MILITARY IDENTITIES: MEN, FAMILIES AND OCCUPATIONAL CHANGE

by

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Military Identities: Men, Families and Occupational Change

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Abstract

This thesis is based on a longitudinal study of servicemen and their families, as they experience transition from careers in the Royal Navy to civilian life. The analysis is based on data derived from three sets of focused interviews with twenty couples, conducted in Plymouth over a period between November 1995 and October 1998, and the findings of a questionnaire survey of just over two-hundred leavers. It develops a theoretically distinctive approach, drawing on the literature of organisations, discourses and identity, in order to understand servicemen's relationships with naval careers, and the implications for adaptation to civilian life on leaving.

The research examines the meanings that men attach to naval careers and organisations, and their symbolic significance for their experiences of both service and civilian life. The analysis addresses the effects of careers on identity, decision-making, personal relationships and friendship networks, families, domestic divisions of labour, career interplay, parenting and resettlement.

Whilst general patterns of success or failure in resettlement have been the main focus of past interest, this thesis uncovers the differential experiences of leavers in all their complexity. The study identifies a relationship between quantitatively and qualitatively different levels of naval involvement and the personal and familial experiences of career change and resettlement. The main findings of the work relate to wider issues of organisations, cultures and discourses, and are relevant to current debates about the future of military cultures, as well as the more specific issues surrounding resettlement.

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Author's Declaration
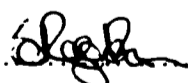
At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award.

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Signed......

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Chapter One - Introduction

Background to the Thesis

The main driving force behind this thesis was an interest in the effects of resettlement on service personnel leaving military service. Recent years have witnessed a growing awareness of the plight of servicemen who are exiting service life and coming to terms with the transition to an unfamiliar civilian environment. Media reporting has generally focused on the large-scale cutbacks of Armed Forces personnel, most notably resulting from policy developments such as Options for Change (1994). Those reports have highlighted the experiences of some personnel who find themselves unable to deal with the changes with which they are faced (NewsNight, 7.6.1998; Westcountry News, 20.8.1999; The View from Here, 20.8.1999). It is therefore crucial that we develop an understanding of the processes undergone by service personnel as they attempt to adjust to civilian life after years in military service.

These issues have not gone entirely un-researched. Albeit relatively limited, there has been some academic interest in the lives of military men, and Jolly (1996) in particular, has highlighted some key issues that typically characterise the resettlement process[1]. Jolly argues that personnel develop a relationship with service life that influences their ability to resettle comfortably and confidently.

However, little is ever said about the complexity of this relationship, and the impact of identification with military careers or organisations, and the consequences for resettlement, has gone largely unstudied. In addition, there has been a distinct lack of research that explores the effects of resettlement on service personnel over a period of time, charting experiences as they happen, and identifying the more subtle relationships between men, military identities, military organisations and occupational change. The thesis attempts to bridge these gaps in current knowledge about military personnel and their careers.

The thesis is based on the view that personnel draw on organisational cultures as a discursive resource in order to formulate 'interpretative repertoires' for making sense of their lives, and

constructing realities for themselves and others. The work refers to notions of discourse in its analysis, and the concept is used to make links between the cultural dimensions of military organisational life and the nature of identities, attitudes and behaviours. This concept of discourse is therefore employed to produce a holistic and integrated account of military identity, organisations, and occupational change. It also helps us to incorporate family issues into this account, providing an added dimension to the study.

It should be understood that the thesis is not primarily concerned with discourse theory. Its central focus is on the nature of, and the interplay between, naval careers, families and resettlement. What notions of discourse offer is a conceptual framework through which to understand the complexities of these issues. The thesis is not, therefore, directed at performing classical sociological discourse analysis. Neither does it seek to develop a political discourse theory for its own sake. 'Analysis of discourse' perhaps more accurately describes the analytical component of my efforts to illuminate the experiences of servicemen and their families as they undergo resettlement. These distinctions are discussed more fully in Chapter Five.

Servicemen's lives do not operate in a vacuum. The impact of the service career does not only affect military men, it also characterises the lives of others associated with military life (British Military Studies Group, 1997; Jessup, 1996; Segal, 1986). The MOD has, over recent years, increased its awareness towards issues surrounding personnel and their family lives. Indeed, the recent Strategic Defence Review (1998) placed considerable emphasis on personnel, and the interplay between their working and personal lives – the first time that such priority has been given to personnel and family issues.

It is clear that the Armed Services are coming face to face with challenges posed by developments in contemporary society with respect to family and parenting roles, dual careers and household divisions of labour. Previous studies, notably Jolly (1989), Jessup (1996), Segal (1986) and Chandler (1987, 1989), have demonstrated that military careers do impact quite significantly on other members of military families, and this is discussed in the following chapter.

However, research is needed to examine naval family processes in terms of the diversity of experience, and the interplay of relationships with wider institutions and individuals within and outside of the Navy. In particular, knowledge of the more social and cultural (as opposed to

practical) issues surrounding identification with the naval career, and their in
is required if we are to develop a deeper understanding.

The thesis deals with these issues by firstly examining the relationship between
organisations and naval families. Findings are then carried thro
processes of occupational change and resettlement. Several questions are
'naval man'? How does the naval career impact on 'naval families'? How do n
their daily lives around the demands of service life? Just how
maintained or transformed? If the forming of naval identities is of signif
families and households, then how is occupational change experienced? What
have on occupational and family lives? Research into these issues pro
debate into the social dimensions of the military.

Occupational change represents not just a static moment in time. Rather it is d
studies (Jessup, 1996; Jolly, 1996) have focused largely on cross-sect
therefore provide something of a snapshot description of men in various sta;
What is now required is a rigorous, in-depth inquiry that is conduc
personnel go through the leaving experience. With this in mind, the
thesis was conducted longitudinally, charting the experience of career change
before leaving, through to leaving date, and following resettlement

Implications for knowledge

The implications of the thesis, in terms of its contribution to existing debate, are
raises intellectual and sociological issues about work/family interfaces a
Secondly, it provides specific knowledge about the Navy, with clear impl
dimension of the research, its concern with the sociological debate surrou
interfaces, raises two important questions:

Firstly, although naval service families may be seen as distinctly 'naval in na
their lives within both naval and civilian 'cultures', do their exper
features of work and family interfaces as they operate within a part
the practices and experiences under scrutiny are not exceptional to

examination may help to shed light on issues that are common to personnel in other occupations, in both their working and family lives.

Secondly, how far do they represent a unique experience? The findings of this thesis could provide a new element of diversity to existing models of career/family interfaces, by adding a more specifically military angle. The second dimension of the thesis therefore addresses issues specific to the Navy, as well as their implications for policy.

Studying the Armed Forces as an example of the impact of occupation on men and their families has important social and political implications. It provides a new platform for the examination of the main issues arising from previous research and the existing literature on work/family interfaces (marriage, domestic labour, parenting, patriarchy and so on), with particular relevance for naval men and their families. These issues are directly relevant to the key concerns of The Strategic Defence Review and the much-debated 'civilianisation' of the military, both of which are discussed in the following chapter.

The Armed Forces represent a topic deserving study in its own right. Whilst the military form only a small part of the occupational structure, they nevertheless represent a major area of modern social life that is often neglected in sociological study. The relationship between military and civilian 'cultures' requires both description and explanation and it is anticipated that this research may help to improve knowledge about these issues. Its findings are of particular relevance in an era when the military is emerging into a different security climate and facing new challenges from civil society to reform its institutional isolationism.

Analysing issues of occupational change can only benefit an understanding of the resettlement experience, particularly in relation to military downsizing and the resulting large-scale redundancies of men well below retirement age. In addition, where the Armed Forces face demands for new 'civilian' models of business management, and 'jobs for life' in the military have become less secure, analysis of career change and its impact on naval men and their families is much needed.

Organisation of the thesis

The following chapter (Chapter Two) introduces some of the concepts that have contributed to an understanding of identity in social and political thought. Socialisation, organisational cultures and notions of power and hegemony are examined in the light of their potential implications for the lives of workers. Theoretical positions are critically evaluated on the way to developing a conceptual framework for understanding socialisation and identification in military organisations.

Chapter Three is concerned with individual, organisational and group change and provides a basis for analysis of the impact of career change and resettlement on service personnel. Since the influences of the naval career on naval families form an important focus of this thesis, Chapter Four then provides a background to current knowledge about families, household formations and work/family interfaces. This is provided within the context of military men and their families and, taken together with the conceptual developments of Chapters Two and Three, provides a platform from which to approach this particular study of naval men and their families.

Such a multi-faceted research topic throws up many methodological challenges, which are discussed in Chapter Five. The specific methods adopted for collecting and analysing the data generated by the research are also outlined. The findings of the inquiry are then presented in Chapters Six to Eight, divided into three chronological sections. Firstly, issues surrounding the naval career, naval identities and naval families are reported. Secondly, experiences of occupational change and transition are documented. Thirdly, the processes of resettlement, and their impact on naval men and their families, are outlined. The discussion in Chapter Nine then brings together these various threads, tying them into a more holistic account.

The overall conclusions of the thesis are presented in Chapter Ten. Implications for sociological knowledge about identity, careers and families, knowledge about the military (including implications for policy) and the potential of the theoretical approach selected are highlighted. Suggestions for further research round off the thesis. We turn first to the conceptual issues surrounding the study of identity, work and organisations, and the context of naval careers that is central to the thesis.

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[1] with specific reference to army personnel.

Chapter Two - Work, Identity and the Navy

Introduction

The central argument of this thesis is that naval personnel variously interact with naval institutions, to the extent that naval 'norms' and 'values' may become used as a personal frame of reference and, in turn, may inform personal attitudes and behaviours. Put another way, naval men develop, to varying degrees, what can be described as typically 'naval' characteristics. These, in turn, have implications for their relations with their families, and for their subsequent transition to civilian life.

The starting point for this study, then, is the formation of naval identity, as personnel distinguish themselves from others on the basis of their relationship to naval institutions. We begin this chapter by exploring some of the key conceptual themes that flow through the work, which are used in order to illuminate the processes and experiences undergone by servicemen and their families.

General conceptions of identity and behaviour provide an appropriate starting point for this discussion. More focused attention is then paid to issues surrounding socialisation to work, organisational cultures, ideologies and power relationships. Following this illustration of the broader conceptual themes, we turn to the more specific issues that affect military organisations and their members, providing the military context that is central to the entire work.

This chapter introduces the rationale behind the overall theoretical organisation of the thesis, and illustrates the way in which its central arguments are founded on a theoretical framework that uses notions of discourse in its approach to making sense of the resettlement process. The overall model developed for this thesis represents a new emphasis on political discourse theory, and is primarily concerned with analysis of discourses (in contrast to classical sociological discourse analysis)[2]. However several social theorists, including Becker, Goffman, Foucault and Gramsci have been influential in shaping my arguments. Laclau and Mouffe, in particular, have been my inspiration for the development of this approach to studying identity in organisations[3].

The discussion provided in this chapter is then complemented by the following two chapters, which focus firstly on issues of identity and change and, secondly, on the relationship between work and

family life. By reviewing related concepts, within the wider context of arguments made in this chapter, the thesis is able to provide a holistic background to the various elements that together impact on servicemen's lives. We turn first to the central focus of this chapter – identity and work.

Work and Social Identity: Some conceptual themes

The notion of social identity is useful for analysing the relationship between work and personal orientation. It refers here to the ways in which individuals and collective groupings distinguish themselves, or are distinguished from one another, through their social and work relationships. This study's treatment of naval identity is concerned with the influence of the naval career on self-image and behaviour, and is therefore concerned with the dynamic principles of similarity and difference – in this case 'naval' and 'civilian'. The use of such a conceptual framework for understanding the genesis and transformation of naval identity thus requires some elaboration.

Identity helps us to define ourselves and others, as well as the nature of our social relationships. As Jenkins (1996:5) observes:

> ...human social life is unimaginable without some means of knowing who others are and some sense of who we are... ...one of the first things that we do on meeting a stranger is attempt to locate them on our social maps, to identify them.

There is an important point to be made here, with reference to the distinction between categorisation and identification. Identity can be both internal (self-definition) and external (definition for, or by, others). This idea has been notable in various contributions to an understanding of identity, from Mead's distinction between the 'I' and the 'Me'[4], to Marx's class 'in itself' and 'for itself'[5]. It is evident in Goffman's 'impression management strategies'[6], as well as Becker's 'labelling perspectives'[7].

But how precisely do individuals develop social identities, and what processes and situations influence their genesis and transformation? Various explanations have been offered. Whilst some have argued that individuals merely respond to the influences and constraints they experience within society, interactionist analysis extends beyond exclusively structural emphasis, incorporating notions of self that recognise both the external influences on peoples' practical social experience, and the rather more internal effects of consciousness. Following this rationale, the nature of identity depends on the adaptation of the self to its environment (Mead, 1934; Miller, 1973), and the

process becomes more multi-dimensional, involving both structural influences and the conscious responses of actors.

What this perspective lends to an understanding of identity, is recognition of the reflexive nature of individuals, and their capacity to engage in symbolic forms of communication within particular settings. Thus experience and conscious reflection inform the self, which informs identity, which in turn informs action. As Swingewood (1991:265) explains:

> ...mind and self, consciousness and action, were thus collaborative, not individual phenomena involving social roles, social relations and social institutions......reality was not a fixed datum but constantly shifting as actors – selves – create new roles and new meanings, defining their situation in a variety of different ways all of which were "real" to them.

For Mead (1934), the act and the self were inextricably linked to social structure and at the same time reflexive and creative. Meaning is therefore associated with the common symbolic characteristics of social groupings, and the nature of the interaction between them. From this perspective meaning is not intrinsically evident in any thing, rather it is inter-subjective, generated via the interactions of individuals with wider social groups.

The question arises; how do individuals generate and maintain cognisance of the appropriate cultural norms? As already stated, from an interactionist viewpoint, neither motives nor actions originate purely from within, rather they are provoked by the various situations in which individuals engage (Smith, 1980; Clegg and Dunkerley, 1980; Miner, 1993). The implication here then, is that particular situations embody typical 'vocabularies' of motives. Mills (1967:442) defines these motives as:

> ...those which conventionally accompany that type of situation and function as cues and justifications for normative actions in it.

Weber (1978) refers to motive as representing a complex of meaning that is instrumental in providing adequate grounds for certain types of behaviour. He argues that is this that demonstrates its social character. It is important to note that, in the words of Mills, (1967:443).

> ...when they appeal to others involved in one's act, motives are strategies of action. In many social actions, others must agree, tacitly or explicitly. Thus acts will often be abandoned if no reason can be found that others will accept. Diplomacy in choice of motive often controls the diplomat.

In order to focus further on this issue, it may be helpful to consider the contribution of ethnomethodology, and specifically the work of Harold Garfinkel (1967). Garfinkel, accepting that actors are reflexive when responding to norms and action, deepened interactionist explanation with reference to 'goals'. Here, individual actors employ 'practical reasoning' in order to assess potential consequences of their own action and then behave accordingly. Such reasoning is based on empirical knowledge that 'members' derive from their own experience of the world. Whilst Garfinkel's and other ethnomethodologists' perspectives have been subject to criticism[8], they have nonetheless provided an opening for the recognition of the salience of context in studying meaning, since meaning formation relies on the interpretive capacity of human beings adapting to different contexts.

This leads to a further point. Why should work and employment situations have any impact on identity? Goffman, (1961, 1969), noted three distinct forms of identity, all of which arise from interaction with 'others' in different social spheres. There is first the personal identity, relating to biography and life history, and shaped by features which distinguish the individual from others. Secondly, Goffman refers to social identity, whereby the individual 'fits' into various socially agreed categories. Thirdly, ego identity exists where the individual's own unique and subjective sense of 'self' comes into play. Goffman proposes that, on entry to an occupation, individuals carry forward their existing ego identities and continue to develop their social identity within the social interaction they experience at work. The formation of work-related identities is often the result.

Many sociologists concur on the centrality of work to identity and the inextricable linking of identity and career (Auster, 1996: Pettinger, 1996: Ingram, 1995: Hogg and Abrams, 1988; & Wetherall, 1996). Precisely how this identification is achieved may differ from one occupation to another. Where work roles are easily identifiable, for example, the relationship between self and occupation is likely to be stronger (Boden, 1994: Sackmann, 1997). At an extreme, some occupational identities may be fixed in their distinctness and exclusivity to other roles (Houston, 1993; Smith, 1980; Elias, 1994), particularly where identification with an occupation is related to the particular skills or knowledge required of it (Clegg, 1999).

Occupational roles then, at least in modern industrial society, are of central importance in the formation and maintenance of identity. This may be formalised, and studies have demonstrated

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that many occupations have embedded and long-term socialising mechanisms. Such socialisation will, more often than not, rely on the internalisation among members of occupational groups, of occupational norms and even values (Ingram, 1995; Sims *et al*, 1993). Socialisation is clearly an important element of this research, and some conceptualisation is therefore useful here.

Socialisation and Work Related Identities

Socialisation can be seen as a form of selection by which individuals are directed, or learn to direct themselves, along particular paths. The processes of commitment continue throughout the period of institutionalised occupational training, shaping and consolidating the individual's ideas on his or her future occupational identity (Clark *et al*, 1994; Salaman and Thompson, 1973).

But how does this socialisation, formal or otherwise, take place within institutions? Sociologists have studied 'role socialisation', which involves training in skills of a future role (Miner, 1993). Becker (1963), emerging from the symbolic-interactionist tradition, identified various 'mechanisms' through which occupational socialisation and the transformation of identity take place. These include; pride in 'new skills'; the possession of professional ideology; investment of time and energy into the work role and internalisation of motives.

Sociological enquiry has also highlighted the way in which thorough training, and socialisation of new recruits at the outset, will have significant influence on the developing identity (March and Olsen, 1989; Clark, 1994.) But socialisation may go further than, whereby recruits in training, once distinguishing what is expected of their role, deliberately play out their role expectations – that is they 'fit' what they perceive to be the 'correct' role, reflecting processes informed by motives. Encouraging responses from other occupational members will result in the provisional, and then often the stable, internalisation of those beliefs, values and behaviours that are being acted out. There is then a transformation of identity, which is further aided by learning occupational jargon and noting positive and negative reference groups.

Notions of personal and cultural reformation are not unlike those referred to in theories of acculturation[9]. A profusion of studies in the 1960s and 1970s demonstrated the 'drawing off' of students or trainees from the previous lay culture to the culture of the professional, characterised by specialised role skills, norms, values and ethical positions[10]. It is possible to see how, in the early part of training/socialisation, these two cultures meet and interact with the trainee. This

consideration may well have relevance for individuals who undergo very visible initiation and training in work organisations and institutions.

Studies of institutional socialisation have been plentiful, Goffman provides the classic example[11]. Further theories have been bound-up in notions of divestiture, where individuals, on entry to an institution, are divested of their existing identities in order that new identities can be shaped to fit the requirements of the institution. This theoretical approach[12] can be explained in part by the over-emphasis on totalistic institutions such as prisons and psychiatric hospitals. Divestiture perspectives are heavily reliant upon approaches to research that focus explicitly on the institutional experience, at the expense of considering the reciprocities between students and institutions. Employment of such concepts may thus prove problematic, as they imply passivity on the part of new recruits in yielding to new enforced values and attitudes.

However, it is possible to view socialisation as a new member's transformation from one culture to another. The concept of trainee or student culture is one that has been well documented[13], particularly in the public sector – in nursing, teaching etc - and is useful in analysing transformation. It is therefore prudent to move beyond notions of assimilation, and instead allow for questioning other influences on identity, such as other emerging relationships, as well as the interaction of raw recruits with their course of learning and socialisation in their new occupation.

This bears relevance to any conceptualisation of the military as a primarily institutional entity. Moskos' contribution to debate about the nature of the changing military in the 1970's demonstrated how its long talked-about institutionalism was being replaced by a sense of occupationalism. This commentary was offered as his 'Institution/Occupation hypothesis' (Moskos, 1977), and is relevant here in so much as it redirected military writers towards an emphasis on the more social and cultural elements of occupation, highlighting specifically the impact of unionisation on the expectations of personnel, and civilian contracting to traditionally military jobs.[14] Moskos' suggestion has implications for looking further at discourses about military organisation and service life, where men serve less as a particular 'calling' and more for reasons of instrumentalism and individual occupational development.

Whilst Moskos' arguments were persuasive at the time of writing, and the move toward occupation a helpful conceptual tool for understanding the military, it is important to note that occupations differ

within and between the modern Armed Forces. His implication that military personnel may be more individualistic and instrumental in developing their naval careers may be true in the realms of the Officer Corps, but other occupations within the same military may offer different rewards.

It is important to point out here, then, that whilst socialisation into work may produce work-related identities, not all of these identities are concerned with occupational roles. I refer here to the way in which we can distinguish elements of socialisation that move beyond identification with a particular work role. Whilst study of occupational roles is useful for a partial understanding of the relationship between work and identity, paying attention to the more social and cultural attributes of organisations yields further fruitful insights. Occupations may vary within and between organisations, but organisational structures and cultures will inevitably exercise some influence over their members (Clegg, 1999).

Organisations and Socialisation

Identification with organisations is important, in so much as some individuals may find it difficult to relate to their actual work role, and so relate more favourably to a specific organisational culture. Some may be particularly attracted to organisational cultures. This may be particularly the case of the military, which provides a highly pervasive culture, comprising elements on which servicemen can draw in order to make sense of their lives (these elements are outlined fully, at a later point in this chapter).

So whilst such personnel might not enjoy their actual occupational role and the work that it entails, they may nevertheless find the organisational structure and culture a useful frame of reference. Identity in organisational, rather than occupational, roles thus depends on the characteristics of occupation and particular organisations, as well as the specific position and work role within them. Whilst emphasis may differ, however, processes are similar. Individuals relate to organisational positions using the organisational culture or other organisational members as a reference. The difference here is that it is organisational roles and rules that are important, as opposed to occupational ones.

This re-direction toward organisation, rather than occupation, is not coincidental here. The emphasis of the thesis is placed firmly on naval organisational features and their influence on naval

personnel. Edmonds (1988) describes the Armed Forces rather more in terms of their professionalism, and it is acknowledged here that naval institutions do share some characteristics common to professions, and further that some naval personnel in the higher echelons of the naval hierarchy may indeed hold the qualities often accredited to professionals. However, the capacity of the concept of profession for providing benefit to the study of naval socialisation is found rather more in its descriptive, as opposed to analytic, usefulness, as I will elaborate here.

This descriptive element is useful in terms of distinguishing naval personnel from laypersons, as they are highly specialised and trained, and appear to share belief systems based on their occupational involvement (Jolly, 1996). Importantly, however, they differ from other professions. Military occupations are diverse, and divided between ranks, as opposed to more orthodox professions which tend to involve similar occupations in what have been described as 'elitist' groups (Greenwood, 1957). Military personnel therefore represent a range of various specialised occupations, some more professionalised (by Greenwood's definition)[15] than others. What is of greater importance for this thesis are the overall organisational issues, and the culture that binds together the various personnel, offering them a shared sense of identity. But how does socialisation extend organisational frames of reference and bodies of knowledge to initiates, and how do we conceptualise such 'knowledge'?

Examples of organisational socialisation are numerous, and often found in those organisations where occupational ideologies can be identified (Moscovici and Doise, 1994). Studies have highlighted the ways in which some organisations may develop ideologies in order to enhance some characteristics whilst playing down others (March and Olsen, 1989; Perrow, 1979; Salaman and Thompson, 1980; Clegg and Dunkerley, 1980). Such mechanisms are used to explain behaviour, to bring the 'self' closer to the organisation, or to distance self from more negative aspects.

Organisational ideologies occur when a set of beliefs and values about the role of particular organisational groups in society, are evoked from a conscious sense of shared organisational experience. Ideologies are most likely to develop in high status organisations, where work is central to life and may represent the main identity and status provider, (as opposed to the central importance that may alternatively be placed on primary group relationships such as family and friendship networks).

Research so far has shown that deliberately extensive organisational socialisation often does take place, but precisely how do organisations utilise ideologies in socialisation processes? Kuhn (1970) asserts that organisational ideologies are not simply available to individuals for indiscriminate amendment, rather they are 'ordered, sorted and interpreted' within the theoretical position currently shared with the organisation. This position is likely to entail wider perspectives on the state of society and the social world.

