woman in Belgium who was seeking an introduction on behalf of a young person there. This teacher's own English wife was introduced to him internationally in the first place. His brother-in-law knew him first and thought him

suitable for his sister. She flew to America and (happily) agreed with this assessment.

Education is another important function within the community. As well as formal teaching in schools, religious and other subjects such as Hebrew are taught in the evenings, often one to one. Men are expected both to learn and to teach[22], and this has to be organised. Individuals go out to schools and colleges in London lecturing and talking to (mostly Jewish) young people about the religious way of life. Summer camps are organised for non-religious youngsters. Interestingly, Lubavitch Jews and, one suspects, those from other Hasidic and ultra-Orthodox sects, do not value university education and, indeed, are anxious that their young do not go to university. This attitude was to be found even among the university-educated respondents themselves. They regard it as potentially corrupting to young people who have been carefully brought up and educated in religious ways. Further education is provided in single-sex religious seminaries and yeshiva (colleges). These are located in London and Gateshead (Newcastle upon Tyne), as well as in Israel and New York.

People visit the sick in hospitals and visit house to house in other Jewish areas offering mezuzahs - small boxes containing a piece of scroll on which are written religious paragraphs. Mezuzahs are seen nailed to the right hand side of many front doors in Stamford Hill. Religious households have them on inside doorways too, and people are supposed to acknowledge the mezuzah and its teaching by touching it when entering. Another rather more notorious activity is the approaching of non-religious Jews on the street and attempting to get them to see the benefits of the religious life. They have an immense energy for going out to convert Jews to a more religious state of being.

Religious observance is very strict and seems to permeate most areas of life. Shabbat (the Sabbath, day of rest) is observed most visibly. All the Jewish shops close early on a Friday afternoon, especially in the winter when it gets dark early. There is always a tremendous scramble to buy all that is

necessary and get home in time to prepare for Shabbat. Schools close early, the girls' always before the boys', so that the girls can help with preparations at home. The men I interviewed who worked in organisations outside the community had all made arrangements to leave early on Fridays. Shops remain closed until Sunday morning on the whole, although the odd one opens at dusk on Saturdays. The women light the candles on the Friday evening and a special meal, with a particular bread (chalah) and wine (Kiddush wine), is consumed. Guests are especially welcome at these meals, so much so that there is someone in the Lubavitch community whose task it is to arrange for foreign religious visitors who are in London to join such meals in private households, if they request it. Some households are renowned for their hospitality. No creative work is undertaken on the Sabbath. This is taken very seriously - even light switches cannot be turned on and off. Non-Jews are not infrequently asked into Jewish homes on Saturdays to adjust a central heating thermostat or to mend a fuse.

The keeping of a kosher home is vitally important to all religious Jews. No pork, shellfish or certain kinds of fish such as skate may be eaten. Above all, milk and meat products must be kept separate, not only within one meal (so that either milk or meat products can be consumed within one meal), but also so that cutlery, crockery and utensils for milk and meat are kept separate. Many people now have two dishwashers. One woman I interviewed was going through small handfuls of rice to ensure that there were no small insects   concealed which would spoil the purity of the meal. The responsibility for maintaining dietary laws lies with the women, as does responsibility for children. As we have already seen in Chapter Five above, men's and women's roles are distinct and separate.

Further evidence of the desire for separation in the ideological sphere lies in the ultra-Orthodox injunction against the possession of television. Of course, there could be nothing in the Torah to make this law, but it was recognised as important by all the Jewish people I interviewed. They did not want their children exposed to 'unwholesome' ideological influences. Several of the women listened to Radio Four, mainly to hear the news, and one or two occasionally read newspapers, but only one described herself as a 'news addict'.

Hasidic women, at least those with children, do not go to the synagogue much. They are not required to do so. Men, on the other hand, have many requirements of them to study, pray and perform mitzvot (duties). Most go out to pray very early every morning and many study or teach several evenings a week. There is a number of important festivals which require special preparations. Most difficult is, perhaps, Passover, when the whole house has to be cleaned from top to bottom and all old food is thrown out. Special food is prepared. Other rather jolly festivals include Purim, when the children dress in fancy dress, and Succot, when little huts are built in gardens to have meals and study in. These have to be open to the sky, so either a straw of leafy roof is constructed, or one which can be removed at relevant times. Chanukah, just before Christmas, is another joyous festival. Candles are lit, usually in windows, for eight days. Rosh Hashanah (New Year) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) are serious religious festivals. Hasidic Jews have a number of customs to observe at this time, giving charity, immersion in the ritual bath, as well as praying and reading the law.

The Status Hierarchy

The status hierarchy operating in the Lubavitch community is, according to several respondents, based on learning, piety and the amount of energy that an individual puts into the community in terms of organising, teaching and social work. I asked Felicity Bloom what the criteria were in the status hierarchy: 'Torah learning, how religious a person is. In Lubavitch, another to a certain extent is how active a person is in organising, or whatever. A Jewish religious life is not just about learning and praying but about organising various areas of life.'

Q: 'Does economic status count at all?'
A: 'Jewish occupations themselves have their own status. For instance, someone who slaughters animals in English society is a butcher and is a fairly low status job, whereas in Jewish society it's a very high status job because of the degree of learning and piety that are needed to slaughter an animal in a particular way. That doesn't answer your

222

question, though, does it? For people doing a non-Jewish occupation,
there is a trace of this sort of snobbery. I suppose the doctor,
the person with a lot of education, probably does get more respect
than the taxi-driver or builder. It may be that it's a compound
of other factors, though. The doctor may be more learned and
apparently more pious.'

I asked Rachel Grossman if there was any snobbery in the community:
'I don't think so. There a solicitor will sit next to somebody who's
unemployed. It's because you're a smaller group you all have to pull
together. You don't have the time. People know that this one or that
one isn't rich but they're regarded as people.'

Q: 'What are the status criteria?'
A: 'Well, it can be whether a person's supporting this or that
    institution, but it's not just that, it's learning, behaviour. You
    can have a really learned rabbi who's hardly got any furniture in his
    house. That's not important. It's his standard of learning,
    behaviour and wisdom.'

More prestige attaches to the schleher, the person sent to start a
community in an area. Lois Diamond: 'Twenty-five years ago there was
nothing (in Stamford Hill). One man who was a schleher from the Rebbe
used to go around knocking on the doors of Jewish homes. This was a
strongly Jewish area, but not particularly religious.... The most
prestigious thing is to be a schleher.'

Q: 'Still here?'
A: 'No. He passed away now, but his son and daughter-in-law are head
    of Lubavitch.'
Q: 'So it did pass on?'
A: 'But then there is a counterbalance to this. Judaism is not just
    concerned with the top of the pole, but that every individual should
    contribute.... The important thing is not who's the best at anything,
    but to what extent you are utilising your potential.'

223

Religion is not separate from the rest of life for the Lubavitch community. It forms and shapes it, suffuses it, illuminates it, gives it its meanings. Herbert Weiner, writing about the Lubavitch community in New York where he spent several months, says: 'It offered its followers a world in which the mind was never confused by contradictions, where life was not compartmentalised, where the tensions between heart and mind, flesh and soul, God and His creation, were all dissolved in the unity of a higher plan.'[23]

My feeling about it, despite its strict forms and structures, was that Hasidic Judaism has a distinct whiff of 'counter-culture', in its combination of anti-materialism, its stress on things of the spirit, its storytelling and joking to make religious points, its occasional bacchanalian excesses and, perhaps most particularly, in its attraction for highly educated refugees from more secular lives. One respondent confirmed that there were indeed former hippies and beatniks among converts. Weiner, seeking to find a common root to Hasidism on the one hand and the 1960s psychedelic searches pursued by the followers of Dr Timothy Leary, observed that both expressed dissatisfaction with the surface relationships, truths or facts, and hungered for more. 'There are those in whom this hunger for "more" gnaws without cessation. "Children "from the chamber of yearnings" is the name which the Zohar[24] applies to those so afflicted. Such children appear among every people, in every culture, and in every age.'[25] Judaism accommodates its 'children from the chamber of yearnings' in its Hasidic community.

The non-Jewish 'communities' in Stamford Hill seem scarcely worthy of the name compared to this. Schools and social services are provided by the local authority, religion by churches where attendance is expected but once

a week, and less often is okay, and neighbourliness is entirely random.
There is only one pub in the area, at the southern end of Stamford Hill,
and it is in no sense the focus of Stamford Hill's drinkers' social life.
To fill this gap, a community centre was very recently opened at the western
edge of Stamford Hill in Bethune Road. English, West Indian and Asian people
use the centre, but no ultra-Orthodox Jews so far. There is no discernable
West Indian community activity in Stamford Hill.

I mentioned in the Introduction and in Chapter Four above the problem of the
logical incompatibility of the categories of respondents chosen - those
of West Indian origin, white non-Jewish native-born English people, and
ultra-Orthodox Jewish people. Nevertheless, people living in the area
recognise the categories, as we will see below, and the Weberian concept
of 'status' explains this subjective phenomenon very well. Status has
the immediate effect of creating socially meangingful differences and
distinctions between people and also typically leads to social closure in
close friendships and marriages. According to the ideal type, it tends to be
expressed in terms of a hierarchy of status groups. Another feature of
'status' is that it hampers the operation of the pure market principle in
the economic sphere. Negatively privileged status groups tend to look
to fulfilment in the future, maybe even after death, rather than enjoyment
of it here and now. The extent to which these ideal type characteristics
of status groups apply is discussed in Chapter Eight[26].

The framework of the rest of this chapter is identical to that used in the
two previous chapters. First I shall examine the knowledge people have of
each other - one-to-one relationships between members of the groups, experiences
of racism, anti-semitism or 'trouble', as well as of positive experiences.
Respondents' knowledge of the racism and anti-semitism suffered by others
will also be shown. Secondly, I shall look at the salience these status
groups have for respondents, and finally I shall see the emotional responses,
attitudes and actions which result from this knowledge and the extent to
which it touches people.

I   STATUS KNOWLEDGE

a)   Personal Relationships

People were asked whether they knew people from the other two groups
personally and whether they counted any of them as friends. Some volunteered
family connections - a parent, step-parent or siblings' spouse, or
long-term relationship. Interestingly, there were two Jewish respondents
who were brought up in non-Jewish households who did not acknowledge
this in the interviews. (This is in addition to Felicity Bloom, who
did refer to it.) I discovered this after the interviews were completed.

Number of West Indian Women acknowledging relationships

	Acquaintance-ship (at least)	Friendship	Family Connection
English	10	6	2
Jewish	7*	2+	0

* 3 of these women said the Jewish person concerned was 'not religious'
+ One of these 2 friendships was with a non-religious Jewish person

People were not asked specifically for 'family connections' with other
groups, so there may be more. One woman's mother was English; and
in the other case the woman's brother's long-standing common-law wife
was English.

The relationshipswith Jews were varied: colleagues, neighbours, a
teacher. It was only through neighbourhood, proximity of living, that
relationships with very religious Jews developed. These were both
positive and negative. Most typically the unhappy relationships were
between young West Indian women and elderly Jewish people. For example,
Vera Hall: 'Like the lady downstairs and the one over there. They are,
how can I put it, like whan she sees me, she's known me for years, I've
got to say hello to her before she'll open her mouth. She won't say
nothing to me. They're two-faces around here. They'll talk behind your
back sometimes.... They're getting old, I suppose.... She's bought
her flat, she thinks she owns the grass.'

Diana Maine, on the other hand, asked whether the Jewish population was
not a notable feature of Stamford Hill, said: 'I don't really notice
them. Those people keep themselves to themselves. They mind their own
bloody business. It's people like me, the Gentiles, that I'm more
worried about. I'm always courteous to them. There's a lady a few doors
away, my spirits always take to her whenever I see her. A very, very
nice old lady. We always have a good conversation. I don't know her
name, and I don't think she knows mine, but we have a rapport.'
Diana's reference to 'people like me', meaning non-Jews white and
.   black, is interesting here and probably reflects her
Catholicism.

Only one of the ten womensaid one of her four closest friends was
English. All the others were described as West Indian or Black, so
it would be misleading to infer that West Indian women typically have
close friendships with English friends. This is another indication
of identity: who 'people like me' (close friends) tend to be. Only
Diana Maine alluded to ongoing unfriendly relationships with English
neighbours.

ii) Numbers of English women acknowledging relationships with:-

	Acquaintance-ship (at least)	Friendship	Family Connection
West Indian	9	5	2
Jewish	9*	1[+]	1

* Three of the women said the Jewish person/s concerned was
  'not religious'
[+] Non-religious Jewish friend

Most of the English women interviewed appeared to have amicable
relationships with both Jewish and West Indian neighbours. The one
exception was Caroline Pryce, whose prejudices against West Indians in
particular led her to avoid relationships rather than indulge in
disagreeable fracas with neighbours. Typical of most English women in
their relationships with neighbours was Geraldine Pusey. Asked whether
she had much contact with Jewish people, she replied: 'No, not really.

227

There's neighbours live at the end of the mews here. Very nice couple, but they don't associate much. Keep very much to themselves. They're as friendly as they want to be. I accept that.'

Q: 'And West Indians?'

A: 'Well yes. Next door, I don't know what the lady is, Jamaican or something, and Cynthia, she's ever so nice. We chat over the garden. It's very mixed down here.... I'll get on well with anyone if they'll get on with me.'

One woman's stepfather was West Indian and another had sisters with West Indian boyfriends. Friendships with West Indians like those of the West Indians with English people were not on the whole among their closest. Debbie Longman explained this thus: 'I suppose inevitably you tend to associate with people more of your own background who happen to be white, been to university or.... I don't feel that the others are too separate, not too unlike.' Only Pam Dixon counted West Indians among her four closest friends.

iii) Information about one of the Jewish woman's relationships is not available[27], so n = 9 below, not 10.

Numbers of Jewish women acknowledging relationships with:

	Acquaintance-ship (at least)	Friendship	Family Connections
West Indian	7	2	0
English	9	5	1

Jewish women named neighbours, people in shops and hospital, cleaners, a taxi-driver and an electrician as non-Jews they were acquainted with, as well as colleagues and friends from university days.

It is clear that the Jewish women are by no means socially isolated from their non-Jewish neighbours. Indeed, the volume of contact seems to be very similar, on a superficial level at least, to that reported by the other two groups of women. They did seem to be more ready to acknowledge friendship with non-Jews than the non-Jews did in return, but they are also rather more articulate about the limitations of that friendship. For instance, Rebekeh Teff, asked whether she knew any West Indians or

228

English people, replied: 'My cleaning lady is a white English Cockney
lady, she's great. We get on really well. Personally I get on well with
most people I come across. They have a certain respect for someone
who's religious. I don't have any personal friends, if that's what you're
asking, apart from my cleaning lady.'
Q: 'How about West Indians?'
A: 'I come across them. I used to have a cleaning lady who was West
Indian. They were very religious, there are a lot of them in
hospitals. I personally don't have any problems with them at all.
I'm not socialising with them.'

There were a few Jewish women who found themselves in situations which
were not to do with the Jewish community, such as work (only one woman),
local politics (membership of the Council Women's Committee) and
voluntary organisations such as the National Childbirth Trust.

Felicity Bloom had both white and Black colleagues she felt 'close' to
at the university where she works. Rachel Grossman was very involved
in Hackney NCT. Asked whether she had close relationships with the
non-Jewish women in the group, she replied: 'I think within the context
of the group. Other than that it's more difficult. There's nowhere
you can go to eat or anything like that, but within those interests, yes.'
This reply states very clearly the fundamental obstacle to close ongoing
friendships between these very religious people and others, including
less religious Jews: the strictness with which they keep to the dietary
laws means that only such 'neutral' items as fruit and fruit juice can
be consumed in a non-kosher house. This renders mutual hospitality
impossible. Food, surrounded as it is by a larger number of laws than
any other area of life for religious Jews, is both the symbol[28] and
the means of separation from the rest of society.

Not all contacts with neighbours were cordial, however: Ruth Friedmann
complained of much harrassment of her children by local West Indian
youth, despite repeated remonstrations by her husband with the parents.
English neighbours who used to live across the road also had boys
who were 'awful'.

iv) Eric Clarke, the one West Indian male respondent, did not know any
religious Jews personally. English people were included among his
colleagues at Fords, not surprisingly. However, 'I get on well with all
races, but I wouldn't say that I was close, you know, to any white people.'

v) Numbers of English men acknowledging relationships with:

	Acquaintance-ship (at least	Friendship	Family Connections
West Indians	7	4	0
Jews	6*	1[+]	0

* Three knew only non-religious Jews
[+] Non-religious friend.

The English men made acquaintance with Jews and West Indians in a rather
wider variety of ways than their partners: at work, in evening classes,
in a local community group, through local politics, playing in a band,
as well as simply neighbourhood proximity. The level of contact with
West Indians seems much higher than with Jews. Graham Stuart observed:
'They don't come into our world at all. Blacks and Asians are involved,
for instance, where I work. I don't even know what types of jobs these
people have. I don't know anything about them. They don't seem to,
they've got their community within a community, and they never come out
of their community, so I don't know anything about them, to be truthful.'

Andrew Moore has some contact with his religious Jewish neighbours, but
this is strictly limited: 'Our neighbours are orthodox Jewish and, apart
from the fact that they take keeping to themselves to an incredible
extent for a family with six children, they are excellent neighbours....
He comes and tells me if my car lights are on. On Saturdays, if his fuse
blows, which it did a few years ago, I had to go in and change it because
that would be classified as work.'

Relationships with West Indians are more likely to be described as friendly.
Nevertheless, they were not among the English men's closest friendships.
Asked whether he had any Black friends, Graham Stuart answered: 'Not

close friends. I'd count a couple of Black people as reasonably good friends, a couple of blokes at work. I don't frequent their houses or anything like that, but most of us at work don't anyway. There's a couple of good lads, yeh.'

Tom Hetherington was asked the same question. He answered: 'Not really, not really. I've thought about that and wondered why. I do know why, really. I don't encounter, um, people in my work strangely enough from other cultural backgrounds except in dealing with organisations which are specific to those groups, and I don't have many social encounters with my counterparts, that is partly deliberate. The group I belong to are tenants, not officials or paid workers.' His answer slid off into describing the benefits of Blacks-only tenants' rights groups. It's an interesting answer this one, as it reveals that Tom himself has made some effort to examine himself for prejudice, but as this is uncomfortable (witnessed by his hesitation and self-contradiction), he fell back on a subtle rationalisation.(best not to mix work and social contacts).

vi) Numbers of Jewish men acknowledging relationships with:

	Acquaintance-ship (at least)	Friendship	Family Connections
West Indian	6	1	0
English	9	6	0*

* It must be re-emphasised that respondents were not specifically asked about non-Jewish family connections. Mordecai Bloom, for instance, has non-Jewish English in-laws, and there are two other originally non-Jewish converts among those interviewed.

Contacts with non-Jews generally occurred at work rather than with neighbours, although there are exceptions. The one Jewish man who spoke of friendship with West Indians was referring to former neighbours. American Solomon Teff knew a number of Blacks in Brooklyn, but none here at the moment. Three of the university-educated men referred to the many

friends they *had* made at that time, but in all cases their current closest friends were all other Hasidic Jews. Emanuel Diamond said he felt he *had* 'moved away' from previous friends into the Lubavitch community and Mordecai Bloom said of old student friends, 'We certainly have an affection for them and hope they're doing well in what they're doing', putting them into the past. These men give the impression of withdrawing into the Lubavitch community socially.

Perhaps illustrating this tendency most vividly was Philip Grossman, who had moved from Bournemouth about two years previously. Asked whether he had non-Jewish friends, he replied: 'Yes, not so many in this area because all my contemporaries are Jewish friends. Back in Bournemouth I have many, many close friends who are non-Jewish. You see, being an ultra-orthodox Jew, it was easier in some ways having non-Jewish friends because they accept you for what you are. If you went to their house, they'd understand that you couldn't eat ... whereas having non-religious Jewish friends, they'd take umbrage that you wouldn't eat in their house. It's sort of a rebound in psychological terms, they feel guilty that you're doing it and they're not. They would see it as an attack on them. So we had very, very close friends who are not Jewish who I've grown up with.'

There is the same strong tendency exhibited by the other sets of respondents to have close friends of the same status group as themselves. The one apparent exception was Ishmail Jacobson, who put a former colleague, a non-Jew, amongst his four closest. Nevertheless, he said none of the four were particularly close.

Summary

What emerges is that the women interviewed were more likely to mix with neighbours of other ethnic groups, whereas the men had more contacts at work. This is not surprising, given that so many of the women work part-time. Relationships are generally cordial, in contrast to casual encounters with strangers from other groups, which, as we will see, were described in more negative terms. The exception to this positive picture seems to be neighbourly relations between young West Indians and older

Jewish people. The lack of mutual understanding here is something we will see again in accounts of knowledge and attitudes below. West Indian and English accounts of friendly relationships with each other seem to match, but there is a mismatch between what these two groups on the one hand and Jews on the other say about Jewish/non-Jewish relationships. The non-Jews appear to regard the Jews as more insular than they do themselves. The overwhelming impression is that ethnic status is still a powerful element in people's definition of 'people like me', evidenced by who their close friends are, and this can be seen as rather a gloomy finding. It is at the point when a person acknowledges that others are just like himself that prejudice begins to disappear, I would suggest. This is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition.

b) Negative Experiences with Other Status Groups

i) West Indian women were asked whether they had ever been made to feel at a disadvantage because of their race, and whether they had suffered from the bad attitudes of others. Various sites of difficulty were mentioned by several of the respondents, but not everyone had suffered in any one of the situations.

The most commonly mentioned situation was school. Only two of the women, Diana Maine and Marcia X had actually emigrated as children, but both were indignant at the lack of interest or understanding that had been shown them at school. Marcia: 'When I left Jamaica I was good in school, reading, writing, what have you. Then when I came to England, I felt I was no good. I don't know why that was. Say like I spoke, I was made to feel it wasn't the right way. People would mock you and laugh at you, call you names. I think it's different. Made you feel you were dumb, sort of thing.
Q: 'Were the teachers sympathetic?'
A: 'I don't think so. They had streaming, and they tended to put me in the lower class due to the way I spoke, and not understanding the English, but I thought I was all right, in Jamaica anyway. But I ended up in the lower class and from that you lose confidence in yourself.'

Diana: 'The teachers didn't look into me. I was just left behind. If I'd been given the right encouragement, I had a problem. Nobody

understood me. My mother didn't understand me, therefore I was
disruptive, not because I wanted to hurt anybody, I just wasn't looked
at in the right way.'

Those who were born here also had similar problems at school in many
cases. In Vera Hall's case, the neglect was dramatic: 'I used to not go
to history, science, geography, and I got good reports. What I didn't
used to go to, I got good reports. That was doing me no good, was it?'

Only Sandra Green complained of being disliked by a teacher because of
her colour. The others put their problems down to neglect and lack
of understanding, aggravated by situations where there are predominantly
non-white children and white teachers. Chloe Sylvester had most of her
schooling problems in such a situation and said: 'I think bad
proportions don't help ... you need to have someone those children can
relate to if we're going to create a better society.' Diana Maine, on
the other hand, saw it in terms of class: 'If you were a little
goody-goody and came from a middle class background, I don't think
they cared what colour you were.'

Several mentioned name-calling and shouting from white children as a
problem, but tended to give as good as they got. No-one mentioned
it as a problem in adulthood - indeed, several denied it happened.

In the field of employment, several women had experienced discrimination.
Three had done secretarial courses, only to find it impossible to get
a job afterwards. Two had been forced into accepting employment in a
factory instead. For instance, Sandra Green: 'I can't tell you how many
application forms I sent off, and I've never had a chance to show that
I can do something, what I've trained myself for. Okay, it might be
because of my age, but when I tried when I was around 19, I didn't get
anywhere.'

Beverley Williams had been interviewed at a printing works for a job
she was more than qualified to do: 'They said they wanted someone they
could train and I was really mad about that because I had a little bit
of experience of how to do it, and looking around I couldn't see any Black
people there, so I thought "they don't want a coloured person here".'

234

Promotion is also a problem. Beryl Clark had felt she had been 'discriminated against on two issues - my colour and my sex' when she had sought promotion in the bank she used to work for.

These women did not give the impression of being too quick to see discrimination where it did not exist. Several were modest enough to mention their possible shortcomings. Gem Bailey was one such. Asked whether she had ever been discriminated against for a job, she said: 'No. I've been to the police for typing jobs three times, but I've failed the test. That's all.'

Interestingly, only one woman, Beryl Clark, had personally had problems with the police, although most of the others knew West Indian people who had. Beryl Clark: 'I'd say there is quite a level of racism among the police force because not long ago, we actually caught someone breaking into our car. We called the police and they turned round and told us they couldn't do anything. So if we wanted to bring charges, it would have to have been a private case.'

Only one woman expressed difficulty in housing because of racism, but this may simply be because the others seemed reasonably settled in their flats and houses and had not moved recently. Vera Hall was homeless, staying with a friend. She said: 'They just want to dump you in a flat and leave you. At the Housing they've got a list, if you're Black, white, Asian or whatever. If you put yourself down as Black, they'll not put you in one place, but they'll offer you the worst.' The Commission for Racial Equality's report[29] on the operation of Hackney Borough's housing allocations policy confirms Vera's opinion.

One woman complained of an attack which had been made on her by a group of youths when she was still at school, but that was the only physical incident of a racist nature reported in the interviews with West Indian women. 'Subtle' racism is probably suffered by all, but only one person alluded to it, Susan Fellows. Asked whether she'd suffered racism, she said: 'Yes, I have, but subtle racism. Not the overt stuff.
Q: 'What form does this take?'
A: 'Comments basically. Not comments about colour, but comments based on stereotypes of Black people.'

235

Q: 'Specifically?'
A: 'Well, being looked at as a sexual object.'

Two women denied utterly that they had been subject to racism - Gem Bailey and Philomena Johnson. Despite lengthy probing in different areas of her life, Gem did not come up with any incident or evidence of bad feeling. Her denial was cheerful and total. Philomena attributed her own freedom from racism to having been brought up by white people and to having her own business. She had never had to compete for employment. These denials are interesting and I will return to discuss their significance later.

ii) West Indian man, Eric Clark, seems to have experienced racism in a variety of spheres. At school: '... say there was a fight between a Black boy and a white boy, the Black boy would get the cane where the white boy might be pardoned. You notice things like that.... But as a man I haven't experienced that much racism. I think that's predominantly because of my size. I don't tend to get picked on.' Nevertheless, he has had the experience of phoning up for a job, being told to come along for an interview, and turning up to be informed the job had gone. He was of the opinion that to get a foremanship at Fords he would have to be 'twice as good as a white guy'. As a youth, he had felt himself picked on by the police and also as an adult motorist. 'They tend to take a statement from the white driver and let him go and grill the Black guy. I've experienced that myself as a motorist.'

iii) English respondents were asked for their impressions of 'race relations' locally and were the probed for their personal experiences. The negative experiences that the English women had had with the other two local status groups were largely to do with 'manners'. Three complained of the 'rudeness' of some Jewish people and about their driving. Typical are Sheila Stevens' comments: 'They do tend to drive their cars on the other side of the road. (Laughs) I do think it's probably a culture thing, because I come across one or two who are rather rude, which is probably their culture, which I think is a great shame, because they're really tremendous, Jewish people.'

236

Pam Dixon was less complimentary, describing the perpetrators of various
minor incidents, such as blocking the pavement, as 'ignorant'. Nevertheless,
she went on '... it's nothing to do with the fact that they're Jewish,
it's because they're ignorant.' Pam also complained of West Indians
staring at her and the sense they were talking about her.

Two of the working class English women mentioned the trouble their
children had had with Jewish children. The impression they gave was
that Jewish children were equally as likely to start trouble as non-Jews.
Mary Baker said: 'He was saying at school the other day the Jewish
kids in the school next door were throwing glass into the playground.
He took it to Mr Evans (his headmaster) and Mr Evans went round there.
So they can start it sometimes....'

Caroline Pryce seems to have been the most personally affected. She
complained about 'simply ghastly' Jewish drivers, houses that had been
painted bright colours with the mortar picked out in black (some
West Indians appear to have a penchant for this), and she had had her
bag snatched by a Black youth. When I interviewed her for the first
time, before the interview had started, Caroline talked angrily about
a scene in the street which she had just been involved in: 'I'm
absolutely furious. I was walking over the bridge and this coloured
boy was finishing off a bottle of fizzy drink. He just put it down on
the bridge. I said to him "Why don't you put it in the bin?" and I
pointed to one nearby. He just left it and smiled. There are no
standards nowadays.' Interviewed again eighteen months later and
reminded of this incident and her 'mugging', she said of the latter
incident: 'That's not just Blacks. In fact, I've seen British folk too.'
Q: 'You'd been mugged just before the last interview.'
A: 'Oh yes, I had. But it was a handbag snatch and that could happen
   anywhere.'

Time seemed to have taken the edge off Caroline's anger, but the tone
of much she had to say about West Indians generally was racist.

Wendy Moore had probably come closest to being on the receiving end of
white racist attitudes: 'Being a teacher, you come across this. You come
across nasty attitudes among older children, but I've heard very nasty

things being said to younger children. It's been said to me when I've taken Black children out - "nigger lover". Oh yes, and it didn't just happen once, either. You see when people say "oh things aren't that bad, they're tolerated", you don't know what it's like to be Black. Or to be in a position when you're there alongside them.'

Perhaps the most surprising finding, apart from the triviality of most of the 'trouble' referred to by the English women, was the fact that five of them had no personal complaints at all against Jews or West Indians.

iv) The proportion of English men reporting incidents in which they were involved was even lower - only two out of the seven. Both were quite aggressive incidents. Barry Stevens said that years ago he had been waiting outside the local Catholic Church when a young Black man had tried to put his hand in his pocket, presumably to steal his money. It has left him feeling anxious about groups of West Indian youths: 'Walking in the park with their dogs, fine. But when they're together they're different people.... Jews can be rude, but they keep to themselves. You could walk past thirty of them in the street and they wouldn't touch you.'

The staring that Pam Dixon alluded to above can be extremely hostile. Graham Stuart gave an account of an incident which had happened about three hours before the interview. He had been standing waiting outside a telephone box in Leyton: '... and this Black bloke went past, early twenties I suppose, and I was standing like this waiting for the woman to come out of the telephone box. And as the bloke passed, I suppose I looked at him, and he stared at me all the way past, and then I didn't take my eyes off him. I wanted to know what he was looking at. So he went round the telephone box, then he came back again and looked at me again, really aggressively, but I wouldn't back down, because I'm like that (Laughs) and I kept looking at him, and I thought, "for two pins you'd like to come up and say something to me, something really aggressive". That's the sort of thing which annoys me. He's got a chip on his shoulder, he thinks I'm staring at him, but I wasn't even looking at the bloke really.' It is not difficult to imagine the

238

other participant's version of this incident. It illustrates how fragile
peace between people of different colours can be and the strength of
feelings which can be around. It will be recalled that Graham has two
West Indian friends at work ('good lads'). Of this incident, he said
himself: 'It's basically different cultures like that, you say you don't
like them until you know them. And when you get to know a particular
person, you think "oh quite a nice bloke after all". It's very much in
the mind, really, until you get to know somebody.'

v) Jewish women's negative experiences were very different in both kind
and volume. I was left with the impression that many of them feel their
families besieged in their day-to-day encounters with non-Jews on the
streets of Stamford Hill. Most notable was the fact that each of the
women who had children old enough to go out without an adult accompanying
them (although in groups with other Jewish children) reported that the
children were regularly subjected to at least crude verbal abuse and
name-calling and at worst physical attack by non-Jewish children.
Abuse was a regular occurrence, degenerating into fights when Jewish
children respond. Asked who were involved, Felicity Bloom answered:
'It's certainly not the other racial minorities ... it seems to me that
it's the Black West Indians and the white working class. I think my
kids and most Jewish people think it's the whities who are - there are
the whities and the schwartzers (Laughs), the whiteys are the nastier
ones, and girls are nastier than boys.'

This is not a new phenomenon. Zipporah Roth grew up in an ultra-Orthodox
family in Stamford Hill and suffered the same experiences as her children.

Abuse directed against themselves as adults was mentioned by four women.
This and the threat of physical attack was sufficiently unpleasant to
make Hephzibar Levenberg afraid to go to the local parks by herself:
'I do go but there always seem to be gangs of kids roaming around in
Springfield and Clissold. I went to Springfield last week and a woman
said "don't go that way" because some kids threw something down on her.'

Outright physical attacks by West Indians had been experienced by three
Jewish women. Two of the women concerned did not experience them as
anti-semitic in motive. Felicity Bloom regarded her experience as a sexual
rather than an anti-semitic attack. A Black man in his forties had tried
to rape her.

Q: 'Did you report it?'

A: 'No. No, it was on a Shabbat so I couldn't phone the police. He
didn't _do_ anything. He was manhandling me and trying, you know.
But I began saying Hebrew psalms, which was all I could think to do
in my desperation. He was very taken aback by that. It sort of
stopped him in his tracks. He began "what are you saying? what are
you saying?".' (Laughs)

Hannah Krausz had suffered anti-semitic vandalism on her previous home:
'I have had slogans written on my front door in Craven Park Road -
"Jews go home" and a swastika ....' She (and another woman) had also had
their houses broken into. Despite the fact that large numbers of
burglaries occur in Stamford Hill and no group is exempt, Hannah
experienced hers as anti-semitic: 'We have to bar ourselves in because
for some reason they think we have got more money than anybody else,
which is utter and complete nonsense. We might have silver candlesticks,
because that belongs to our religious tradition....'

vi) Jewish men mentioned less often the problems experienced by their
children, but more of them complained of both verbal and physical abuse
directed at themselves than their wives had, and physical attacks were
unequivocally anti-semitic. Five out of the nine had suffered physical
attacks. They did not have much to say about verbal abuse, but random
physical attacks were another matter. Aaron Levenberg: 'I cycle to
college every day and it's not a daily occurrence but every week I get
insults hurled at me, sometimes stones thrown at me. I've had water
or some liquid thrown over me.'

Incidents can be quite subtle, but menacing, as in the case of
Emanual Diamond, who recounted an incident which happened in Greenwich:
'There were a couple of yobbos, we were walking through the market, and
one of them brushed by me on purpose and made his arm scratch on my

240

briefcase to create an incident, literally, I could see him doing it.
My (non-Jewish) colleague ... didn't actually notice what was happening.
These yobbos were shouting "look what you've done to my friend's arm!".
I have a policy on that sort of situation to avoid confrontation ...
and keep walking.'

Ishmail Jacobson had had his hat snatched by skinheads on a train.
Isaac Friedmann had had his car stoned with him inside it. Maurice Schmool
had been attacked by a Black youth: 'Actually once, yes, but I think
that was an accident. I was rushing, and I accidentally kicked him
because I was rushing, and he ran after me, nearly knocked my head in.'
(Laughs)

Anti-semitism can be experienced simply on the level of feelings.
Israeli Abraham Bauer mentioned this when I asked him whether he had
experienced anti-semitism here: 'Yes, a lot of it, not in a very open,
but I am aware that Jews are not very popular.'
Q: 'What makes you aware?'
A: 'It's little things. You feel it. I can't give you any examples
    right now, but it's general feelings. Nobody here call me "bloody
    Jew", or whatever. Nobody has ever told me he doesn't want to deal
    with me because I'm Jewish, they didn't. But people talk to me in
    a certain way, and you understand why. The British have a good,
    very nice way of saying things, but the French or Germans would
    have said it a lot worse.'

Most denied that they had been discriminated against personally, apart
from one man who said he sometimes felt ignored and passed over in shops.
Solomon Teff pointed to the Holocaust: 'As a member of the Jewish people,
I'm certainly at a disadvantage in that millions of us were killed, not
just in history, but in our own time... only for one reason, because they
were Jewish.'

Ishmail Jacobson spoke briefly and tantalisingly about relations with
other Hasidic groups in Stamford Hill: '... and some don't exactly get
on with others, and Lubavitch in particular don't get on with one other
which I won't mention. There would be terrible trouble!' At this point
he knocked over a glass of orange squash and the ensuing interruption
to clear up the mess put an end to this interesting expose. He had

also complained about non-religious Jews 'who think they are the only objective people in the world. We suffer a lot from that.'

Summary

The negative situations involving the other status groups seemed to vary not only with group membership, but also with sex (although that claim is not being made for the West Indian sample, because of the size of the male sample). West Indians were the ones to suffer discrimination at work, and neglect, the result of institutional racism at school. As children, they had experienced name-calling, but not as adults. Jews, on the other hand, were subject to verbal abuse - men, women and children. The latter were particularly often affected by this, although the opinion of one or two of the English women was that the Jewish children sometimes 'started it'. More of the Jewish men had been physically attacked than had the women, avoidance being particularly difficult because of the injunction against riding on the Sabbath. (Women's attendance at public prayer is not required under the laws adhered to by Hasidic Jews.) Jews acknowledged more trouble with West Indians than vice versa and most agreed that incidents occurred with both West Indian and working class English people, the latter tending to be 'nastier'. The triviality of the problems suffered by most of the English women was what most characterised their complaints. The men also had few complaints but two had had aggressive incidents with young West Indian men. One of these seemed to be six of one and half a dozen of the other to blame, and exhibited machismo as much as racism.

c) Secondhand Knowledge

Personal knowledge of and first hand experiences with members of other status groups are not the only sources of knowledge people have about each other, and each other's problems. A bias on my part must be acknowledged here. While everyone was asked about the problems of racism and anti-semitism suffered by West Indians and Jews, people were not asked whether they thought the indigenous white population suffered problems on account of bad community relations. This is because my

prejudices are those of a guilty middle class white person brought up
in a post-imperial society. My underlying assumption by this omission
is revealed to be that English people alone have caused the problems and
do not suffer the consequences. Several of the respondents, West Indian,
English and Jewish, challenged this assumption.

First of all, though, how did people see anti-semitism and racism? <u>Did</u>
they witness it, and know about it in the abstract?

i) <u>Anti-semitism</u>

The overwhelming impression that most West Indian and English respondents
had was that the orthodox Jews kept much to themselves and that there
was very little anti-semitic feeling and few incidents locally. Several
people denied having witnessed any anti-semitic incidents and one or two
went as far as to say they thought that there were not any. Types of
incidents people were aware of were name-calling, especially by and between
children, and jokes. For instance, Pete Whittaker: 'I know many
people in this area and if you're prepared that people will always crack
jokes about people, but would by no means practise any discrimination
against them, then no.' And Ronnie Baker: 'One hears the odd passing
comment "damn Jews", but again, it's just something someone says. I
don't think there's any fervent anti-Jewish feeling.'

There were exceptions to this relatively agreeable view of Jewish - non-Jewish
relations, however. Eric Clark, for instance, said: 'Actually I haven't
seen much open racism but from talking to people, you get the impression
that for all their white skin, they're hated by all races. Instead
of the simple opposition between black and white, you tend to get
the impression that all races are anti-Jewish... people say they're all
for themselves, they contribute nothing to the community.'

Karen Corrigan makes much the same point: 'Maybe against the Jewish
religion rather than anything else. Maybe it's because there are so
many of them, maybe it's the way they dress ... they make it known that
they're different whereas coloured and Greek people will mingle and
adjust to the community, whereas they don't want to.'

243

These remarks were unquestionably expressions of the respondents' own
anti-semitic feelings, but I repeat, they were exceptional. We will be
looking again later in this chapter at respondents' own feelings and
attitudes as both bearers and receivers of racist attitudes.

A number of people made the point that racists tend to hate everybody
'different', not just West Indians or Jews. Ronnie Baker observed:
'If you look back down the years it's always been against whoever's
happened to be the latest wave of immigrants. There were Jews etc ....
People I've known like that hate everybody, not just Black people. "Damn
Jews, damn Black, damn this and the other....".' Sheila Stevens said:
'I think people who are like that suffer themselves. It's them it's
eating up.'