Such wider perspectives encompass further claims to knowledge, about how organisational goals should be achieved. Judgements are made according to organisational criteria, by those with the necessary organisation familiarity (Sackmann, 1991; Salaman and Thompson, 1980; Moscovici and Doise, 1994). Implicit in these judgements is not only an understanding of organisational knowledge, but also the influences of the socio-economic situations of organisations and their members. As Elliott, (1972; 150) states;

> *...the patterns of thought and activity which develop...are supported internally and externally by its own structure and the relationship it has established with other organisations and associations. Not only career and economic interests are at stake, but also established patterns of thought and ways of approaching the world.*

If we are to accept that ideologies and socialisation techniques are not unintentional in organisations, we must also ask why, and how, organisational values are so effectively internalised by their members. Compliance with organisational norms and values relies to some extent upon the levels of control that organisations exercise over their members, as well as the formality of those controlling processes (Foucault, 1977; March and Olsen, 1989). Where organisational role is formalised to a greater extent, institutionalisation of its norms and values, and therefore of its members, is often the result. Socialisation procedures, which are aimed at controlling, may become quite visible and explicit to those both in and outside the organisation.

There are many examples of occupations which demonstrate a high level of generalised control over their member's behaviour, such as the armed forces, law, clergy and so on, and depend on their compliance with normative 'work' roles (Elliott, 1972; Edmonds, 1988). This is most visible in their 'institutionalised' control over entry, education, training, socialisation, and the surveillance of behaviour that sometimes extends into the private sphere (McKinlay and Starkey, 1998). Often it is traditional occupations, which may be resistant to change and may have developed an institutional

identity over the years, which have the tightest control. What are significant here are the external forces influencing identification among individuals in particular organisations (Handy, 1993; Ingram, 1995).

Organisational socialisation that helps to control, occurs particularly in careers that are characterised by specialist education, either by professional bodies or by organisations themselves. Over the years, professions and organisations have increasingly socialised their members through specialised institutions, either in universities or specialised academies (Elliot, 1972). Socialisation however, can be extended to the actual institutions where workers are located, for example: hospitals, schools, agencies, military organisations and so on, enabling further, more direct, control. Different levels of socialisation may be associated with key variables in the post-training stage, including levels of contact with colleagues and levels of tension between organisational constraints and professional practice.

In a similar way to that described by Goffman in 'Total Institutions' (1968)[16], many organisations exercise a high level of control over their members, and reinforce this control through isolationism. On entry to such an organisation, a kind of 'disculturation' takes place, whereby the individual is forced to abandon the culture from which he or she comes and becomes encapsulated in the culture of the organisation, in much the same way as the acculturation process, as outlined previously. The organisation is thus able to effectively secure the compliance of its members.

Organisations, then, are far from neutral institutions. Salaman (1980) suggests that in order to understand organisational life, we must observe it in its political and environmental complexity, rather than simply reducing it to economics and the structural requirements of capitalism. Organisational cultures are the creation of different dynamic elements, which together form an organisational world-view and identity. In particularly pervasive organisations, this may be more pronounced to the point where powerful organisations can be seen as actively controlling their members.

Organisations and Power

Notions of power and control are central to any study of identity, and work-related identities provide particularly suitable research foci. As Jenkins (1996: 25) argues;

Organisations are made up of, among other things, of positions... ...they are important in social classification... Individual and collective identities are systematically produced, reproduced and implicated in each other... ...the classification of individuals is at the heart of modern, bureaucratically rational strategies of government and social control.

He goes on to explain;

Social identities exist and are acquired, claimed and allocated within power relations. Identity is something over which struggles take place and with which stratagems are advanced. Not only is the classification of individuals at issue, but also the classification of populations.

Institutional 'barriers' are often erected between the organisation and the wider society, in order that their objectives and organisational imperatives are carried out with the least interference from external influences. As suggested, isolation bolsters high levels of socialisation which, in turn, helps maintain the control of the organisation.

Since military organisations are variously characterised by these principles, it is interesting here to consider the nature of particularly controlling occupations. Derrida (1973, 1978) portrays organisations not as 'things', but as 'processes' that are designed to hide the 'uncertainty we live in'. This emphasis on control and, by implication, power, is elaborated by Foucault (1977), who further suggests that contemporary society, and thus the organisations within it, are maintained by systems of bodily surveillance and discipline that are embedded in their frameworks (see also Dandeker, 1990)[17]. Grint (1991:146) argues;

...like prisoners, workers must always be visible to their controllers and the routine of daily life is legitimately ordered and observed from above and written up, not into personal details but into bureaucratic case notes. Subjectivity is systematically shredded by the organisation, and a model of normality is reconstituted from the elements.

Foucault (1977) comments on the way in which organisations involve the construction of 'normal' behaviour patterns that organise and control or discipline their members.[18] The theoretical focus here is on the creation of 'persuasive' representations of the organisation, and, at the same time, the interpretative processes of organisational members. Deetz (1998:169), for example, argues that:

"...an intricate set of relations between structural, economic and personal discursive processes......is a central node in the circuit of power.'

Deetz employs this concept in order to understand the formation of the internal politics of organisations, as well as processes directed at suppressing conflict and alternative values and behaviours. As he continues:

> ...the power of the concept rests in the capacity to close off certain discursive options rather than in simply its rhetorical appeal. The conception deployed allows the discussion to seem complete and neutral, thus hiding the tensions and incompletions. With such a closed set of discursive options, the employee is basically left to choose loyalty or exit, but not voice. In choosing loyalty they gain membership, clarity, status and specific identities, but they also re-enact a dominant set of power relations with costs.

This exposition raises clear issues regarding the hegemony of organisations and institutions over their members. Writers on the military have identified the link between military 'espirit de corps', hierarchy, and retributive discipline, and the requirement for total obedience and loyalty to the institution and its other members (British Military Studies Group, 1997; Edmonds, 1988; Fallows, 1981; Jolly, 1989, 1996; Hauser, 1980). But whilst some processes may appear to be controlling, others may be beneficial to those who demonstrate strong identification with their particular organisation. Many organisations create and maintain distinct cultures, generated through networks of formal and informal groupings, institutions and associations (Elliot, 1972). The relevance of membership of an organisation here is the provision of a personal reference group, where involvement is reinforced by status gained from the organisational role (Sims *et al*, 1993; Greenberg, 1997; Sackmann, 1997).

Organisational groups may also be bolstered by shared valuables, such as specialised training, completed pre-requisites of the job, personal and social involvement with other organisational members and promotional possibilities. Membership of such groups implies adequate adjustment to the work situation as well as conferring some social prestige, which is directly dependent on the organisation and would be lacking without it. Sociological approaches to organisations as status-givers move beyond the economic elements of occupational participation. Cultural values feed notions of prestige and, subsequently, the ways in which different occupations and organisations are evaluated by members (Coxon and Jones, 1978; Goldthorpe and Hope, 1974).

This is worthy of note in any study that examines the attitudes of occupational or organisational groups to 'other' groups. It also demonstrates the social and cultural importance of work-related identity in modern society, where trade-offs between salaries, prestige and respectability are

commonplace. Here the salience of the cultural aspects of organisations to the formation and maintenance of identity becomes clear. The increasing literature on the culture of organisations has been a response to the growing belief that the ecological and cultural characteristics of organisational establishments influence attitudes and behaviours in a significant way. As Handy (1993:183) suggests:

...strong pervasive cultures turn organisations into cohesive tribes with distinctively clannish feelings. The values and traditions of the tribe are reinforced by its private language, its catch phrases and its tales of past heroes and dramas. The way of life is enshrined in rituals so the rule books and manuals are almost unnecessary; custom and tradition provide the answers.

Handy argues that, whilst not all cultures are appropriate to all people or situations, the culture of organisation is always available and visible in many forms. He states (1993:182):

...this culture often takes visible form in its building, its offices, its shops or branches. The kinds of people it employs, the length and height of their career aspirations, their status in society, degree of mobility, level of education, will all be reflections of the culture...they look and feel different. They will require different kinds of people, will appeal to different kinds. They have different ways of working. They are different cultures. Even within, organisational cultures will differ. [19]

Handy argues that large organisations, using expensive and interdependent technologies within routinised environments, are typically based on 'role culture'. This type of culture, argues Handy, requires a particular type of 'psychological contract' amongst certain types of members who will feel secure in their relationship to the organisation. If this is indeed the case, it is the organisational culture that holds organisations and their members together.

It may therefore seem pertinent, in any study of organisations, to describe and explain culture as the underlying cause of the individual and collective acts of their members. However, organisational culture depends on the actions of those very members, just as the culture of the wider society does. Handy's analysis addresses the uneasy relationship between culture and structure, suggesting that those organisational systems and structures are, at least in part, a manifestation of organisational culture. At the same time, however, Grint (1991: 132) suggests:

...culture does not cause people in organisations to act in specific ways, rather culture is generated by certain individuals defining some forms of action as representative of the 'official' organisational culture.

Identification with work is thus multi-dimensional, and may occur on different levels in work situations. Many work positions involve a complex interaction of occupational and organisational influences and, as a further point, some members of organisations may also gain membership of particular professions, which do themselves enjoy their own norms, values and ethical codes of conduct (Greenwood, 1957). Look to inter-professional workers for an example, subject not only to professional ethics and bodies of knowledge, but also the specific organisational structures and cultures within which they carry out their work as well as those of the various agencies that call upon them. Cultural values and influences may operate on several levels for these workers. So, if identification with work is multi-dimensional, and if many theories are useful but nevertheless lacking a holistic application, how best should the relationship between work and identity be theorised?

The study of socialisation into work has fallen broadly into three streams; the analysis of individual change, the study of occupations, and investigation into the culture of social institutions. We have considered notions of 'role', and behaviours can be explained in part using this concept. The salience of organisational culture is clearly evident. However, analysis should perhaps be more sharply focused, in order to incorporate a study of the influences exerted by group members on the organisation, as well as those exerted on them. Olsen and Whittacker (1970: 191) highlight the benefit of:

> ...consideration of the reciprocities between individual aspirations and occupations and institutional structure, reciprocities which imply the transformation both of the aspirations and of the structures in which the aspirations are realised to whatever degree.

In challenging purely structural notions of identity, it could be argued that many studies of organisational socialisation are limited by their insufficient attention to the conscious decision-making abilities of individuals in groups. Certainly such studies provide inadequate explanation of the disparity of occupational and organisational images amongst members of the same organisation, and this surely highlights the importance of recognising 'difference' in any study of the social dimensions of work.

Taking the military as an example, we may see how service training and experience has some bearing on how service members come to construct their world views and relate to wider civilian society. However, care must be taken to recognise the limitations of making broad statements

about 'perception' and 'attitudes or values' of service men and women, without noting their origins or their subtle differences. There appears to be some need for more bridging concepts, in order to link phenomenological and interactionist conceptions of self, with structural accounts of institutional rule and regulation. Notions of discourse take the analysis in this thesis one step closer to achieving this.

Discourse Theories and the Treatment of Identity

Discourse theories are concerned with the role of meaningful social practices and ideas in social and political life. They aim to study the effects of different systems of meaning – or discourses – and how they shape individuals' understanding of their social roles. This thesis is primarily concerned with using notions of discourse to illuminate the resettlement process undergone by service personnel on leaving behind their naval careers and, as such, the benefit of the discourse approach to this thesis is two-fold. Its first advantage is its capacity to combine the concepts outlined earlier into a cogent yet flexible conceptual framework, through which the different strands of the research can be drawn together in the final overall analysis.

Secondly, and importantly in the light of the previous discussion, analysis in terms of discourses allows for an understanding of the reciprocities between naval organisations and the personnel they employ. In this way we are able to bridge the structure/agency polemic, allowing for a more multi-dimensional analysis of what is essentially a multi-faceted research phenomenon. This is elaborated upon in Chapter Five, with specific reference to the research methodology.

Discourses, then, refer to systems of social meaning that influence the identities and behaviours of individual agents. Discourses are not intrinsically 'true' or 'false', since each individual can draw on compatible elements of a number of different discourses. Neither are they reductionist or deterministic. All areas of social life, whether social, political, economic or otherwise, have a discursive character (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990, 1995). In brief, all social activities involve a discursive dimension, thus discourses are not separate from actions, since actions themselves embody social meanings and beliefs.

Discourses are not closed systems. They draw on elements of other discourses, and can evolve over time. The usefulness of the concept in illustrating work-related identities, attitudes and

behaviours lies in its application to the differential experiences of organisation members. As such, it is possible to combine analysis of both structural influences and individual agency, in relation to occupational and organisational identity. In order for such things to be meaningful to individuals and groups, they must be located within particular discourses. Put more simply, in order for things to be understood, they must be part of a wider frame of reference.

Take a man as an example. Depending on the social context within which we find him, he may be a serviceman, or he may be a father, a sportsman, a husband and so on. The identity of the man is thus contingent on the particular type of discourse which assigns meaning of 'being' to him at that particular moment in time. Many work situations provide this 'wider frame of reference'.

So different discourses will confer different meanings on the same object or person. Family discourse may make a man, father, husband or son, radical feminist discourse would view him as a patriarch, naval discourse, a military man, a fighter or protector, and so on. The importance of this discussion is in highlighting the relational character of identity. Reference to the overall context of ideas, practices and institutions is paramount. As Howarth (1995: 119) points out:

> *Each meaning is understood in relation to the overall practice which is taking place, and each practice in relation to a particular discourse. Hence we are only able to understand, explain and evaluate a process if we can describe the practice and the discourse within which it is occurring.*

The idea of organisational discourse represents a more holistic view than can be gained from concentrating on organisational ideologies. Ideologies may contain ideas that are fixed in opposition to other interpretations. On the other hand, discourses can never be completely closed and are prone to the influence of other discourses. As already explained, discourse theorists argue that discourses comprise elements, ideas and practices from all areas of social life. Ideologies are not, therefore, lost in discourse. In discourse theories, ideologies are used to describe the drive toward the impossible total closure of discourses, or the persuasion of one exclusive discourse over another.

How then, are discourses constructed? Laclau and Mouffe (1987) introduce the concept of articulation, which refers to the synthesis of different elements into a new discursive 'identity'. Take again the military and the various elements assigned to it by some military writers: isolationism, conservatism, collectivism, loyalty, discipline, hierarchy, traditionalism and so on [20]. Articulation here

unifies a series of ideological, political, economic and social elements, each having no essential meaning to navy life on their own, into a 'naval' discourse. It is also possible to see how, through years of practice by service members, and the naturalisation of its principles, this naval discourse has become well sedimented or 'layered on' and relatively, although not completely, fixed.

The theoretical platform for this conception of discourse is based on the works of linguist Ferdinand de Sassure. Reflecting earlier symbolic interactionist perspectives, Sassure (1976) proposed that identities are not determined by intrinsic properties. Rather they are known by their relation to a system of other identities – the organisation, or structuration, of meaning within historical conditions and contexts. This organisation of meaning is structured and institutionalised and, above all, relational. Sassure refers to 'linguistic units', which he labels as 'signs', and divides them into 'signifiers' and 'signifieds'. Hence a sign such as 'naval' consists of a written or spoken element: the word 'n-a-v-a-l'. This is the signifier. The concept we understand through this particular word is the signified.

Discourse theorists point out the formal and structural relationship between the word and the concept, or the signifier and the signified. The implication here is that there is nothing intrinsic or natural about the association, and that words do not share any natural properties with the concepts they imply. It is important to recognise that social phenomena have different signifiers – we have already argued that they have no intrinsic or essential nature, some signifiers are just more fixed than others, due to socio-historical and political conditions[21].

We cannot therefore demonstrate the validity of signifiers empirically, we can only fix some over others through persuasion, argument and debate. Thus, even normative values are grounded in socio-cultural and political meaning, and their analysis is therefore valuable in terms of discovering their origins. This relational theory of identity lends itself then, to insightful analysis of social phenomena.

Discourses acquire their own identity through the construction of antagonisms on 'frontiers' between different discourses, built on 'us and them' connotations. For example, traditional family discourse and feminist discourse may be polarised since some of their key signifiers - biologically based gender roles versus gender equality - are at odds with one another. Drawing on both

traditional family and feminist discourses would be problematic, in the sense that they inform very different approaches, between which are antagonistic frontiers.

Social antagonisms in discourse theory have several dimensions. Firstly, they provide a platform for frontiers to grow between different identities. Once constituted, these frontiers construct for identities 'enemies' or 'others', their 'difference' being vital for the partial or relative fixity of the particular discourse within which they are located, in a way similar to the barriers and reference groups discussed earlier. This further highlights the contingent character of identity. One view, cited by Parker (1985:107), may illustrate:

When you're a soldier you don't really belong in the outside world.

It could be argued here that Parker's interviewee refers to civilian life as the 'other' - the 'outside' world - erecting a metaphorical frontier between naval and civilian discourses and stressing their difference.

Although individuals may draw on different discourses, and formulate differential identities, relationships at the surface are not always antagonistic. Discourse theories have outlined two relationship 'types', which may serve to highlight the various systems of difference in both antagonistic and non-antagonistic relationships. Relationships are organised by two different types of logic: difference and equivalence. The types of logic that organise relationships are shaped by the discourses from which they are drawn.

Again, we can apply the naval example. Naval relationships are organised within an underlying logic of difference, where relationships are multiplied by establishing points of syntagmatic articulation. Put more plainly, there is no subversion of identities in that positions are not polarised. Rather they are put into a specific order, or hierarchy. This is a useful example of how different elements of discourse are relationally articulated. Conversely, relationships that are organised within a logic of equivalence are able to subvert differential identities, by highlighting their equivalence and polarising positions into 'us and them' situations.

All relationships have their own antagonisms, but those in the logic of difference and equivalence differ in their nature to one another. In a logic of difference, as is the case of the Navy, different

positions are not seen as threatening each other. Instead hierarchical stratification is naturalised as subordination. It is important to note that hierarchical relationships do not always make us feel oppressed, and all individuals find themselves in some form of hierarchical relationship. Positions in a logic of equivalence, on the other hand, are polarised. They are therefore more visibly antagonistic.

Relationships based on a logic of difference are increasingly difficult to sustain in a complex contemporary society pre-occupied with issues of social equality. Gramsci's writings on hegemony point to the generalised politicisation of more and more aspects of social relations (Gramsci, 1971), where antagonisms become harder to conceal and there is often consensus on the equivalence of positions.[22] Analysis of discourses allows for an examination of both organisational behaviour and the various relationships that inform and result from it. Notions of discourse and hegemony then, may help illuminate issues concerning military identity and its impact on military lives, moving beyond those perspectives which offer uni-dimensional or reductionist explanations.

This approach also offers a theoretical framework through which dynamic processes of change may be illustrated and, as such, these concepts are employed in discussion of the findings of the thesis in Chapter Nine. This allows for flexibility and consideration of difference within and between the experiences of military leavers, and the various ways in which they identify with different aspects of naval culture. Attention to the cultural elements of naval service is thus imperative to an understanding of naval identity, and provides insight into issues surrounding naval power and hegemony over its members. It is therefore necessary to consider previous studies that have contributed to an understanding of the naval culture that provides the overall context of this thesis.

Military Organisational Culture: Key issues

Writers of military research have tended to relate the various elements of military organisational culture to military organisational structures. Features that have been identified as those which comprise military culture, include: collectivism loyalty and camaraderie, discipline and codes of conduct, formal and informal, hierarchy and networks, pride in military identity and notions of masculinity (British Military Studies Group. 1997; Jessup, 1996). Since such cultural characteristics may inform naval discourses, they require some conceptualisation here.

Jolly (1996) suggests that it is the terms of engagement, and more specifically the unlimited liability condition of service, that dominate the organisational practices of the military. Edmonds (1988:31) further explains that organisational structures in the military are developed for the purpose of meeting two main objectives:

> ...the maintenance of a high level of discipline and morale among personnel, and the achievement of maximum combat effectiveness and operational efficiency. They therefore provide a framework of responsibilities and authority that links functional groups together.

The maintenance of high morale is essential to the military, since it holds service personnel together, and aids organisational effectiveness in stressful situations. Its nurturing, particularly in peaceful periods, is problematic in definitive terms, but studies have shown that morale is greatly enhanced by several factors including; training, a developed 'military' identity, a normative commitment to occupational tasks and pride in the military role (Goldthorpe and Hope, 1974). Some suggest that a sense of patriotism is also essential (Fallows, 1981; Parker, 1985).

The military is affected by the dominant consideration that its members may be killed in the process of 'doing their duty', and survival in combat situations will depend on morale, discipline and preparation (British Military Studies Group, 1997). The cohesion of members is crucial, thus collectivism and camaraderie are highlighted as imperative features of military organisational structure. Morale is a quality on which the military depends, and is played out in their selection of Officers. Leadership is an essential requirement, at least of the higher ranks. The ability to influence the activities of personnel, particularly at stressful times, is therefore crucial to the effectiveness of the military (Edmonds, 1988).

Hierarchy and ranking systems have also been explained in terms of organisational structure. The Armed Services follow the 'line and staff' concept of organisation (Hauser, 1980 in Fallow, 1981), where clearly marked levels of authority and responsibility are fixed along a direct chain of command, and are highly observable in the distinct military rank structures. Clear definitions of responsibility at each level of the rank hierarchy renders group discipline, and therefore operational efficiency, manageable.

There is a tightly structured cross-section of different personnel in the military. Leadership and command are essentially the domain of rank, or the officers' corps, where non-commissioned

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officers are appointed to organise and manage personnel as required by commissioned officers. Further down the hierarchy, other ranks exist to be led. In a sense, these are the operatives of the military machine. Clearly these different organisational roles may have different implications for individual identities. Edmonds (1988:33) argues that leadership qualities have two main dimensions:

> *Firstly "social and moral orientation" – integrity and maturity, the ability to tackle complex problems with intelligence, judgement and practical common-sense and secondly, the ability to operate within a service organisational and group context, which by definition, must include the responsibility for both the operational effectiveness of the unit under his or her command and the lives of the people in it, in difficult and dangerous situations.*

'Followers', that is lower ranks, need to demonstrate quite different qualities, more associated with carrying out orders efficiently, and relying on Officers' decision-making abilities. Within this context of decision-making, March and Simon (1993) offer a conceptual distinction between 'programmed' and 'unprogrammed' decisions.

Programmed decisions are commonly taken by members of an organisation who are more junior in the organisational hierarchy, and are made according to criteria that are already established. Unprogrammed decisions, on the other hand, require the recognition of a new situation with reference to hierarchical goals, organisational knowledge and expected outcomes, in order to 'fit' this new situation into accepted practice. It is largely their ability to take unprogrammed decisions that gives leaders their higher status. As explained by an officer cited by Parker (1985:99):

> *It is one of the finest traditions of the army, I believe, that this system should be perpetuated: because it does truly mean those fortunate enough to have the professionalism and sense of tradition which soldiering requires can devote themselves entirely to it, while those who would perhaps not make such good officers – through no fault of their own, I hasten to add – are in a subservient, but no less an honourable position where their capabilities can be used to their very best extent.*

Service personnel are immediately responsible to those in overall command for the specialist knowledge necessary for an understanding of the overall situation. Many different types of personnel have been integrated into the military over the last century. As a result, there is presently a high degree of sub-specialisation in the armed services, but the 'essential chain' of authority and command remains.

Although hierarchy has been viewed as significant in an operative sense, there are also undeniable social elements within the hierarchical organisation of the military. As Coxon (1978:25) states, with reference to professional hierarchies:

> Some people acknowledge that they are socially inferior to others... ...superior people on the other hand avoid being in the company with their social inferiors...At all levels of the hierarchy, people have notions about who are neither their superiors nor their inferiors, and it is with them that non-instrumental social interaction (mutual entertainment, inter-marriage etc.), takes place. To summarise, in a prestige hierarchy people defer to their superiors, derogate their inferiors and accept their equals.

Hierarchies are clearly elements of a socially constructed reality. They rely, in the first place, on the existence of some form of shared meanings amongst social actors within a group (Perrow, 1979). Put another way, if the symbolic significance is not recognised by actors, there can be no basis for deference. But why such deference in the first instance? Is it based merely on the 'professionalism' and 'sense of tradition' documented earlier in this discussion?

Officer recruitment has for some while provided an issue for contention, and many have argued that selection has more to do with class interests than any more meritocratic criteria. Some writers have suggested that, rather than qualification, skills and knowledge, officers are disproportionately drawn from upper-middle-class backgrounds, with particular educational histories (Edmonds, 1988; Fallows, 1981; British Military Studies Group, 1997). Ethnic background (there is a predominantly white officer corps), geographical region, and a family history of military service have also been identified as influential factors. It would appear that there may well be a pool of elites from which the officer corps of the military is drawn (Fallows, 1981).

As I mentioned earlier, the hierarchical structure of the military provides for a further and very visible feature of military life, that is discipline. Again discussed in terms of organisational effectiveness, studies of the 'ecology' of war, the battlefield environment and all its noisy, dangerous, situations, have highlighted the importance of both personal and organisational discipline (Hauser, 1980).