Tom Hetherington made a very interesting point about the difficulty one
can have in making non-stereotypical observations about the ultra-
religious Jews when there is so little contact with them: 'It's
difficult to describe the Jewish population to someone who doesn't live
here, because they're so distant from the rest of the community that
one feels by implication that any sort of reference to them is almost
derogatory, insofar.as what can you say about them except that they
drive in a particular way, they have their own shops, or whatever....'

The Jews themselves, as we have seen already, have quite a different
view of the level and persistence of anti-semitism generally. One or
two of the men mentioned that there were still clubs they would have difficulty
in joining, and Solomon Teff remarked that he would probably have
difficulty if he ever wanted to become President of the United States.
He analysed various levels of anti-semitism: 'There is the genteel,
Christian English anti-semitism; there is the extreme, fanatical,
formalised National Front type anti-semitism; then there is the street,
you know, having ill-feeling towards any stranger, projection of certain
personal experiences; then you have within that minorities, as it were,
Black anti-semitism.'

There is suspicion of the 'genteel, Christian, English' anti-semitism born
of the centuries of anti-semitism in Europe and the atrocities of the

244

Second World War in particular. Rebekeh Teff relates: 'I had a
neighbour across the road, she died. Her attitude was not very
complimentary. Why? Because she was caught in the war. She said as
far as she's concerned there aren't any good non-Jews around at all. I
said "come on". She said "Look. I lived in a town and every day my
neighbours used to smile at me and say 'hello'. That was it. When the
Germans came to take us away, they were still up in their windows smiling."'
She went on to say that it was part of the English xenophobia suffered
by others such as Indians or Irish, and that it was a problem
specifically of Christian societies.

Jewish respondents were particularly puzzled by Black anti-semitism, as
they felt they had much in common as strangers in the society.
Mordecai Bloom went as far as to say Rastafarians were 'the Hasidim
among the non-Jews, the freedom-lovers (Laughs) in a world full of people
with basically very materialist values.' Rachel Grossman was very
suspicious of anti-Zionism: 'A lot of Jeiwsh people aren't Zionist,
they don't support the political state, but when you see anti-Zionist
writing it's as if the Jews can do no right. It's bound to attract
people who are anti-semitic.'

A number made the point that not all attacks on Jews were necessarily
anti-semitic. Mordecai Bloom: 'It's very hard to tell. It's a quite
violent area, and so when people are being violent, they'll use any
framework or format to be violent.' And Miriam Shmool: 'I think the
main part of the harrassment isn't so much to do with being Jewish, it's
to do with the vandalism in the area.'

Aaron Levenberg summarises perfectly Jewish respondents' attitudes to
anti-semitism in Britain: 'Well, there is an element of anti-semitism
(among the British), but it doesn't distinguish them. Looking through
Jewish history, Jews have suffered much more in other countries. In fact
we're relatively (original emphasis) well tolerated and free to go
about our beliefs unhindered and the fact of the occasional insult -
my wife hasn't got any family ... killed, and our experiences don't begin
to compare with that. It would be silly to worry too much about English
anti-semitism. I think most British anti-semitism is xenophobia rather
than anti-semitism. At least most of the people in our time who have

been anti-semitic have been anti-Black and anti-Indian. Even the Black
anti-semitism isn't anti-semitism as much as they're frustrated and
angry and maybe Jews are an easy target, just like little old ladies
are easy, either to rob or express your anger against....'

There is an obvious measure of agreement here with those non-Jews who
observed that crude racists tend not to discriminate between those they
hate. Evidence of some English respondents' attitudes and feelings
below does not support this.

I asked a number of the Jewish respondents why they kept themselves so
separate and whether this was because of anti-semitism. For instance,
Mordecai Bloom was asked whether the religious Jewish community had a
wall round it and in what ways it was part of British society: 'In
a very interesting way. There are two dimensions to this. First of all
there's a spiritual dimension. The spiritual dimension is that activities
which happen in one place without any direct relationship with the other
place have an effect on it. You put an injection in one part, and another,
the swollen finger, gets better. So there is a belief that by a more
spiritual perspective on life, one section of the community will help
the community as a whole in a spiritual way.... If we look at a more
practical input, I believe that if the Jewish community lives in the way
it's supposed to live - for instance we have a very, very strong inner
welfare system ... there is a very strong family system. I believe that
just by the fact that there is a section of the community which preserves
and maintains these principles, which are very general and apply to
everyone on the planet, that helps others in affecting themselves.'
Q: 'But as a non-Jewish person living in this area, I've had very
    little contact with Hasidic people at all. I'm quite open. Therefore
    it's hard for me to understand that religious Jewish people are
    willing to be open.'
A: 'I would say a lot of it just has to do with language. Not two
    different languages, but within English. It's knowing how to
    communicate with a person who has a different variety of experience.
    (Unlike Lubavitch Jews) ... the other Jews in this neighbourhood
    very often feel quite simply that they were saved from the Holocaust
    and they're trying to preserve what the Holocaust destroyed, and

246

'they don't know how to deal with anyone else. They want to set up
that structure, rescue it, as it were ... this may lead them to be
very retiring, not only from non-Jews but from other Jews.'

Solomon Teff, a teacher in the Lubavitch school, was asked whether he
saw the separation as a function of protection: 'No, I don't think
I've ever thought of that at all.'
Q: 'There isn't a lot of contact, is there?'
A: 'That's a different thing. The question is why do people seem to
be ... isolating themselves. I don't think it's fear of anti-semitism.
People were afraid if they sent their children to a comprehensive
school they might fall into a particular lifestyle, become too
friendly, sex, drugs, petty theft and other types of things ... the
school is made so that the child can function as a Jew. Behind that
ideal is a deeper, wider ideal, namely that the Jew can contribute
more not only to his own perpetuation but to society at large,
and the world at large, by being a Jew, being comfortable as a Jew,
knowing what it means to be a Jew....'

This point seems to be that the Jewish way of life, lived authentically,
serves as a model and example to the rest of society, and also operates
on a metaphysical level to enhance the world's spirituality. Communication
with non-Jews in the here and now is difficult because non-Jewish life
experiences are different and 'language' is different. The separation
of children into religious Jewish schools is crucial to both imparting
Jewish knowledge and creating individuals comfortable in their Jewishness.
The purity of the Jewish light in the world is preserved by separation
- of Jewish children from non-Jewish children, and of adults, although
in a more relaxed way.

We have seen already how the dietary laws function to prevent intimacy
developing not only with non-Jews but with less religious Jews.

Other appurtenances of ultra-Orthodox Judaism which non-Jews cite as
'differences' are the wearing of wigs by married women and the singularity
of the men's dress and hairstyles. Non-Jews sometimes resent this and
experience it as a deliberate flaunting of Jews' desire to be different.

For instance, Karen Corrigan: 'They're living in Britain, which is a
multiracial country now, but they want to be as if they're in their own
country living and dressing as they did years ago. At some point they
ought to say "we ought to be like this". Not in your religion. Keep
your religion, sure, but ....'

Married women wear wigs (and cover their arms and legs) as a mark of
modesty, so that they are less likely to attract the lustful gaze of
men other than their husbands. Some of the garments worn by men, such as
the talus, the four-cornered fringed vest, have specific
religious significance. They are a mark of fraternity. The form of
dress also has an ironic meaning, illustrated by a parable told by
Rabbi Nachman, founder of the Bratzlav Hasidic sect:

> '... a prophet announced that all who would eat wheat that year would
> become insane. Only one family believed him, but even then they
> realised that the scarcity of food would force them to eat some
> wheat. Besides, if they were the only ones to remain sane, the
> others would consider them crazy. What could they do? They decided
> to eat the wheat, but to mark their foreheads with a sign so that
> they would at least know that they were acting insanely. Hasidim
> made the same choice. Living in an insane world, they wore clothing,
> observed laws, and kept other signs by which they could at least
> remind themselves of their insanity." (30)

Of beards, Philip Grossman said: 'By rights all Orthodox Jews should
have beards because there is a lot of holiness within the beard, even
at the practical level where a little child clings to the beard, that's
a connection between her and her father. But there's a lot of holiness.
If you pull out a strand, you tend to put it between the leaves of
your prayerbook ... non-Hasidim tend to be clean-shaven....'

So lifestyle differences may appear to outsiders as defiant statements
of exclusivity, but while this impression is functional in identifying
a person as an ultra-Orthodox Jew, the interior meanings are softer
and kinder than the austerity suggests.

Summary

While there seemed to be relatively little awareness of anti-semitism
among non-Jews, acknowledgement of it came most forcefully from two of
those (very few) who expressed anti-semitic feelings. There was no
discernable differences in perception between English and West Indian

people, or between men and women, or between middle class and working class people. The Jews' knowledge of anti-semitism was clearly affected by its long history. They are all too aware of the variety of its forms and it was obvious from the way the respondents tallied about it that it was endlessly discussed. Understanding it is a form of defence against it.

ii) Racism

Respondents' perception, understanding and acknowledgement of colour prejudice and discrimination were quite different from their perception of anti-semitism. Firstly, many more people were aware of it: most people acknowledged its existence, even if some qualified their remarks with opinions which blamed a minority of Black people themselves. Secondly, respondents recognised that the problems Black people faced were not simply ones of abuse, but had expression in solid material effects such as in employment and housing. Thirdly, unlike the anti-semites, those who most openly expressed racist views were the respondents who DENIED that Black people were discriminated against.

Most of the English respondents recognised that West Indians were discriminated against. Of these, most recognised that the employment sphere was where they suffered, shown in the level of unemployment. Housing was less frequently mentioned. Tom Hetherington had witnessed the 'absolutely appalling' living conditions of many Black and Asian tenants of a particular local housing association and had come to the conclusion that it was operating a racist policy. Nevertheless, he saw that 'it was because they were people who could not influence ... and racism was part of a class attitude'. Several people mentioned the problems that Black people had with police prejudice. Two women recognised that sterotyping by the wider population occurred as the result of the activities of a small minority. For instance, Judy Jones said of 'muggings': 'I suppose there must have been an element of it in the beginning. It's now unfortunate that whenever you hear of a mugging you straight away think it's a Black person who's done it. I don't know where it's come from, but it's just happened.'

Ronnie Baker acknowledged employment as an area of discrimination, but thought that the standard of education among West Indians was'...abysmal.

Sometimes I wonder how they could have passed through the secondary school system. Some of them could hardly read, write or count... I got the impression that some of them couldn't be bothered.'

Four other English respondents denied that racism was much of a problem and that the fault lay with West Indians themselves. For instance, Barry Stevens, asked to describe the divisions in British society, said: 'I think they make too much of this racism business. Black people bring a lot of it on themselves with their bad attitude. They're the ones that think nobody don't like them. The majority of people don't care, I think....'

Caroline Pryce was another to put the blame on Black people themselves. Asked whether she recognised that unemployment was very high among Black youths, she replied: 'Yes. I suppose they find it hard to get good jobs, but then I think it all stems from home life and education. I think probably if they had better education and home life they'd get better jobs.' One thing which was notable about the other three (working class) of the four who blamed West Indians' problems on themselves was that they all had West Indian friends and among them was one woman who had included a Black person among her four closest friends. This splitting of consciousness is something *I shall* return to later.

A slightly higher proportion of Jewish respondents denied that West Indians suffered racism or heavily qualified their affirmative answers in such a way as to blame them - four women and two men. One man denied that West Indians were at any disadvantage in society. The others gave 'yes - but' answers. Five of the remaining six said that Jews had also suffered discrimination and prejudice, but had pulled themselves up. Zipporah Roth was typical: 'The thing is it's a white country started by white people. If they came here it's because they come from the British colonies. They should behave. It's only when they misbehave that it causes this big tension.'
Q: 'You see it as misbehaviour on their part rather than innate prejudice on the part of the whites?'

A: 'There definitely must be prejudice ... but if a person makes an
    effort. We've had prejudice all through our history and even when
    we've made an effort we find it hard. Look at Germany. The Jewish
    people in Germany made a tremendous cultural effort.'

Miriam Schmool pointed to the reactive nature of racism. Asked whether
she thought West Indians had much racism to deal with, she replied:
'Put it this way, if there was less of a problem in the way coloured
people behave, I think they would have less of a problem from white
people. Obviously if somebody sticks a knife in your back, you're going
to react to it. We are human. I've had so many bad experiences....'

The others, who simply agreed that West Indians suffered discrimination most
commonly pointed to employment as the area in which it occurred. Only
one mentioned police racism. Four people mentioned that they thought the
education which Black people received was deficient and to blame for
their poor performance; for instance Solomon Teff: 'I don't think
discrimination itself is a cause of the disgruntlement. I think it had
to do with the whole education system. Part of the education system
has to be to teach people how to rise above other people's weaknesses
and evil nature. You can't plan your life as a reaction to other
people. So an education system which to a large extent sees life in
terms of class war, exploitation - all true by the way, but not a
solution. Man must see it as a conflict within yourself, make yourself
successful, be human within yourself, godly within yourself, prevail
over the animal, lift yourself up. Values which in the West Indies
are very, very real and fulfilling, very spiritual people, strong
traditions, I understand, of togetherness and morality. Now these
things have had a severe knock in this society, this educational system....'

Another to offer an analysis of what had gone wrong for West Indians
was Maurice Schmool. He talked about the deprivations suffered by
Jews in sweatshops, and I commented that Jews had joined unions and been
politically active. He went on: 'They don't have the leadership. In
America there's leadership. At the same time, whenever I speak to them, they
seem to have such a chip on their shoulder about why they're being
mistreated. Maybe they are. It's a lot easier to treat them badly
because it's obvious they're Black ... whereas Jewish people are able
to mix. They're easier to tolerate.'

Education and politics are two areas where Jews have organised themselves well. These respondents are saying that West Indians have yet to do so.

Several of the West Indian respondents revealed that their awareness of racism, like that of the Jews, was not confined to the here and now. No less than four of the women mentioned South Africa. Diana Maine's views are expressed in a typically trenchant manner: '... When I watch the news, and I'm not prejudiced, but I do curse those people in South Africa ... our brothers and sisters in South Africa are being treated like dirt ... I can't understand it. Those white <u>dogs</u> (original emphasis). How can they <u>do</u> such things? How can they do that to human beings? What did that Douglas Hurd expect? They can't do in England what they do in South Africa. I'm not violent, but I'll get violent if need be. (Thumps the table. Laughs) It's all coming out now....'

Marcia X regarded racism as global: 'When you look at it, it's not just English people because look at South Africa! (Laughs) It's Black people as a whole, it's like they shouldn't be there. It's like everyone's telling them they shouldn't be around, it's like we're people who shouldn't exist at all. No fault of ours. We're not there because we wanted to be there. (Laughs) We were created like everybody else.'

A number alluded to the fact that family histories were broken by slavery. Eric Clark was one: 'My own regret is that where the average Englishman can trace his past several hundred years, the average 'Badian ... if he's lucky ... can go back a hundred years. You do feel that's a loss.'

Susan Fellows talked at some length about the effect of stereotyping: 'I feel people see a Black person walking down the street and they feel "Oh yes, I know that person", purely because they're Black: "They're into loud music, they're into...", so there's a disadvantage. When you meet someone you've got to rise above the stereotypical image they've got of you, for a start, to show in fact that it's <u>their</u> idea that's incorrect. Otherwise what will happen is that they'll say: "You're not like other Black people", when they probably don't known any other Black people. They could be saying that to a hell of a lot of Black people, including the one odd Black person who is like their stereotypical image....'

The recognition of the link between the class system and racism has been
highlighted a number of times in this chapter. It is worth raising again
in this quotation from Eric Clark, as it also neatly defies and
throws back what some of the non-West Indians said about the education
of Black people. I asked him whether he thought racism was getting
worse, or were white people adjusting. He replied: 'The average person
will - it's only when you get up towards the higher social strata you
notice they tend to want to perpetuate racism a bit. They don't
want to mix with the Blacks. For that matter, they don't want to mix
with the lower class whites. You tend to notice that. The average
guy tends to have very racist attitudes because he's looking towards
the higher social strata. You can get quite a lot of ignorant
English people. Most of them you can't hold an intelligent conversation
with. The first thing they'll tell you is that you're a very ignorant
Black. I've been surprised, you can actually get a lot of them coming
out of school and not reading. That surprised me ... in a country like
this, highly developed. They actually allow people through the system.'

Summary

Awarness of racism was much greater than of anti-semitism. There was
more of a tendency to blame West Indians themselves for what they
suffered, rather more particularly among Jewish respondents. Jews have
had to endure many centuries of anti-semitism and understand it
thoroughly. Fewer of the West Indians were able to talk at length about
racism. This is probably because of the more working class profile of
the West Indian respondents, or possibly the age profile, as Jews were
older and so had been around to experience and think about anti-semitism
for longer. It may also have been difficult to talk to a white person
about these experiences.

11 SALIENCE OF STATUS

We saw above[10] that when it comes to close friends, the respondents,
with very few exceptions, chose the people from their own local status
groups. This is one indication of the salience or prominence of status
groups in the respondents' pictures of who they [people like them] are,

253

We saw above[31] that when it comes to close friends the respondents, with
very few exceptions, stuck to people from their own local status groups.
This is one indication of the salience or prominence of status group
in the respondents' pictures of who they (people like them) are. Another
more direct one is the Ten Statements Test. To what extent did people
use categories such as 'Black', 'West Indian', 'White', 'English',
'Jewish', 'Hasidic', 'Lubavitcher' etc in their description of
themselves?

	Number of people mentioning status	Total number of mentions
West Indian women	7	8
West Indian man	1	1
English women	0	0
English men	0	0
Jewish women	7	10
Jewish men	8	16

The three West Indian women who did not give status-specific
descriptions of themselves in answer to the Ten Statements Test were
three of those who tended to deny or 'not look for' racism[32] -
Diana Maine, Gem Bailey and Philomena Johnson. Two of the three Jewish
women who did not put down 'Jewish' or similar descriptions were from
ultra-Orthodox sects other than Lubavitch.   This may reflect the fact
that almost all of the Lubavitch women were converts from less Orthodox
households or from Christianity, and Lubavitch is a high-profile
'evangelical' movement. The sects to which the two women belonged were
quieter and less outgoing. Two of the Jewish men also wrote 'Englishman';
and the American and Israeli respondents described themselves in such terms.
When I pointed out to the one Jewish man who did not write 'Jewish' or
similar description that he had not done so, he was embarrassed and said
it was an 'automatic assumption' on his part.

None of the English respondents mentioned their nationality or their
colour. As members of the indigenous population, this obviously has

* See notes p 304 concerning the use of this term.

very low salience. Abroad or in a situation where a non-indigenous
person is present, colour or nationality may have salience. Two of the
men wrote down a reference to where they were born - 'of Welsh origin,
born in Manchester' and 'born in Liverpool'. The significance of this
is difficult to determine, as in fact all but one of the 'English'
men were born outside of the home counties. Interestingly, all of
the English women were born in or close to London.

What these findings suggest is that the respondents were describing
themselves to me, an indigenous person whom they perceived as such.
A large number had some difficulty in attempting the Ten Statements Test.
Most typically they asked 'in what situation?' or 'where?'. The only
help I gave was to suggest that they described themselves as if to
someone they had not met before. I fell into this category for most
respondents. It also suggests that a single, pure, abstract test of
salience is impossible. 'Who I am' is always in relation to something
or somebody else. It would be very interesting to replicate this
test using both English, Jewish and West Indian interviewers.[33]

As another test of salience, people were asked to describe Stamford Hill
and the people who lived there as if to a person who had never been
there. Would people refer to its poverty, the class of the people living
there, or its variety of countries of origin, colours, religions?
Overwhelmingly, people described it as mixed, with a large orthodox
Jewish population, plus Black people, Asian people and white people.
Such descriptions came from all three local status groups, both sexes,
and from middle class and working class people. As it stands, these
results are not especially illuminating, although it is interesting that
everyone uses similar descriptions. Its mixed nature is a salient
feature of the area for its inhabitants. What is rather more interesting
is the fact that, while none of the Jews had to be prompted in this
question, four West Indian women, three English women and two English men
had to be prompted, because their descriptions began with adjectives
such as 'nosy', 'dead and boring', 'nice people and horrible ones',
'all right', 'nice', 'friendly', 'quiet', 'geriatric', 'pleasant' etc.
It is particularly interesting that three of the four West Indian women

who needed prompting were the three who had not described themselves as 'West Indian' or 'Black' in answer to the Ten Statements Test. One, Diana Maine, even said after prompting: 'What kinds of people?' and, after an answer describing a pleasant relationship with a Jewish neighbour: 'I never put people as groups as such, Blacks, whites, Jews.' The English respondents who had to be prompted may have been those most anxious to hide their prejudices. The data below support this hypothesis.

Summary

Status group as a category had salience for West Indians and Jews, but not for English respondents in a test where people were asked to describe themselves to a stranger. Asked to describe the Stamford Hill area, all of the Jews described it as 'mixed' or 'multi-ethnic' without prompting. The small minority of West Indians who had not described themselves in status terms also failed to describe the area in those terms unprompted, and a small minority of English people - those who seemed anxious to conceal racist attitudes - also did not allude to the ethnic mix of the area, although everyone else did.

III   RESPONSES TO STATUS

So far in this chapter we have seen evidence of what people know about the other local status groups - the extent to which they mix socially or know personally individuals from other groups, negative, personal experience of contacts and of respondents' more abstract knowledge of racism and anti-semitism. We then saw the salience or prominence of status in respondents' perceptions of their own identity and the area in which they live. Glimpses of people's attitudes and feelings inevitably emerged in these data, but it is now time to examine these more carefully, together with the evidence of any 'political' responses in the form of individual membership of or voluntary activities in community groups.

A cluster of questions relating to the local status groups and the
relationship between them was used variously to evoke responses.
Some were oblique, such as 'Do you think there's much discrimination
against Jews/West Indians locally?' or 'How do you see the future of
race relations generally? Are you optimistic or pessimistic?'. They
were very effective in a number of cases in exposing racist or
anti-semitic feelings. 'What are your attidues to other racial groups?'
was used several times, but was too crude. Undoubtedly, the most
fruitful probe for racist attitudes was 'What do you think were the
causes of the Tottenham riots?'. Respondents were prompted if they
found this too difficult with 'Was it because they were unemployed?'
or 'Was it bad housing?'. Several respondents then felt free to disagree
and reveal their attitudes. Involvement in local politics, community
groups, voluntary and religious activities was also questioned.

1) West Indian Women

a) Racism

All of the respondents were asked the Tottenham riots question, although
I had felt beforehand that West Indian responses would be entirely
predictable[35]. In fact, three of the West Indian women blamed Black
youths themselves. Gem Bailey was one: 'They were just ready for it.
They were all planning it, thinking "Brixton's done it, we've got to do
it". I saw people we know coming from Leyton, Shoreditch, Clapton, all
heading for Tottenham. It wasn't that woman at all.'
Q: 'Are they angry?'
A: 'Half of them just do it for a good fight, I'm sure of it. People
    say the worst police station is Stoke Newington, so why start in
    Tottenham? Half of them just travelled there for the fun of it.'

Vera Hall gave a similar answer. Philomena Johnson was vague and
non-committal about the causes of the riot. I asked her eventually,
"Was it because they were angry?'. She replied: 'It could be, but you
don't like to see bad manners when people come for a job. I don't think
all white people discriminate. You can find good and bad in all sorts.

I think white people have a right to discriminate against Black people.
Some of them ask for it. Look what those boys did to that woman with
the child six months old. Slash the baby's legs....' This was an
astonishing answer and I was unable at the time to probe further. My
feeling then was that Philomena was trying to tell me what she thought
I wanted to hear, but that is not the total explanation.

It will be recalled that three West Indian women did not give status-
specific answers to the Ten Statements Test: Diana Maine, Gem Bailey
and Philomena Johnson. These three, plus Marcia X, were also the women
who had to be prompted to describe Stamford Hill in terms of its
mixed ethnic population. What it suggests is that Gem and Philomena,
and to a lesser extent Diana, are simply denying that racism exists
or matters, and identifying with English people. There is much to
support this hypothesis in the data. Gem is 23, unemployed, with one
child aged 4. She was born in nearby Clapton and lives with her
mother and brother, and says she is ambitious for a career in engineering,
having always been more interested in 'men's subjects'. She is a
cheerful chatterbox. Prompting her for the second time about the mix
of people in Stamford Hill, I asked: 'What kinds of people live in
your road?'

A: 'Mostly Jews. There are a few Africans who are very noisy. I
     don't see many of them, just the Jews. There are a few Black people
     coming in, but they're mostly Africans, which I'm ... (inaudible)'

Q: 'Why's that?

A: 'I'm prejudiced against Africans. (Laughs) I think most Black
     people, most West Indians are. That's the one race they do not like.

Q: 'Same ancestors.'

A: 'Only the ones who say they are Rastas, which they are not. They are
     all mad. They're the only ones who say their true roots are African.
     My mum came from Jamaica. One of my great-grandmothers was Scottish....
     I say "I'm not no African. I come from Scotland." (Laughs) You
     really want to go into it, I'm Scottish.

Q: 'You don't actually think of yourself as West Indian, then?

A: 'No, I don't. They ask me where I come from, I say "here".
Then they ask me where my mum and dad come from. Then I say Jamaica.
Q: 'You've no desire to live there?'
A: 'NOOO. (Laughs) None at all.'

A little later, I asked her: 'Have you had much racism to deal with
from white people?'
A: 'No. I don't know. The people who used to live downstairs, we used
to go everywhere together (two young English white women). It doesn't
matter. We don't go to places where there's too many Blacks in one
place, we go to where there's a mixture. There's too much trouble
where there are too many Blacks. (Laughs) That's another thing,
I'm prejudiced against my own colour as well....'

She denied Black people were picked on by the police. It happened to
her brother. 'Once, but it was his fault.' Her 'friends who steal
credit cards warrant it.... I don't know anyone who's actually picked on.'
There were several other remarks she made which indicated her subjective
distance from West Indians and identification with Britain. She is an
ardent Royalist.

Philomena Johnson, a sincere if not very church-going Catholic, came to
England from Trinidad when she was 16. She married a white Englishman
from whom she is now separated and has four children. She owns her own
home, helps to run her brother's electrical business and votes Conservative.
She too was very talkative and extrovert. I asked her whether
throughout her life she had suffered much from racism. She replied:
'Naargh. I'd say not. First of all, white people brought me up. Why
should I feel like that? Sometimes in an argument they call names, but
that's when the animal instinct comes up.'
Q: 'You've not failed to get a job or anything because of discrimination?
A: 'Well, you see, I've never worked for anybody else, in fact I've
had people employed by me. I can't say I've had any problem.'
Q: 'Do you think generally Black kids have a lot of discrimination to
deal with?'
A: 'Yes, I think so, but some of them it's their bad behaviour that
has a lot to do with it. I don't look at people by the colour of

259

their skin. It makes no difference to me <u>whatsoever</u> ... I go to
the courts and I see <u>99 out of 100 and they're Black youths. They
are bad, very bad</u>.'

Q: 'But don't the police pick on them?-
A: 'Well I know, sometimes the police do pick on them, but they do a
    lot of bad things ... I'm not saying all. Some of them ask for it.'

I asked her whether she thought of herself as Trinidadean.
A: 'No, I'm a British citizen. Trinidad was a British colony, so I'm
    British.'

She is not as denying of her roots as Gem. I asked her what she thought
of those who wanted to go back to the West Indies, including those who had
been born here. She said: 'They're talking rubbish. They don't know
anything about the islands. They say they want to go and see their native
lands, but our native land is really Africa. That's where they originate
from. So should I go back to Africa? I'd like to visit it, of course,
where my forefathers are.'

Gem and Philomena were the only West Indian women to think of themselves
as simply 'British'. All the others said they regarded themselves as,
for instance, 'Antiguan', 'West Indian', 'neither', 'Black' or 'British
born of West Indian parents'.

Diana Maine had not mentioned her status in answer to the Ten Statements
Test. Also, it will be recalled that she felt she had suffered
discrimination at school not because of her colour but because of her
class[36]. Moreover, she had to be prompted to describe Stamford Hill
in terms of its ethnic groups. To do so, I said 'aren't the Jews a
feature of Stamford Hill?'. She talked about her neighbour, then said:
'It is a Jewish area but there's all types living here. I've never put
people as groups as such, Blacks, whites, Jews. I live next to Jews, I
live next to whites.'
Q: 'Are you the object of racism yourself - cheek from kids?'
A: 'No. I'm always at work. You have your days, someone bangs into
    you in the supermarket. <u>I'm not one for going around looking for it</u>.'
    (my emphasis)

A clue to both Diana's and Philomena's effort to come to terms with living in a racist society is to be found in Diana's answer to the Tottenham riots question: 'I'm not a mixer any more, I don't know what's going on any more. I suppose I do know what's going on. I just think it's a nasty world we're living in... and everyone's blaming each other. The Blacks are blaming the whites, the whites are blaming the Blacks. Show me any part of the world where there's stability and I'll go and live there. There's no stability. I'm a Christian, right. We all have our bad habits, but in the Christian terms, the world needs cleaning up. <u>There are nasty evil people, Black and white alike</u>. (My emphasis) There are good people but there are very few, I'm afraid to say. That's all I can say ... I admit there are a lot of white people step over Black people and leave them in the gutter. They don't want to help. They say "leave them, they don't want to better themselves". When I watch the news, and I'm not prejudiced, but I do curse those people in South Africa.'

She went on to do just that, getting more and more indignant[37]. This answer is interesting as it immediately pointed to 'evil' individuals and the Christian answer to problems. Diana is a regular attender at the local Catholic church and a sincere, if struggling, Catholic. It suggests that her religion, which she shares with Philomena Johnson, is serving to rationalise her perceptions of racism in terms of 'evil' and helping her not to recognise them. In Philomena's case, it is even more effective, probably because as an orphan brought up by white people she was less able to develop a sense of herself as Black, a Black identity, as to do so may have alienated her from her adoptive parents. Her marriage to a white Englishman at a very young age (17) would have done little to threaten this identification. Her insulation from discrimination has come largely from her economic power as an employer and owner-occupier. Catholicism is a means of making sense of racism for these two women. For Diana, it is insufficient in itself. Her understanding of the link between white racism in South Africa and the events on the Broadwater Farm Estate is only interpreted by her Christianity in the answer above, not obscured by it.

Gem Bailey's identification with white English people is less explicable. Her Scottish grandmother makes it possible on one level, and the absence

of discrimination she reports as having suffered is another. She describes
herself as 'not religious'. Her friendship with the two English women
may have had an effect. She avoided going to places where there were
'too many Blacks'. From whose point of view? Hers or the people she was
with?

These questions also arise in the case of Vera Hall. She is very young
- 21 - with a four-year-old child. At the time of the interview she
was living with a Scottish divorcee and her children. Both have had
'dealings with the police'. Vera blamed Black youths themselves for
what happened in the Tottenham riots. Asked whether they weremot
discriminated against for jobs, she said: 'They don't want jobs. (Laughs)
They don't want jobs.... And they've got sovereigns and things, they
just want to look smart, dress up fancy on the street, drive C-reg cars,
hustling, burglary ... If they say they're looking for work, it's a big
lie.'
Q: 'If I'd just heard all that coming from a white person, I'd be
      thinking "she's a racist". Are you not exaggerating?'
A: 'No. I used to go with Gloria (her Scottish friend) on a Friday.
      This pub is gone down, all Blacks hanging round outside, swearing out
      their mouths. I just don't want to go there. I'd rather go in a
      white person's pub and be more comfortable.'

Here again, the presence of her white friend may be affecting her attitudes.
Gloria's emotional support is probably considerable, the more so as Vera
is an orphan. Nevertheless, her identification with 'white attitudes'
does not go far. She described Jamaica as 'where you belong' and
Britain as owned by white people.

If the reaction of these four women to racism was a tendency to deny
it or attribute it to the behaviour of 'bad Blacks', the reactions of
four others was anger, combined with ambition. All four (Susan Fellows,
Chloe Sylvester, Sandra Green and Marcia X) blamed frustration and anger
caused by discrimination in employment and police attitudes and behaviour.
Chloe and Susan were both scornful of the 'conspiracy theory' concerning
the riot: that it had been planned by politically motivated outsiders
beforehand. Uniquely in doing so among these respondents, Susan Fellows
analysed it in class terms: 'I think the whole lot had to do with
government policies and how it's affecting the working class people.'

262

Q: 'It's partly a class issue then?'

A: 'Yes. I see it primarily a class issue as opposed to a race issue.
I think it's easier for the media to categorise it as a race issue
because if it's seen as a class issue, more people will be able to
relate to it. If it's a "race issue", it's just "oh those Black
people" - people can segregate it.'

Susan is interesting because, although one of her parents is white,
she identifies herself as Black, not only in answer to the Ten Statements
Test, but in some of her concerns and activities. She has run racism
awareness courses and is involved with Black community groups running
nurseries.

Chloe Sylvester was another angry and ambitious young woman. Although
born in Britain she feels neither West Indian nor British. Asked for her
hopes for the future, she said: 'I don't think it lies in this country
unless there are some major changes in the political structure. I don't
think I would be happy here. I'd rather struggle with my own people.'

Marcia X admitted to feeling angry sometimes. Her reply to the questions
'How do you deal with this (racism) inside your own head? How do you
stop yourself going mad?' is typical of the remaining West Indian women,
including those who did not exhibit any anger during the interview:
'I stop and think I've got a life to live and I'm going to live it. That's
the only way you can think of it. If you're arguing every day about the
same thing, it's not going to get you anywhere. So you go out there
and try to forget about racism or whatever, you just say "well, if you're
lucky, you'll get that job". Try to forget about the racism. Just
keep trying, don't give up.'

Only Beryl Clark was active in Black politics. She is involved as a
school parent-governor in the Hackney Black Governors' Collective,
Hackney Education and Development Association, and a group in her teacher-
training college which is monitoring racist malpractices in the college.
Her personal experiences of racism and her edcuation have led to her
'radicalisation'.

b) **Anti-semitism**

Four West Indian women owned to disliking Jewish people. Most complained
of their 'standoffishness' or 'snobbery' - in other words, a perceived
desire for isolation from the rest of the community. One woman complained
about their 'untidy and unkempt' appearance. She disliked her own
prejudiced feelings and said 'I do try and work on my prejudices and
when I hear other people I do challenge it.'

ii) West Indian Man

Asked whether the racism he had seen and experienced made him angry,
Eric Clark answered: 'No, it doesn't make me angry because I've
come to the terms that this is a white man's world and you got to make
your way in it best. One day I should make enough money to be lucky
enough to without any shadow of doubt have then and return to my own
country.' He was a bit reluctant to admit to disliking Jewish people,
but said: 'I almost probably, will, somebody looking at me would
recognise that I have little prejudices too, and I would be willing to accept
that I probably have.'
Q: 'Nothing that's eating you up?'
A: 'No, no, no, no.'

iii) English Women

a) **Racism**

Only four *English* women simply and unequivocally blamed discrimination, police
harrassment and bad housing as the causes of the Tottenham riots. Not
surprisingly, three were the middle class university or college
educated Labour voters. No racist attitudes emerged in these three
interviews, although in the length of time allowed for this topic in the
interview, no probing in depth was possible. They gave the impression
of seeking to understand Black people's problems. Two - Louise Cooper
and Debbie Longman - as well as being politically active in the Labour
and Communist parties, were also involved in the local community action

groups. Louise is now the administrator of the new community centre. These organisations all have explicit anti-racist policies. The other to appear free of racist attitudes was Karen Corrigan, whose stepfather came from Trinidad and whose sister married a Jamaican.

At the other extreme was the remaining middle class woman, Caroline Pryce. We have already seen a selection of her views above in this chapter concerning Black youth unemployment and droppers of litter in the street, and what Black people do to the outsides of their houses[38]. She was not comfortable expressing these views, however. One indication of this was her description of Stamford Hill in terms which signified 'West Indian' and 'working class' without being explicit. Another, as we will see, is her tendency to say 'it's an awful thing to say'. Nevertheless, her racism is not simple and universal. Asked whether she thought what she had described as 'this coloured business' was more of a problem[39] than relations between the classes, she replied: 'Oh yes, I think it's a real problem. I can't see any solution. It's the working class whites and Blacks who've got a problem, the ones without jobs. That's what it's all about[40]. I've met some fantastic people in hospitals, all highly qualified, very bright, but you get good and bad in every race. But I don't want to see my daughter go to a school that is half coloured and half white. It's an awful thing to say, isn't it, but I feel strongly about it.'

I asked her a minute later whether she had ever felt threatened by a coloured person: 'Well I was threatened by one. Well, not threatened, but I had my bag snatched, just down the road. But then again, it's not just the coloured people really. It's an awful thing to say, isn't it. I wouldn't like Harriet to go to school where it's fifty-fifty (Black and white). I suppose it stems from my upbringing where the - it's a bad thing to say, isn't it really. I was never so happy as when that Indian couple - the Home Office said they could stay. I just thought they looked a really super family and put a lot into the community and they're as good as anybody else.' She vacillates between uttering racist comments, realising it, and finally seeks to show that she isn't a racist by expressing her approval that a middle class country-dwelling Indian

family be allowed to remain. It indicates that her racism is selective, and that she realises it is not respectable. Above all it shows what underlies prejudice - a lack of sympathetic identification with another human being. The ones you know and the ones you see as like yourself (middle class, with your values) you can identify with and treat as whole people. The ones you don't know and the ones who haven't had your kind of upbringing are the people to whom stereotypes so easily attach. The interplay of ethnic status and class as a status category is also notable here.

Another to be overtly racist was Pam Dixon. She blamed the Tottenham riots simply on Blacks, saying '... they wanted to show they were badder than Brixton.' She denied Black people were discriminated against for jobs: 'I think like because they're a minority, they use it a lot. I'm not saying all of them, I'm saying those who want to cause a fuss.' Her racism is selective. Asked whether she thought race relations would get worse or improve, she replied: 'To me, I think it could get worse. I think the white people are bowing down to the ethnics too much. You've got the Asians. Don't hear a word from them.' She denied she was prejudiced. Her views are puzzling in that she says some of her closest friends are West Indians, as indeed is her children's father. The reasons for the failure in her identification with her friends and the difficulties they and their like must suffer did not emerge in the interview. Pam's case suggests that   close familiarity with West Indian people is not a sufficient condition for the withering of racist attitudes.

The other four English women exhibited one or two racist attitudes. 'Chips on shoulders' and 'expecting everything on a plate' were the usual complaints against West Indians. Two expressed reservations or resentment against anti-racist policies in schools and in local authority employment practices. One such was Mary Baker: 'The only thing that's wrong is that I think the school's now fetching in racialism. They're fetching it to the attention of the kids. Like my kids don't know no difference, Black and white. They have friends round, Black or white, it doesn't matter. When you go down the school, they're changing the books and they're having meetings about it. It makes the children ask why, I should imagine.... It's also the government's fetching it to their attention because they put adverts in the paper saying they want only Black people

for this job and I think that's going to make people racialist ...
cause more friction.'

This suggests a lack of understanding and knowledge rather than ill will
on this woman's part. All of these four were at pains to stress that
they felt relations between the races <u>ought</u> to be friendly and that
discrimination was 'wrong'. Some are self-consciously struggling with
their own attitudes, such as Sheila Stevens: 'I was with my mum in
the flats walking up the stairs and there was this really big youth
coming the other way, really big.... My mum said "Ooh, he's a lovely
boy, often carries my shopping". (Laughs) That goes against what
you read. "He always carries my shopping." It makes you feel really
horrible then. Because I'm aware of doing that, I do try to keep an
open mind.' Such self-awareness is essential to the disappearance of
racist attitudes, but then perhaps so are the acts of kindness which
preceded it.

b) <u>Anti-semitism</u>

Three of the English women expressed anti-semitic attitudes.
Louise Cooper was less anti-semitic than against orthodox Judaism and
its laws: 'I don't approve of organised religion that puts an immediate
barrier up. I would say the same about anyone who was pushing
Catholicism or anything else. I'm perfectly willing for people to have
religions, although I'd argue against them on a personal level, it's
where it actually comes out and it's somebody else's freedom to do what
they want. I think that religion that forbids people freely meeting
with other people, as I understand it the (Jewish) orthodox religion
does....'