Rollinson et al (1997) describes the application of discipline as producing 'internalisation of an organisational rule'. Rollinson's position is founded on two different approaches to discipline: rehabilitative and retributive. Rehabilitation represents a corrective approach to discipline, using methods such as persuasion and non-threatening explanations of the need to observe

organisational rules. In contrast, retribution carried a pre-judgement of guilt and, when imposing a sanction, a connotation that it is the penalty for having done wrong.

Somewhere in between these approaches is discipline based on difference – applied through highlighting the adverse consequences of future role transgression. This technique is often rationalised by members of an organisation as rehabilitation (Rollinson *et al*, 1997). Whilst different organisations may fall somewhere between these two approaches, contemporary organisations tend to favour more rehabilitative methods. In contrast, some organisations, and particularly the Navy (Edmonds, 1988), rely on more traditional retributive methods.

Rollinson *et al* (1997) argue that confusion can occur in organisations over exactly which form of discipline is being used, and that it can be difficult to distinguish which approach is in play. Edwards (1989) suggests that the effectiveness of discipline depends on whether or not people are aware of a rule, as well as considerations of legitimacy of particular rules. In addition, support from peers has some capacity to support or negate punishment, influencing the deterrent effects of sanctions (Sims *et al*, 1993; Pettinger, 1996).

In different organisations, rule observation can be more or less ambiguous. However, extensive socialisation is able to pre-empt, or at least minimise, any confusion concerning discipline (Sackmann, 1991; Salaman and Thompson, 1980). For individuals in the Navy, rule observation is therefore perhaps easier to follow, since rules are laid down in regimental fashion and retributive punishment is clear to all. As an interviewee in Parker's study (1985:55) explains:

> *"Drilling you see, is designed to teach soldiers to obey orders instinctively and to act as one...come the hour and come the day, they still need to have had instilled in them instinctive obedience to orders. You cannot have debates on the battlefield, you cannot have doubts and hesitations.'*

Another aspect of this battlefield context is the provision of the military in many battles that are fought exclusively by men. The organisational structures of the military services make for difficult integration of women into their various branches, and some do not allow women at all (Bunyard, 1995).[23] Several works have portrayed the military as being deliberately 'masculinist' (Allat, 1983; Collinson & Collinson, 1989; Enloe, 1983), and the very notion of war is one loaded with masculine conceptions, where fighting and masculinity are terms often used interchangeably (Van Creveld, 1991). Enloe (1983) highlights their symbolic link:

*...to be a soldier means possibly to experience combat and only in combat lies the
ultimate test of man's masculinity.*

Bunyard (1995) refers to the process of enlistment to war, and notes that it has often been
legitimised by the idea that men should protect those more vulnerable than themselves, these
being women, older people and children. The notion of protector then, as well as fighter, is one
that carries masculine significance – so in war or peace masculinity is at the forefront.

In wider civilian society men often engage in, and enjoy, a masculine image. Servicemen have
been perceived as particularly notorious in the popular imagination. Goldman and Stites (1982)
explore the origins of such imagery, pin-pointing the camp followers of past times and the
continuing organised provision of prostitution. Bunyard (1995) discussed the ways in which
servicemen 'prove themselves' in their participation in brothel visits and strip-shows, while Hearn &
Parkin (1993) noted the masculinity boasted of in 'war chants'. Feminists argue that these
processes serve to maintain and perpetuate an environment built on male autonomy, saturated
with images of masculine identity (Burrell and Hearn, 1989; Mills, 1989; Gutek, 1989; Collinson and
Collinson, 1989).

According to much of the literature then, the organisational culture of the military is based on its
organisational structure, determined through military objectives. Nevertheless, social
characteristics are as embedded as are those of strategies, tactics and technology. Over time, of
course, objectives shift in response to changes in political climate, as well as technological
advance, and the contentious 'civilianisation' of the military is discussed fully in the following
chapter with reference to identity and change. To return to this discussion, experts argue that the
challenge to service organisations is to adapt to such change whilst retaining the all-important
elements of cohesion, identity and unity (Jessup, 1996; Jolly, 1989; British Military Studies Group,
1997).

Consideration of these elements may be useful in understanding the behaviour and identity making
processes of service personnel. It is also important to consider the more controlling aspects of
naval culture and organisation, and the hegemonic issues surrounding such control. The Navy has
its own institutions for training and continuous socialisation, in which the person's work is felt to be
his or her whole life (Jolly, 1996). As Edmonds (1988: 35) states:

...this process is designed to break down the systems of supports and values that the recruit had before entry, and to replace then with those of the institution. The more totalistic the institution the more intense and rigorous the process...it is this feature of armed service life which puts into sharpest contrast with civilian.

Janowitz (1960) remarks that 'doctrination' in the military (the Army in this particular case), depends 'not simply on formal entry procedures and academy', but also on the 'daily routine of military existence'. This is particularly true where practice is often physically separated from the civilian public. In Goffman's terms, the 'presenting self' of new recruits is effectively destroyed, as they are immersed in the naval routine and separated from the outside world. It would appear that servicemen come to value this separation, and develop a sense of pride and self-esteem in their different role (Edmonds, 1988; Jolly, 1996).

Jolly (1989) argues that on joining a military organisation the serviceman's world becomes, and remains, 'tightly knit and inward-looking' and 'self-consciously different' from civilian life. The 'civilianisation' of the Armed Forces may have added to an existing 'us and them' attitude, as civilians increasingly and very visibly perform jobs alongside military personnel. This is important, since issues of isolation and referencing 'others' are again taken up in the discussion of the findings of the thesis in Chapter Nine.

The military can clearly be characterised by some form of isolationism. Even where it may be becoming more civilianised, there are practical and procedural matters that require secrecy, for the protection of service personnel, for example, against terrorists. There is also the requirement of segregation, for the protection of civilians from the often-perilous activities carried out by the military. Isolation in this sense can be seen to be beneficial to the military objective of national and organisational security. It is also often appealing to military personnel. As Jessup (1996:3) explains:

Living in a military community is analogous to living in a company town. One sole employer provides subsidised housing, frequent medical, educational, community and social welfare facilities, and often institutionally approved supermarkets exclusively serving military families and offering attractive tax concessions on alcohol and tobacco products.

In this respect, the Armed Services may appear to share some common features with the total institutions described by Goffman (1961), although it should be remembered that this refers mainly to Army communities. However, to say with confidence that the various military represent total

institutions as Goffman defines them, is problematic. Certainly military facilities and civilian society are kept at arms length both socially and geographically (Dandeker, 1990; Jolly, 1989, 1996). Jessup (1996:3) states:

> *The military has been able effectively to control the total environment with which both employees and family members are sustained.*

However, access to the outside civilian world, though sometimes difficult, is hardly restricted in a total sense, although the exception is perhaps the time spent on ships at sea in the Royal Navy. The isolation of service personnel, however, is nevertheless important in terms of socialisation and the internalisation of service culture. As such, this issue of control is worthy of consideration.

Servicemen and women, in the course of their military careers, will all spend a high proportion of their lives in situations related to their occupation. This is the case not only for work related activities, but also in terms of leisure time. Studies of work and leisure have highlighted the prioritising of work, where leisure time is dependent on time allowed for non-work (Edgell, 1980). Naval service, in particular, compounds the control of institutions over leisure time, as well as the types of activity in which service personnel engage. Women and men are required to spend considerable periods of service on-board ships, maintaining routines and discipline.

Implications for leisure are clear. Time spent 'off-duty' is still spent with other service personnel, and usually in the crowded conditions of the mess deck. Even for necessary non-work activities such as eating and sleeping, the military presence is strong. With the exception of (most) senior officers, sleeping accommodation for personnel is shared, ratings usually sharing with at least ten others, and junior officers with at least one other (Bunyard, 1989).

As Bunyard (1989) suggests, solitude is impossible. The distinctions between public and private domains thus become blurred. Even off-board, the British military is organised around predetermined schedules, codes and disciplines that extend into the private worlds of their members. Burrell and Hearn (1989), claim that processes that blur distinctions between private and public spheres serve to provide for total control of organisational members. In as much as industrialisation separated the spheres of work and home, the military career has the opposite effect, to the extent where the boundaries between work and home are less decipherable. The military career then, is extended into many different aspects of servicemen and women's lives.[24]

A further example of organisational control is the military's prerogative to discipline and punish its members.[25] Servicemen and women are not only subject to the law of the land, they can also be tried by martial law for activities that may breach the objectives and acceptable behaviour of the military, for example; desertion, negligence, disobedience and even homosexuality (Bunyard, 1989; Jolly, 1989). The use of personal privileges is a further controlling feature shared by the military, in terms of both reward for good service, and withdrawal for unacceptable behaviour. Again, the meaningfulness conveyed by these normative rewards and punishments requires some isolation from civilian life. That is, adherence to a particular set of rules is bolstered by separation from those in other, civilian environments. Edmonds (1988:43) suggests that the Armed Services:

> ...fulfil a highly specialised function, the effect of which is to separate them entirely, and geographically to a great extent, from civil society. The picture then is of a highly specialised corporate set of institutions which have little in common with civil society – frequently referred by armed servicemen as being "outside" – with their own set of values and ways of doing things.

Military organisations, then, are concerned with control over service personnel, achieved through socialisation techniques and the influence of cultural features that feed organisational discourses. Military discourse has to sustain traditional key elements as it represents a hegemonic project, that is the hegemony of the military as an institution, over its members. Of course, if the preceding discussion is taken into account, internalisation of military culture by military personnel strengthens this very same hegemony.

All of this leads to a further question: What is it that keeps military men and women in the military, and why do they accept such extensive invasion into both their public and private worlds? Etzioni (1964) argues that this is a matter of 'compliance'. In his view, compliance represents an inter-relationship between the level of control an organisation is able to exercise over its members, and the member's interests in remaining part of that organisation.

Whilst Etzioni extends his analysis to the conclusion that the military retain their staff through isolation and coercive organisational power, this has been criticised by others who point to the voluntary and often flexible nature of service careers (Fallows, 1981). Such critics argue that professional military personnel do their jobs voluntarily because it is their profession and it is in their interests to do so. Other writers (Jolly, 1996), for example, highlight the vocational and

patriotic characteristics of service life, and it is certainly true to say that the symbols of nation state are explicit and always visible, particularly during the induction process. Appeals to patriotism and the call to 'do one's duty' are often cited in military recruitment literature.

It is also important to remember that military careers are not altogether unrewarding in the financial sense. Studies have shown how servicemen and women often trade off family considerations or other problems of the job for the security of generous financial reward. (Regan *et al*, 1995). Deetz (1998:169), asserts that some members of organisations make:

> *...many sacrifices owing to the work expectations and long hours. They seem to have struck a Faustian bargain with the company to accept conditions of subordination for the sake of pay-offs in terms of identity, financial standing and job security.*

So, whilst military organisations may employ methods that socialise and control their members in order to perpetuate military hegemony, it is not simply the case that service personnel submit themselves passively to the whim of the institution. Socialisation to the military represents a two way process and it is primarily for this reason that a flexible discourse theoretical approach provides such an appropriate framework for the thesis.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates the application of various concepts, and theoretical arguments, to an understanding of identity and work in contemporary society. Further, it offers some conceptual debate that relates specifically to those issues within the context of military organisations. Such an exposition of ideas provides a basis for the illustration, in this thesis, of the experiences and feelings of servicemen and their families before, during and after resettlement.

The major themes running through the thesis have been explored here, and we can recognise the salience of processes of socialisation and identification with particular discourses, in the working and personal lives of naval personnel. The concepts outlined in this chapter are picked up later in the thesis, and used in order to frame the findings and the arguments that are provided in the final chapter.

Processes of employment and socialisation into discourses do not operate in a vacuum. They interact with other aspects of social life, including family and friendship networks. Discourses are

also open to the influences of other alternative discourses, depending on context, and are therefore concerned with change. The next two chapters address the conceptual parameters of the thesis in terms of organisational and occupational change and family considerations.

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[2] This distinction is discussed in detail on page 84.

[3] The methodological context of which is provided in Chapter Five.

[4] Mead distinguishes the 'I', as ongoing and individually unique, from the 'Me', representing the internalised attitudes of others. See 'Mind, Self & Society From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviourist, 1934'.

[5] Marx's 'class in itself' is united by its common characteristics (specifically relations to the means of production) as defined by others, whilst the 'class for itself' recognises its position and collective sufferings, and thus defines itself. See Marx, (1934 & 1976).

[6] Goffman's emphasis on the importance of impression management strategies dramatises the interface between self-image and public-image. See the 'Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, 1969'.

[7] Becker's labelling perspective highlights the interaction between self-definition and definition by others in terms of their internalisation. See 'Outsiders, Studies in the Sociology of Deviance, 1963'.

[8] Such perspectives have been criticised for their heavily interpretive bases and their micro-focuses.

[9] Whereby organisations are seen actively to 'assimilate' members on entry.

[10] See Elliot (1972) for examples.

[11] In Asylums (1961), Goffman investigates the impact of institutions on patterns of interaction, as behaviour is regulated and activities are subsumed to the aims and will of the single institutional authority.

[12] See page 13.

[13] See Turner (1974) for full discussion.

[14] Moskos (1977) refers to: "restructuring of the welfare and retirement system...increasing class and racial unrepresentativeness of the ground combat arms...separation of work and residence locales and growing numbers of single men living off base...burgeoning resistence of many military wives, at officer and noncom levels, to participating in customary social functions...high rate of attrition and desertion in post-Vietnam military...increasing tendency of active duty personnel to

bring grievances to litigation" as being indicative of the ascendancy in the 1970's to the occupational model.

[15] Greenwood (1957), provides a framework of attributes through which professionalisation can be measured, including; a foundational body of systematic theory (professional knowledge), specialist expertise, specific community sanction, a regulatory code of ethics and the creation and maintenance of professional cultures.

[16] In which members spend all of their time (such as prisons, hospitals, psychiatric units and so on).

[17] Dandeker refers specifically to the power relationships between the military, the state and issues of surveillance.

[18] He refers to a science of 'engineering', where individuals develop in the army, schools, hospitals, madhouses and factories through mechanisms including spatialisation, control of activity, repetitive exercises, detailed hierarchies and normalising judgements. See Discipline and Punish, 1977.

[19] Handy distinguishes between four basic typologies of organisational culture; power, task based, person and role. In power cultures, key individuals operate from the centre of a 'concentric web', utilising trust (as opposed to rules), in controlling their members, whilst task-based cultures rely on, flexibility and decentralised control. Person cultures centre on the individual, whilst role cultures, on the other hand, may be more common, and involve specialisation, procedures and rules, which follow bureaucratic lines.

[20] Which are covered in more detail in the following discussion of military culture.

[21] A classic example here is the signifier 'terrorist' which, depending on context and the position and discourse of the author, may be replaced with the alternative signifier 'freedom fighter' in describing the same signified concept.

[22] Gramsci shifts Marxist thought to the realm of 'ideological hegemony', whereby the dominant class contrives to retain political power by manipulating opinion and creating a 'popular consensus', and a worldview that is accepted as common sense. Gramsci argues that ideological struggle is vital to political struggle, where the dominant ideas and values are exposed and challenged by those they oppress. See Selections from the Prison Notebooks for elaboration.

[23] Chandler *et al* (1995:125), argue that 'the participation of women outside times of national emergency and in a professional armed forces is deeply challenging to the construction and symbolisation of gender... ...unease about women's' military participation is found in both masculinist and feminist accounts.

[24] Conceptualisation of work and family interfaces is discussed in detail in chapter 4.

Chapter Three - The Naval Career and Change

Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the ways in which individuals identify themselves through various levels of interaction at work. It assessed some of the conceptual themes that have been used to understand the processes of identification and associated behaviours in work related situations, and demonstrated a suitable theoretical framework for enquiry into the experiences of naval personnel.

Of course, work and employment situations are not static. On the contrary, they are dynamic processes that interact with others in the working and personal lives of individuals and organisational groups. This is an important point, since a central element of this thesis is the analysis of occupational change amongst naval leavers.

I have already stated the benefits of using discourse theories in the study of identity, particularly in terms of their capacity to capture elements of difference between different individuals in similar situations. I have also pointed out their suitability for research that sets out to examine phenomena within a holistic context, which takes into account the relationship between structure and agency. This approach is similarly appropriate for any academic study of change.

For the purposes of this thesis, we are concerned with three varieties of change. Firstly, we must consider the requirements of geographical mobility and trickle drafts, which make for an insecure, unsettled and often transient lifestyle for service personnel and their families[26]. Secondly, discussion in Chapter Nine demonstrates the importance of the contentious 'civilianisation' of the Armed Forces, and the implications this has for service personnel. Finally, the thesis addresses, as a central point, the more immediate challenge of redundancy and resettlement. These three dimensions are distinct, yet they are related by their impact on the working and personal lives of individuals in the Navy.

This chapter addresses the conceptual themes that inform current knowledge about change, and its impact on identities and personal experiences. It is organised around the two themes of organisational and occupational change.

Change and the Military

The main structural and cultural features of military organisation, and their impact on personnel, were discussed in Chapter Two. However, the military is subject to change, just as other institutions in society are. The British Armed Forces are currently undergoing far-reaching changes that have sparked wide debate in political and academic arenas.[27]. Whilst impending change has been largely directed at the macro-level of national security and defence budgets, the implications for personnel working in the three branches of the nation's Armed Forces are significant. Changes to military structures over the past few years continue to impact on military personnel.

The first aspect of the changes referred to, is the increasing 'civilianisation' of the Armed Forces. This has important implications for the organisational cultures and identities on which the theoretical framework of this thesis is based. Fallows (1981:98), documents the recent emphasis in the US on concerns about civilianisation, and calls for 'ethical reform' and 'rededication to military values':

> ...the effectiveness of any military force depends on the creation of a series of human bonds – among soldiers who risk death for the sake of other men in their unit, between troops and leaders, between the military as a whole and the nation it is supposed to represent. These bonds can be built only by demonstrations of mutual respect and willingness to share hardships; without them, many soldiers say, an army will be eviscerated, no matter how impressive its machinery.

Fallows locates the imperative social aspects of the military, and argues that the 'enemy' to re-establishing military values are enforced programmes, budgets and other external, non-military, pressures. He refers to civilianisation as being a result of the increasing volunteer army in America, which transforms the principles of the military to those of the 'workday world'. Some critics have argued that this civilianisation is eroding the very heart of organisational structures and cultures.

The civilianisation of the Armed Forces as referred to in this thesis appears to have two dimensions, and some distinction is therefore useful. Firstly, the military has increasingly involved the employment of civilians in various positions, as different areas of military organisation are

tendered out to civilian agencies (Fallows, 1981; Hauser, 1980). Civilianisation in this sense refers to the increasing proportion of non-military personnel working alongside military personnel and as part of the military machine. Edmonds (1988) argues that it is rare to find military branches comprising exclusively military personnel. This may have implications for the relationship between service personnel and civilian 'others'[28].

The second dimension of civilianisation is its relevance in terms of social and cultural emphasis. Changes to military organisational practices and traditions have increasingly led to a service which is in some ways, although certainly not all, more akin to civilian organisations. In the light of the preceding discussion of culture and socialisation, this type of civilianisation is a salient issue, deserving some attention here. It is important then, to consider the cultural aspects of the military that have already been outlined, within the context of civilianisation.

Fallows provides some descriptive evidence of civilianisation. He highlights the fact that married men living in towns have replaced unmarried soldiers residing in military bases. Further he describes the provision of snack bars for men to eat in, instead of dining together in mess halls and the living arrangements changing from squad bays to 'motel style barracks'.

Hauser (1980) examines the diminishing social elements of service, which once distinguished military men. He identifies four main aspects; submission, fear, loyalty and pride. Submission describes the process through which recruits are routinely and repetitively forced to undertake particular activities until they are fully cognisant of the fundamental role to obey. This may illustrate part of the socialising processes outlined earlier, which also parallel notions of sedimentation and naturalisation discussed later in this chapter, with reference to discursive strategies. Hauser refers to such experience as a 'conditioning process'.

Fear is associated with the need for soldiers to both know and trust their comrades, loyalty with the emotional attachment to both colleagues and their unit. The fourth aspect, pride, derives from a soldier's knowledge that he/she performs a role on which others depend and value as important to society in general. Hauser suggests that both loyalty and pride have diminished in the modern army for two main reasons.

Firstly, loyalty developed in the past through proximity – men lived, ate, slept, worked and socialised together. The implications for men that live quite separate family lives are very different. Secondly, Hauser claims that pride has been affected by the changing ways in which new recruits are targeted and enter the military, arguing that whilst patriotism encouraged enlistment prior to the 1970s, for at least the last 20 years it is career advancement that attracts contemporary recruits.

This increasing individualism reflects changes in wider civilian society, and has significant implications for identity. Social scientists interested in labour organisations have identified a shift in identities amongst wage earners, from collectivist value orientations with an emphasis on solidarity, towards more individualistic value orientations, this time emphasising self-interest and personal development (Madsen, 1997; Zoll, 1995)[29].

Valkenberg (1995), suggests that individualisation is an expression of underlying fundamental changes in work, and also the processes whereby individual identity is formed. Personal identity is seen as less shaped by collective or common experience, rather more by a multiplicity of different experiences. That is, where identity has long been based on work, identity formation is now in constant development. Individuals may, in one period of life, choose leisure and lifestyle, politics or other non-work activities over their careers. For Hauser, much of the military comprises men who enlist as a result of their failure to find gainful employment elsewhere, rather than in securing a work role through which they gain a strong sense of military identity.

Fallows (1981:98) also highlights changes in the operating practices of the military. For example, instead of receiving pay envelopes direct from their captains, men are provided with computerised cheques *like social security recipients*. Training is completed more quickly and is less physically challenging than in the past. . Further, he states, instructors are given less slack to discipline. In addition, women have now been more integrated with men. Of course, issues of female integration into sea-service have also been documented as providing a modern challenge to a traditional military so dominated by masculinist culture, and this could be seen to compound the apparent 'civilianisation' to which researchers refer (Chandler et al, 1995).

Furthermore, while many military experts and academics alike call for the application of contemporary market models of organisation, debate about autonomy in work has increased. This has highlighted a process of routinisation within contemporary organisations whereby, due to the

increasing complexity of work methods and relationships, unprogrammed decisions can be taken at a lower level in the hierarchy. That is, multi-skilling has led to more autonomy in decision-making, although organisational practices or knowledge may still largely direct this. This, by implication, would have important influences on a military culture based on organisational structures of hierarchy, where higher ranks are largely responsible for decision-making.

Fallows then raises two issues to which he refers as 'discipline': positive, and internal, discipline and a more negative, and external, one. The former consists of ties of loyalty, camaraderie, tradition and trust, whilst the latter is concerned with the more structural and organisational aspects, such as power, pay and discipline etc. Some observers have claimed that all these elements have, over the last twenty years, been subject to change, and some would argue gradual demise, as the wider civilian society has applied its labour market model to the military. In addition, changes in political climate may be seen as prompting the response of the military as self-professed peacekeepers rather than fighters. Edmonds (1988:58) suggests:

> *The picture that emerges is one of modern armed services becoming inextricably ever more involved in the civil affairs of the state... ...in stark contrast with the image of armed services as an institution geographically separate, organisationally distinctive, administratively autonomous and functionally.*

However, there are those who argue that, whilst some form of modernisation appears to have taken place, elements of the traditional military persist, and that the values and attitudes shared by many servicemen still form the basis of military life (Jolly, 1989, 1996; Segal, 1986). Whatever the extent of 'civilianisation' to today's military, arguably based in what has been termed 'post-military' society (Shaw, 1991), certain cultural aspects remain evident. Service personnel are still able to refer to them in their everyday lives, using them, consciously or otherwise, as familiar signposts for appropriate attitudes and behaviours. All of this leads to the second, perhaps more prominent, aspect of change in servicemen's lives, when these reference frameworks are threatened by occupational change.

The Navy and Occupational Change

One implication of structural changes in the Armed Forces in recent years is the large number redundancies that have taken place[30]. As Regan *et al* (1995:4) state:

The recession of the 1990's has meant that the Armed Forces have been subject to organisational change, both in terms of management practice and radical reductions in staffing. In addition, the end of the cold war and the resulting peace dividend has signalled a need to reduce the previous size and strength of the military services. Thus, whilst the forces face change parallel to that taking place in the private sector over recent years, the reduction in staffing levels has been even more radical, in response to a changing global and economic climate.'