We have already seen Karen Corrigan's attitudes to Jewish people. She
disliked what she perceived as their determination to 'stand out from
everybody' and be different. Karen's fifteen-year-old daughter was
present during the interview. Her mother had just started to answer
the question 'is there much prejudice against Jews or West Indians
that you're aware of?' when the girl interrupted and asked me whether
I was Jewish. Karen still sought to deny she was prejudiced: "We've

267

all got to live in this world. Why make enemies? It's ridiculous.
It's stupid to go round hating people. They've not done me no harm,
so that's how I look at it.... Personally, I've got no prejudice at
all against other races. They might annoy me, infuriate me sometimes
with the silly things they do, the way they are, the way they stand out,
in my personal opinion, they should try to conform a little bit....'
The progression from anti-racist to anti-semitic attitudes occurred
without a pause!

Pam Dixon is similarly unaware of contradicting herself, saying 'Round
here it's only the Jews who give you the aggro, more than anything. They're
very, very ignorant', and a minute later: 'I've heard people talking
about them (Jews): 'Oh they're an ignorant bunch". It's nothing
to do with the fact that they're Jewish, it's because they're ignorant.'

The majority of English women did not express anti-semitic attitudes
during the interviews.

iv) English Men

a) Racism

The English men divided very neatly in terms of the expression of racist
attitudes between the four middle class men, who did not, and the three
working class men, who did. Ronnie Baker felt that 'a lot of Black
people hide behind their colour', in other words, they blame *positive* racial
discrimination for their own shortcomings in the employment market. The
Tottenham riots he blamed on agitators, but stressed that he really did
not know and said he'd 'got a very open mind about it'. His prejudice
emerged as very low key.

Less so was that of Barry Stevens. He regarded the Tottenham riots as
'pre-organised', and denied they were anything to do with resentment
over unemployment: 'There's a lot of them. Well, it's
easier to be on the dole, isn't it. They go on the dole, do a little
bit of work. What people forget is why they went there - you must
think I'm a right racist - in a no-go area so they can sell drugs and
everything....' He disliked the Labour Party: 'Labour are too much

268

for this minority business.... All this "you can have a job because
you're a minority" business is rubbish. Hitler created a lot of work
for people before the war, building roads and that. He said if there's
five jobs going, five German people should have them, have priority.'

Graham Stuart was the most extreme. This Labour-voting postman with
the two Black friends expressed a fairly full catalogue of racist
views: 'Too many of them in this country', 'gigantic chip on their
shoulder that we owe them a living', 'a lot of the late teens and early
twenties ... don't want to work', 'I'm not sure they're discriminated
against', 'I don't see any reason why a white man shouldn't have
priority over a Black man for a job. It's his country', 'I don't mind
the Asians so much'. This latter point is interesting, as he went on:
'I used to not like Asians and wasn't too bothered about West Indians
but I've turned full circle now.' Not only is his prejudice selective,
it is also volatile. Nevertheless, he felt 'both sides were as bad
as each other' in the Tottenham riots.

b) <u>Anti-semitism</u>

Only one of the English men expressed anti-semitic attitudes -
Tom Hetherington. He resented their separation from the rest of the
community and the fact that the Jewish community have been able to use
what he regards as ill thought out Council policies on supporting ethnic
minorities. His grouse seems to be that they are behaving in a very
effective manner in the political sphere, not in terms of class politics
(his own weltanschaaung) but as an ethnic status group. To this end,
he alleges, Labour party meetings are 'packed' from time to time.
He also thought the Jewish community less than honourable in their
toleration of a particularly notorious property speculator and landlord
whose charitable donations help to support the community. He felt that
the common identity the Jewish community created 'feeds on insecurity':
'I don't think that is good for <u>people</u> to manifest insecurity to keep
together. It doesn't lead to what I believe as a socialist is the
growth and development of the human being. It's counter-productive.'
(Original emphasis).

He is very active in local community matters, as is the communist
Pete Whittaker. None of the other English men are involved in
community activities.

v) Jewish Women

None of the Jewish women attributed the causes of the Tottenham riots simply to unemployment, deprivation, bad housing or police harrassment. One or two mentioned unemployment and police 'brutality' among the causes, for instance Lea Jacobson: 'I think people are bored, basically, they just don't seem to have, MSC schemes are useful. I don't know why they don't avail themselves of this type of employment.' Even Lea is suggesting that Black youth unemployment is largely voluntary.

Without exception, the Jewish women regarded the problems of Black youth and the Tottenham riots as attributable to poor education and a lack of guidance from parents and their own community. For instance, Rachel Grossman: 'Obviously, there's more than one factor, but from what I've heard, a lot of the parents are alienated from their children. The children go to British schools with different values. They think that the discipline isn't as valued here as it was back in the West Indies.'

Miriam Schmool: 'Their community needs to try to influence those who aren't good by those who are, and encourage them to try good things. I think most people can try to find work, and if they can't find work, they can be involved in something good ... I think if they can't find anything to do, they must be very unmotivated people. I think if they'd been brought up to do something and be involved, they couldn't bear to do nothing.'

It would be difficult to argue that views such as these are overtly racist. However, they stand alongside some very negative feelings against both West Indian and English people as a result of attacks on them and more particularly their children. The reactions are divided between anger on the one hand and fear, or wariness, on the other. Hannah Krausz, for instance, thought that white youths were just as aggressive as Black. I then asked her: 'Is it mainly in connection with your children that you've had problems with the non-Jewish population?'
A: 'Yes, definitely. It makes me so angry, I can't tell you. It makes me seize with anger. What do we do to them to harm them, to hurt them? We go our own way. We may look different, we might not integrate within their community, we don't harm them. We live and let live. We have no axe to grind. Let them just leave us alone, not be so aggressive.'

270

Another woman was angry as she said: '... the Blacks against the Jews I can't understand. It is a known fact that when there were plantations and slavery and everything, it's part of our Bible that we have to treat our slaves very, very well and there are catalogued stories of Jews who actually were killed, their plantations were burned because they were treating their slaves better than other people wanted to. So the slaves wanted to escape and go to, you know....' She seemed unaware that it was the very existence of slavery as much as the treatment accorded their ancestors which angers today's Black people. Only one other woman expressed her anger in overtly racist terms. She said of the local West Indian population: '... they're mainly the cause of any antagonism, I would say. Very often they are out of work and short of money and I suppose it springs out of jealousy, although I must say I don't think they're terribly hardworking either. We have Indian neighbours who are extremely hardworking and there's never any problems from people like this.' Asked whether she thought it was the young people who caused the problems, she replied: 'I don't know, I've wondered about this. Some of the older people are lovely. They're almost naive in their way.'

Those who were wary or fearful of West Indians had all suffered or witnessed violence. Hephzibar Levenberg was asked whether there was much racism locally. She replied: 'Yes, there's quite a lot of anti-Black feeling amongst the Jews. I think it's justified, having lived here. I think the difference between that and the way we behave is that we do not physically abuse them. We're the subject of a lot... Some of it is justified. I think it's only a small part of the West Indian population who behave badly, but inevitably the whole population gets (pause) disliked somehow.' After the taped interview was finished, she expressed discomfort about her attitudes to West Indians. She said her attitudes had changed as the direct result of Black anti-semitism.

All of the Jewish women were actively involved in their religious communities either voluntarily - fundraising, helping neighbours, counselling adolescents, organising summer camps or school plays and lecturing - or actually employed as librarians, community workers, teachers or running a bookshop. At least one furthered the interests of

the community by being co-opted to the Women's Committee of Hackney Council.
With the exception of Rachel Grossman, who was active in the National
Childbirth Trust, none participated in local community activities outside ..
the Jewish community.

vi) Jewish Men

Jewish men attributed the Tottenham riots to a wider variety of causes
than their wives had done. Abraham Bauer blamed lack of integration:
'The root cause is that the Africans are not yet an integral part of
Britain. That's the problem, and lots of problems arise from that.
They're not British. They're Africans. They don't feel British. The
British don't feel they are British.'

Maurice Schmool (like others) blamed 'politically motivated' elements,
while acknowledging deprivation: 'They are a little bit deprived and
there are arguments to say they might be getting a better deal. It's not
very difficult to raise them up to make them feel they should be treated
better and given jobs and that, the housing is probably bad.... They
don't have the leadership....'

Ishmael Jacobson also blamed agitators, but 'I think West Indians have
lost to a large extent their cultural roots. When they came over here
they had very strong community bonds and church bonds as well. Most
West Indians have lost that.'

Philip Grossman saw the riots as protest: 'It's just a tension that
builds up. People are anti-establishment. Back in the 1960s, like
at Woodstock.... people took their clothes off against the establishment.
Now it's much wilder.'

Others saw 'misguided' education as being at fault, 'in the sense of
not only in the classroom but the subtle, well socialisation, that
goes on in the family, in the community. They've taken a wrong turn.'
(Isaac Friedman) He went on to say that children were being brought
up to be intolerant and demand their rights.

272

Like their wives, Jewish men did not express many overtly racist sentiments. Only one spoke of 'chips on shoulders'. Only one said he didn't like 'Africans': 'My opinion of the Africans is not high. So maybe I'm a bit racist, but that has nothing to do with my being Jewish. It's not true to say I'm a racist. I don't like Africans ... they're different.'

Q: 'Do people who are different necessarily dislike each other?'

A: 'Not necessarily, but naturally they do....'

Only one person, Emanual Diamond, admitted to fear: 'I'm afraid to walk on the street, I'll tell you honestly.' He and his wife had suffered several burglaries and physical attacks between them and had witnessed a very disturbing scene in a petrol station, when a West Indian man had thrown a fire extinguisher through a glass panel at the cashier. Nevertheless, he was optimistic about the future of race relations: 'I take a little heart from the American experience ... Blacks there seem to have developed less of an inferiority complex. They're more in society, so their behaviour is less critical. There'll probably be a slow evolution to even things out a bit, but it'll be slow.'

Aaron Levenberg described himself as 'jaundiced' concerning race relations.

The other men took refuge in philosophical detachment. This ranges from the simple - 'Okay, the kids, you'd hear "bloody Jew". "Jew boy" etc. It's hurtful at the time, but you just put it down to where they come from' (Philip Grossman); 'It's a very superficial aspect of the person giving the abuse' (Mordecai Bloom); - to the difficult. I asked Isaac Friedman how he coped with anti-semitism: 'For me personally it is a religious problem, a theological problem, because the difficulty I have is in relating what I believe to what I see in practice. It is a tension under which I live. So for example, my religion teaches me that all human beings have spiritual potential and all human beings have the capacity to be righteous and close to God and acceptable to God. It's difficult for me to teach that to my children when they come home holding their sides, they've just been beaten up by someone. It's very difficult at that moment to say "yes they are godly creatures with spiritual potential". I'm a human being like everyone else and ... sometimes I react badly in the sense that my initial reaction is "oh it's those

273

damn Blacks again". In moments of rationality I tend to think they'd be
different if they'd had a different kind of upbringing and education.'

He, like two or three others, sought not to be overly sensitive: 'I
think we've been immured to it so it doesn't make that much impression
on us. It's an accepted part of living.'

Mordecai Bloom: '... it's so, um, irrelevant to my thinking that I
don't really register it.'

These Jewish men were also very active in the Lubavitch community.
The most common activity was teaching - Hebrew and Jewish subjects mostly,
but Philip Grossman was teaching electrical skills to groups of women.
Several were keen organisers of summer camps, fundraising and the community
library. Free time outside the home seemed to be entirely spent
promoting the community, either directly within it, or lecturing to outside
bodies. To an outsider, it seems an astonishing level of commitment.
They apparently seek to be good Jews for as high a proportion of their
waking hours as possible. It is not hostility from outsiders which
causes their separation from the rest of society.(we have in any case
seen differing accounts about the level of this), but their urge to live
as good Jews, learning and teaching.

Summary

The three sets of respondents reacted very differently to the social
realities they occupy. It could not be otherwise when these realities ARE
so different. Those West Indian respondents who had or had had very
close relationships with English people tended to identify with them
and deny or 'not look for' racism. Involvement in Catholicism also
seemed relevant in the case of two women. Others were angrier. Two
wanted to go and live in the West Indies and two were involved in Black
community groups and political groups. Two or three were stoic, but
ambitious in terms of their own careers. About half of the West Indians
expressed anti-semitic feelings.

The English respondents divided almost perfectly along class lines
concerning racism. With one exception, the middle class respondents
did not express racist views and the working class respondents did,
although very few in most cases. Most of these English racists denied
their racism and its changeable nature was evident in several
instances. Fewer English people expressed anti-semitic feelings;
those that did had little discernible in common in terms of experience,
class or sex.

Jewish women did not express many overtly racist attitudes - probably
about the same proportion as English women. Their reactions to anti-
semitism were either anger or wariness. There was no denial of it
by the women. Two or three of the men did seek to deny it, or perhaps
rather its importance. Several applied reason to try to achieve
philosophical detachment. One was fearful, one cynical. Again, there
were few openly racist remarks made.

CONCLUSION

The data in this chapter reveal something of the nature and extent of
relationships between the three main ethnic status groups in Stamford Hill.
They reveal that while there may be quite a high level of superficial contact,
between the women as neighbours and to a lesser extent the men, close
friendships and family relationships are still, with few exceptions, with
those of the same group. Rather more social contact of all kinds occurs
between English and West Indian people. The religious Jews are the most
isolated from the rest, although they do not necessarily choose to see it
that way themselves.

West Indians had the most to endure in terms of discrimination. This
occurred in several spheres - school, employment, housing and relations with
the police. Jews suffered verbal and physical abuse, on the other hand,
and they experienced a lot of it. Relationships between Jewish children
and others seemed to be particularly difficult, and respondents from all
ethnic status groups acknowledged it, although the Jews mentioned it most
often. English experience of 'trouble' between the groups were few and
largely trivial. In total, people were most aware in the abstract of
racism rather than anti-semitism.

Ethnic status had salience for West Indians and Jews but not English people,
asked the question 'Who am I - describe yourself'. The ethnic status of
the interviewer was probably relevant here. Almost everyone described
Stamford Hill in terms of its ethnic status groups, however. The question
was useful in yielding clues about people's racism.

The data certainly support Ann Dummett's view that 'prejudice is not a
unit, but a protean superstition, rapidly changing form'[41]. It changed
between two interviews with one woman, and a man confessed to disliking West
Indians rather than Asians as he had previously. I sensed it lurked beneath
the surface of several respondents, English and Jewish, emerging in
apparently mild ways, such as objections to equal opportunities policies
'because they would stoke prejudice'.

I have stressed that the interviews did not allow for sufficient time to
examine thoroughly racist attitudes. One question I would have liked to
have pursued in retrospect is whether respondents have an 'assimilationist'
or a 'pluralist' outlook. Two English respondents volunteered their
orientation. Richard Pryce spoke approvingly of the effects of 'time and
progressive assimilation'. Judy Jones, on the other hand, said 'we can't
all be the same ... there's different religions, we need different ones.'

This question is very important to the future of race relations in Britain:
the melting pot or the tossed salad? The evidence from this very small
serving suggests that the people in this very heterogeneous inner city area
are choosing largely to remain separate.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1   36.6% of those in employment in Hackney use buses, 22.8% use cars,
    14.2% trains, 26.4% 'other'. 1981 Census Data collated by the Borough's
    Research and Intelligence Unit.

2   Michael Hunter, The Victorian Villas of Hackney, Hackney Society, 1981, p 11

3   P Harrison, Inside the Inner City, revised edition, Penguin Harmondsworth,
    1985, p 189

4   Eileen Howes, Black and Ethnic Minorities in Hackney, Research Note 9,
    March 1985, p 18

5   Ibid

6   Ibid, appendix A, pp 40-42

7   E Howes, Black and Ethnic Minority Population Estimates, Research Note 10,
    July 1986, p 5

8   Ibid, p 11

9   E Howes, Black and Ethnic Minorities in Hackney, Research Note 9, p 8.
    These statistics were calculated from 1981 Census Data, based on the
    country of birth of the head of household.

10 Ibid, p 19

11 Commission for Racial Equality, Race and Council Housing in Hackney,
    London, 1981

12 Ibid, pp 11-12

13 Report of Hackney Borough's Racial/Gender Monitoring Statistics to
    Women's Committee, 24.3.87

14 Report of Hackney Borough's Economic Development and Employment Committee
    (6.1.87) and the Policy and Resources (Race Relations) Committee (19.1.87),
    Table 1

15 Ibid, Table 2

16 Ibid, Table 3

17 S Sharot, _Judaism_, p 101

18 Ibid, p 103

19 V D Lipman, _Social History of the Jews in England, 1850-1950_, Waltz & Co, London, 1954, ch 1

20 S Sharot, op cit, p 155

21 H Weiner, _9½ Mystics_, p 163

22 See chapter 5, p129 , Mordecai Bloom's remarks

23 H Weiner, op cit, pp 195-6

24 A cabbalistic text

25 H Weiner, op cit, p 333

26 See pp 295-297

27 See chapter 4 above on the perils of interviewing couples together.

28 M Douglas, _Purity and Danger_

29 See note 11

30 H Weiner, op cit, p 242

31 See above, pp226-233

32 See below, pp 257-262

33 See chapter 4 above on Methodology

34 See chapter 4 on Methodology

35 This prediction was probably an example of racist sterotyping.

36 See chapter 6, p 196

37 See above, p 252

38 See above, pp 237, 250

39 See chapter 4 on Methodology on asking questions based on racist assumptions

40 It will be recalled that she blames Black youth unemployment on bad education, home life and character.

41 A Dummett, <u>A Portrait of English Racism</u>, p 83

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

This research has had as its central question - given that there are very considerable material inequalities in Britain in the 1980s, inequalities between the classes and the sexes, how do people accommodate themselves to these disadvantages? The intervening variables examined were gender and status, location being held constant. Stated rather more concretely, how do men and women from the three largest local status groups - West Indians, white English and ultra-religious Jews - in a poor but 'improving' inner London suburb, experience, perceive and reconcile themselves to the inequalities of the society? Why has a 'class for itself' not arisen? Why are not women revolting?

Class Consciousness

We saw in Chapter Six how people's perceptions and experiences of the class system led them to picture it, and the variations in perceptions between the classes, sexes and local status groups. There were very few respondents who were coherently and openly critical of the status quo and who identified themselves as 'socialists'. All but one of them had, or had recently had, middle-class occupations. Turning my central question on its head - what had caused or led these people to become radical? What does this radicalism mean in practice?

a) The Radicals

Andrew Moore's socialism had the palest hue. He had never joined the Labour Party and disliked its 'almost fascist hard left'. Asked how his socialist outlook had developed, he answered: 'I was a hippy in the sixties. (Laughs) You tend to operate in a more lenient social atmosphere. I was Conservative until I dropped out of business because that would be my family's philosophy, apart from my mother, who was Labour.' He had worked for two years in marketing after college, '... then I smoked a joint and everything changed. (Laughs) No, it was just what was happening at the time.' He then sold antiques in Portobello Road for some years and lived in various communes and squats. His vision seems more religious than political: 'I think everybody

280

is the same. That's the basic proposition. We're all the same. We're all equal. If I were a religious person, which I am, but not in the sense of going to church, I believe there is a purpose to this which for the moment seems to escape us. If one takes on board the idea of there being some kind of divinity, Godhead, then I'm sure that Godhead could not have done anything except make us all equal, irrespective of our sex, colour of our skin, the way we talk, our education, that belief is fundamental - we are all equal.'

This basic moral belief that everyone is equal clearly underpinned all the radicals' thinking. In the case of the middle class respondents, it is reflected in their motivation for doing the job they are doing - all the middle class radicals expressed the importance of doing something which reflected a sense of social responsibility.

Such a luxury was beyond the means of Eric Clark, a worker on the production line at Ford's in Dagenham. I asked him whether his parents had been radical: 'Not really.... I've had the opportunity to work at a place like Ford's. There's quite a bit of time for thought, and you get to talk to a greater scope of people. It helps to form your opinions, unlike the West Indies.... I've always liked to think I can exercise a bit of independent thought.'

The car factory, employing a large number of manual workers in alienating work, has long been recognised as the classic site for the raising of class consciousness[1]. Eric Clark's answer does not tell us what it is specifically about his experiences at Ford which formed his views, but his unprompted attribution of his political views to his place of employment is in itself very significant.

Tom Hetherington had also worked in a car factory when he was very young. When I asked him where his radical vision and perspective derived from, he said that it was the result of being brought up in the working class, and experiences at work and in the tenants' movement.
Q: 'It was not an intellectually derived thing at all?'
A: 'No. No. Just experience. The only intellect involved is trying to analyse and understand ... see it as a pattern.'

He had worked in Oxford until 1968, when there were massive redundancies in
the car industry. He left not because he was personally made redundant, but
because 'I found it difficult to take what was happening to people, in a place
like Oxford, particularly where the motor industry was so important'. He
believed it was 'a deliberate strategy', which caused incredible devastation
in the community: When redundancy comes, your house in an area like that is
worth nothing. You can't sell your house because everybody is putting theirs
up for sale to pay the mortgage. Nobody wants to buy your car. What you've
got is absolutely worth nothing. I worked in a small factory making radiators,
not in the large Cowley plant, only 1,200 people. Eventually after a struggle
and a fight, the management agreed to have voluntary redundancies. There was
only twelve compulsory redundancies carried out, and of those twelve, four
committed suicide as a result. There was just nowhere for them to turn. That
was so awful, I just left Oxford, came to London.'

On the way to lunch one day at the car factory, by himself, he had a sudden
powerful flash of political awareness: 'It wasn't sophisticated. I
realised that in rubbishing socialism I'd been quoting the press rather than
thinking for myself, and that's what everybody did. I saw the pattern of
society, economics. I realised I had to join the Labour Party, and set up
a junior workers' committee.'

Q: 'Do you know what led to that spark, that change?'

A: 'No. It was an amazing experience though. My mind seemed to open for
      the first time. What the cause was, I don't know. I think I was thinking
      deeper than I was realising for some reason .... I was campaigning for
      the apprentices. It was probably from that, seeing how they were
      exploited, and that unemployment was part of it....'

He was also at the time living with an uncle who was a shop steward. He
joined the Workers' Revolutionary Party later, leaving it as he'd left the
Labour Party previously because of its 'unreality'. He joined the Communist
Party, but was unhappy because they did not get down to grass roots discussion.
It was 'all about art and society' etc. Several years and jobs later, another
leap in his consciousness occurred when he was living in Paddington, when he
'got involved in yoga and stuff like that'. Like Andrew Moore, he got involved
in the London counter-culture for a while. The most recent turning point
occurred when he decided to stay in Hackney (which he had despised) and organise
a tenants' association. These three major turning points[2] all 'took me
somewhere else, mentally and spiritually', and were to do with the raising of
this consciousness.

282

He talked at considerable length about the experiences in various jobs and in the tenants association in particular, which formed his current Weltanschauung, and it is most unfortunate that I cannot give them more space. He is obviously an exceptional individual, and very intelligent, but he is also modest. We get a clue as to how his mind works from the answer to this question:

Q: 'Did you have powerfully influential friends, or have you worked out your radical views for yourself?'

A: 'I must say for a start that I don't regard my views as radical. Right? And I don't. To me, they're just clearly right. I don't think that people have different views to me as much as they haven't developed their views. See what I mean? I don't find my views in conflict with those of most people that I talk with. They've developed from direct experience. I think the most important thing in that development is to know where you stand and where you come from, and therefore how you relate to it.... I also think it's important to turn your arguments round, to be able to take in, so your view is not down a blind alley, because that is of no value to me or anybody else.... Never shut out things that challenge it, indeed welcome things that challenge it.... I want to understand the motive of people with different views, because by listening to people like Maggie Thatcher, I understand myself a lot better.'

His job with tenants he regards as deeply political, his involvement with the Labour Party as largely irrelevant.

Communist Pete Whittaker's political awakening derived from a number of sources. As a student in the late 1960s, he was excited and 'fascinated' by the events in Paris and Prague. After a year out in industry, during which time he had done a lot of reading in politics, he and others returned to their course in Stafford to be very disillusioned with it. He got involved in leftish federation of political groups called Red Circle. 'We all used to meet above this pub, have a good time, thrash things out, have a good laugh. We did one or two little things like a Vietnam demonstration. Then I started to get exposed to new currents of political ideas ... people were quoting Engels and Marx. I found it very boring, irrelevant to what I saw as nowadays Stafford. One or two characters would occasionally laugh and reduce these people reading at the lectum to rather small quantities. Interesting characters - one was

the son of a Ukrainian exile who could actually speak Russian, and had made a
detailed study of Lenin's works in the original. A very pragmatic, practical
type. Anyway, these two were in the Communist Party, and I went to visit them.
He had novels and thrillers and things and he read the Morning Star and the
Financial Times, and he said that's all he needed. His reading seemed not to
be confined to the narrow band of stuff some of the others read. And the
crunch came just before summer, and the then International Socialists suggested
that we all join a local timber merchants, Venables, which was a very big
family firm ... that we join as students and organise the workers with unions
because this would be a good thing,wouldn't it. Well, I and this communist ...
said "you don't know what you're talking about. You can't just go in and
organise workers. What are you talking about? You're going to leave in a
couple of months. You might organise people but you'd leave them in a
complete mess." But they were over-ridden and they dissociated themselves
totally. It was an unmitigated disaster. These International Socialists
went in, set up a union, and left after two months. Just after it was set up.
The workers were totally inexperienced in running a union, and a lot of them
were sacked for joining the union. The students left to return to college
and I was quite sickened by the whole thing. I saw that they (the communists)
were the only ones who could see in advance what would happen. I decided to join
because I wanted to join an organisation which seemed to have its head on its
shoulders. I joined in 1970 ... and I've been in the Communist Party ever since.'

I asked him how you could get people to wake up politically: 'By fighting
for things at the most boring, basic level. Against the most basic injustices,
no matter how you perceive injustice. The people around you, your friends,
your colleagues.... If you keep it at this level to begin with, people will
say, "I know these people, I identify with these people. They've done so and
so, and they're fighting for this. I can associate with them." Then when
they express a real interest, you can say "well, I'm a member of so and so
party", um a natural interest may come.'

Q: 'Is this just on a practical level?'

A: 'No, not just practical. It has to be moral. I don't want to sound like
a Seventh Day Adventist; you have to be honest, for example. If you're
a member of the Communist Party, you have to be holier than the Vatican....
Sounds horribly pious. You've got to be an example. You've got to be as
total a human being as you can be. People will then hopefully see that
you are not being devious, that you are what you are.'

284

He was active in the local residents' association. Here again, a consciously religious dimension appears in this radical's world views, with a stress on everyday experience.

Louise Cooper's political awakening was much less grounded in industrial experience, and had far more to do with avoiding conventional married life.

Q: 'How did you come to be involved in politics?'

A: 'Dad's idea of going to university was to get a man with a sports car and get married ... but I realised things weren't all well with the world. I met up with a couple of particular people. There was the LSE incident (an occupation). It seemed to me that the more interesting people around were politicos, so at the end of college, I broke off my engagement and went to live in AgitProp. It wasn't because they were more interesting people, but the interest and importance in what was being said.... I despised politics, until a few years ago, when I decided that something needed to be done.... The decision to break off the engagement was very much a political one. It opened up all kinds of new vistas, like not being married. I was settled down by the time I was twenty....'

Her involvement with the tenants' movement and grudging membership of the Labour Party happened after meeting Tom. She is active in the new local community centre, and although she is knowledgeable and angry about political matters, it does not seem to be grounded in experience as it is with some of the others.

Debbie Longman was born into the Communist Party: 'My parents were in the Communist Party. They're very much inactive. My mother's not too dogmatic, but my father is a real old Stalinist. He got all the answers years ago, and he's never going to change. When I was fourteen, I joined the Young Communist League, but when I was thirteen I'd been going to CND. It was very split and aggressive and sectarian then, and when I went to university, I wasn't involved in any politics[3]. By then, I'd lapsed by YCL membership.'

After that she had been reluctant to get involved beyond 'making a few contacts' and selling the Morning Star occasionally. 'I had a reluctance to get involved again. I imagined I'd get roped in for meetings all the time.' When she moved to Stamford Hill, she met two party members who rekindled her interest. 'I was impressed that (they) were so nice, not at all heavily political, just

285

decent human beings... I've been active in varying degrees since then.'
Among the turning points in Debbie's life was the 'loss of religion'. She said
she regretted it, and wished it could be regained. I did not ask her about
the nature of her beliefs, unfortunately. She, like Tom, Pete and Louise,
was active in local community affairs.

What did these people have in common? With the exception of Eric Clark, who
was younger, all were in their mid-thirties to early forties and had to some
extent been influenced by or become involved either in political situations
and/or in community living and counter-culture in their late teens and early
twenties. Their interest arose as the result of direct industrial experience,
and/or through meetings with significant individuals. Personal experience
and direct observation underpinned the most convincing and secure socialists'
world views. Those whose views arose more nebulously out of family background
or the Zeitgeist of the late 1960s were less persuasive in their views.
None was personally experiencing acute poverty or deprivation at the time
of their arising of political consciousness.

Two others who expressed Marxist views of the economy were Susan Fellows
and Beryl Clark. These women are younger, in their late twenties, and students
in higher education. Their views have not taken them into the Labour Party
or other more left-wing political groups. As Black women who have suffered
discrimination and stereotyping, they have channelled their political efforts
into supporting the local Black community. Beryl is a school governor and
a member of Hackney Black Governors' Collective, and is involved in Hackney
Educational Development Association, a Black community centre. Susan is on the
committees of two Black community groups in Hackney. It is their Blackness
which has salience rather than their class politics. I ll return to this
point later.

Of all the women, only Sandra Green had had experience in a factory and of
trying to organise or represent her fellow workers. I asked her whether
anyone had tried to get a union going. She replied: 'No. That's one of the
things. Some of the factories and some people. You try to make suggestions
to them and everyone says "yes, yes, yes", and when it came to the actual
crunch, everyone backed off and left one or two of you doing it and that was
no good. You needed everybody. There were one or two things he did in that
factory that I didn't agree with. Quite a few of them didn't agree with them.

286

We'd say "how about we talk to the boss about it?" Everybody said "yes" until they came to that point.' She had neither the political education nor personal contacts with political people which enabled her to act in this situation. She chose instead to change her job. She votes Labour 'maybe because it's a working class party', but a consciousness of where her experiences belong in a wider political context has not yet arisen.

So it would appear that a fully socialist class consciousness or radical vision, or political activity, are rare, and are most likely to be found among the more advantaged. The most deprived, the separated or divorced mothers and the unmarried mothers who were dependent on supplementary benefits, were not among the 'radicals'. They lack the regular contact and history of common experiences which a group of workers in a factory or office enjoy. They are unlikely to meet by chance proselytising socialists or socialist ideas. The connection between one's own situation with its immediate causes and the wider economic and political context is not recognised. Many of the English and West Indian respondents knew clearly who benefits from the status quo, but had not seen how this connected with their own situations.

b) Class and Status

I was surprised by the results of the analysis reported in Chapter Six at the limited extent to which sex and kind or level of class consciousness correlated. I had expected to find greater differences, having designed a sample where the women were least likely to be in full-time employment and likely to experience fully the economic, industrial or political realities of employment, and consequently (I had reasoned) were less likely to be 'class conscious'. It is true that when speaking of class, men were rather more likely to talk about the division of labour and authority relations in the workplace, and the women were more likely to mention lifestyles, but property, education and cultural capital were mentioned equally by the sexes, and indeed, contrary to expectations, it was a category of women (West Indian) who were most clearly aware of a money or power basis to class. Awareness and knowledge are not the same as consciousness, though, as we saw above.

287

Much more distinct lines could be drawn between the knowledge and attitudes of respondents in the three local status groups than between the sexes. These can be characterised as follows. The West Indian respondents were most likely to be aware that money or power was the basis of class; were most likely to perceive two rather than several classes; but were most likely to regard race as the main or a major division in society (four of the seven West Indian women asked). They may have voted Labour, but they have not joined the Party or become active in class politics. They were much more likely to have suffered discrimination than the Jews. I would suggest that these findings lead to the view that Black people's experiences of prejudice and discrimination in schools and workplaces leads them to mediate their understanding of class to accommodate racism. There is no doubt that several remained aware of class; for example, Sandra Green and Diana Maine[4], but I would argue it is significant that the two most highly educated West Indian women, acquainted with Marxist thought and very self-aware, have chosen to become involved with the local Black community or political groups rather than in leftist politics. There is an obvious lesson here for the Labour Party in its deliberations about Black Sections.

Amongst the English respondents, there was a similar level of awareness that money was one of the bases of class. However, the English respondents were also most likely to talk about lifestyles, education and the intangible cultural trappings of class. In other words, they also treated 'class' as a measure of prestige, a Weberian _status_ category. Some Jewish and West Indian respondents revealed themselves as aware of these more subjective phenomena, but felt detached from them. One measure of this is that the English respondents were least likely to have close friends from a different class. 'People like me' for English respondents meant people from the same class. They were the most likely to talk about the hurts of snobbery. As we have seen, most of the socialists were middle class and English. None of the English people named race as the major division in society.

The Jewish respondents largely appeared to drop out of class all together. They explicitly denied that they felt they were 'classed' persons, saying that as an 'ethnic minority' they did not count. A distinct prestige hierarchy operated in the very religious Jewish communities, based on learning, piety and community activity. The Jews, especially the women, were least likely to

regard money or power as the basis of class. Jewish women seemed to be most
open to the government's ideological statement that the young priced themselves
out of jobs. This reflects the Jewish women's comparative isolation from the
economic and industrial realities of employment outside their own community.
It was also congruent with their general political conservatism. This has
less to do with their middle class status than with their belief that the
Conservative Party's policies echoed their own major concerns - the sanctity
of family life and the quality of education. Nevertheless, three of the women
(all had been to university) admitted to being involved in Labour Party
politics in their youth. Werblowsky, writing about 'new' and 'not so new'
religious sects in the United States, notes '... most fundamentalist-revivalist
type (sic) of sectarian movements tend to the right or at least to conservative
value systems'[5]. While he appears to be referring to Christian fundamentalism,
the same seems to be true of these Jewish fundamentalists.

The pattern of what prevents the arising of class consciousness as Marx
would have understood it is fragmented and difficult. Many factors intervene
between the direct negative experience of the capitalist system and consciousness
of what this experience means in the context of one's fellows and the wider
society. Many people have not had wounding personal experiences of a material
kind in the first place. Few of these respondents had suffered compulsory
redundancy or homelessness. A few suffered, and continue to suffer, long-term
poverty, but the causes are seen as deriving from 'the system', but as simply
the difficulties of maintaining a large family on a small income, or because
of the desertion of a husband or boyfriend. Outside of the youth sector,
unemployment in London is still fairly low compared with other parts of the
country. A number of respondents expressed the opinion that jobs could
be found by those who want them, quoting the vacancy columns in local newspapers.
In this small area of Hackney, although not affluent, grinding poverty is not
obviously widespread.

People were almost unanimous[6] that to be poor was a worse disadvantage in
Britain today than to be a woman or to be Black. Isaac Friedmann described this
most eloquently: 'I think being poor has a very damaging effect on your self
image. There are things that you want and you can't have them. You have to
count your pennies. Maybe your neighbours, you see people at a financial
advantage. If you're Black we know you're disadvantaged, but you have an

identity, a collective identity with other Blacks certainly. There can be
motivation to improve your lot. If you're a woman, you have various women's
liberation groups to latch onto and feel you're making positive moves to improve
your lot. If you're poor, who do you associate with? There's no association
of the poor. You're left with a bad self image and you don't try to improve
your lot. You accept poverty, which in the long run is more damaging.'

Gender Consciousness

If socialism or radical consciousness of class inequalities was unusual among
the respondents, feminism was exceedingly rare. Only one woman had been
involved in a feminist consciousness-raising group (at university - Debbie Longman).
We saw in Chapter Five that only one or two others expressed feminist opinions,
recognising in specific terms the disadvantages that women suffer,[7] although
many more recognised in general terms that women were undervalued in British
society. Again, as we saw with class consciousness, there was a gap between
how people saw and organised their own lives and their recognition of the
generality. There are interesting variations in this pattern which I shall
describe, but first let us look briefly at Debbie Longman and Pete Whittaker's
household.

a) The Feminists

Pete and Debbie have, together with another couple, bought a house which
they share. They live communally. Debbie: 'We have a calendar where you
put down what you're going to cook. We do a big shop once a month. Usually
Pete does that because he drives the car. I do, but I haven't driven for some
time because of eye problems. As far as housework goes, we've divided the
house into areas, one person responsible for one area, and then every so
often we'll switch it around. Each person is responsible for their own
washing and ironing.

Q: 'What about when you lived with Philip?' (Her husband from whom she is
    separated)

A: 'Well that was completely different. He was so involved with NALGO for
    weeks, come in from the pub late, so I was doing all the shopping,
    cooking and washing, which was hard work.... Every now and then we'd
    have a row about it. He'd always have some excuse, like there were no

shops near where he was working. That's the classical thing. The woman
always manages somehow to do the shopping. You justify it to yourself,
like "I've got more time"....'

It is interesting that Debbie, who had been involved with women's groups at
university in the early 1970s, should four or five years later allow herself to
fall into the traditional role, even though this caused rows. She regarded
her time as more available than his for these domestic tasks. In her current
household, things were run differently from the start. It is undoubtedly
significant that Pete had been brought up to look after himself. 'At a
domestic level, I've always done things around the house. As children we
were always expected to do this, on pain of being clouted. So we did all
this stuff. It seemed quite natural. You've got men in the army who've
had to do the same thing. They get used to it. When I left home I was
surrounded by men who didn't know where to begin.... I came to think that
anyone who didn't behave like this was peculiar. So it seemed perfectly
natural to me if women should complain about this. A lot of men have no direct
experience of this kind.'

Thus Pete's feminist education began in childhood, forming his expectations of
what he could and should contribute to the maintenance of a household.
Debbie's father, on the other hand, was 'a plain old-fashioned male chauvinist.
My mother's always done everything.' So while Debbie's feminism told her
that a man could and should contribute fully, the first man she ever knew did
not.

Here again, as with class consciousness, it is the conjunction of personal
experience with exposure to and development of ideas which raises consciousness.
It will be recalled from Chapter Five that two of the women with very male
chauvinist fathers or husbands, Karen Corrigan and Geraldine Pusey, were
consciously bringing up their sons to help and be self-sufficient. Pete's
story shows how it works.

b) Gender and Status

As with class consciousness, the interesting variations in experiences and attitudes towards gender fall less on class and sex lines, but on local status group lines.

While I must repeat that it is regrettable that I was unable to obtain more than one male West Indian respondent, the discovery that only three of the ten West Indian women were currently living with husbands or boyfriends was very interesting. There was nothing in the method of sampling which leads me to doubt their representativeness. Seven of them had lived with male partners at some time. The Jewish respondents, on the other hand, were all living with their husbands, and all but two of the English women were living with partners. Two of the West Indian single parents lived with their mothers and four were themselves the offspring of single or divorced mothers who had largely brought their children up single-handed. Another had been orphaned and brought up by white adoptive parents. The nuclear family was not the norm among these respondents.

This is reflected in their unanimous rejection of the proposition that the male breadwinner/female houseworker was an ideal division of labour for the raising of children. They were also unanimous that women were undervalued. Six out of ten said they had felt disadvantaged as women, the largest proportion of the three groups. One might be led to the inference that they were likely feminists, but not so. Five did not know anything about feminism and, while one or two recognised women were not fairly paid, only Beryl Clark said she had been discriminated against at work on account of her sex. The disadvantages of womanhood were not experienced as material as much as physical and sexual - sexual attacks and harrassment, the pain and discomfort of pregnancy and childbirth, and lack of height and strength. Despite this, the West Indian women were least deterred from walking by themselves at night.