The Tri-Service Resettlement Organisation at this time prided itself on its 'career change support service', which provided briefings, training, publications, marketing support and job-matching services to eligible personnel who had served beyond five years. Redundancy following extensive cuts has become a reality for many service personnel and, at the point or writing, private services have been contracted to provide resettlement advice.

Aside from redundees who have served their contracts, and those who are at retirement age, a large number of service personnel have voluntarily severed their attachment to naval careers, particularly where financial benefits of redundancy have been thrown into sharp relief. This is partly due to the nature of the Armed Forces, and in particular their resistance to social change (Edmonds, 1988).

In spite of issues raised by increased civilianisation of the military, the strict service life continues to cause problems for the retention of personnel development (Regan, 1995. Regan *et al*, 1995; NewsNight, July 7th 1998; BSMG, 1997). Many men and women of the forces appear to find military life incompatible with their personal, and particularly family, lives and career. The military career has long been characterised by relatively early retirement and, in many cases, military leavers are able to embark on second careers. The TRSO (1996:1) state:

Men and women are constantly being recruited to meet the manpower needs of the three services...because, unlike most commercial organisations, military service is predominantly a young person's business and requires fit, healthy, intelligent men and women who can operate effectively and efficiently in all sorts of adverse circumstances.

The changing demographic profile of service leavers, with more young personnel exiting their careers mid-cycle, has further implications for resettlement and adaptation to change. Regan *et al* (1995), in a study of job search amongst military leavers, conclude that service leavers may be disadvantaged, in terms of both employment prospects and social relations, through their lack of contact with civilian labour markets. In addition, they point out that many such leavers may have

had little experience of civilian life in general. Occupational change amongst these individuals is clearly a rich area for further exploration.

Researching and Analysing Change

The study of career change, and a concern with the social adaptation of those experiencing occupational transition is crucial because the social implications of work and occupational identity in transformation have an importance that goes beyond mere economics. Adaptation to a new situation is crucial to the adequate running of the life course and the inability to do so is detrimental to an individual's social and psychological well being. As Jolly (1996:3) reasons:

> It entraps an individual in his past and divests his subsequent endeavours of direction and intensity. At the extreme, a person can come to regard the rest of his or her life, with all its achievements, as an anti-climax.

Research on the elderly, and prisoners, in institutions, as well as professionals such as oil-rig workers, the clergy and the police, has shown that the loss of a socialising (occupational) institution from people's lives can have far reaching effects, and can become a traumatic experience for many (Kenny, 1985; Armstrong, 1981; Middleton, 1977; Howes, 1987; Marris, 1986). Leaving a socialising occupation means that not only is the job taken away, but also a whole way of life, and many of the meanings that people hold and use in order to understand their own lives and the social world around them.

However, studies into the effect of occupational change have been relatively limited and have largely focused on job search strategies and economic considerations (Osipow, 1973; Crow and Allen, 1994; Dex, 1988; Gordon, 1984), or psychological approaches to attachment, loss and change (Buss, Redburn and Waldron, 1983; Musgrove, 1977; Cohen and Taylor, 1972; Marris, 1986; Campbell, 1986). To an extent, an analysis of military leavers should be informed by both these spheres, as well as additional issues surrounding identity, and some discussion of previous contributions to knowledge is therefore useful here. Generally speaking, although such studies are diverse in their subject matter, their conclusions highlight similar findings. Individuals facing major life change through occupational transition typically develop one of three main strategies.

Firstly, conscious effort may be expended on adjustment of self-image and re-direction toward the requirements of the new situation[31]. Alternatively, the individual may develop some form of

resistance against the new situation, consciously or otherwise. A third option falls somewhere between these two. Individuals slowly begin to recognise and accept change, maintaining a more or less linear association with their old situation. For many, this option helps them to avoid the harshness of a complete break and re-direction, even where they may be aware that this is their ultimate aim. It would appear that some attempt at change is imperative, and further that this must be purposeful if any strong sense of identity and self-fulfilment is to be maintained.

We have seen how the naval career may involve 'subordination of the self' to the requirements of military life. If this is the case, then what happens when a service leaver departs military service? What are the implications for identity in becoming a civilian? Most military leavers have access to high quality resettlement training and advice on housing needs, financial matters, job search. Re-training is plentiful for those who wish to avail themselves of it (TRSO, 1996), and psychological counselling is often included. However, little is said about de-conditioning and reconditioning.

As Jolly points out, for every serving man and woman, much time, energy and money is given over by 'the military' to create and sustain a 'military persona'. When a person leaves the service, this self-image is inevitably eroded. But there is no provision of assistance with discarding this military persona, nor any help in building the necessary new social identity. If this task is to be accomplished, it is to be accomplished only by the servicemen or women themselves, as well as perhaps their families and friends.

The adaptation of identity to a new employment, or unemployment, situation is imperative. However, radical life change and the consequent rebuilding of an appropriate alternative self-image is not a straightforward process. It involves a transformation of the multiplicity of elements, which go to make up an individual's identity.

As outlined in the previous chapter, the maintenance of identity relies on particular perceptions of life; of self-image, of work and family relationship, of behaviour, attitudes and responsibilities (Jenkins, 1996). Redefinition of internalised notions of self is complex and has often been regarded as synonymous with 'struggle'. As Marris (1986) in Jolly (1996:9) puts it:

> *The ability to interpret events and predict from experience the outcome of behaviour is threatened...he is caught between (the impulse) to return to the past, which seems in retrospect a haven of security and meaningful satisfactions; or to realise at once a new*

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self... ...each impulse provokes its painful reaction; the attempt to revive the past only exposes its decay; the pursuit of the future leads to humiliating frustrations and bewilderment, and a sense of betrayal of his true identity. The conflict cannot be resolved, but only worked at.

It may be the case that the social attitudes espoused by leavers are as important as they are in occupational training and socialisation, precisely because occupational change and successful adaptation may require re-socialisation (Musgrove, 1977). Attitudes toward the self, the family, friends, work and life in general may require some transformation, whilst at the same time being retained to the extent that they have formed, and will always form, part of the individual's make up.

How far then, can an individual consciously shape the process of career change in a way that is likely to have a particularly positive or negative outcome? Jolly (1996) makes a valuable contribution to an understanding of 'the individual's struggle to redefine the key meanings of his life in a new context', with her 'three stages' of transition: confrontation, disengagement and re-socialisation. She suggests that these stages are of equal importance in successful transition from one career to another.

To elaborate, confrontation involves the acknowledgement and confrontation of impending change in career or lifestyle. The nature of confrontation will depend on two main elements; the degree of suddenness in realising the change and the degree of willingness to make that change. This has been similarly documented in study of unemployment, where Fineman (1993:63 asserts:

> *The confrontation was symbolic. It was a way of personally coming to terms with the fears and anxieties associated with the threat by carefully examining oneself and one's predicament, and then harnessing energy to find a replacement for the lost job.*

The second stage of transition is 'disengagement'. Jolly (1996:10-11) defines disengagement as follows:

> *Typically starting in the mind, with the questioning of sympathies, of judgements, of priorities...having clarified attitudes and perhaps realigned sympathies, the individual may be ready to move in the desired direction – although movement at this stage is not always decisive and not always successful... ...this whole period, when a former way of life is being relinquished before there are many certainties as to what will replace it, is almost always confusing and painful.*

Musgrove (1977) argues that whilst individuals must change to fit their new situation, they must also have the awareness and confidence to challenge certain aspects of it. This requires the

knowledge, and more importantly the sense of belonging, to the new situation. Again, reference to discourse theories may help explain the process of change, in as much as individuals facing change must learn to draw on new, more appropriate, discourses in order to make sense of their new lives.

The third stage of civilianisation is re-socialisation. This describes the process of assuming a new social identity and taking on a different role in society that is described in the previous chapter. Of course this involves being perceived differently by peers and also by oneself, therefore it may be possible that those still perceiving themselves as a 'military man' may have more problems with re-socialisation. Military identities are positively reinforced at a consistent level, within and outside of military rhetoric. Coopers and Lybrand (1992:2) report:

> ...a number of qualities shared by service men and women – reliability, adaptability, self-discipline, self-organisation, self-reliance, resourcefulness, loyalty, teamwork, leadership, goal-orientation, integrity, decisiveness, self-motivation, commitment and responsibility.

Identities may be based upon quite visible and descriptive social and personal elements. As discussed with reference to discourse, re-socialisation is problematic when a prior discourse has been deliberately so ingrained. Re-socialisation thus requires a new perception of oneself and others.

However, such perceptions may be based on common sense views, rather than empirical knowledge, particularly when such knowledge has been limited in the first place. Common sense views may be often embued with stereotypical notions of others, and discourse is once again important here. Individuals may exaggerate differences between, and minimise difference within their two groups through discourse. There appears to be a tendency to polarise issues such as: what am I?, what are they? and what are their different roles?, and to refer to them in crude terms and typologies in discourse.

Coxon (1978) suggests that this 'levelling', 'sharpening' and 'assimilating to the typical instance' may be employed in order to gain the effects of metaphor, imagery and contrast in communication. Here we can see an example of 'myth' entering discourse. According to Barthes (1991), myth appears as a second level of communication in discourse, using extant words or images in order to create a supplementary or alternative message. Barthes analysis demonstrates that to use facts as

a token for something else is to use facts as a token for subjective meaning. There is a distinction then between meaning and form, whereby the myth creates a 'distortion' of the original image and presents it, through discourse, as fact.

These notions of discourse reflect directions of earlier works. Becker offered the notion of 'perspective' and culture. Culture here is not a distinct separable feature of the membership of a group, rather it arises from role performances and role relationships (Becker, 1963). Perspective, taken here to mean an articulated set of ideas informing response to a new situation or problem, an individual's approach, thoughts, feelings and actions in such a situation, provides a linking concept between role and culture. For leavers this may be problematic, since they may still be drawing on naval culture and discourse in order to make sense of problems in civilian life. Where individual perspectives have been elaborated into a shared culture, they may be difficult to break with.

Action in repetitive situations follows previously elaborated perspectives, until a new problematic situation is experienced, requiring the formation of a new perspective. Becker suggests that such situations are likely to be problematic in so far as they have not been met before[32]. The formation of new perspectives entails knowledge of a different discourse. If naval discourse has not been disengaged, and re-socialisation not established to any extent, the complications are obvious.

Few individuals will draw exclusively on one particular discourse. As has been discussed, identity will be dependent on a number of roles, and different discourses may be used depending on which role is a priority at any given time. In the military, although there may be quite visible military discourses through which service personnel understand their worlds, discourses are not closed. Despite the emphasis on group bonding and occupational socialisation, uniformity, conformity and personal discipline that has been documented, it could be argued that, as with the wider civilian society, there will be a spectrum of opinions toward most issues.

So, whilst socialising practises may be played out on servicemen and women, not all will necessarily be successfully institutionalised and this will inevitably have implications for change. As has already been discussed earlier in this chapter, little research has documented the nature of the diversity between and within groups, or the implications for change and adaptation. Perhaps one factor that has been missing from studies of the impact of any form of change on individuals is the benefit of longitudinal study. If the above discussion is taken into consideration, then this thesis

must examine change as process, and this requires a flexible research design that captures the experiences of servicemen and their families at different stages of their lives as they unfold.

The importance of longitudinal study for investigating change becomes clear. In conducting such study it may be possible to highlight the processes involved in creating occupational identity, before moving on to an understanding of how such identities may be maintained or transformed throughout occupational change.

Conclusion

Studying the impact of change, and its implications for identity, using the approach outlined in this chapter, may help illustrate the ways in which the resettlement process affects men's personal, working and social relationships, as well as their family lives. In order to achieve this, however, some understanding of the conceptual debates surrounding family, kinship and household formation is first required. The following chapter is concerned with these issues.

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[26] Naval careers are characterised by constant change as personnel are drafted to different jobs, often in different geographical locations, having implications for separation or weekending or interruptions to spouses' careers and children's education.

[27] Not least in terms of the Strategic Defence Review in 1998, which outlined a number of changes to military organisation, including downsizing and attention to the retention and situation of military staff, and to family lives.

[28] This is discussed, with particular reference to the findings, in Chapter Nine.

[29] It is useful here to note Giddens' (1991) analysis of modernisation, and individualisation as a reflection of the processes underlying individual identity formation.

[30] Under the Options for Change redundancy programme, the number of redundancies between 1992 and 1995 totalled 24,137, with subsequent redundancies related to Options for Change adding a further 11500 to that number (TRO, 1996). Redundancies have continued since this date.

[31] The salient influence of occupation on self image has been outlined in Chapter Two.

[32] This would appear to be the case with the majority of the individuals in this study.

Chapter Four - Families, Households and Occupation

Introduction

The previous two chapters discussed the conceptual themes underlying an understanding of the importance of work and occupation in modern society, both in terms of social organisation and identity. The service career, as well as occupational change, also has an impact on the family life of service personnel. Since this thesis is concerned with the interplay between work, families and households, this chapter refers to the key concepts used in understanding family processes, and positions this discussion within the context of work and family interfaces. Attention is paid here to issues surrounding the increasing trend toward dual career families, and concepts related to household and parental roles.

Some definition of the contemporary family and household is first required. However, notions of the family and its relationship to society are historically contingent. As such, consideration of the importance of families in traditional, pre-industrial and industrial societies, and their relationship with work and employment, will provide the starting point of this discussion.

Society and The Family

There has been a great deal of debate surrounding family forms throughout history. Peter Laslett, in his influential study *'The World we have Lost'* [33], regards pre-industrial society as being centrally characterised by the organisation of family and household units. Families, argues Laslett, represented units of economic production, featuring the co-operation of family members involved in family enterprise. He referred to such households as nuclear in their formation, comprising immediate family members, although sometimes being extended to members of wider kinship groups, who were integrated into the household and contributed to its communal economic production. Families and households were thus the basic social units of pre-industrial societies (Anderson, 1980, 1994; Bradley, 1992).

The upheaval of the industrial age, however, had implications for families and households, as the processes of industrialisation led to the separation of work and home (Hobsbawm, 1987; Elliot, 1986). This separation of public and private spheres resulted in a shift in emphasis on families from units of production to units of consumption. This, of course, had further implications, in terms of the organisation of families or household formation. Despite some variations[34], men were typically drawn out of the household and associated primarily with the public sphere, whilst women remained tied to the private sphere, their female responsibilities now being to maintain the family home (Crowley, 1992).

For Laslett, a key characteristic of family formation in traditional society is that of patriarchy and, in terms of family studies of both pre-industrial and modern industrial society, this concept has become an important one. According to Laslett, patriarchy refers to a system of family hierarchy that is based on male power and derived from notions of inheritance and property. Max Weber (1964) sharpened this definition to one that described a particular model of social power that directed groups in traditional society into households based on economics and kinship. Here, a particular male individual, who headed the household through his relation to inheritance, exercised authority for social, economic and political reasons. Thus familial authority resulted in control, by the head of the household, over the economic practices and behaviours of other family members. Families then, were characterised by hierarchies based on gender and age.

Patriarchy has been variously described in sociological analysis, not least in feminist accounts. Some view it as originating from the family itself (Firestone, 1972), some in terms of the exclusion of women from important areas of public life (Millett, 1971), and others as a consequence of economic relations (Hartmann, 1976, 1981). Patriarchy is still a crucial concept for study of contemporary families, and current sociological analysis in general (Bradley, 1996. Elliott, 1996).

Walby (1990), describes patriarchy as a complex system that 'socially subordinates' women, and perpetuates their exploitation by men. Its use as a concept for this study perhaps combines all three of the approaches mentioned here, and clearly it is an important feature of family studies throughout history. Patriarchy, subordination and exploitation are institutionalised in contemporary society, 'hidden' in the social structure. Women's family responsibilities and ties to the domestic sphere are viewed as examples of oppression, which bind women in both public and private patriarchy. Through social construction, relationships between men and women, and their access

to power, are gendered. Some attention to the history of gender in families is useful here, in order to understand both its genesis and maintenance in contemporary society and the implications of service life and occupational change.

Families and Gender Relations

Clark (1982), argued that marriage and family life in pre-industrial England was more egalitarian than was the case for families in industrial society. Both productive and domestic work were shared equally. This, she argued, contrasted with the more unequal positioning of men and women in public and private spheres respectively, and the limiting of women to the housewife role.

For Clark, industrialism brought with it a shift that forced women's dependence on men, as men conversely became economically independent. This view reflects Marxist analysis. Marx sought to explain housework in relation to the capitalist economy, in models that emphasised how housework creates value through creating and servicing labour power in breadwinners and future breadwinners (Marx, 1962). Thus housework contributes indirectly to surplus value via the reproduction of labour and women's role becomes clear. Such views have come under criticism for their idealised imagery of traditional households in the first place. Other sociologists describe pre-industrial households as being stratified along gender lines in a variety of ways. (Shorter, 1976; Ehrenreich and English, 1979).

However, what is important here is not which type of society was more or less equal, but rather the fact that role allocation based along gender lines has long been a feature of family life. Of course, it is foolhardy to treat all families in any given society as homogeneous. Indeed, most sociologists would agree that gender relations must be examined within the wider context of stratification, since they may interact with other forms of domination and oppression, such as class, age and race (Bradley, 1996; Segal, 1983; Hartmann, 1981). This consideration is taken up in the analysis of the findings of the thesis, and the discussion that is provided in Chapter Nine.

It is also worth mentioning here that recent studies of family life have declined to talk of 'the family', recognising instead the plurality of family forms in a society characterised by increased cohabitation, divorce, reconstituted families relating to remarriage, same-sex and single parent families (Gittins, 1985; Jones et al, 1995). Whilst earlier studies referred to 'the family' as a

particular unit of social production, recent contributions to knowledge have discussed 'families', and their relationship to society (see Gittins, 1985). Indeed, one aim of this thesis is to discover whether naval families embody unique experiences.

From the preceding discussion, it is evident that the family is an institution that has provoked a substantial level of discussion in academia and politics. Whilst the traditional family is often represented as providing the 'moral backbone' of society in political rhetoric[35], changes in family types and structures, particularly during the process of industrialisation, have been subject to scrutiny. Present debates highlight many people's fears about the nature of contemporary families. Often involving comparison with the idealised families of a bygone age, changes in families have often been viewed in a largely negative light, particularly in the questioning of traditional family models and 'naturalised' family roles.

However, as previously mentioned, socio-historical studies have identified flaws in the idealised images of family life. The assumption that multi-generation extended families dominated pre-industrial England has long been challenged (Laslett, 1965). Equally, it has been argued that those changes that have taken place in families have not been for the worse. Indeed Richards (1982: 121), argues that:

> ...the family is adapting to changing circumstances and is at no risk of disappearing...
> ...important changes are taking place [but] these are more complex, and in certain respects contradictory than is generally believed.

The changes to which Richards refers are familial structures, and particularly those of gendered family roles, developments which he suggests:

> ...will not necessarily appeal to the more conservative members of our society.

It is worth considering why this should be the case. What are these structures that are so preciously defended? Why should they be so defended, and what implications may this have for an enquiry into the family lives and formations of service personnel?

Family Formations

Broderick (1993) draws on Weberian theory in his study of power relationships in family units, where he asserts that stratification is a main feature of family life. Families, Broderick claims,

relate firstly to stratification where different members, at different times, are accorded more influence and more access to family resources; and secondly in their relation to the external, strata of wider society.

It has already been noted that society is stratified and characterised by differentiation of its members (Bradley, 1996; Bocock and Thompson, 1992; Hall, Held and McGrew, 1992). This extends to the private sphere of contemporary families. Allan and Crow (1989:7) argue:

> There exists a tension between the conception of the home as a place for relaxation and freedom from rules and regulations, and the need for some element of regularity and predictability in domestic arrangements and routines, if the familiarity and order upon which feelings of being in control depend are to be achieved.

Importantly then, families are subject to specific organisation through stratification, reflecting the organisational nature of contemporary society. Whilst the enactment of family responsibilities may be viewed as a series of 'negotiated commitments' from individuals in different structural positions that are subject to individual variation, they are nonetheless developed within specific normative guidelines (Finch, 1989; Elliot, 1986; Hatner, 1993). These 'normative' guidelines are based on assumptions about men and women's 'natural' biological and psychological propensity to fulfil different roles, and are perpetuated throughout society.

Notions of 'natural' gender roles then, have implications for expectations placed on men and women, within the context of family life (Young and Wilmott, 1973). Women become identified with housework and childcare, men with the public world of work (Fox, 1993; Rapaport, 1982; Becker, 1981).

Reiss, (1981) refers to the allocation of quite specific family roles based on 'naturalised' assumptions. The distinction here is made between 'task leaders', responsible for setting family and work goals and mobilising themselves and other members to that end, and the 'expressive leader', whose central role in life is maintaining group morale and appropriate interpersonal relations.

In the Parsonian sense[36], the task leader would be the father, with the mother taking the expressive leader role. The female's 'natural' propensity for care and support and the male's dynamic, rational assertiveness makes this a suitable model for a functional family. The functionalist model of the

nuclear family, with its 'appropriate' breadwinner/housewife roles, is based on these assumptions about the inherent nature of men and women (Elliot, 1986; Bocock and Thompson, 1992).

Such roles have consequences in terms of the attitudes they evoke in others, and therefore the various identities that are consistently reinforced by this role association. Reiss describes how different roles are accorded differential levels and types of prestige, the task leader being viewed with respect and the expressive leader with affection. Inevitably such explanations have been challenged by feminists for their glib gender role stereotyping, and their basis in patriarchal notions of differentiation.

In accordance with this 'natural' role allocation, early sociological studies of the family naturalised the position of women in the private sphere. [37] In opposition to functionalist perspectives on family structures and the division of labour, however, feminists have claimed that the social separation of public and private spheres is:

> ...a gendered structure in which women and men come to be identified with different social places, different values, and different activities and characteristics. (Crowley, 1992: 72).

Gittins (1985) argues that contemporary society remains characterised by patriarchal relations between men and women that are embedded in the very fabric of society, pervading every sphere. In modern society the hegemony of patriarchs is still achieved through the complex interaction of social institutions, including the family, all of which are bound up in patriarchal structures.

Whilst the term patriarchy has largely been discussed with reference to domestic situations and gendered power bases, sociological contribution to the debate has emphasised the role of patriarchs, where men actively perpetuate patriarchal power relations within the family sphere (Hall, Held and McGrew, 1992; Oakley, 1974). This is characterised by men's lack of involvement in the private sphere and the binding of women to housework and childcare. Gittins (1985:131) points out that:

> ...for a very long time the idea of womanhood – and increasingly wifehood – has been synonymous with a woman's "natural" responsibility for childcare and domestic work. However a society or household is organised, there has always been the assumption that a certain core of domestic work is by definition women's work. This regardless of whether she engages in paid work, whether she is totally or partly dependent on a

husband or father, regardless of whether she is single, marries, widowed or divorced, young or old...[a man's] domestic participation is totally and always voluntary.

Housework is thus viewed as the primary 'domain' of women. But how are 'traditional' family values perpetuated, despite changes to traditional family structures? Clarke (1982) suggests that the cultural institutionalisation of marriage aids the maintenance of a patriarchal social system. The implications of the privatisation of marriage, bound up in notions of the domestic mode of production, are different for men and women, generally resulting in the economic dependence of wives on husbands where, for women, marriage becomes synonymous with housework and care. Brubaker (1993:99), argues:

> *...women are generally expected to be the "emotional glue" of a marriage and family. They are responsible for maintaining ties with extended kin and serve as the major family representative in the local community. They are the major caretakers of young children and other family members needing care, such as elderly parents and the ill and disabled.*

Gender roles, then, play out on a societal level, bolstered by notions of marriage and family life. Government rhetoric over recent years may be an obvious example of the normative statements that pervade our lives, but more subtle messages are also continually presenting us with images of 'perfect' family life (Clarke, 1982).

Mass communications, media and advertising present us with models of idealised family life. Marriage and family life have also been viewed as providing security in terms of accommodation, income and standard of living. An age-old legacy, this view has of course been challenged by feminists who argue that all these advantages pertain to men, and moreover, only to men (Goldthorpe, 1987; Morgan, 1996; Fox, 1993). However, despite the association of the institution of marriage and family with masculine benefit, and ultimately patriarchal perpetuation, marriage and traditional family formations persist.

One major influence on changes in family lives is paid employment. The family represents a central social institution, and changes in family formation do not exist in a vacuum. Rather they are influenced by changes in other spheres of social life. Contrary to the political rhetoric regarding the crumbling moral backbone of society, resulting in the breakdown of the traditional family, academics have suggested that the evolution of new patterns of family life are actually more likely

to be related to changes in the nature of work and employment, as well as more general societal awareness of gender stereotyping. (Morgan, 1996; Segal, 1983; Allan, 1985).

Housework and Paid Employment

Interfaces between work and families have increasingly become an area for academic scrutiny, with a growing interest being taken in the nature of the interdependence between work and family roles. It is important here to consider how such relationships may both mediate and affect, as well as be affected by, the division of labour and power relationships in the wider society. Such conceptualisation is necessary for informing the element of this thesis that is based on household formations of service personnel and their families.

The previous section pointed out the traditional divisions between men and women in 'public' and 'private' spheres. Recent attention has been focused on the onerous nature of the 'housewife' role. The housewife may develop a territorial view of the domestic sphere, and may even fiercely defend her domestic role. However, housework has been largely undervalued, as in contemporary society work is seen to comprise paid employment, and this leaves housework in a marginal position.

Over recent years such views have been challenged and notions of housework have been brought to the fore of sociological debate. In particular, reference has been made to the symbolic importance of household management as an area in which women do manage to sustain an element of control (Chandler, 1987 and 1991; Oakley, 1974). It is now widely accepted that childcare, cleaning, cooking, ironing, shopping etc, are tasks which require effort, time and energy and, as such, they constitute work (Barrett and McIntosh, 1982; Murgatroyd, 1985; Elliot, 1996). However, the increasing number of women in paid employment has meant women's labour crosses public and private domains, an asymmetrical division that increasingly characterises women's lives.

Academics explain that this trend has developed as an economic response to a growing mass-consumer society, where women's participation in paid employment can enhance family lifestyle in terms of home-ownership and material possessions[38] (Voydanoff, 1993). These developments have significant implications for the nature of what is regarded as 'women's work'. The 'feminisation' of the work force had been limited to increasing levels of part-time, 'light industrial' and service occupations, as well as to the increasing casualisation of the work force[39] (Hall and Gieben, 1992; Hall, Held and McGrew, 1992).

In addition, the trend toward increasing female employment has resulted in a major challenge to male and female work and family roles. Men are no longer the breadwinners in every case and women's time in the home caring for families has been compromised (Scanzoni, 1995; Goldthorpe, 1987; Fox, 1993). Such changes clearly affect both men and women, and this thesis directs its analysis accordingly.

It is important to see that these changes are not necessarily egalitarian in every sense. Dual-career families tend to have 'leader' and 'follower' careers, where one takes precedence over the other (Rapaport and Rapaport, 1982). This might, at least on a superficial level, appear to be practical and inevitable, due to different interdependent work/family responsibilities. However, there appears to be a persistence of attitudes, within and between families, where women's employment is constrained by their naturalised domestic responsibilities (Scanzoni, 1995).

Traditional family roles serve to sustain gender roles where women are given a supporting role, sacrificing their own career aspirations for spending some, if not all, of their time in the home as unpaid workers. And in any case, increasing participation of women in the labour market is not necessarily accompanied by increasing participation of men in the private sphere (Goodwin, 1996; Pahl *et al*, 1984; Ross, 1987; Seymour, 1992).

Career Interplay in Families

Poole (1983) argues that the career expectations and aspirations of young women differ from those of young men, in that they generally expect to leave paid employment at some point to make time for child-rearing. Bunyard (1995), describes how domestic responsibility increases men's commitment to employers, whilst it appears to lower women's expectations. As more women become involved in labour markets, the traditional division of labour in the household remains dominant, even where women work full-time.

All of this leads to a further point. Women's career cycles are vastly different from those of men. Women may cease working in paid employment in various different stages of their life course. In some cases this may be when they marry or bear children, with no return to work. Work may also be interrupted by childbearing in the early stages of a career, but the woman returns subsequently to work. Alternatively, some women's careers may be subject to late interruption, where women

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establish careers before having children, with a period off work, and then return. Some women's employment may be characterised as 'unstable', where full-time home-making and paid employment is alternated. In addition, some women pursue work and family activities through career stages with little or no interruption for childbearing.

Different occupational career patterns for women, then, are dependent upon a number of factors, including age at childbearing, age of children on return to work, and the size and timing of family changes. This stands in contrast with men, whose working lives are far more consistent, while women negotiate work and family role staging. So whilst women's involvement in labour markets differs from that of men, they cannot be regarded as homogeneous groups, as there are also differences between women's experiences (Hartmann, 1981). It is important to bear this in mind when considering social differences between individuals in organisations. It is of specific significance to this thesis in terms of the hierarchical organisation of naval personnel.

This is not the end of the matter. Much research has focused on the downward occupational mobility suffered by women following withdrawal form full-time employment in mid career for domestic and childcare duties (Crompton & Sanderson, 1986; Dex, 1988; Hakim, 1979). The domestic sphere of women's lives typically has negative implications for women's work histories in a way that is wholly uncommon for men. This said, there would appear to be contradictions between male and female attitudes toward equality in employment opportunities, where men are less likely to recognise inequality: assuming either that women are able to effectively combine work and domestic roles, or that they do not expect or desire to follow progressive careers (Kelly, 1991).

Kelly refers to the way in which women's participation in labour markets is often viewed as a choice, and as such, women are blamed for any difficulties they may experience in combining work and family labour efficiently. This serves to reproduce traditional gender ideology. Carling (1992:121), asserts that female gender ideology:

> '...tends to prevent women from taking full economic advantage of men, where women are in an economic position to do so. Quite often, it seems to result in the self-sacrificial (or is it self-preservative?), attempt to combine the role of career woman with the role of faultless wife and mother.'

Many women, then, find themselves in a dual role in terms of working, and this is increasingly becoming the norm. Women are forming a larger and larger proportion of the paid workforce, but

at the same time it is still women who perform the majority of household tasks (Allan, 1985; Voydanoff, 1993).

Career Interplay and Household Divisions of Labour

The combination of work and family responsibilities for women has led to several developments. Newell (1993) refers to a shift toward a 'superwoman syndrome' where women, drawing on gender role ideologies, attempt to excel at both work and family roles. Allen & Crow (1989:8), take the motive for the continuation of the division of domestic labour one step further, with the example of wives...

...resisting their husbands' intrusion into what they perceive to be their sphere.

Calls for changes in the structure of work have begun to be heard, particularly in the light of rising awareness of the plight of single mothers [40]. Structures that make for role conflict have been identified in several elements of traditional work, including; compulsory non-flexible working hours, non-discretionary over-time and penalties, in terms of career development, for involvement in part-time work. Such policies are largely directed at supporting the traditional division of labour

Different levels of involvement in employment have different implications for family histories. Rueschemeyer in Reiss (1981) distinguishes between the experiences of single career and dual career families. In single career families, wives may share ambitions for their husband's career development, whilst at the same time resenting the career that may inhibit his involvement in family matters. Wives in single career households generally accept the main responsibility for household management, to the extent that participation outside of the domestic sphere might not be viable. Conversely, husbands tend to take for granted their wives' household management, and women in single-earner households often report feelings of isolation and loneliness, despite their efforts in the home.

Rueschemeyer argues that both wives and husbands in dual career families have a relatively higher awareness of work and the negotiation of work and household roles. This is stronger where partners have decided on dual careers from an early stage, and especially where they both engage in professional training simultaneously or met as professionals. Rueschemeyer (1981:172) asserts that wives in these families are:

...less overwhelmed by their husbands' successes and failures and have less a feeling of being controlled by forces they can neither fully understand nor affect.

However, whilst dual career relationships may be based on more equality and accommodation, husbands and wives often lead more independent lives, to the detriment of shared family experience. Both adults working outside the home leaves less time for involvement in household management and parenting, and this often leads to conflict between the various roles in which both men and women engage.

The Negotiation of Work and Family Roles in Dual Career Families

Individuals, at some point in their lives, are involved in a number of different roles, including worker, parent, partner or spouse. Any role will consist of activities, identities, obligations and relationships with others. Several roles may be performed simultaneously, and these are interdependent in terms of the time, energy and commitment expended on them. Such interdependence can result in role conflict in situations where participation in a role is made difficult by participation in another.

Voydanoff (1993:100) refers to two types of work/family role conflict, whereby the different spheres may place constraints over one another. Here she makes the distinction between overload and interference.

> *Overload exists when demands on time and energy are too great to be met adequately or comfortably. Interference occurs when conflicting demands make it difficult to fulfil the requirements associated with both work and family roles.*

It is worth considering these role conflicts, because families are forced to respond in some way, and the nature of their response has strong implications for family and household formation, as well as the well-being of family members.

A high intensity of time and energy required for work and family roles at various stages is often likely to converge. For example, where early involvement in an occupational career may demand high levels of participation, there may also be significant demands from young children in terms of time and energy, leading to interference. In contrast, in later career stages work may be less demanding, and children may well have left home. For those families where both spouses pursue both work and family careers, the incidence of overload and interference may be increased.

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Sequential role staging and symmetrical role allocations have been identified as two main techniques that families utilise to offset problems.

Sequential role staging, on the one hand, refers to the way in which work and family responsibilities of men and women are alternated through the life course. Symmetrical role allocation on the other, is used in attempts to reduce overload and interference by shifting work and family roles between both partners during different stages of the life course.

Increases in female employment have led to sequential staging and symmetrical role allocation (Voydanoff, 1993). This is also dependent upon the nature of women's employment patterns. As discussed, whilst men tend to work full-time throughout the occupational career, excepting instances of forced unemployment through illness, redundancy and so on, women's career cycles are wholly different, and employment is often more sporadic. The main difference here is conditioned by the legacy of the traditional gender roles discussed earlier. Therefore, whilst men may use sequencing in order to accommodate family responsibilities around their occupational career, the opposite is true of women. Here sequencing is more often orientated toward the accommodation of the work role to responsibilities relating to family career stages.

Role staging is used to co-ordinate work and family roles through adjustment of working, time, marriage and childbearing, in order to reduce overload and interference and balance the constraints of traditional role allocation. Calls have therefore been made to develop a more symmetrical work/family role allocation, where men are required to perform more family work, and women to engage in more work related roles. [41]

Young & Wilmott (1973) note how symmetrical role allocation implies more balance in the commitment of both partners to both work and family careers. However, recent studies have demonstrated that this balance has been more associated with women's decreasing family work than with men's participation in the family (Voydanoff, 1993). In any case, Voydanoff suggests that work/family role staging is more common an occurrence than symmetrical role allocation. Men and women now both work in paid employment, but still in a relatively traditional division of labour.

Women, then, fulfil the largest part of housework and caring regardless of occupational status. It is also important to note that where there is increasing male participation in the home, particular

household and parenting tasks are in themselves gendered. Statistics from work of Goodwin (1982) demonstrated that men tend to involve themselves in the tasks they find most pleasurable.

Sullivan (1996) highlights different tasks that provide the most pleasure, (or the least displeasure), such as childcare tasks, playing and cooking. Tasks least enjoyed are documented by Sullivan to be cleaning and clothes-care. Again these are the tasks performed exclusively by women, and which men often deem to be 'women's' jobs.

This thesis acknowledges that the relationship of men and women to household work is clearly gendered and exploitative. However, Goodwin (1996), among others, criticises enquiry that treats men as one homogenous group. Goodwin argues that men's participation has for too long been investigated in terms of the impact of men's lack of involvement on women. He points out the merits of exploring the participation of different groups of men, in order to shed light on the potential conflicts they experience between home and work. It has been suggested that men may experience this conflict in different ways.

While Goodwin's analysis largely supports established views about equality in the household, it suggests that levels of participation vary between different groups of men. He draws three main conclusions. Firstly, the more resources that a man has over a woman (for example career, earnings and status), the less domestic labour he participates in. Secondly, the more traditional his sex-role attitudes are, the less domestic work he is prepared to do. Finally, the less available time he has outside work, the less time is given to domestic chores. It is perhaps useful here to re-iterate Broderick's (1993:180) assertion that:

> ...an adequate model [of the family] ought to recognise both multiple hierarchies and also that families and individual family members may be ranked meaningfully in more than one such hierarchy because of the multiplicity of the roles that each member assumes.

It is therefore important to consider the impact of parenting on the work and family lives of men and women. It could be argued that domestic divisions of labour are commonly subject to change following the arrival of children, whereby men become involved in the childcare sphere, leaving women free to complete the tasks required of the domestic, housekeeping sphere. Often this means that men will spend more time in the home. Whatever the case, attitudes toward fatherhood

have been subject to change over recent years, and since the attitudes of servicemen to their parenting roles are explored within this thesis, some conceptual consideration is beneficial here.

Families and Parenting Roles

It is widely believed that the contemporary British father has more participation in family life, and particularly the lives of his children, than has been the case in the past[42]. One significant change that has been noted is the increasing awareness of the importance of the father role. Changing trends have been worthy of study in their own right, and a substantial number of books about fatherhood have become widely available (McKee and O'Brien, 1982; Richards, 1982). Even so, the participation of fathers remains a complex matter, and measurement of participation problematic. In many cases it is left to female research subjects to define the male's involvement levels, levels which are in any case subjective.

However, despite these shortcomings, studies of participation (Sullivan, 1996; Goodwin, 1996), have highlighted time and again that whilst men's levels of participation are increasing, they remain relatively low compared to those of their partners, in terms of both parenting and household tasks. Women's expectations of men sharing parental responsibility are also relatively low, and even minimal levels of involvement are praised. Rather than being the norm, husbands who share the responsibility are often viewed as being 'special', 'one in a million' or 'a new man'. (Richards, 1982).

Reasons for these low rates of involvement are most often linked to gender stereotypes and the 'natural' propensity of women to rear children, which has already been outlined in relation to housework. As already discussed, many authors also document a high level of conflict between work and home life. (Beaul & McGuire, 1982; McKee & O'Brien, 1982; Voydanoff, 1993).

Attitude studies highlight the ways in which men are likely to view women as being more suited to childcare due to her 'maternal instincts', (Newell; 1993). The division of labour between couples, in terms of childcare, reflects the gendered domestic division of labour and is based on the same principles as have already been outlined. La Rossa & La Rossa in Reiss, (1981), refer to the distinction between primary and secondary activities, the former comprising those tasks that

require considerable time and effort to the exclusion of other activities, and the latter representing tasks that occupy less time and can be fulfilled around other responsibilities.

La Rossa and La Rossa suggest that men tend to involve themselves in more secondary activities, leaving women to perform the primary ones. Further, they agree that men actively select particular activities relating to childcare which can be easily accommodated around other prioritised, often work, activities. As White *et al* (1982:128) explain:

> *Fathers may choose play because play "eats" less into their own free- time. So rigorous play, a favoured activity of fathers, can be fitted around watching television, resting, reading etc, it can be terminated easily by fathers saying "Daddy is tired, give him a rest", it does not take much out of fathers and they can do it anywhere, in or out of the house.*

This contrasts with other less-favoured tasks that, by necessity, must take place at a particular time in a particular location, requiring full attention and being non-negotiable, such as night-time tasks, feeding and nappy changing.

If the image of the modern father is embued with higher levels of involvement with children, this includes emotional closeness. Younger people tend to view the responsibilities of fatherhood as those associated with the modern symmetrical family (McKee & O'Brien, 1982). Men are expected to be physically and emotionally involved with their children, and research has demonstrated that men often find involvement in the birth process a positive and enlightening experience that may further reinforce their relationships with their children (Beaul & McGuire, 1982). However, it would appear from this research as well as others, that normative expectations are not often paralleled by reality.

In terms of being confidante to his children, the father appears to have some way to go in levelling the gender differences between himself and the mother (Brannen *et al*, 1994). Mothers remain central in everyday family life, fathers are less likely to be approached as confidantes and have less involvement, often less than children, in domestic routines.

Again, it is suggested that boys and girls feel differently about father involvement. Girls may be less satisfied than boys with the attention given to them by fathers and are more likely to report misunderstandings within the relationship. However, boys appear to prefer a 'benevolent' and

even more remote father (Chandler, 1987). Common responses in research studies show that many children who feel dissatisfied tend to associate low levels of involvement with paid employment. Increasing female employment has been associated with the increased dissatisfaction of children with their mother's involvement in family life.

There is also some evidence of gendered differences between children (Beaul and McGuire, 1982). It is suggested that boys are more likely to first approach fathers, while girls turn to mum. This is also reflected in joint child/parent activities, where leisure is the most popular activity to be shared with parents. There appears to be a special father/son dimension founded on leisure.

It would appear important to husbands that they should enjoy 'quality' time in which to relax with their wives, as well as their children (Edgell, 1980; Regan *et al*, 1995). The home is normatively portrayed as a communal place where members share in joint activities, co-ordinating their interests, and where personal space and solitary activities are lower priorities (Hunt, 1992). However, as Devine (1992: 100), asserts:

> ...men and women perceive and use the home differently, and this reflects their
> different family and work roles. The dynamic nature of people's home lives should not
> be underplayed.

Research has shown that where men do have time to spend outside work, they continue to participate in individual leisure pursuits. Conversely, women continue to perform domestic-related work or facilitate children's activity (Voydanoff, 1993). Thus, whilst the arrival of children may involve subtle shifts in men's participation in the home, it does not necessarily mean that men are confined to the home as often as is the case for women.

Gendered Space: Work and leisure

Men spend more time outside the home, whilst women's lives are largely played out within the domestic sphere. Devine (1992) suggests that one aspect of this arrangement for men is that they meet more and different groups of people with whom they may form strong attachments. This, she argues, leads to a further loss of time spent in the home as they enjoy the companionship of these attachments in their leisure time.

This is not to say that women have no contact outside the home. Rather women's attachments are both quantitatively and qualitatively distinct. As Young & Wilmott (1962) pointed out, women often find consolation in the company of other women in circumstances similar to their own. Women may also find themselves involved in friendship and community networks that are defined by, and accessed through their partners. As Edgell (1980: 86) found in his study of middle-class couples:

> *The husband was the major source of friends although most of the friends were subsequently regarded as "joint" by the couples.*

In addition, free time may be less tangible for women, which further constrains the ability for women to socialise. One response to this isolation can be seen in the move toward shorter maternity leave for working mothers (Dex, 1988). However, return to work requires the assistance and support of family and friends if the father is unavailable due to the requirements of his own work. The implications for women without such help are clear. Part-time, flexible work is often the only answer, but this is frequently detrimental to any sense of career progression. On the other hand, for women who do return to full-time employment, there is less freedom to structure personal time according to preference. Women are bound to completing their domestic chores before they can relax, whether inside the home or otherwise.

Leisure time for women is often filled with domestic activities such as playing with children (Devine, 1992). Few women with young children are able to undertake leisure activities outside the home, not only because social or leisure activities open to them are limited. The fact that many other women, with whom mothers often socialise, are in paid employment during daytime hours and therefore unavailable for companionship often compounds the isolation. This of course contrasts with the rosy image of the family with which we are bombarded by government and media alike.

Idealised notions of family life may not be paralleled in reality. Isolation may make family life far less comfortable. Indeed, there are many different families that suffer from isolation for another reason, which is related to work and occupations, and in itself forms an important focus of this thesis. Intermittent absence of naval personnel from their families, is an aspect of service life that characterises work/family interfaces in a highly visible, and often negatively experienced, way.

Families and Intermittent Absence

We have seen so far, how normative statements about the family are based around notions of normative family roles, and the requirement of high levels of involvement in the family sphere. Swerdlow et al (1981) uggest:

> Family is where people get their start in life, where they retreat from the pressures of work and school, where they fall back in deepest need, and where they experience the most sharing, usually as a matter of course. Family is a group that eats together, sleeps together, plays together and combines forces to survive together.

However, there are a growing number of individuals who live, on a long-term basis, in locations and situations that differ in varying ways from the traditional conception of a 'home'. Higgins refers, as an example, to institutions such as hostels, boarding houses, hotels, boarding schools, hospitals, prisons and so on. More specifically, intermittent husband absence is associated with a significant number of different occupations; offshore oil workers, fishermen, long-distance lorry drivers, military personnel (see Chandler, 1987 and 1991; and Jolly, 1989).

Research has demonstrated how families that are intermittently separated must adapt or learn coping strategies in order to deal with their unique situation (Chandler, 1987; Jolly, 1984). Studies of husband absence have centrally addressed issues of stress and coping during periods of husband absence, and described them through the emotional relationship, often in almost pathological terms (Isay, 1968; Bey & Lange, 1974). Recent sociologists have recognised the importance of exploring wives' experiences in terms of what they do, that is, the processes involved in everyday domestic life, and the way they are transformed. Chandler (1987: 46), points out:

> ...although a husband may be physically absent, he may still be psychologically present; wives may symbolically maintain a husband's presence in the home by not assuming total management, by not "closing out the husband/father" position from the family circle.

It is important to consider issues of patriarchy even when the 'patriarch' may by intermittently or wholly absent. Analysis may highlight the ways in which patriarchal influence is effected and sustained across geographical and cultural space. Research into women who experience husband absence is important, since it could be argued that this would allow greater female control (Finch, 1983), particularly where female networks were present.

Research into intermittent husband absence has therefore generally focused on the problems it has generated for wives, whilst its effect on men is not seen as being necessarily negative. As a result, it has been largely ignored. It has been argued that his independence, and her dependence, characterises an unequal relationship while men are absent from their wives (Chandler, 1987). Investigation into male experiences however, is lacking. We have already discussed the complex, dynamic nature of familial roles and relationships. Husband absence must surely affect both husband and wife, as well as children and kinship/friendship networks (Regan, 1996) and I would argue that it seems insufficient and superficial to examine the phenomenon wholly within the context of waiting wives.

Hill (1949), in his study of returning veterans of WWII, distinguished between what he terms 'closed ranks' and 'open ranks' reactions of family members, the latter allowing men to fit easily into family decision-making processes whilst the former represents mother and child closing the husband/father role in his absence. Of course, this carries social elements above and beyond physical factors, and differs between families of different socio-economic backgrounds, (Boss, 1979). What is significant here is the possible exclusion of men from family life, due to the occupation that took them from their homes in the first place.

Husband absence has also been considered in terms of parenting and child reactions, with particular reference to the military (Jolly, 1989; Chandler, 1987). Some conclude that children from military families demonstrate over-dependence on mothers and Chandler, (1987: 49) suggests also the:

'...pseudo-maturity and idealisation of absent fathers.'

It is important to note, again, that there is considerable diversity within families with absent husbands/fathers. Firstly different occupations involve different types of absence, making comparative study problematic. Secondly, men may or may not be unhappy with absence. Thirdly, wives' employment has implications for potential problems in periods of husband presence where men are less satisfied with family life when women are drawn outside of the private sphere by paid work. [43]

Such discussion is important to this thesis. Intermittent husband absence is a defining feature of military service in the Royal Navy. Army families tend more toward mobile communities, where families follow servicemen, and live in groups in service barracks. Naval servicemen, on the other hand, are more likely to be owner-occupiers living in civilian areas, where families can be left during periods away at sea (Jolly, 1989). Consequently, naval wives can expect to spend their lives intermittently separated from their husbands. Studies have explored the emotional and practical responses of women to service life and husband absence. As Jolly (1989: 133) argues:

> *One way or another, wives find ways of restructuring their lives during their husband's absences – only to find that when their husbands return, they are the ones who must change again.*

Again, the experiences of servicemen have been less well documented. Furthermore, longitudinal research that documents the experiences of military families over time has not been forthcoming. Current debate may benefit from analysis that explores absence and change as process and there may well be an advantage in studying this process in terms of its effect on the identities of various family members. Such conceptualisation is crucial, in any case, as identity is a central concern of this thesis. Since discourses, from which identities are drawn, are open to the influences of other discourses, it is important to consider the interplay of family, work and other discourses, as well as the identities of other family members.

Work, Families and Identity

Studies of stratification have outlined the ways in which families deal with their own relationship to wider society. Family members identify with particular reference groups in the same way that has been discussed with reference to occupation. In some cases occupational members provide this reference group. Families may then identify their own placement within the groups (Devine, 1992; Reiss, 1981). More research is required to investigate the influence of auxiliary sources of personal status on family members and their dynamics within the home.

Investigations into the semantic elements of communication between family members, both immediate and extended, have been most concerned with concepts such as beliefs, values and common understanding (Reiss, 1981). It has been suggested that cohesiveness and adaptability may be enhanced by a number of mechanisms including clear communication channels, joint activities, family rituals and folklore (Broderick, 1993). It is clear that in a world of diverse family

structures such mechanisms may serve to generate various forms of family identity, and this may also differ between families, as well as from member to member. More research into this area is needed in order to explore the complexities of the extension of occupational socialisation to family members and familial identities. This is one important aspect of the contribution made by this thesis[44].

As highlighted in Chapter Two, the military is an example of a pervasive socialising occupation, which may affect other family members and the relationships between them. Though other occupations may parallel the tasks and skills requirements of military careers, the Armed Forces are unique in their conditions of service, and this has implications for personal, as well as working, lives.