As with Marxist class consciousness, only two expressed the view that sex, along with class and race, w · significant division: in society, and that to be 'Black' and 'a woman' were the worst disadvantages. These two were again those in higher education whose political activities centred on local Black community groups. Once more I am led to the hypothesis that the experiences

292

of racism that these women suffer aggravate class and gender deprivations. Furthermore, acting politically for and with 'people like me' does not mean joining a women's group, but given limited leisure time it means getting involved in Hackney's Black community.

The following incident is one I witnessed in a baker's shop in Stamford Hill very recently. An attractive young Black woman with a baby in a buggy was buying bread when a young white man came in. He immediately started 'chatting her up', apparently, saying 'Do you want to come to the cinema with me? We'll see King Kong.' She replied, 'No, thank you. I can see that any time I want on the video,' and walked out. The man turned to the two (white) women shop assistants and laughed, saying 'She didn't get the joke, did she?'. The incident was both sexually charged and crudely racist, and I would suspect is typical of what young Black women frequently experience. The collusion implied by her white 'sisters'' laughter indicates where her experiences are more likely to be understood and sympathised with - inside the Black community[8].

There is not much to be said about English respondents' experiences and attitudes towards gender inequalities. The way they divided household tasks and childcare was, on the whole, slightly more egalitarian than the ways the Jews organised things. In part this reflects the fact that the English men spend more of their non-working time actually at home. All the Jewish men had extensive religious and community commitments. English women were not unanimous that the traditional division of labour was ideal, nor were they unanimous that women were undervalued. Two felt women's valuation of themselves was the problem. These two, plus another, had always worked in areas such as nursing or childminding where they were unlikely to have encountered sexual discrimination.

On the face of it, Jewish women keep to very traditional roles and mores. As I mentioned above, the division of labour is rather more 'traditional' in that Jewish men did less around the house. Attitudes were clear: women in British society were undervalued, but religious Jewish women were emphatically not undervalued. They were 'queens' or 'working princesses'. Their arguments for the ideal nature of the male breadwinner/female nurturer were heavily biologistic. and derived from fundamental teachinos in the Talmud. Women were to be responsible for the care of their children. There was no law against women working for money to support the family, however.

Jewish women were least likely to feel disadvantaged as women, although the difference is marginal: four Jewish, five English and six West Indian women felt personally disadvantaged. Jewish women felt disadvantaged not because of discrimination, the pains of childbirth or lack of physical strength, but simply because they feared physical attacks by (non-Jewish) men. Some _had_ been attacked. They did not resent women's minimal role in the synagogue or prayer house. Indeed, one or two were grateful for it. The exhortations to have as many children as God sends was regarded as a source of joy, not an intolerable burden on women's bodies. I suspect that in practice, health and wealth or their lack may play some part in limiting or slowing down the growth of families. The Jewish women were not all either pregnant or nursing small infants. The Jews were generally very well informed about feminism, unlike West Indians and English respondents, and they were not universally hostile to it.

The unexpected paradox which emerged concerning Jewish women was that, although they accept and live by very traditional and restrictive-looking laws at home and at work, they also _behaved_ like feminists in the public realm. They organised fundraising and very many community activities as women in women's committees. They were _by no means_ directed by men in these activities. I was told many times that people enjoy working separately, and even celebrating separately, dancing and carousing with their own sex. They see it as 'natural'. Moreover, two or three of the women got themselves co-opted onto the Hackney Council's Women's Committee, partly for the purpose of securing funding for a women's centre for religious Jewish women. They are thus behaving as Jewish feminists in the political sphere.

There are various points to be made about respondents in all categories. Firstly, there was no evidence that the men were generally doing any more around the house than their fathers had. Some did more, others did less, but there was no clear pattern. What may be changing, and these only slowly, are women's expectations of men. Two were bringing their sons up to be more self-sufficient. Two others whose first marriages had broken up spoke disapprovingly of their spouses' contribution to the home compared with that of their new partners. One woman whose father and previous partner had done more than her husband was very dissatisfied, though she admits 'I knew what I was marrying'. Such an acceptance or 'collusion' was acknowledged by many respondents. I suspect

many people would agree with Lea Jacobson that 'It's not worth the bother' of getting partners to do more. Changes of circumstances such as a new baby or new job are usually sufficient to cause changes in the sharing of domestic responsibilities.

Secondly, the relative absence of feminists among these respondents (compared with even socialists) may simply reflect the youth of the modern women's movement. It was only in the early 1970s that feminist consciousness-raising began in Britain, and membership of such groups tends to be short-lived compared with membership of established political parties. So, there may not be all that many feminists around who can influence or inspire feminist consciousness outside of higher education. The proliferation of women's studies courses may change this in time, together with a burgeoning feminist literature. It is unfortunate that feminism has become associated with lesbianism in some respondents' minds. This undoubtedly weakens its impact.

Finally, I am left with a small and irritating conundrum concerning the division of labour in households. Why are women so reluctant to hand over responsiblity for washing clothes and ironing them to men? The skills and rules are easily taught and learned to cope with these endlessly repetitive and necessary tasks. Is it to do with reluctance to relinquish control, as Tom Hetherington suggests? I have 'relinquished control' in these terms in my own house, but the occasional disquiet I suffer has less to do with doubt concerning my spouse's competence, or with losing control, but is sparked by guilt. If I am honest, I regard laundry as 'women's work', and it ought to be done by me. This lies uncomfortably in an otherwise feminist consciousness. At least it should be less of a 'problem' for my son and daughter.

Status Group Consciousness

I have been using the concept 'status' rather loosely up until now. The time has come to review it to see whether my use of it has had any validity. Referring to the original source[9] of the concept (a procedure which would undoubtedly be applauded by my Hasidic respondents), a number of characteristics of status are described. The first is that status creates socially meaningful differences between people and social closure in friendships and marriages.

295

Certainly the respondents recognised the categories I have used in this research - explicitly Afro-Caribbean West Indians or their second generation descendants, white non-Jewish indigenous English people, and ultra-religious Jewish people. These are certainly socially meaningful in the area I have studied. I have indicated much evidence to show that there is significant social closure as far as close friendships are concerned, although there is a lot of generally friendly neighbourliness between the groups. West Indians and English people are perhaps less divided socially than the Jews are from either group. There also appears to be a level of social closure between the groups in the matter of marriages, but it is not complete. One West Indian woman had a white husband (from whom she was estranged), one English woman had had two babies with a West Indian man, and at least two of the Jewish people I interviewed had been born into English non-Jewish families and had converted.

The second feature of status groups is that they form a hierarchy of prestige. If it is essential to the existence of status hierarchy that its members or groups recognise it similarly, even if some reject its moral validity, then Stamford Hill's groups are not status groups.

Another feature is that status operates to hamper market principles. We have seen in Chapter Seven that racism has been shown to distort the fair allocation of Council property in Hackney. Also in the housing sphere, it is locally recognised that there are a small number of streets in Stamford Hill that non-Jews find it very difficult to buy houses in. Market principles are undoubtedly ruptured in the purchase of kosher food. A diet without the laws of kosher applying to it would be very much cheaper. The careful ritual surrounding the slaughter of meat and the regular inspection and validation of food manufacturers raises the costs of production.

Relatedly, a fourth feature of status groups is that they involve a distinctive style of life. We have seen how undeniably true this is of the Jews, but it is more difficult to argue that West Indians and English people have markedly different lifestyles. Youth styles may differ somewhat, and many older West Indians still cook their native foods, but this is by no means universal among younger people and those born here. The stereotype of the West Indian extended family and the isolated English nuclear family did not seem to apply to the respondents. There were isolated single parents and a nuclear family among the West Indians, and several English women saw their mothers regularly. One had hers living with her. I am not sure it is possible to argue that

'distinctive styles of life' are to be found, except in the case of the ultra-religious Jews.

Finally, according to Weber, members of negatively privileged status groups look to future fulfilment rather than satisfactions in the here and now. While Weber himself specifically mentions the Jews and their desire for the birth of the Messiah, I am not convinced that the people I interviewed were motivated by a spirit of deferred gratification. They seemed to me to be very much enjoying the observances they kept, and regarded the here and now as to be made the best of. Support for this view comes from Thomas Oden[10] writing about the parallels between pietism and certain counter-cultural psychotherapies in the United States:

> 'Hasidism was a response to the desire of ordinary people for a joyful, emotively (sic) satisfying faith applied practically in a social context. The aim of Hasidism was not to change belief but to change the believer. Concrete experiencing in the here and now was more important than abstract conceptualizing.'(11)

On the other hand, eight of the twenty Jews mentioned the Messiah when I asked them for their hopes for the future. A car sticker to be seen not infrequently in ancient Volvos around Stamford Hill proclaims 'We want Moshiarch now!' Nevertheless, these eight and the other eleven Jewish respondents also answered this question in terms which suggested they wanted more of the same (children, good health etc) rather than radical changes of a utopian nature. The same was true of most of the West Indian and English respondents. One or two wanted to move to the West Indies, to have somewhere new to live, but on the whole, the spirit seemed to be, in the words of one, 'to keep on keepin' on', but more peacefully.

I would argue that on balance Weber's concept of status has some validity applied to the categories of people living in Stamford Hill that I have identified for the purposes of this study. The existence of 'socially meaningful differences' which 'hamper market principles' are clear. The existence of hierarchy is most questionable, but the distinctiveness of lifestyles and deferring of gratification can be seen to have some validity, most particularly in the case of the Jews.

The Three Communities

i) The West Indian Community

I am not sure it is meangingful to speak of a 'West Indian community' in
Stamford Hill itself. West Indian community centres are to be found further
south in Stoke Newington and Dalston. Only two of the women were involved
in community groups. While there is a Pentecostal church on the western
fringe of Stamford Hill, none of the churchgoers in the sample attended it.
They were all Catholics, and all but one were very irregular attenders.   With
these exceptions, the West Indians did not seem to meet regularly outside
their homes in any organised way. This is not unusual: 'The existing
material on West Indians in Britain shows a consistent pattern of low levels
of participation in formal associations. Moreover, those few formal
associations which have been established tend to be highly ephemeral and
prone to fragmentation. This pattern can be discerned from the earliest
period of West Indian settlement in Britain right through to the present day.'[12]

Pearson suggests a number of factors to account for this: the heterogeneity
of West Indians from different islands, classes and of different colours;
a concern with individual economic activity and residential mobility; a
belief in the temporary nature of migration; their class - they tend to be
the urban poor, who are not politically active on the whole; and more
contentiously, that the historical influences of colonialism fermented self
and group recrimination along class or colour lines; and that the level of
discrimination has incapacitated West Indians in being politically active.
It has not been my main purpose in this research to evaluate these factors,
but they are germane, and some of them do appear to be supported by the data.
People did come from different islands and expressed their distinctiveness
from the rest of the West Indies; many of them were personally ambitious in
employment terms; two wanted to migrate to the West Indies; the two active
women were middle class and more highly educated. Poor single parents are
the most likely to have difficulties in arranging babysitters to enable them to
go out to meetings. The level of discrimination was depressingly high, but it
is difficult to say whether this is 'incapacitating'. The 'acculturating'
effect of colonialism is a controversial[13] matter. It remains the case that
strong Black community bonds are not evident in this inner city area.

298

Wariness in speaking to a white woman must clearly have impeded totally frank revelation and discussion of the respondents' experiences of racism. Several sought in various ways to deny these experiences . altogether, and appeared to identify with the white status quo. Nevertheless, while I acknowledge Lionel Morrison's point that 'It has been a black argument for some time now that only a black writer and researcher could seriously and truthfully depict, not interpret, black viewpoints with all their innuendos and "gut" reactions'[14], I would suggest that the data do reveal the areas where these respondents have experienced racism - at school, at work, in housing and with the police. None of this is new knowledge, of course, but it supports the cry, as an active political necessity, for the elimination of racism.

In particular, West Indian respondents' experiences of British schools seemed to be anything but encouraging. While Jewish arguments for the existence of separate schools are persuasive, they centre on a distinct religious purpose and an explicit desire to preserve and develop Jewish culture. Such distinctive purposes and desires are not evident among West Indian respondents, nor indeed in radical Black writers such as Hazel Corby. She argues that 'This pluralitic model assumed that equality could be achieved through cultural diversity and thus removed from the realm of politics'[15].

The 1985 Swann report[16] on the educational problems of ethnic minorities explicitly rejected the notion of separate schools. It emphasised a number of measures to try to encourage better education for Afro-Caribbean children in existing state schools. The existence of the Hackney Black Governors' Collective will ensure that West Indian voices are heard not only at the macro policy-making level of ILEA, but also at governors' meetings in schools. Another political response to West Indian problems is Hackney Borough Council's Equal Opportunities programme and the introduction of a Race Relations Unit. The Parliamentary constituency in which Stamford Hill is to be found has just returned the first Black woman Member of Parliament, Diane Abbott. There can be little doubt that Black voices will increasingly be heard in the political realm. It is less clear whether it is, in Maurice Schmool's words, 'the melting pot' or 'the tossed salad' which they favour.

ii) The English Community

The English community in Stamford Hill is similarly amorphous. English people
have probably been the most active overall in setting up and running the two
residents' associations, and the action group which successfully petitioned
for the development of a small part in the area. Here again, it is the
middle class and well educated socialist party members who are active in these
concerns.

Class differences also emerged in the expression of racist attitudes. Crudely
(and there were exceptions), middle class people did not voice these
attitudes, but working class people did, albeit inadvertantly. On the other
hand, very few people emerged as overtly anti-semitic. One ought not to be
complacent about these attitudes. We have seen the volatility and inconsistency
of racist attitudes in some of the English respondents. Most people declared
themselves pessimistic about the future of race relations.

iii) The Jewish Community

The Jewish respondents may well feel themselves to be in the front line if
this proves to be true. The level of anti-semitic abuse, both verbal and
physical, which they reported as suffering at the hands of both white working
class youth and West Indian youth, is very surprising and alarming. On the
other hand, these respondents seem to have become relatively free from
discrimination. No-one reported having suffered serious anti-semitic
discrimination. The people working inside the community are obviously well
protected in this respect, but those working outside it were not troubled either.

The Lubavitch Jews were all 'converts' from either less religious Jewish or
non-Jewish backgrounds. Their Judaism is fundamentalist and embraces a
powerful and coherent Weltanschauung in the same way that socialism can.
With only two exceptions, they all described their religious move into Lubavitch
as a major turning point in their lives. This seems to have happened for
most of them quite early in their lives - middle to late teens. It is
interesting in this connection to note that none of these people report
estrangements from their families of the kind Eileen Barker alludes to
in her account of the conversion process of Moonies[17]. Several volunteered

that their parents had been upset to begin with but had soon 'come round'.
Several parents had themselves stepped up the level of their own devotions.
Contact with impressive individuals or families was important to several
people in awakening their interest, and of course an endless programme of
education forged and continues to maintain it, for the men at least.
'Conversion' to socialism was not unlike this for a number of the English
radicals.

The Jewish community is the .only local status group entirely worthy of the
word 'community'. The Lubavitch community from which most of the Jewish
respondents were drawn is extremely well organised and supportive of its
members. The Jewish community finds political expression and representation
through its councillors and its members' conscious decision to vote for
Jewish interests. One of its major concerns currently is the funding of
Jewish schools. The Yesodey Hatorah schools, which are attended by both
Hasidic and non-Hasidic children from very religious homes, are seeking
financial support from the Inner London Education Authority. The community
argues that it is not rich and, like Catholic schools, they need state support.
The counter-arguments are that children should not be overwhelmingly
subjected to one religious ideology in school, and that if the Jews are supported
in this way, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Rastafarians will follow in demanding
funds for their own schools.

Final Conclusions and Hopes for the Future

Two themes have repeatedly rippled to the surface of this research report:
the importance of education and politics. Jews have long recognised the vital
role of education, not only in improving the material lot of the individual,
but also in preserving and developing the collective spiritual condition of
Jews. Ruskin College and the Workers' Education Association attest to
socialists' understanding of education's role in raising consciousness.
Feminists have understood it and continue to oversubscribe women's studies
courses, as well as to write. Each school in ILEA is now required to have
explicit anti-sexist policies (as well as anti-racist policies). Black
academics have found their voice and are increasingly researching, writing
and teaching about the area of Black people's experience, an area into which I
have had the temerity to stray, but briefly. The special education needs of

Afro-Caribbean and Asian children is now on the agenda in London schools. These developments can only have the effect of raising consciousness, whether socialist, feminist, Black or Jewish, in time.

Concerning politics, women have long had a separate voice within the Labour Party without disastrous consequences. Black people are now demanding the same, and they are right to do so, as mainstream party politics remains the main arena of struggles for power in this society. It is on the Left that West Indians, like the Jews fifty or sixty years ago, are most likely to find a political home, for the time being. The religious Jewish community is politically vocal in the defence and promotion of its schools. Class politics, on the other hand, are in a state of confusion after eight years of populist Conservative government. Our four active socialist respondents have gone back to the roots, helping people with whatever problems they present to them, or through the tenants' movement.

What do people hope for in the future? These respondents all hoped for two or three of the following: good health, happiness and peace, and the same for their children. West Indian and English respondents were rather more likely to mention material conditions such as housing or a 'comfortable' standard of living, but I was surprised by the overall similarity of the replies, the Messiah notwithstanding. My own hopes would include one that people increasingly come to recognise the similarities of their purposes and existences and thereby increasingly recognise 'people like me' rather than 'strangers'. In this I am like Wade Nobles in hoping for the rebirth of what he calls the African Ethos:

> 'Self awareness or self-conception is not, therefore, limited (as in the Euro-American tradition) to just the cognitive awareness of one's uniqueness, individuality and historical finiteness. It is, in the African tradition, awareness of self as the awareness of one's historical consciousness (collective spirituality) and the subsequent sense of "we" or "being One".' (18)

For those who have read this, I hope it has cast a little light on 'other people's' lives, especially if 'they' are neighbours.

1   See for example, D Lockwood, 'Sources of Variation in Working Class Images of Society', in M Bulmer (ed), <u>Working Class Images of Society</u>

2   See below, Appendix 1, concluding question, p i

3   Although she says she was not involved with 'politics' at university, she was involved with the women's movement.

4   See Chapter 6

5   R J Werblowsky, 'Religions New and Not So New: Fragments of an Agenda', E Barker, ed, <u>New Religious Movements</u>, p 40

6   Exceptions to this view were expressed by two Black women, both of whom answered 'Black women'. Two men, one Jewish, one English, answered similarly.

7   See, for example, Wendy Moore, pp 142-3 and Sheila Stevens, p 142

8   Hazel Corby makes a similar point in her essay 'White Woman Listen. Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood'. She says that Black feminists decry white feminists' 'non-recognition of Black women's sexuality and femininity'. White feminists ignore the racial and sex-and-race elements in Black women's experience. <u>The Empire Strikes Back</u>, p 220

9   M Weber, 'Class, Status, Party', H H Gerth and C Wright Mills, eds, <u>From Max Weber</u>, pp 180-195

10 T C Oden, 'The New Pietism', E Barker, ed, op cit

11 Ibid, p 89

12 D G Pearson, <u>Race, Class and Political Activism</u>, p 7

13 For a critique, see E Lawrence, 'In the Abundance of Water, the Fool is
    Thirsty: Sociology and Black Pathology', in <u>The Empire Strikes Back</u>

14 L Morrison, <u>As They See It</u>, p 7

15 H V Corby, 'Schooling in Babylon' in <u>The Empire Strikes Back</u>, p 194

16 <u>Education for All</u>, report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education
    of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups

17 E Barker, <u>The Making of a Moonie</u>, pp 24, 32, 35, 121-122, 175-176

18 W W Nobles, 'Extended Self: Rethinking the So-called Negro Self-concept',
    R L Jones, ed, <u>Black Psychology</u>, p 104

* The use of the terms 'status' and 'local status groups' here is not classically
Weberian. As I mentioned in the Introduction (p 1), 'Jews', 'West Indians'
and 'English' are not categories of the same logical order, being
respectively religion, race and origins in a particular place, and race and
birth in a different country. They do represent different social realities,
as this thesis seeks to demonstrate, but it was difficult to find a single
term to encompass this. In pp 295-297 below, there is a discussion of the
Weberian concept of status and its applicability here. There is a sense
in which the concept of status does apply to each group. The West Indians
respondants shared 'being Black' as a negative status, the Jews equated their
status with their religion, and the English measured their status in terms
of economic and educational variables. What is missing, however, is the
notion of a local hierarchy which ranks all these groups together, which
is central to Weber's use of the concept.