Chapter Two also highlighted the Armed Forces as socially marginal groups, set apart from the civilian community (Janowitz, 1960; Jolly, 1989; Edmonds, 1988). This would perhaps have further implications for military family identities. Consideration of the various multiple roles of family members, both work and non-work, helps to shed light on the processes which allow for the formation, maintenance or transformation of family identities[45]. The possibility of family members developing naval identities of their own through the serviceman's career is one that this thesis sets out to explore.

Military Families and the Naval Career

The Strategic Defence Review of 1998, and several writings by observers of the military, have highlighted the impact of service life on the families of personnel, and the divided loyalties that service personnel have to their career and their kin. Most notable have been the contributions made by Jolly (1989, 1996) and Jessup (1996). Both writers argue that the naval career has significant implications for families, not just in terms of intermittent absence, but also for personal and domestic relationships.

Firstly, service spouses have long been expected to perform the dutiful wife role, including competent management of domestic affairs and appropriate self-presentation at social events, as well as acceptance and, at the extreme, espousal, of military values. The contribution of the service

wife is one that has been viewed as important in the efficient running of service life, as well as one that serves to protect the control of the service over its members. As Jessup (1996) states:

> *Attendance of wives, and where appropriate of children too, whilst it could not be ordered, was nevertheless expected by the chain of command. Non-appearance would require convincing explanations, since compulsory socialising on certain occasions was perceived as a way of fostering a sense of group identity and belonging*

This is an important point, but levels of belonging, however they are fostered, will differ. It is not just a case of those who accept and those who do not, rather it is a complex of different issues. Jolly (1989) argues that many wives do not wholly embrace the traditional image of the archetypal service wife and family. Jessup (1996:115) explains:

> *It would be wrong to say that this pattern of social assistance was entirely voluntary. Beneath the spirit of altruism and the undeniable mutual benefits[46] lurked also the anxiety that failure to participate would damage the careers of service husbands.*

Military organisations are able to exercise an element of control through discourses about military families. Military life is one that has been viewed as traditional, conservative and patriarchal, where wives are expected to derive pride and fulfilment from their own involvement in service life. However, developments towards greater social equality and dual-career households in civilian society have had some impact on the attitudes of service wives toward their own naval role. Whilst there may be practical benefits in the service lifestyle, women have begun to challenge traditional family roles, and conflict between the naval career and the family is often the result.

The problem here is that Armed Forces personnel must, at all times, be readily available to their employer. This requirement for centrality in servicemen's lives has far-reaching implication for their families. Mady Segal (1986) refers to the military as 'greedy institutions', where military organisations are able to impose high level demands on their staff, requiring total commitment to the military occupational role. Segal extends this definition to the family, particularly where military families are making more demands for support in dual career households, and parenting issues are highlighted in line with attitudinal changes in civilian society. This play off between two greedy institutions has important implications for disharmony in the working and family lives of service personnel, and it is partly this interface with which the thesis is concerned.

It is important here to acknowledge that the military does offer some recognition of the potential for problems in the family lives of its members. Jessup (1996:12) states:

> *Crucially, employee welfare agencies legitimise the disclosure by individuals of marital and domestic problems to a confidential service which overtly acknowledges the interaction between the personal and professional life of employees and responds with a range of helping strategies, a process operating in the interests both of employer and staff.*

This may well be the case, but it is important not just to know what services are offered, rather how these services are viewed and used by service families. What is crucial here is an understanding of the complex processes informing service personnel's reliance (or otherwise) on such services. Whatever the case, research into the impact of military careers on families will be enhanced by taking a discourse approach to analysis, allowing for an in-depth examination of these multi-level issues.

It is also important here to note that most of the available literature about military families is based on examinations of specifically army life. Since the patterns reported by Jolly and Jessup are derived from army studies, it should be remembered that variations may occur, due to the elements of military life that differ, between the Army, the Navy and the RAF. The thesis takes these issues into consideration in its study of the naval career and naval families.

Conclusion

Having considered the impact of work and employment on individuals in Chapters Two and Three, we have now seen how their influence spreads to the family lives of workers. Work/family interfaces are characterised, not only by personal relationships, but also by processes of household formation and parenting. The domestic division of labour, in terms of both household work and parenting, reflects the gendered nature of paid employment. Furthermore, the experience of women in the home has far reaching effects, and impacts on other spheres of their lives, as well as those of men. It is important to recognise the different and complex interactions between men and women, family roles and household/work interfaces.

Work and employment, then, have implications for families, in terms of gendered divisions of labour, in both public and private spheres. Their influence, however, may go beyond this, particularly where individuals are engaged in socialising institutions that pervade their personal

lives. The effects of organisational discourses and socialisation on workers (and, in particular, military personnel) has already been discussed in Chapter Two, but it would seem that the salience for other family members, in terms of family identity, is an area which has been largely under-researched. This research addresses such issues, as well as others outlined in the preceding chapters.

The concepts detailed in this chapter are employed later in illustrating the experiences of the naval families involved in this research. Consideration of the conceptual and theoretical framework outlined in these last three chapters raises implications for research design. This is discussed in the next chapter.

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[33] See Laslett, P (1965) The World We Have Lost.

[34] Although the separation of work and home tended to follow this particular pattern after industrialisation, there were exceptions. For example, in the cotton industry, the workforce remained predominantly female. See Rule, 1986 'The Labouring Classes in Early Industrial England 1750 – 1850', for detailed analysis.

[35] This statement refers to the pre-occupation in popular politics with the drive for a 'shift back to family values.'

[36] Talcott Parsons' functional analysis of family life featured normative 'roles' that are essential to an academic functioning of family units in society. See Parsons (1951) 'The Social System'.

[37] For critique see Goldthorpe, 1987.

[38] This is important to the thesis in terms of its focus on occupational change and, more specifically, redundancy.

[39] This has implications for the re-entry of service wives into labour (see Chapters Eight and Nine).

[40] See Voydanoff, 1985 for a more detailed discussion of these issues.

[41] See Voydanoff, 1993 for a more full discussion of these issues.

[42] Again it is important to remember that stereotypical images of fathers in the past are to be questioned.

[43] The implication here is that the naturalised assumption that a woman's place is in the home is compounded where men are also located in the home for any period of time.

[44] See Chapters Six and Nine.

[45] These issues are discussed, with reference to the findings of the research, in Chapter Nine.

[46] For example; informal assistance from others in the military community at times of crisis, shared lifestyles and the support of other wives during periods of husband absence.

Chapter Five - Research Design

Introduction

The previous three chapters demonstrated that the analysis of military occupational socialisation and its effect on military families and resettlement is concerned primarily with meanings, and therefore involves an element of subjectivity. This raises questions about the nature of the research methodologies that are employed to derive the empirical evidence required for an improved understanding of these issues.

The attempt made by this study to observe the way in which individuals view the world around them, and act upon their perceptions, leads to debate about the very quest for knowledge, as well as the methods used to achieve it. This chapter charts the research process, locating discourse theories in the spectrum and development of research methods and describing the main issues concerning their application to this study. It also introduces some of the more fundamental theoretical and practical issues that relate to this approach.

Conceptualising Issues

Reviewing the original research questions, it became apparent that the project had two basic dimensions. Firstly it was concerned with the impact of the naval career on the naval man and his family, and all its implications. Secondly, it aimed to address the concept of resettlement - a process of transition - and its effect on those same individuals. These are not unrelated issues. As stated in Chapter One, resettlement had become a concern for the very reason that some 'institutionalised' individuals, once losing the guiding hand of the institution which first socialised them, found transition from service to civilian life an uneasy experience.

This reflection led to another question; what is it about naval service that is powerful enough to cast such a long shadow over other family members and relationships, and makes transition to civilian life so problematic? The literature surveyed highlights the way in which certain groups are extensively affected by organisational socialisation, and how families are affected by the extent to which the man's, or woman's, life is influenced by the demands and expectations of the job[47]. Naval

service exercises more control over the movements and loyalties of the individual than is usual in even the most demanding civilian occupations. The identities of service personnel are affected by deliberate socialisation into naval discourses, socialisation that is actively used by the Navy to secure control over its personnel.

Several questions thus arose: What impact does the naval role have on servicemen? How does this impact extend to the family sphere? How does the naval career affect decision-making and family formation? What is the significance of housing and locality issues, as well as friendships and community networks? In the context of recent cutbacks, how do naval families respond to occupational change? What happens when the 'us' become 'them'? Does the man's career remain a pivotal issue, and if so, what are the implications for women's lives? How do naval families become 'resettled'?

Identity, occupational/organisational socialisation and discourses have been discussed in the preceding chapters, demonstrating the various approaches of previous studies to work and lifestyle issues. The thesis employs a variation of discourse theory in its treatment of such issues, for the conceptual and analytical advantages outlined in those chapters.

As already discussed, discourse theories and analysis have in themselves been open to various interpretations, not least in terms of their application to different research problems.[48] The approach taken in this is based on the view that individuals and groups draw on different systems of meaning, in order to make sense of their lives in different contexts. As such, reference to certain systems of meaning is temporally and situationally specific. In other words, individuals draw on discourses that they find most meaningful within the context of the situations in which they find themselves. Their reliance on different discourses may therefore change over time, as well as within and between different settings.

As we can see, the discourse approach lends support to the notion that individuals in work situations may draw on particularly occupational or organisational discourses[49] in order to make sense of their working lives and roles. The thesis further posits that organisational discourses are more influential on members with a stronger working, or personal, identification with the organisation concerned.

Analysis of discourse is used here, then, in order to describe and understand the processes involved in informing and directing the working lives of servicemen, while at the same time considering the roles played by the servicemen themselves. Such analysis commences by firstly identifying the different systems of meaning that are attached to various agencies, and then uncovering significant features of those discourses[50]. Secondly, it explores the ways in which different individuals draw upon these discourses in different contexts.

In this respect, the analysis of discourses, and illustration through discourse theories have a clear advantage. Modelling organisation and behaviour has long presented a challenge for social scientists. Analysis of discourse makes possible the understanding of military identities and behaviours through attention to both structure and agency, and analysis is therefore necessarily multi-dimensional. This statement requires some elaboration.

As discussed briefly in Chapter Two, sociological enquiry has been primarily concerned with structural investigation, emphasising the role of social structures in constraining individuals to follow certain directions and behave in certain ways. Explanation is then found at the level where role affects behaviour, and the organisation, in this case the Navy, assumes primary importance in an individual's life. Of course, there are merits in this approach, not least in terms of its capacity to examine power structures and the responses of individuals and groups in certain environments.

However, in respect of this thesis, such an explanation is perhaps too uni-dimensional. I have argued in Chapter Two that individuals interact with organisational structures. To focus exclusively on naval institutions, or on servicemen themselves, is insufficient here. For the purposes of this research, the concepts of structure and agency are taken to be far from mutually exclusive. The social world is constituted by the thoughts, actions and meanings assigned by individuals, and social structures cannot be viewed as existing independently of those actions and meanings. We must acknowledge that structures are seen to produce individuals, as well as being produced by their actions.

Analysis of discourses allows for precisely the type of multi-dimensional analysis required of this specific research problem. It is particularly relevant where the interaction between different agencies (organisational, individual, familial, civilian and so on) is under scrutiny. This approach

then, reduces its analysis neither to the structural limits of realist ontology, nor to the abstractions of the human mind. Rather, both elements are inextricably entwined, and are explored accordingly.

Methodological Issues

The task of the thesis is to gain knowledge about the ways in which servicemen respond and interact with various elements of naval and non-naval life, and how they variously or similarly draw on naval and non-naval discourses. It is therefore concerned with subjective self-formulation of identity and behaviours, within both working and non-working contexts, as well as the relationship between them. The approach recognises both the structural constraints of the Navy as an institution and the interpretative capabilities of the serviceman who nevertheless experiences a sense of agency and individuality. In brief, the analytical focus of the thesis lies in the interplay of institutional (naval) practices, social (kinship and friendship) and personal (family) relationships and servicemen's individual interpretation of situations, all within the wider context of identity formation and resulting behaviours and actions.

In the light of this discussion, it becomes clear that the analysis of discourses, in contrast with more micro-focused studies of conversation and linguistics, is directed at the wider context. It is concerned with the macro-structures and systems of meaning that operate within a social situation, which in this case is service life. The distinctions between discourse theory, discourse analysis and what I have termed 'analysis of discourse' are important here, since each has a different emphasis for the same research question. As stated previously, the thesis employs notions of discourse in its conceptual and analytical framework. Analysis of naval and civilian discourses, emerging from data collected by interviews and survey, is used to reveal the complex relationships between various aspects of service life and, ultimately, their implications for the experiences of servicemen and their families during resettlement.

I have therefore deliberately referred to the analytical method used here as 'analysis of discourse', in order to achieve some sense of distinction from the better known 'discourse analysis' that is often employed in deconstructing conversations and text, in the field of ethnomethodology[51]. The distinction made here is aimed at providing for theory that examines the production of meaning amongst individuals and organisation without reducing it to purely linguistic investigation. Rather it broadens interaction to the wider context of naval and civilian discourses. This, of course, has

implications for the kind of data required, and here is an important point. What data are needed for the purposes of the research? What counts as data? What kinds of data best support the type of analysis outlined above?

I have already alluded to the type of information needed in order to conduct a thorough analysis of the experience of servicemen and their families in relation to service life, resettlement and beyond. Such enquiry requires data that reflect both the experiences and the interpretative processes of servicemen and their wives or partners. To be more specific, there are different types of data that together complete the desired 'picture' of servicemen's lives.

Firstly, in order to access the personal worlds of various individuals, some attempt is made to uncover subjective opinions, perceptions, experiences, attitudes and behaviours (for example, "I think that the Navy expects me to put my career before my family, and I really resent it"). Secondly, this exploration is broadened to the realm of intersubjective and interpersonal group processes, in terms of data that reflect shared opinions, perceptions, experiences and so on.

Thirdly, attention is paid to subjective or intersubjective data that can be grounded in evidence that is, to some extent, verifiable (for example, "I think the Navy expects me to put my career before my family because they told me when my son was born that I couldn't get leave because they needed me and that the job always had to come first. I felt resentful at not being at the birth").

Finally, data have been collected that are objective and factual, such as documentary evidence[52]. Such 'factual data' are, however, treated with caution. Analysis of discourse would perhaps reveal even these 'facts' to be influenced by wider systems of meaning, and subject to different power dynamics. The latter point is particularly relevant when it is considered that this type of revelation is, in itself, one objective of the study.

The emphasis here is therefore clearly on the more subjective and interpretative kinds of data used for social research. Having established the conceptual and analytical parameters of the thesis, this lengthy but nevertheless imperative consideration all leads to the point in question, that is: How would those data be derived? Essentially, what methods would achieve the most suitable results in terms of data collection?

Before outlining the rationale underlying practical method selection, it is perhaps helpful to mention the use of analysis of discourses and discourse theories in this thesis in terms of their tactical, strategic and theoretical bases. In these dimensions, the research methodology can be seen as middle range, in so much as discourse theory is built on the premise that meaning accredited to all social phenomena derives from various discourses[53].

However, the actual data collection methods used to examine the nature and social consequences of these discourses may be more varied, depending on the context of investigation. Therefore more specific and precise theoretical formulations may be located and developed for different research projects. Indeed, this research borrows from some elements of a grounded theory approach, at least in terms of its longitudinal, reflexive and increasingly focused methodology. This is discussed further at a later point.

The analysis of discourses, then, despite being viewed as a method in its own right, represents a type of broad organising principle in the context of this research. It is therefore necessary to employ more tactical methods of data collection and, in this respect, I have chosen to use both qualitative and quantitative methods. This largely pragmatic decision requires some elaboration.

Selecting the Methods

As we have already seen, in discussions regarding structure and agency, there are different ways of viewing the world. Different methods carry sets of beliefs about the nature of society, as well as epistemological approaches toward how it should be studied. As Williams and May (1996:69) state:

> *all philosophical positions, and their attendant methodologies hold a view, implicitly or explicitly about social reality...this determines what can be regarded as legitimate knowledge...therefore the ontological shapes the epistemological.*

The natural science paradigm, which still holds strong purchase on social research, requires an exact rational understanding of reality and, to simplify, the application of research techniques that aim at generation, reproduction, explanation and prediction. Emulation of the natural sciences draws us to the epistemology of positivism, focusing on universal laws of cause and effect, and subscribing to realist ontology, where the social world consists of objectively defined facts. Positivistic approaches to research involve uncovering these 'facts', and establishing causal relationships through quantification, standardisation and measurement. Such research requires the

application of quantitative methods, in order to derive and test numerical data. Scientific method dictates that this methodology allows for measurement, repetition, generalisation and prediction.

Standing alone, such a worldview may not be best suited to the purposes of discourse theories. Indeed, in the light of discussion concerning the requirement of subjective and intersubjective data for an understanding of discourse formations, the contrast between the focus of the natural and social sciences is evident. For those drawing on interpretivistic foundations of knowledge, human meaning and consciousness are the central characteristics of the social world and must therefore form part of any social enquiry. As Hughes (1990:90) argues:

> "knowledge of persons can only be gained through an interpretive procedure grounded in the imaginative recreation of the experiences of others. History, society, art, indeed all human products are the objectifications of the human mind, and not at all like material things".

Uncovering attitudes, emotions and beliefs of human individuals and groups is necessary, in order that we understand, rather than just explain, social relations. Such understanding is gained from the 'inside', rather than from 'outside' observation.

However, whilst it is important to consider the positivist/interpretivist debate, to view it in a way that polarises quantitative and qualitative methods is not particularly useful to the analysis of discourse. As I have already stated, such analysis may be approached in various ways, methodologically speaking, shifting emphasis and meaning but still maintaining its analytical usefulness. Whilst it is perhaps more closely aligned with interpretative perspectives, and benefits therefore from more qualitatively derived data, other quantitative methods are nonetheless valid in certain contexts. From the outset, I considered it pragmatically justifiable to collect or express some data quantitatively, even where their source may be qualitative in nature (such as intersubjective opinions, experiences and attitudes). For this reason, some data have been usefully counted, and presented as patterns or themes. Hence the thesis employs a combination of both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.

Methods: Interviewing

There is no single set or system of qualitative methods suited to analysis of all types of social interaction. Qualitative methods are as varied as those used in the natural sciences. I decided that qualitative, in-depth interviews would best provide for this study of military families. It would allow

for an interpretive understanding of the ways in which military men form military identities to the extent where their families become affected by the military career, and where leaving military life poses distinctive problems for them. I also felt that interviewing had the capacity to access the self-reflexivity among interview subjects that quantitative methods alone could not.

It is perhaps necessary here to address the way in which quantitative researchers have long criticised qualitative interview methods, for providing an opening for unacceptable forms of bias, where interviewer and interviewee combine to produce data that are distorted through the researcher's participation. This, however, represents a narrow view of interpretative research and meaning construction.

Participants in an interview setting may inevitably be implicated in constructing meaning (Silverman, 1996), but so too are persons involved in naturally occurring talk or interaction. Does this render all interaction invalid in terms of passing on knowledge? As long as we recognise that meaning is constructed in particular contexts and settings, and that the meanings generated during my interviews reflected the attitudes, feelings and behaviours of service personnel and their families, the issue becomes less problematic. Uncovering meaning in different settings is an important aspect of the research. And in any case, if we return to the original analytic objectives of the research we are reminded that our interest lies not in mere conversation analyses. The importance lies in how meanings in the interviews relate to the subjective experiences and attitudes of the respondents.

Therefore, this thesis does not claim to represent a value-free enterprise. It acknowledges the view that we should be aware of how values inform the way in which we conduct and analyse our research. In summary, though interviews themselves are social constructions, narratives generated by interviews represent worlds that exist outside of the interview situation. In this respect, researchers employing qualitative interview methods are able to capture, and re-represent, elements of those worlds.

It is also important here to address the claim that, in order to have the necessary subjective knowledge to understand particular groups' life experiences, researchers should be members of those particular groups. In short, researchers must themselves have experienced, in some way, the very material their research generates, in order to make valid knowledge claims. Clearly this was

not the case for my study - a young, (and, at the point of interviewing, unmarried) academic researcher studying the family lives of service personnel with spouses or partners and dependants. However, naval families do not form one homogeneous group[54]. My respondents came from different backgrounds and included both men and women[55]. What they had in common was the naval career.

Undoubtedly there are obvious differences involved between the research respondents and myself, not least the service language referred to by many. Does this render the interviews devoid of rich information about social worlds? On the contrary, I would suggest that these social differences allowed for respondents to articulate their feelings, attitudes and beliefs with more clarity, in order that they become accessible to an outsider, and without referring to common sense assumptions about service life. The benefits of such explicit description were of great value to analyses of discourse, which are conducted from an other's position.

It may be helpful to reflect here that some interviewees, finding themselves in what is essentially a hierarchical investigator/respondent relationship, actually found my 'otherness' empowering. Their insider knowledge afforded them a sense of control over the situation, and this comment was made on more than one occasion. Furthermore it provided a platform for naval families, who have often been stereotyped and devalued by wider society, to reflect on their lives in a way that is that rarely possible. Surely this can only be seen as a potential benefit of our social distance.

These things considered, interviews are used to explore general topics, in order to reveal participants' perspectives on their experience. Therefore, to varying extents, accounts of this experience are framed and structured by the participants themselves, and not by the researcher. The story thus unfolds as the participant views it, and there is inevitably an element of subjectivity in this. However, some systemisation of questioning was required by the thesis, in order to access data concerning a variety of issues. This study also involved many participants and comparisons were to be drawn from the data[56]. Semi-structured, in-depth interviewing was deemed an appropriate method for investigating the effect of career and career change on family life and decision making, since it allowed for an understanding of the meanings people hold for their everyday experience, and the ways in which they apply this to their own behaviour.

Interview schedules were organised around several salient themes. The literature review had assisted the clarification of the conceptual framework of the research, and identified some of the important issues. These were synthesised with newer ideas and worked into the interview schedules. The schedules comprised directive and non-directive questions, and allowed for free expression from both the participants and myself. Prompts were added in case any further probing should be necessary.

The issues explored in the interview schedule were drafted into the following sections; general background and demographics, career aspirations past and present, home issues, household roles and responsibilities, housing and locality, children and parental roles, and family, friends and community relevant relationships. The themes were all explored within the context of the interplay between them, the naval career and career change.

Whilst the design of the schedules was originally structured around the systematic use of particular questions, it was expected that, as the research progressed, the schedules could be modified and questions adapted. As additional interesting and significant focuses and themes became apparent, the schedules were modified accordingly, without losing its original focus. A research diary made reflexivity possible throughout. The data collected during each stage of the research fed back into the next, progressively sharpening the focus.

Semi-transcribed field-notes from each taped interview were added to observational notes, and these were reviewed before the next interview, assisting the development of more efficient interviewing by investigating new ideas, as well as emergent patterns, as the process continued. This method fulfilled the aims of the interviews adequately, and confirmed the suitability of qualitative methods to this stage of the research. The reflexive, longitudinal approach facilitated the development of the research from the outset to its conclusion.

Methods: Questionnaires and Survey Research

In addition to my qualitative interviews, I decided to conduct a quantitative survey interview, in order to access a larger sample of servicemen and their families. The findings of the questionnaire could be used to frame and contextualise the richer, more in-depth findings of the qualitative interviews, adding breadth to their depth. Many researchers have claimed that surveys, if used

efficiently, not only tap respondents' own behaviour, but also can be used to generate information that goes beyond this, extending into relationships, interactions and activities (De Vaus, 1991).

The use of data gathered from the survey study would thus be used in order to build up a larger picture, and not for establishing generalisable, predictive, statistical facts. It is important to state here that the survey itself focused on some data that were qualitative in nature, such as attitudes, perceptions and so on. More factual questions provided information that identified demographic background and practical experience.

The questionnaire used in the larger survey was designed in a similar way to that of the interview schedules. Since concepts were operationalised in the same manner, and the use of the survey was to contextualise the findings from the qualitative interviews, questions were largely drafted into the same sections. However, actual question formation was far more explicit, in order to compensate for the potential for misunderstanding in the self-completion of questionnaires by respondents, and to limit the scope for different interpretations of questions. Most of the questions were closed. However in the case of several issues, specific answers could not always be anticipated or transformed into direct questions. Some open-ended questions were inserted where necessary, usually providing a follow-up to closed questions. Demographic and occupational details in particular, required open questioning since it was impossible to pre-code enough alternatives from which the respondent could select an answer.

At the end of the questionnaire schedule, I found it useful to include a space for qualitative comments, allowing respondents more freedom in constructing their own questions and answers regarding the research. This also allowed for any issues to be raised that were not picked up by the focused questions. A coding book was also drawn up, in order to make for more efficient analysis.

The Sample

Once the research had been designed, the next stage was to ask who should be involved in the study. Reviewing the original aims and objectives of the thesis, I concluded that the research required the participation of a range of service personnel and families, from a variety of branches and ranks, in order to access a range of experiences. This type of sample made it possible to build up a more complete picture of the service experience.

To re-iterate an earlier point, I do not refer to service families as a homogeneous group or groups. The study demonstrates the richness of difference, and this recognition is reflected in the emphasis on difference that is evident in discourse theories. However, analysis of the literature reviewed brought to light the fact that naval institutionalisation does take place, and moreover that personnel from various ranks and backgrounds may be affected differently[57].

I required, then, two different samples; one smaller sample with known representative characteristics (in terms of branch, age and rank) for the in-depth interviews[58], and a larger one for the survey. What was important in both was to represent different ranks and branches and, if possible, age. Both samples would be located within the same target population, personnel who were leaving Naval Service and who defined themselves as living in a family.

This leads to a further issue. If identity and behaviour is relational and contingent on meaning construction, then the definition of 'family' requires careful consideration. As highlighted in Chapter Four, sociologists have begun to question many of the previously accepted concepts and theories regarding the nature of the family. The political importance of the family increases the difficulty of developing consensus about what 'the family' is, or what it should be.

If we accept that the traditional family is a political and ideological construct, and that this differs from the reality of the varying nature of families in contemporary society, then the family cannot be researched as a universal phenomenon. For this reason the families in this study were self-defined. The final sample consisted of those defining themselves as family men, regardless of marital status or family size.

The participants thus represented different types of families, and this was deemed entirely appropriate and valid for the purposes of the research. Despite this ambitious plan, however, in reality some single men were included in the questionnaire sample due to lack of access to personal details and a representative sampling frame. Nevertheless, marital status became a useful variable for the purpose of the analysis at a later point, representing a somewhat fortunate 'accident' in the longer term.

To pick up on an earlier point, much sociological research has assumed that the family, and all the complex interactions of family life, can only be depicted accurately in the natural environment of the home. Recent contributions to the study of families have, however suggested that families are not strictly private but are connected with public life. The household does not exclusively locate family life and family members. As Silverman (1995;57) explains, families:

> present the reality of family life in different ways to different audiences and in different ways to the same audience.

Thus I did not feel it necessary to interview the participants in their homes in every case.

It is important to note that all the naval personnel sampled were male. This is not to devalue female personnel, nor to understate their importance as subjects for this type of research. Literature documents differences between male and female service careers, whereby career cycles for service women are characterised by shorter periods of service, often interrupted by motherhood and downward occupational mobility (Stewart and Greenhalgh, 1984; Martin and Roberts, 1984). This alone renders them worthy of further study.

However, the parameters of the thesis did not allow for a broadening of issues to this extent and, for this reason, and after much careful consideration, I decided to focus exclusively on service men and their families. Nonetheless, there is recognition here of the need for research into the experiences of service women and their families, and the implications for comparative analysis are of obvious importance.

A related issue, at a more specific level of researching family life, is that it is important to remember that the study is aimed at describing not only the serviceman's experiences, but also those of the wife/partner. Whilst the central focus is the impact of his career on his family, this does not in any way render the wife's or partner's experience any less valid or significant. The wife has her own identity and is an important research subject in her own right.

Although the research investigates the social interaction between the serviceman, his career and his wife or partner, her 'role' and identity is not assumed to be wholly contingent on that of her husband, even where this influence is noted. The thesis focuses on the experiences of both men and women, within the wider context of family life, and I felt it therefore imperative to avoid the male

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bias or androcentrism that has long been debated in scientific research and theory[59]. Whilst I do not subscribe to an exclusively feminist epistemology, this issue is rightly given some consideration.

Embarking on this research, I quickly learned that it involved complex political and ethical considerations, and that as researcher I should develop an awareness not only of the politics of the family, but also that of organisations and the individuals within them. Therefore it was imperative to develop good relationships with everyone involved in the research. This required an awareness of the various different interests of 'gatekeepers', the participants and myself, the researcher. From the outset the major considerations included building trust, maintaining good relations and demonstrating a sensitive respect of ethical issues. The reality, however, was not so straightforward.

Gaining Access to Military Organisations

Having never before been involved in any research into organisations[60], it soon became clear to me that organisational research was subject to its own particular difficulties above and beyond those normally expected in the process of researching. As already stated in Chapter Two, organisations are bounded territories with unique value systems, cultures and, in the case of particularly controlling organisations, restrictions on access. Problems with entry were almost immediately apparent, and at least one major planned aspect of the research firstly became vulnerable, and then unworkable.

Originally, I had planned to produce a comparative study, conducted on servicemen and their families from both the Navy and the Army. The co-operation of both the Army and the Navy was crucial to the research, since only through them could I secure access to an adequate number of respondents for comparative analysis.

I had already gained access to research subjects from the Navy, during a previous MSc study[61] and so access was quickly regained. In seeking the 'gatekeeper's' co-operation I sent a letter to the Resettlement Officer, informing him of the new research opportunity and detailing my main aims and objectives. A meeting was then arranged to discuss the issues more freely.

There was originally some sensitivity over the meaning of the term 'service culture' to describe the environment under which some service families operate. In addition, the Resettlement Officer was uneasy about the study's potential for revealing a more negative side of service life, enhanced in this case, since a number of those leaving had not done so voluntarily and may have harboured feelings of resentment. Similarly, those who were leaving voluntarily may have had a particular reason for doing so that was drawn from negative experiences of service life. It was felt that the findings could perhaps be sensationalised and used, or abused, for political means.

Discussion of these issues required tact, and my assurance that the research did not represent any kind of moral crusade. I explained that the research findings would not be portrayed as definitive or static realities, but would rather represent subjective accounts of experiences that would be open to interpretation and challenge. Following our discussion, the Resettlement Officer agreed to be of assistance in securing a Navy sample for the study.

In addition to the ethics surrounding informed consent and confidentiality[62], Navy officials, and later participants and respondents, were assured of the security of the project. Provision was made to avoid any breach of security Information was coded, and occupational and other details were kept securely under lock and key. This was particularly important in the light of the situation in Northern Ireland at the time, and this concern was provided as the main reason for the Army's reticence.

Whilst securing access to a Navy sample had been relatively straightforward, gaining access to soldiers leaving the Army was to present its own problems. Army officials were immediately suspicious of the objectives of the research. At first they stated that they had no time to become involved. They, like the Resettlement Officer from the Navy, were also concerned about potential political use of the research findings, and they highlighted adverse publicity from other recent research as an example. Unlike the Naval Resettlement Officer however, they did not feel prepared to 'expose' their servicemen to any academic research, citing security issues as their ultimate priority. Such fears on the part of respondents, and particularly organisations is well documented (Bryman, 1988). After some while in negotiation, the plans for the research had to be modified, and the research was eventually conducted on solely naval personnel and their families.

This issue of access highlights one of the main methodological problems involved in research into organisations and their members (Cassell and Symon, 1994). Unlike most social science research

in the community, we require access not only to individual respondents, but also to the organisation itself. As Bryman (1988) points out, such access entails substantial negotiation, due to the 'bonded nature' of organisations, which imposes an 'additional layer between organisational researchers and their subjects'.

Furthermore, some organisations are resistant to being researched. The Army in my own case provides one example, and demonstrates that issues of security may only compound reluctance to allow access. In addition to this, in a very structured organisation such as the military, we must be aware of the time taken up by the investigation. Gatekeepers and respondents are required to give up their own time to take part in research. The Resettlement Officer was most accommodating throughout the research. Clearly, without his help it might not have been possible to continue with interviewing of the necessary participants.

I feel it useful to reflect here that, whilst methodological writings present various 'guides' to researching into organisations, some espouse more flexible approaches to this type of enquiry (Cassell and Symon, 1994). My experience with this research supports their view that organisational research requires flexibility, patience and a good deal of inter-personal negotiation, all of which must be exercised on an ongoing basis. Fortunately, for my own part, this flexibility was facilitated by the longitudinal and reflexive nature of the research and, in turn, provided for some of the more serendipitous findings of the thesis.

The Resettlement Officer agreed to distribute briefing letters and forms to the personnel who were passing through the Resettlement Office. It was necessary, of course, to demonstrate sensitivity for participants' feelings and potential reluctance, and respect their right not to participate.

To return to the sample, it was necessary to include participants representative of the various ranks within each branch of Naval Service. In order to gain access to these possible combinations, I aimed to interview twenty families, from different branches and ranks. Since it was my intention to interview each family three times, over a three year period, this number would allow for a certain natural 'wastage' of participants through geographical mobility, loss of interest and so on.

Another problem encountered was that of securing access not only to servicemen, but also to their families. A seemingly patriarchal view of the status of wives[63] meant that letters could only be

addressed to the serviceman, and that it was then his decision whether or not his spouse/partner be involved in the research. Initially it was felt that this might result in problems. However, the majority of those who returned forms indicating a willingness to be interviewed included their partner/spouse in that decision. Interestingly, on arranging interviews by telephone, several wives who had 'volunteered' knew nothing of the research or the interviews, although all agreed to participate.

Interviews were arranged by telephone. This presented its own problems; gaining access and arranging interviews required time, patience and sensitivity to the rhythm and routine of service-men's lives. Since servicemen had tight working schedules, and some were working away or at sea for long stretches, contact often required several attempts. Service wives largely made interview arrangements through their husbands' diaries. Interviewing thus took place over a longer period of time than was at first expected, although all three sets were conducted according to plan.

The help of the Resettlement Officer was also enlisted in order to access a larger sample for the survey study. Again he distributed briefing letters, this time referring to a mail questionnaire. In addition, he provided a number of names and addresses of service men and women who, on passing through the Resettlement Office, had indicated a willingness to participate. From these I was able to compile a confidential mailing list which, when added to names and addresses from the previous study, amounted to over four hundred personnel.

It is important to note that access to both samples was obtained through official Navy sources, in the Resettlement Office. Since respondents may have regarded the research as being sponsored by the Navy, a major concern was that this form of negotiation could evoke suspicion in potential respondents about the true aims and objectives of the study. This may have been compounded, since the Resettlement Officer had been promised reports of the findings of the investigation. Therefore, the briefing letter distributed by the Resettlement Office was designed to assure respondents of confidentiality, and the fact that the investigation was independent of the military services.

Conducting the Fieldwork

A research diary was kept through most stages of the research, which allowed for reflexivity and enhanced its development. It made it possible to view the integration of methods and different stages in the research with clarity, and to understand their relation to the overall project. It also provided for learning from mistakes, (or accidental beneficial developments!), and aided write-up considerably.

The Interviews

After three pilot interviews had taken place with friends who had recently left the Navy, interview schedules ware amended where necessary and interviewing commenced. Sixty interviews were conducted in three sets of twenty. Most of the interviews took place jointly with both servicemen and their spouses/partners and in some cases children were present. A small number of servicemen expressed a desire to be interviewed alone and, in this, their wishes were respected. Most interviews took place at the participants' homes, although a small number were held in an interview room at the University.

Interviews sometimes unavoidably intruded into the participants' homes and family settings, and I was aware that participants had to adjust to my presence, unlike the postal survey research. People had interrupted their routines and priorities; many had children with feeding, bathing and bedtimes to re-arrange, in order that husband and wife could be interviewed simultaneously after work. They were giving of themselves for the purposes of my research, and I expressed my sensitivity toward this. Research issues and questions were, where possible, well-developed before the interviews took place, in order that my role be managed effectively and carefully and to ensure good use of available time. I did, however, allow conversation to deviate where I felt it useful.

In order to reach an intersubjective understanding, interviews commenced with a review of the aims and objectives of the research, and a brief description of what the interviews would entail. Once the participants had confirmed an understanding of their own roles in the research, the interviews began. Participants were guided through the main issues covered in the interview schedules, and were asked some questions directly, although they were allowed to speak freely about any issues arising from the original questions. More non-directive questioning further into the interviews allowed more latitude, both for myself and the interviewees. It also provided a suitable

setting to explore not only specific details regarding career and family life, but other general attitudes and the possibility of more serendipitous findings.

Interviews were recorded on audiotape, with the participants' permission. In addition, observational notes were made and added to pre-fieldwork mappings of the participants' demographic details. Following each interview these notes were examined, alongside those obtained from previous interview data, and these were then used in order to highlight new ideas or patterns that had emerged throughout each set of interviews. The use of this approach greatly assisted the longitudinal progress of the research, and meant that additional questioning could be used for further probing of relevant issues arising during interview. Immediate follow-up and clarification were possible, which was imperative since I was unfamiliar with much of the local service 'culture' and language[64]

Participants varied in their responses and behaviours during interview. Some were eager to answer questions in the fullest sense; others appeared more reticent. The diversity of interview responses appeared to be marked, in particular, by differences in terms of rank and gender. Higher-ranking individuals were more 'forward' in the interview situation; answering questions fully, often with examples and analogy, asking questions themselves and providing elaboration where they felt it necessary. In the main, ratings, although certainly not without exception, were more reticent.

In terms of gender, it was the men who took control. Where questioning was addressed jointly to the servicemen and his wife, answering was dominated by men in most cases. Identifying this as a potential problem, I modified the second and third set of interview schedules in order that both partners were asked the same questions separately, although still in each other's presence. It was hoped that this change would allow for an increase in female responses. However, even after the schedules had been modified in this way, wives would sometimes defer to husbands or, more often, check with them that the right response had been offered. No attempt was made to overcome this. Such behaviour raises an interesting issue in its own right, as observed interaction.

At the end of each interview informal feedback was provided, and any comments or questions arising from the research were dealt with at this point. Interviewees were thanked for their assistance and co-operation, and permission for on-going correspondence and further interviewing was secured at each stage of the research. The right to decline further involvement was made

clear at all times. A formal thank you note was sent to all participants after each set of interviews, enclosed with stamped addressed envelopes for any change of address notices.

The Survey

Following a pilot study on a sample of twenty men, which generated twelve returns, and clarification of the questionnaire, 'packages' were sent out to just over four-hundred servicemen on a rolling basis. Packages comprised; a questionnaire for completion and return, a covering letter, a briefing letter and a freepost return envelope. Respondents were asked to reply within the next ten days. In reality, and perhaps unsurprisingly, completed questionnaires were received over a longer period of time. Follow-up letters were produced to remind potential respondents of the research. Just over 200 completed questionnaires were eventually returned, representing a reasonable response rate for a postal survey, considering that many leavers had moved, and forty of the original questionnaires were returned undelivered.[65]

Data Management and Primary Analysis

Interviews

As stated earlier, interview data inevitably involves an element of interpretation, through which the researcher makes meaningful and insightful the words and behaviour of the research subjects. It is an interpretive act that brings meaning to raw data.

The combined use of audiotaped and later literally transcribed data alongside observational notes and pre-fieldwork notes, greatly enhanced the data analysis. The analysis required the bringing of order, structure and meaning to the large amounts of complex data collected during the interviewing stage, and this was certainly no linear process. In addition, analysis involved the integration of textual data from the qualitative interviews, and numerical data produced by the quantitative survey study. For these reasons, analysis was begun early in the study, and went on throughout the duration of the fieldwork itself, with final analysis following its completion. This allowed for reflection and I felt, therefore, the production of more meaningful results.

In addition to this continuing analysis, thorough reading and re-reading of the interview transcripts was imperative in order to efficiently and meaningfully organise the raw data. Only following this did I feel ready to embark on the generation of particular 'categories', 'patterns' and 'themes'. This was

effected, in the main, by reviewing the issues that had originally informed the research, and around which the interviews and questionnaire had been designed. Pre-developed recording 'charts'[66], designed as the interviews progressed, assisted with the organisation in this way.

The main 'organisation' of the data was achieved through the use of a computer package designed specifically for the analysis of qualitative data. QSR NUD*IST 4 provided a computer package designed to aid management of non-numerical and unstructured data in qualitative analysis. NUDIST made for easier, more rigorous and thorough data analysis, by using technology aimed at supporting the processes of research that could otherwise have been messy and time-consuming, such as coding data, searching for patterns in text and so on.

The documents used in my research, including interview transcripts, observational field notes and notes from related studies, were loaded onto a document system. Categories of data and analysis developed during the study were held within an index system. Data in each system were then manipulated using tools for searching and displaying. Particularly beneficial to my own analysis was the 'system closure' feature, whereby the results of my searches and analyses were returned to the original project database as extra data, and made available for further analysis.

Many qualitative researchers have challenged the use of computers because of their tendency to de-contextualise data, through coding and manipulation. Certainly NUD*IST does produce a fluidity within the data and the emergence of new categories, but in so doing it also allows for flexibility in ideas. That is it makes rethinking, moving between data and ideas a far more systematic and efficient process. It provided for rigor, reliability, thorough searches for patterns and themes and consistent analysis.

It should be noted that the purpose of NUD*IST, as I perceived it, was merely to organise and manage data, and not to analyse it in place of the researcher. Awareness of the potential for de-contextualising interview data is imperative, and it soon became obvious that it would be easy to make this mistake. Precisely for this reason, I avoided breaking down the text to an extent where relational indicators would be lost.

To briefly summarise this discussion, rich and complex data are intrinsically messy, and not a little intimidating! What NUD*IST made possible was to keep the richness of the data but to achieve

simplicity in linking data and ideas. Additionally, and of great importance for this research, it allowed for further computer aided analysis and synthesis of the findings from both the qualitative interview data and those collected in the quantitative survey.

The Survey

The raw data were entered and analysed using the SPSS statistical computer package. The first stage of the data analysis was to derive the frequency count for the variables that had been entered on to SPSS. This preliminary univariate descriptive analysis allowed the data to be checked for any input errors, and also had the effect of simplifying the data, providing a basis for further tests to be conducted. In addition, by producing a percentage as well as a count for each category of the given variables, it was possible to standardise the data, allowing for comparisons to be drawn between different data sets.

However, methodological limitations became clear as analysis commenced. Firstly, the questionnaire had been designed in order that some questions were answered by those planning to leave, and others by those who had already left. The limitations to sampling procedures discussed earlier meant that representative sampling was not entirely possible, therefore it is important to state that the sample was more heavily weighted towards those men who had already left, and this is borne in mind when discussing the findings.

Secondly, this also had implications for statistical analysis. In retrospect, it was a disappointment that the research was not able to benefit from more multivariate analysis. At the outset I felt that the thesis only required simple quantification of some data, in order to provide evidence of the main themes and patterns from a larger sample. This would then be used to frame and contextualise findings from the in-depth qualitative data analysis. In the event, the wealth of information contained in the completed questionnaires spurred me on to conduct further quantitative analysis. However, such analysis proved to be problematic.

Since the sample had been broken down in the way described above, testing had to be conducted on each group separately, which had the effect of minimising numbers in different cells of statistical tests. So whilst it was possible to perform simple cross tabulations of variables, testing for significance was less valid. For example, cells in chi-square tests contained an expected frequency of fewer than five, limiting the validity of the results.

These two limitations to more rigorous statistical testing were frustrating, as I was unable to perform multivariate analysis but could not enjoy the security of demonstrating, statistical significance in some of my conclusions. However, the rich material derived from the interviews provided further assistance. Therefore the analysis of the quantitative data is presented through reference both to the empirical results of the survey and reasoning based on the findings of the interviews. Thus, the results are reported in terms of frequencies and general cross-tabulations, as well as with reference to interview data. This was deemed entirely appropriate for the purposes of the survey data which, to reiterate, was intended to provide a 'picture', or background to the interview data.

Analysis of the Research Findings

Although interviews had been structured around several main questions, my intention was to draw information from participants that was presented, as much as possible, within their own terms. This principle was also the basis of my final analysis. Literal transcriptions from interviews, and notes taken subsequent to the organisation of data using NUD*IST, were analysed for key themes. Quotations from interviews directed more focused analyses as the process developed. In adopting this approach, I was able to analyse qualitative findings on a larger scale, in a systematic manner, tying them in with the rather more quantitative findings of the survey.

Once the findings of the various strands of the enquiry were analysed, I then set about the task of bringing them together in a final analysis. Using the discourse approach made possible a more holistic view of the findings, more comparative analysis and more attention to the dynamic relationships between them. I was therefore able to examine the interfaces between work, identity, family formations and occupational change in terms of their interactions.

This examination was achieved in two ways. Firstly, emerging themes and patterns were used in order to identify various signifiers of naval discourse, as well as civilian discourses. Secondly, attention to the behaviours and actions of the respondents provided a foundation for exploring the relationship between discourses and social practices in the context of service life. Put another way, the practical implications of naval and civilian discourses were observed in the way that individuals behaved, drawing from the various signifiers they had described. This was particularly useful for

understanding the transitional process of occupational change. Illustration through reference to discourses also allowed for an understanding of the hegemonic relations between naval organisations and groups, and helped to describe different discourses in terms of their implications for control in a naval context.

Conclusion

The research strategy underlying this thesis is based primarily on the need to provide rich, in-depth data for the analysis of identity and discourses in a naval setting. The discourse theoretical approach allows for analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data, and enables examination of related issues of families and households, as well as those of organisational and occupational change.

This approach makes possible the development of a framework through which power relationships can be identified, and where differences in experiences may be charted. The thesis also enjoys the benefit of analysis that considers the influences of both structure and agency in its conclusions. Finally, its reflexive approach to longitudinal study allows for analysis of change and transformation, achieved through comparative study of the data as the research progressed. The findings of the research are now presented in the next three chapters.

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[47] See discussion in Chapters Two and Four.

[48] See Chapters Two, Three and Four.

[49] See Chapter Two for distinctions.

[50] See Chapter Two for definition and discussion of 'key signifiers'.

[51] Although it is recognised that analyses of discourses, and discourse theories, are based on similar epistemological concerns to those of ethnomethodology.

[52] This comprises documentation derived largely through official naval sources.

[53] See Chapters Two and Four for a more detailed exposition of these ideas.

[54] See Chapter Three.

[55] A breakdown of the demographic profile of the respondents is provided in Appendix A.

[56] Comparisons were made between individuals in terms of rank, age and a number of other variables.

[57] See Chapter Two.

[58] In fact, whilst the interview sample was representative in these characteristics, the questionnaire sample was more difficult. The interplay of different variables was complex, and the limitations on gaining access to a stratified sample made entirely representative sampling impractical. What resulted from the distribution of letters to leavers through the Resettlement Office was more of a cluster sample, although it was more representative in terms of rank.

[59] Such perspectives have levelled their criticism at the objective, standardised and rational (and ultimately 'male') nature of an empiricism that was born of a traditional, male dominated discipline.

[60] I refer specifically to work organisations, as conceptualised in the previous chapters.

[61] This MSc was an investigation into job search amongst a number of naval leavers in Plymouth.

[62] Read Homan's (1991) Ethics of Social Research for more information.

[63] This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven, but refers directly here to the ways in which the naval institution, and some naval men, may exclude naval wives from much decision making.

[64] Methodological issues regarding interviewer effect and investigating particular groups with which the researcher is not familiar, have been discussed earlier under the heading: Selecting the Method.

[65] This represented 50% of the questionnaires distributed. The typical response rate for postal surveys, according to De Vaus (1991), is 60% to 75%.

[66] See appendix for diagrams.

Chapter Six - Naval Careers: Identity, Families and Households

Introduction

The theoretical and methodological context of the thesis has been outlined in the previous five chapters. The results of the fieldwork are detailed in the next three chapters, starting here with the impact of naval careers on men and their families. Findings from both the interviews and the questionnaire survey are presented together, in order to provide a fuller picture of the experience of the respondents. Where statistics are referenced, these are derived from the questionnaire survey, whilst quotations come from both elements of the research, although most are taken from transcriptions of the interviews. Where they are derived from questionnaire answers, this is indicated. The findings have been organised around particular themes that emerged from the research. Firstly then, we return to the men's naval careers

The Armed Services exercise more control over the movements and loyalties of the individual than is usual in even the most demanding civilian occupations, and the identities of service personnel are clearly affected by institutional socialisation. This became strikingly apparent both during the interviews, and in the larger questionnaire survey.

Reasons for Joining the Navy

In investigating naval identities, it was important first to assess why the Navy appealed to those who joined it. It is important to remember at this point that this thesis deals with the experiences of male service personnel, for reasons already outlined. As such, it should be noted that women's reasons for joining the Navy, and indeed women's experience of naval life and occupational change, might differ from those of men. Suggestions for further research are provided in Chapter Nine.