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

BIOGRAPHICAL:

1. Hand card: Identity test
2. Turn on tape. Ways in which life differs from parents.
3. Age, occupation, number and ages of children, education, birthplace of self and parents, previous occupations.
4. Why work? Money, fulfilment, friends, boredom at home, identity, responsibility?
5. Are you ambitious?
6. Occupations of four closest friends.

GENDER

1. Who does what around the house? Children, cooking, shopping, cleaning, laundry?
2. How different is this from your parents?
3. Man breadwinner, woman housewife - the ideal way to raise children?
4. Are women undervalued? Attitude to feminism and feminists.
5. Do you feel at a disadvantage as a woman?
6. Which sex would you choose if you could be reincarnated?

STATUS

1. Describe Stamford Hill and the people who live here as if to someone who has never been there.
2. Do you think there's much prejudice and dsicrimination against Jews/West Indians?
3. Own attitudes to other racial/religious groups.
4. Do you know any West Indians/white English/Jews personally? Any close friends?
5. Proud of own culture? Identification with birthplace.
6. Ever felt at a disadvantage because of colour or religion?
7. In Britain, is it a worse disadvantage to be poor, Black or a woman?

CLASS

1. Describe British society as if to a foreign visitor - its divisions.
2. Self classing; basis of class; cui bono; alternative vision.
3. As a working-class person, do your interests oppose/compete with those of a middle-class person?
4. Possibility of social mobility? How - education?
5. Is the wages structure fair? Are young people pricing themselves out of jobs?
6. One law for the rich, another for the poor?

POLITICS

1. Voting behaviour; political membership (including feminist); religion; community groups.
2. Derivation of radical perspective.

CONCLUSION

1. Turning points in life; hopes for the future.

i

APPENDIX 2: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

The following brief summaries may be helpful in reading Chapters Seven to Nine. All names have been changed, as have other details which might cause the real identity of respondents to be obvious.

WEST INDIAN WOMEN

1   Beryl Clark, aged 29, married to Eric Clark. She is a student teacher with two children, Dean aged 6 and Dionne 9. Lives in a Council property, the top half of a terraced house.

2   Diana Maine, aged 34, a beautician in a department store. She is single and has three daughters aged 10, 13 and 16. Her mother lives with them in a housing association flat in a large terraced house.

3   Gem Bailey, 20, currently unemployed. She was a typist, has one son aged 3, is single and lives with her mother and brother in a Council flat in a terraced house.

4   Chloe Sylvester, 22, a playcentre worker with one child aged two. Married, lives in nearby Clapton in a privately rented flat, but spends most of her daytimes in her parents' owner-occupied terraced house in Stamford Hill.

5   Vera Hall, 21, single, one child aged 4. Not working and living temporarily with a white divorcee and her children in a Council flat in a small block. She has worked in a factory.

6   Sandra Green, 25, single, mother of one child aged 6. She worked in a clothing factory until recently, but is now about to work as a part-time health service auxiliary. Lives in a Council flat in a small block.

7   Susan Fellows, 33, a law student training to be a solicitor. She is separated from her husband, has one son aged 7, and lives with him in an owner-occupied flat in a large terraced house.

8   Philomena Johnson, 39, helps to run her brother's electrical business. Married but separated from her English husband. She has four children and owns her terraced house. She used to be a dancer. Her children are aged 5, 7, 9 and 13.

9   Beverley Williams, 24, a playcentre worker, has one child aged 3. She is a single parent, living alone in a Council house with her child, although she used to live with her child's father.

10   Marcia X, 28, one child aged 4. She is a secretary and lives with her
     boyfriend in a Council flat in a small block. She is pregnant.

ENGLISH WOMEN

1   Wendy Moore, 39, secondary school supply teacher. Two children aged 6 years
     and 18 months, married to Andrew Moore. Lives in an owner-occupied
     house. Her mother also lives with the family.
2   Debbie Longman, 35, part-time osteopath. One child aged 4, divorced
     but lives in a shared owner-occupied house with her child's father,
     Pete Whittaker, her ex-husband and her ex-husband's new partner.
3   Caroline Pryce, 38, a nurse working part-time some evenings and weekends.
     Two children aged 7 and 3. Married to Richard Pryce, lives in owner-
     occupied house.
4   Sheila Stevens, 29, currently not working. Married. She has two children
     aged 9 and 5. She is married to Barry Stevens, lives in a housing
     association flat in nearby Stoke Newington, but moved from Stamford Hill
     three months before the interview.
5   Louise Cooper, 37, community worker and part-time home tutor. One son
     aged 8. Lives with Tom Hetherington in a housing association flat in a
     terraced house.
6   Mary Baker, 33, homeworking fur machinist. Two children aged 9 and 5.
     Married to Ronnie Baker, shares a large rented house with her father-in-law
     and her brother-in-law.
7   Karen Corrigan, 38, childminder. Seven children aged between 2 and 16.
     Married, lives in a large housing association flat.
8   Geraldine Pusey, 36, childminder. Four children aged between 8 and 18.
     Divorced, lives in a Council house.
9   Judy Jones, 38. Three children aged 18, 8 and 2. Lives in a housing
     association flat. Divorced. Unofficially, she lives with Graham Stuart.
     Occasionally works as a childminder and auxiliary in an old people's home.
     Not working at the time of the interview.
10   Pam Dixon, 24. Part-time barmaid. Two children aged 4 and 18 months.
     Single, lives with her children in a Council flat in a large block.

JEWISH WOMEN

1   Hephzibar Levenberg, 31. Three children aged 3, 2 and 3 months. Not
     working. Married to Aaron, living in a large terraced owner-occupied
     house. She has a degree in English and Philosophy.

iii

2 Lea Jacobson, 36, a part-time librarian. She has seven children aged between 14 and 3. Married to Ishmael, living in an owner-occupied house.

3 Rebekeh Teff, 42. Part-time teacher and counsellor in the Lubavitch school. She has thirteen children aged from 21 to 2. She is married to Solomon and they live in two adjoining (interconnected) owner-occupied terraced houses.

4 Zipporah Roth, 28. Not working. She has four children aged between 8 and 1. Married to a jewellery stone-setter. Lives in an overcrowded housing association flat. A member of the Ger sect, not a Lubavitcher.

5 Felicity Bloom, 44. A convert from Christianity and academic historian and university lecturer who has nine children aged between 20 and 4. Married to Mordecai, lives in an owner-occupied house.

6 Hannah Krausz, 39, part-time social worker attached to the Aguda community (she is not a Lubavitcher). Five children aged from 17 to 5. Married, lives in an owner-occupied house. Ultra-religious, but Litvish rather than Hasidic.

7 Lois Diamond, 41, part-time social worker in the Lubavitch community. Has nine children between the ages of 13 years and 2 months. Married to Emanual, she lives in an owner-occupied house. She has a degree in sociology and was a medical researcher before getting married.

8 Rachel Grossman, 32. Has seven children aged from 10 years to 3 months. A part-time librarian in the Lubavitch community library. Married to Philip, they live in an owner-occupied house. Active in the National Childbirth Trust. Moved from Bournemouth three years ago.

9 Ruth Friedman, 43. Part-time teacher in the Lubavitch school. Twelve children aged from 15 years to 5 months. Married to Moishe, they live in an owner-occupied house.

WEST INDIAN MAN

1 Eric Clark, 31, production line worker in a car factory. Married to Beryl.

ENGLISH MEN

1 Andrew Moore, 41, unemployed manager. Married to Wendy. Has sold antiques, farmed on a Scottish island.

2 Pete Whittaker, 40. Systems analyst with a local authority. Lives with Debbie Longman.

3   Richard Pryce, 38. Accountant. Married to Caroline.
4   Barry Stevens, 33. Building foreman. Married to Sheila.
5   Tom Hetherington, 40. Tenants' rights worker. Lives with Louise Cooper.
6   Ronnie Baker, 33. An electrician working for British Telecom. Married
    to Mary.
7   Graham Stuart, 35. Postman. Separated from wife and children, unofficially
    living with Judy Jones.

JEWISH MEN

1   Aaron Levenberg, 38. Student of chiropody. Married to Hephzibar.
    Former academic economist and traveller.
2   Ishmail Jacobson, 39. Local authority public librarian. Married to Lea.
3   Solomon Teff, 46. Teacher in the Lubavitch community school. American.
    Married to Rebekeh.
4   Abraham Bauer, 36. Export and import merchant. Israeli, married with
    five children. Lives in a rented house. Was a commissioned officer in
    the Israeli army.
5   Mordecai Bloom, 40. Teacher in the Lubavitch community school. Married
    to Felicity.
6   Emanual Diamond, 39, accountant. Married to Lois.
7   Philip Grossman, 37. Manager for a kosher food manufacturer. Married
    to Rachel
8   Isaac Friedman, 42. Visiting teacher in state schools on Jewish religion.
    Married to Ruth.
9   Moishe Schmool, 38. Systems analyst with a local authority. Married to
    Miriam.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abercrombie, N, Hill, S and Turner, B S, 1980, The Dominant Ideology Thesis, London, Allen & Unwin

Adams, Parveen and Minson, Jeff, 1972, 'The "Subject" of Feminism', in m/f, vol 2, pp 43-61

Alexander, S, 1986, 'Women's Work in Nineteenth Century London', in J Mitchell and A Oakley, The Rights and Wrongs of Women, Harmondsworth, Penguin

Althusser, L, 1971, Lenin and Philosophy, London, New Left Books

Atkinson, A B, 1974, Unequal Shares, Harmondsworth, Penguin

Barker, E, 1984, The Making of a Moonie, Oxford, Basil Blackwell

Barratt, Michele, 1980, Women's Oppression Today, London, Verso

Batstone, E, 1975, 'Deference and the Ethos of Small Town Capitalism', in M Bulmer (ed), Working Class Images of Society, London, RKP

Beech, Reginald, 1985, Staying Together, Chichester, Wiley

Benston, M, 1969, 'The Political Economy of Women's Liberation', in Monthly Review, September 1969

Berger, P and Luckmann, T, 1967, The Social Construction of Reality, Harmondsworth, Penguin

Berthoud, R, 1976, The Disadvantage of Inequality, London, Macdonald & Jane's

Beteille, A (ed), 1969, Social Inequality, Harmondsworth, Penguin

Beynan, Hugh, 1975, Working for Ford, Wakefield, EP Publishing

Blackburn, R and Mann, M, 1979, The Working Class in the Labour Market, London, Macmillan

Bott, E, 1957, Family and Social Network, London, Tavistock

Braverman, H, 1974, Labour and Monopoly Capital, London, Monthly Review Press

Brown, G W and Harris, T, 1978, The Social Origins of Depression, London, Tavistock

Bulmer, M (ed), 1975, Working Class Images of Society, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul

Collins, R, 1972, 'A Conflict Theory of Social Stratification', in H P Dreitzel (ed), Family, Marriage and the Struggle of the Sexes, New York, Macmillan

Commission for Racial Equality, 1981, Race and Council Housing in Hackney, London, CRE

Cook, S, 1981, chapter 5 in L H Kidder, Research Methods in Social Relations (4th edition), London, Holt, Rinehart & Winston

Coote, A and Kellner, P, 1982, Hear This Brother, London, New Statesman

Corby, Hazel, 1982, 'White Woman Listen. Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood', 'Schooling in Babylon', in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, The Empire Strikes Back, London, Hutchinson

Cousins, J and Brown, R, 1975, 'Patterns of Paradox: Shipbuilding Workers' Images of Society', in M Bulmer (ed), Working Class Images of Society, London, RKP

Crompton, Rosemary, 'Approaches to the Study of White Collar Unionism', in Sociology, vol 10, No 3

Goldthorpe, J H, Llewellyn, C et al, 1980, Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain, Oxford, Clarendon

Gorer, G, 1971, Sex and Marriage in England Today, London, Nelson

Habermas, J, 1976, Legitimation Crisis, London, Heinemann

Harrison, Paul, 1985, Inside the Inner City, revised edition, Harmondsworth, Penguin

Heath, Anthony, 1981, Social Mobility, London, Fontana Paperbacks

Hill, Stephen, 1976, The Dockers, London, Heinemann

Hill, Stephen, 1981, Competition and Control at Work: The New Industrial Sociology, London, Heinemann

Hiller, P, 1975, 'Nature and Location of Everyday Conceptions of Class', in Sociology, vol 9

Hobson, D, 1978, 'Housewives: Isolation as Oppression', in Women's Studies Group, Women Take Issue, London, Hutchinson

Holter, H, 1970, Sex Roles and Social Structure, Oslo, Universitetsforlaget

Howes, Eileen, 1985, Black and Ethnic Minorities in Hackney, Research Note 9, Research and Intelligence Section, London Borough of Hackney

Howes, Eileen, 1986, Black and Ethnic Minority Population Estimates, Research Note 10, Research and Intelligence Section, London Borough of Hackney

Hunt, P, 1980, Gender and Class Consciousness, London, Macmillan

Hunter, Michael, 1981, The Victorian Villas of Hackney, London, The Hackney Society

Davies, A F, 1967, _Images of Class_, Sydney, Sydney University Press

Davis, H H, 1979, _Beyond Class Images_, London, Croom Helm

Douglas, Mary, 1970, _Purity and Danger_, Harmandsworth, Penguin

Dummett, Ann, 1984, _A Portrait of English Racism_, Manchester, CARAF
Publications

Education for All, Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Education
of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups, Cmnd 9453, London, HMSO

Eichler, M, 1980, _The Double Standard_, London, Croom Helm

Feirstein, B, 1982, _Real Men Don't Eat Quiche_, London, New English Library

Firestone, S, 1979, _The Dialectic of Sex_, London, The Women's Press

Fransella, F and Frost, K, 1977, _On Being a Woman_, London, Tavistock

Froude, A M, 1982, 'Women's Perceptions of Class', unpublished MSc
dissertation, London School of Economics

Gardiner, Jean, 1977, 'Women in the Labour Process and Class Structure', in
Alan Hunt (ed), _Class and Class Structure_, London, Lawrence & Wishart

Garnsey, Elizabeth, 1978, 'Women's Work and Theories of Class
Stratification', in _Sociology_, vol 12, No 2

Gavron, H, 1966, _The Captive Wife_, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul

Giddens, A, 1973, _The Class Structure of Advanced Societies_, London,
Hutchinson

Goldthorpe, J H and Lockwood, D, 1969, _The Affluent Worker in the Class
Structure_, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Hyman, H H, 1954, Interviewing in Social Research, Chicago, University of Chicago Press

King, R and Raynor, J, 1981, The Middle Class, London, Longman

Lawrence, Errol, 1982, 'In the Abundance of Water, the Fool is Thirsty', in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, The Empire Strikes Back, London, Hutchinson

Lewis, C and O'Brien, M, 1987, Reassessing Fatherhood, London, Sage Publications

Lipman, V D, 1954, Social History of Jews in England 1850-1950, London, Waltz & Co

Lockwood, David, 1958, The Black-Coated Worker, London, Allen & Unwin

Lockwood, D, 1975, 'Sources of Variation in Working Class Images of Society', in M Bulmer (ed), Working Class Images of Society, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul

Mackie, L and Pattullo, P, 1977, Women at Work, London, Tavistock

Mann, Michael, 1973, Consciousness and Action in the Western Working Class, London, Macmillan

McNally, F, 1979, Women for Hire, London, Macmillan

McRobbie, Angela, 1978, 'Working Class Girls and the Culture of Femininity', in Women's Studies Group (eds), Women Take Issue, London, Hutchinson

Moore, Robert s, 1975, 'Religion as a Source of Variation in Working Class Images of Society', in M Bulmer (ed), Working Class Images of Society

Moorhouse, H F and Chamberlain, C W, 1974, 'Lower Class Attitudes to Property', in Sociology, 8, pp 387-405

Moorhouse, H F, 1976, 'Attitudes to Class and Class Relationships in Britain', in Sociology, 10, No 3

Morgan, D H J, 1975, Social Theory and the Family, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul

Morris, L, 1987, 'The No-Longer Working Class', in New Society, vol 80, no 1266, 3 April 1987

Morrison, Lionel, 1976, As They See It, London, Community Relations Commission

Mortimer, Carole, 1984, Untamed, London, Mills &&Boon

Newby, H, 1979, The Deferential Worker, Harmondsworth, Penguin

Nichols, T and Armstrong, P, 1976, Workers Divided, London, Fontana/Collins

Nobles, W W, 1980, 'Extended Self: Rethinking the So-called Negro Self-Concept', in R C Jones (ed), Black Psychology, 2nd edition, New York, Harper & Row

Oakley, Ann, 1974, The Sociology of Housework, London, Robertson

Oakley, A, 1976, Housewife, Harmondsworth, Penguin

Oakley, Ann, 1982, Subject Women, London, Fontana

Oden, T C, 1982, 'The New Pietism', in E Barker (ed), New Religious Movements, New York, Edwin Mellen Press

Parkin, Frank, 1971, Class Inequality and Political Order, London, MacGibbon & Kee

Parsons, T, Bales, R F et al, 1956, Family, Societization and Interaction, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul

Pearson, D G, 1981, Race, Class and Political Activism, Farnborough, Gower

Pollert, Anna, 1981, Girls, Wives, Factory Lives, London, Macmillan

Porter, M, 1978, 'Worlds Apart: The Class Consciousness of Working Class Women', Women's Studies International Quarterly

Porter, R, 1984, (ed) Child Sexual Abuse within the Family, London, Tavistock

Poulantzas, Nicos, 1975, Classes in Contemporary Capitalism, London, New Left Books

Reid, I, 1977, Social Class Differences in Britain, 2nd edition, Open Books

Roberts, K, Cook, F G, Clark, S C and Semeonoff, E, 1977, The Fragmentary Class Structure, London, Heinemann

Salaman, G, 1979, Work Organizations, London, Longman

Schatzman, L and Strauss, A L, 1973, Field Research, Englewood Cliffs NJ, Prentice-Hall

Scott, J, 1982, The Upper Classes, London, Macmillan

Seccombe, W, 1974, 'The Housewife and Her Labour under Capitalism', in New Left Review, no 83

Sennett, R and Cobb, J, 1977, The Hidden Injuries of Class, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Sharot, S, 1976, Judaism, Newton Abbot, David & Charles

Shuttle, P and Redgrove, P, 1980, The Wise Wound, Harmondsworth, Penguin

Social Trends, London, HMSO

Sorokin, P A, 1964, Social and Cultural Mobility, London, Free Press of Glencoe

Stewart, A, Prandy, K and Blackburn, R, 1981, Social Stratification and Occupations, London, Macmillan

Trezise, Rhona, 1984, <u>Nurse Helena's Romance</u>, London, Mills & Boon

Vanek, J, 'Time Spent in Housework', in <u>Scientific American</u>, November 1974

Weber, M, 1948, 'Class, Status, Party', in H H Gerth and C W Mills (eds), <u>From Max Weber</u>, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp 180-195

Weiner, H, 1969, <u>9½ Mystics</u>, New York, Macmillan

Werblowsky, R J, 1982, 'Religions New and Not So New: Fragments of an Agenda', in E Barker (ed), <u>New Religious Movements</u>, New York, Edwin Nellen Press

Westergaard, John and Resler, Henrietta, 1975, <u>Class in a Capitalist Society</u>, Harmondsworth, Penguin

Willis, P E, 1977, <u>Learning to Labour</u>, Farnborough, Hants, Saxon House

Wright, Eric Ohlin, 1976, 'Class Boundaries in Advanced Capitalist Societies', in <u>New Left Review</u>, no 98

Wright, E O and Perrone, L, 1977, 'Marxist Class Categories and Income Inequalities', in <u>American Sociological Review</u>, col 42, pp 32-55

Young, J, 1976, foreword to F Pierce, <u>Crimes of the Powerful</u>, London, Pluto

Young, M and Wilmott, P, 1973, <u>The Symmetrical Family</u>, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul

TITLE

CLASS, STATUS AND GENDER

AUTHOR

Ailsa Madeline Froude

D76201