Most of the servicemen interviewed had joined the Navy not so much as a calling but for a number of different reasons, including the perceived attractions of life at sea, naval identities, and the chance to travel.

> *I liked the idea of being on ships, the idea of being at sea basically, to travel was good too. (CPO)*

> *It was exciting and different. I didn't want to get stuck in an office job where every day was the same...in one place...dull. (Lieutenant Commander)*

> *When you're young – you've no responsibilities – the Navy seemed a great idea for a young single man. It drew you in. And it made you someone. (PO)*

This sense of identity appealed to several respondents:

> *It seems silly now...I was young...but I guess I felt like I could be a bit of a hero. I was going to be a sailor, serving queen and country...[laughs]...I thought it would get me the girls too, it's a big part of it at that age! I'm not sure I did, but I remember feeling quite good at the time.(CPO)*

Many ratings and junior ranks saw Naval service as an escape from the doldrums of civilian life, an opening to a career which provided opportunities they might not otherwise have been able to pursue:

> *For someone like me...leaving school when at sixteen like...with not much idea of what to do next. Enlisting in the Navy seemed an easy option. And with not many good qualifications...I wasn't much good at academic things like...it seemed to offer a chance to get a job, career, that I probably wouldn't have got in a million years in Civvy Street. I suppose the money was quite an attraction, I didn't need to think about it for too long anyways! (Able Seaman)*

Most respondents were attracted to a career that was both secure and financially rewarding. In addition, the higher-ranking individuals had viewed it as a career with good prospects for advancement:

> *When they're appointing officers to jobs, there are three considerations...the service's requirement, the officer's career, and the officer's requirement [personal preference]...That's just the Officers though, the ratings they draft and there's less strategy behind them. They're not appointed in the same way. But for Officers it's great! The possibilities for career advancement are far better, or they were, than they are for those in most civilian occupations. (Commander)*

Some men, although relatively few, had followed the family tradition:

I came from a naval family – my dad and my brother. I sort of, fell into it. I don't know if it was expected of me...it just seemed the natural way forward. (CPO)

Few of the respondents had seen themselves as intrinsically or naturally military men, or even as sailors. However, by the time of interview, where the average length of service was twenty years, most saw themselves as military men and wore this badge with an obvious pride. The prospect of losing this identity clearly filled many with apprehension and even, in some cases, absolute dread. It was important then to ask what this naval identity meant to them, and where it originated.

Men and 'Naval' Identity

In answering these questions the respondents, in almost every case, referred to the very beginning of their careers. Tales of initiation were shared and these were obviously important to the majority of the men.

It's where you learn what's important – you see, it's all about camaraderie and getting things done when they need to be done. It's different to being a civilian. As soon as you start you realise that you have to have loyalty – to the service and to each other. And yes, there are also many very traditional unwritten rules that you have to learn. But that's OK, you need tradition.. (PO)

It's where you learn about personal pride – these things aren't important to civilians... and yes, I felt very proud when we first paraded... I did, and so did the wife, or girlfriend as she was then. [Wife nods in agreement]. (Able Seaman)

It's about going about things in a certain way. In the Navy, you can expect people to do things. And to do them properly.(CPO)

Oh, they make you feel welcome, part of a bigger thing. It doesn't take long really...and it felt good if I remember. (Able Seaman)

I really felt like part of the Navy, it was a really big thing...loads of ceremony. (Able Seaman)

Listening to the ways in which the servicemen had been initiated into the service, it became clear that they had undergone some form of socialisation. Socialisation into the 'Navy way of doing things', about the role of servicemen, about service attitudes - about how a serviceman should behave and, to an extent, think.

You have to get 'in tune' with how the Navy does things. Like how you should react to certain problems, what sort of decisions you make...yeah, different to how civilians would – we even have our own sort of sense of humour! (PO)

The learning process undergone by these men as raw recruits clearly extended beyond merely learning the job. For most of the respondents there was far more at stake. They had learned how to become servicemen in every sense of the word, and began to apply their new outlook to their lives in general, as well as their futures:

> *You don't just learn how to do the jobs – it's more than that – you learn what it's all about...being a service man. You learn to live 'life in blue'. (CPO)*

The socialisation of these individuals was thorough, and based on common shared experiences of organisational activities and behaviours, isolated from outside civilian influences. For most of the men interviewed, their encapsulation in the new 'naval' culture was evident:

> *You see, it's not just a job – this is the difference – it's a way of life that civilians wouldn't be able to understand. It has to be a way of life – you don't leave your job at work – you are a naval man through and through. And the service itself does expect you to see it as a way of life, that's true enough. (Lieutenant Commander)*

> *You very quickly learn that there are certain ways of going about, you get used to it...and it makes sense really. (WO)*

The men began to shape their identities around their naval occupational role to the extent where, socially and personally, they felt 'naval'. In so doing, they began to understand and accept the broader goals of the organisation for which they worked, and demonstrated an obvious pride for their role within it:

> *It gives you a sense of pride – I mean, I often find myself in some country doing something or other I didn't believe in, but it's my job to, and I do feel proud of it. (Able Seaman)*

As interviews progressed, it became apparent that socialisation may affect their daily lives. Unwritten rules and codes of conduct become routinised and unquestioned:

> *There is a set protocol there, for example, you always pass the forks clockwise, the madeira never goes in front of the port. Don't ask me why! I just know that now. It doesn't matter really, it's just something that you do. It's just a tradition of the service I suppose, maybe it's general etiquette, but it's enforced in the Navy. You can't really say it's a rule to pass the forks clockwise, but no-one would even think of passing it anti-clockwise, and we wouldn't dream of letting the madeira pass in front of the port! (Commander)*

The men described how the learning process continued following initiation and training.

There are lots of little things which tend to build up this all-of-one company, we all conduct ourselves in the same way, follow the same rules. You learn as you go along...so many little things. (Lieutenant Commander)

Many of the things we learn to do are totally unimportant in the overall picture of trying to progress your daily work, they're just 'one of those things you do'. (CPO)

Daily routines reinforced learning patterns, while separation from the 'outside world' compounded this further. Indeed, most of those interviewed came to value this separation, and developed a sense of pride and esteem in their new positions:

You have to do things in a certain way that you wouldn't necessarily do in Civvy Street – that's how it works. (Able Seaman)

Things that you might not think about are very important in the service...well, like being disciplined. Doing what you're told, even if you don't think it's the right decision, otherwise everything would fall apart...and discipline within yourself...yeah, self discipline...well, being punctual and looking the part all of the time. And you have to be very organised and tidy. Appearance is important. Pride in yourself and your work (and your colleagues). And there are like hidden codes of behaviour and stuff – you get used to them with time...and then it's difficult to not be like that! (PO)

Navy 'culture', then, generally involves particular occupational slang, norms and standards of work performance, problem solving perspectives and maintaining distance from 'outside cultures'. None of the men felt that this culture had been deliberately imposed on them, rather they saw it as an intrinsic and necessary facet of service life, one that they actively sought to create and maintain:

You do things 'the navy way'...I know people who live their whole lives 'the navy way'.(CPO)

The Navy does have certain social ways, and you have to learn all those, traditions and things, and you...that's part of the espirit de corps, to help keep you all as one company. The closer you get to achieving that, the better you can maintain morale, especially in times of difficulty.(Lieutenant Commander)

Interviews revealed that servicemen became 'different' from civilians in many ways, and some respondents claimed that they even had 'service personalities'. As one wife explained:

The funny thing is, you can pick out a serviceman, without a haircut or a uniform. You can be listening to people in a group and you can pick out which ones are Service, and those that aren't. Even, say, the old timers. They don't necessarily have to be talking about the Navy or the Army or that. You can just tell, it's more their sense of humour. Their whole personalities.(CPO's wife)

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Many respondents agreed that there is a very particular 'service' sense of humour, shared by men in the Navy. Most suggested that it made identification with their peers easier, and once again gave a sense of belonging:

> The sense of humour is totally different (laughs). Totally, totally different. In what way? Well, I s'pose its quite a dark...a black sense of humour I s'pose. It's very different to Civvy humour, civvies would probably think we were strange or rude or insensitive or something. But in the Service it works, we're all like it in that way, in or out of work. I s'pose it helps you cope with the pressure of what we do, 'specially in like battle situations. (Able Seaman)

Again, this 'service humour' appeared to represent one aspect of the military culture with which the majority of men interviewed identified. Some other aspects also became evident. Many respondents referred to the pre-occupation with a 'drinking culture':

> A lot of it revolves around the pub, which is why a lot of guys find it difficult to leave the Navy I think. In the Navy the beer's there and the time to drink it's there. In the Navy, people get twitchy if they haven't had a drink for long. (PO)

> There is certainly a drinking culture. Well, you're lads together, away from your women. And that creates a good sort of environment for drinking. Sometimes that's all there is to do. (CPO)

Other respondents commented on the male dominated nature of service life:

> It is all very male, very macho. And I think that all centres around the mess. It just extends to outside the mess, when everyone goes out they're still like it. As an example, there's far too much drinking. And that's not really nice for wives to put up with. I mean, I've done a fair bit of drinking myself. You do. A tremendous amount of drinking goes on in the service. Drinking is one-hundred percent part of the culture. (Able Seaman)

Several interviews revealed that this 'macho' element of the culture did not sit comfortably with family life:

> (Serviceman) They'll arrange something the first night back after you've been away for three months. But you want to be with your family again then, you know!
> (Wife) And you do get called few names as well, for not going, but...
> (Serviceman) We'd be away for months and come back and then a week later they all want to go out. you know, not with the women. Just the blokes. But I spend twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week seeing them. I want to be with the family on the few chances I get! (Able Seaman and Wife)

Some respondents, mainly higher-ranking individuals, pointed out that the necessary control extended by the Navy over its members, as well as a sense of belonging, was effectively and

efficiently secured through the socialisation process. The research so far has shown that socialisation into this naval 'culture' has taken place, but why does the Navy socialise its members in this way? Several suggested that the organisation vetted applications in order to select suitable recruits for socialisation to the Navy lifestyle. One interviewee explained how he felt the Navy had firm ideas about the ideal candidates for Naval service:

> *You see I went to a public school, so I was a typical product that they wanted. They are quite deliberate in exercising control over all the men, regardless of rank. Officers particularly are a very specific group of people with similar characteristics. Well... and so are the juniors. We give the orders, they follow. That's the way it has always...and must always be. You simply cannot have the type of 'everyone for themselves' kind of thing that goes on in civilian organisations. Men must be able to recognise their roles and responsibilities within the service or else we are lost. And that cannot happen to the Royal Navy. (Commander)*

> *The thing is, the way we see things in the Navy is very traditional. Everything follows a particular line, although I think that the Navy is probably more 'civilian' now than it was when I started....but it is still different in its outlook.....and you become like that too sometimes. (CPO)*

How then, was this compliance effected? How do men come to accept certain values and behaviours in a way that transcends the working environment? What seemed to reinforce this was the social life attached to naval service:

> *There is always something going on and whether or not you go, there is always something to go to. And because you're friendly with the people on the submarine or ship or what have you, you're left alone, away from the big wide world, and so you do become friends.(PO)*

Friendship Networks

Friendships become centred around the service life, whereby collective values may be reinforced. The majority of respondents and interviewees said that most of their friendships were with other servicemen and their families. One CPO reflected:

> *In the Naval mess you generally talk shop. You talk about lots of things. Because you do so much together, and you have your little social world within the wider social world, which you all belong to, it tends to be that you always go back to them, you're always talking to the same people. (CPO)*

Friendships also revolved around rank and branch:

The engineers will talk to the engineers, I mean we all talk to each other, but they talk together about steam plumbing and that sort of thing, and officers talk about officer kinds of things (Commander)

This related to a further finding; that there was diversity between different ranks and branches, one which reflected the characteristic hierarchy. This ultimately represented an internal 'us and them' situation, not unlike the wider service/civilian distinction mentioned so often. An Officer explained:

The social life, it is based on a rank structure. If I walked into a mess and saw my Captain, I may be less formal, but the way I treated him would be largely the same as I do at work. That is expected really. That's the way it works. (Commander)

This appeared to be heightened among ratings and commissioned officers, where various ranks became isolated from one another:

Oh no, you don't mix socially. You're in different classes…and you're made to feel it too. For example, I would never be invited to an Officer's mess. Even if you were, you wouldn't go. Oh no, everyone has their place…yeah, even socially. Especially socially. (Able Seaman)

Perceptions of difference between 'military' and 'civilian' culture varied between categories. Of those personnel who did record differences, 34% had friendship networks with exclusively naval personnel and their families, compared with only 7% of those not recognising any difference.

Percentages of servicemen having exclusively naval friendships.
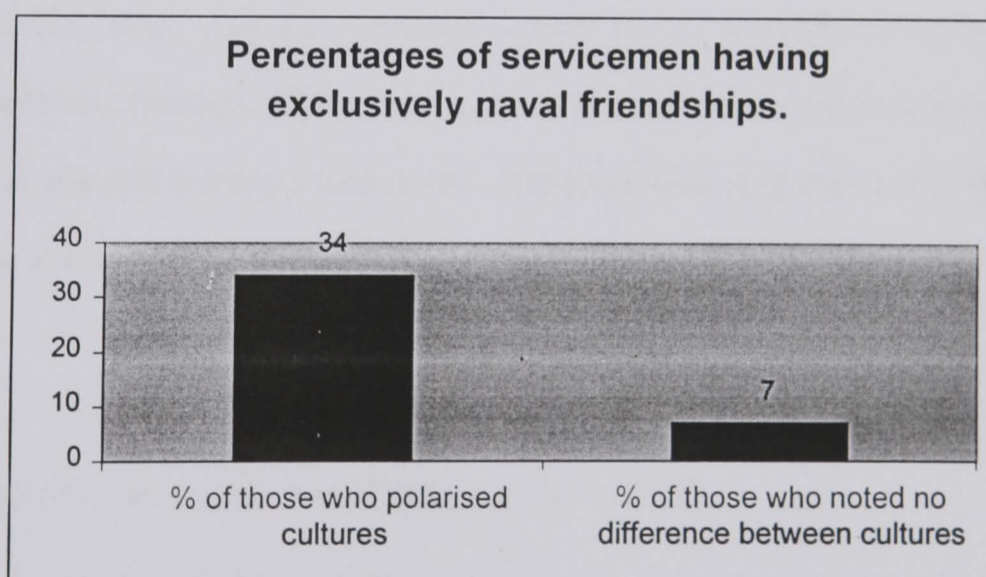
Figure 1 - Servicemen's involvement in exclusively naval friendship networks by perception of differences in culture.

However, the transient nature of such friendships, due to the effects of trickle drafts, came up time and time again:

I made a lot of really good friends, but I had to leave them. You do that, so you probably shouldn't get attached in the first place. But I do. And then I really miss them. (PO)

For those who did not welcome a completely 'service' way of life, settlement in civilian areas provided an alternative option, although most retained quite substantial links with service friendship networks:

When I started off I had mainly service friends, and then in the '80's when we started to buy houses there was a mixture but, no, it was still on the service side. Frankly you do become a bit bored talking about guns and torpedoes and changes to the pay regulations, although you still end up doing it to an extent! (Lieutenant Commander)

We were in a married quarter, but I was going to make a deliberate switch from acquaintances in the Navy, to what I call proper social friends outside it, outside that strict Naval social structure. (CPO)

It would appear that the Naval social life outside 'mess dos' did not appeal to everyone, and that when this was the case, servicemen and their families actively sought to establish networks out of the Navy, in civilian circles:

You can get away from it if you want – it's harder like, if the wife's not got a job in Civvy Street (cos you really might not know anyone else...civilians like), but as I say, you can do it if you want. But you have to be the sort of bloke who can stand up and take the flack for it. I think it made me more balanced – I still see's 'em but not all the time. And it's gotta be better for [wife]. (Able Seaman)

The Naval career, then, had an extensive impact on all the families interviewed, sometimes positive, sometimes otherwise. Most of the servicemen interviewed felt that the military career, '*not just the job, but the whole military way of life*', had to be central to their lives. This finding supports the previously discussed view that military discourse is internalised and normalised by many military men.

The Navy provides mostly everything for a man. (CPO)

It's got everything. (Able Seaman)

The service was intrinsically meaningful and mostly personally fulfilling. It is therefore important to investigate the way in which the balance between work involvement and personal life, outside work, is shaped.

Naval Men and their Families

Most of the servicemen in the study, in both survey and interviews, cited family considerations as their main reason for leaving the service. Whilst it was generally Commissioned Officers who talked most favourably about the prospect of redundancy (due to the financial benefits), voluntary redundancy was also a popular reason for other ranks (70% of ratings, 55% of CPO's and 21% of PO's). Deeper analysis of interview and open-ended data revealed that reasons for voluntary redundancy were based primarily on family concerns, such as spending more time with the family.

Spending more time with the family was particularly important to the youngest age category, all of whom had left for this reason, and who also had the youngest children, all of these being under 16.

Reasons for leaving.
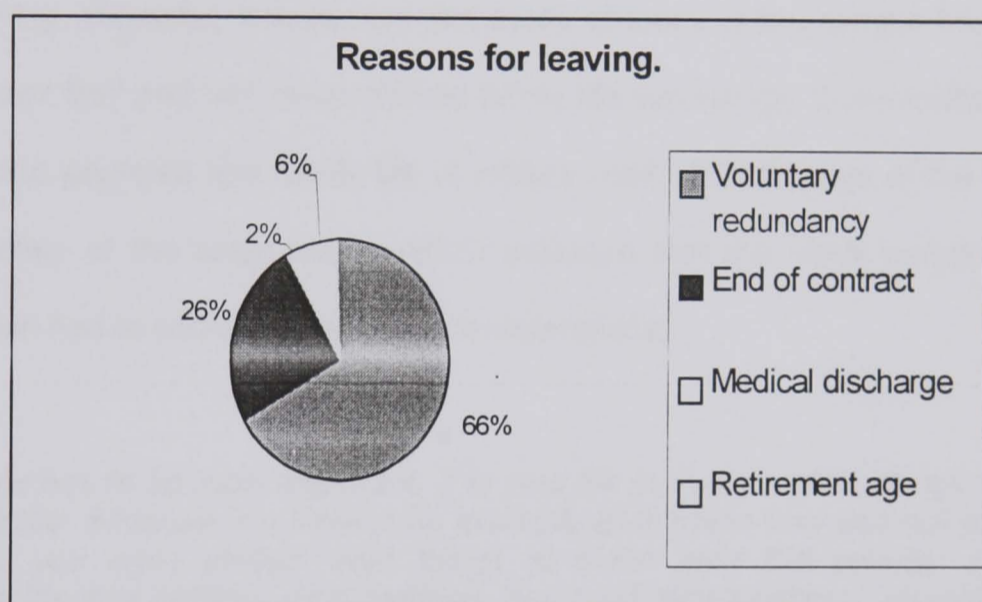
Figure 2 - Servicemen's reason for leaving the Navy.

Men generally believed that the military ethos was incompatible with the well being of their families and their own personal life. One wife suggested:

> I think the Navy would prefer it if their men didn't have families at all...I think we probably get in the way. You should ask them – see what they say to that! (CPO's wife)

Several issues were raised again and again; invasion of privacy, absence of husbands and fathers, family adjustment on the servicemen's return, household formations and the domestic division of labour and the lack of long-term non-work plans. Since many feel that they do, to an extent 'belong' to the Navy, they cannot choose how their time and effort can be divided between work and family:

> When I was single, it had everything to offer – it was great, really great...but with a family...I don't know if you've got kids...well, it changes things. The Navy is not very...shall we say...accommodating. (Able Seaman)

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Servicemen and their wives often felt that not only did the service have to be central in the serviceman's life, it also became central to family life. Respondents who were separated or divorced laid the blame exclusively on the service career:

> *If it weren't for the Service, we'd probably still be together – it was just too much pressure...she couldn't cope with it at the end of the day. (Lieutenant Commander).*

> *Families have to adapt to the job. If they don't...well, I've seen quite a few lads who've had problems when they've tried to put their families first. (CPO)*

Higher-ranking respondents were generally more accepting of the centrality required by the service career, and answers in questionnaires, suggested that this was due to higher incomes and standards of living. However, it appeared that many of those in the sample had become used to 'putting the career first' and had compromised family life accordingly. Does military discourse then, pervade even the personal and family life of military men? The findings of the research suggest that it does. Many of the respondents (65%) indicated that the naval career had, in terms of importance, often had to come before family considerations:

> *The career has to be most important. It is your life in a way...other things have to take second place. Because you have to be available all the time they can call you away like that. And you don't always want things to come after the service, specially the kids...and it's their birthday or something. You can't plan anything...your life's not your own. But you know that when you join, and it has got its good points! (CPO)*

There were many similar answers. Many of the service families felt very much a part of the Navy, despite the obvious practical problems associated with being a 'military family.'

> *It's easiest really, if you just accept it. And they do become like a big family... the lads...their wives and kids...if you want them to be, they are like a family. Not everyone's cup of tea, but you may as well make the most of it...it's there if you want it. (Able Seaman)*

Naval Wives and Service Life

In the same way that servicemen had learned to accept the military rules and codes of conduct, so too did their wives. The navy wife 'code' comprised different aspects of the wife or partner's life, including socialising, parenting, attending navy functions and sometimes playing a part in service-wives networks. Two Officers reflected:

I'm talking officers now, as opposed to ratings, (ratings don't have the same requirement to, shall we say 'perform well in public' and Officers wives do and it's as simple as that). If there is a cocktail party at the establishment, and the officer's wife turns up, she is expected to perform in a certain way. If you like, Naval wives have to complement their husbands... and I'm sure Naval husbands have to complement their wives. (Commander)

If you went to the Captain's dinner party wearing a short (not long formal) skirt or jeans, there would be outrage. The husband would get drawn aside afterwards. (Lieutenant)

This did not only apply to Officers. One Rating remarked:

There are certain ways a navy wife should act. Otherwise it can cause problems with the navy, and with the people you're working with...they're not the same rules as the men follow, no, there are differences. But there is an unwritten navy wife code. (Able Seaman)

Whilst accounts differed, several key characteristics of the 'perfect' naval wife became evident. These included: an ability to 'complement' and support the husband in his position, observance of rules and codes in relation to dress and self-presentation, the capacity to effectively manage domestic arrangements made more difficult by frequent husband absence, the ability to act as two parents during separation and to allow the serviceman to resume his role on return, and the forming of naval friendships with other service personnel, and particularly their wives. A further feature was knowledge, and respect, of hierarchical structures. There appeared to be some hierarchy amongst service wives, reflecting the rank structure within which their husbands worked:

The problem with the women's side is that, if you get involved with the Naval Wives Clubs, you find that the Officers wives look down on the Chiefs wives, the Chiefs wives look down at the PO's wives and... it's all crap really. (Able Seaman)

The Captain's wife is the most important wife there is. Other wives are expected to be extremely respectful. (Commander)

Once again reflecting the experiences of their husbands, relations between wives also included rivalry between different branches, as well as ranks. One wife remembered:

I got called a slag for being a submariner's wife, by the surface ships wives. There's a lot of rivalry between them and submariners, even though submariners are supposed to be the elite! (PO's wife)

The practical implications of this ranking between wives was often viewed with irritation, although a certain resignation:

That was, like, when we went away...when the women all had a trip out on the Polaris submarine, I was chummy with about ten of the girls. And we all troops off in a coach down to the submarine. Well, when I gets into his mess, I'm the only one! The others were junior rates, because he'd just been promoted and he wasn't allowed in the junior rates mess, so I wasn't allowed to mix with my friends, oh no, I had to be with the Senior rates wives...and they all looked down on me! That was quite a shock...I thought oh...I could have had a good time today. It seemed stupid really. (CPO's wife)

Even within the Officer Corps, wives had different experiences:

If wives don't know how to behave, well general list officers wives are more likely to have been to Ascot etc, to have had a social life in the upper social tier. But some wives do have a difficult time because they just do not have the experience of the social level that the Navy demands, and that has caused many marital problems, I know. Some wives become unhappy because they lose their usual friends in their same social grouping, I'm not going to say class...alright I will say class...and move into circles of which they aren't themselves naturally part. And that makes it very hard for them, because their natural friends are not these people. (Commander)

It would appear from the data that wives were expected to accommodate their husbands' career even within their own social lives. The Naval identity embraced by many of the servicemen was often extended to their wives, regardless of whether or not they too embraced it. Some wives felt that they had been discriminated against by civilians, for the very reason that they were service wives:

When I used to take the kids to school they all used to stare at me, like I was something weird, some sort of alien who shouldn't 've been there. And the only ones who were friendly, like out of all the mums outside the gates when I was picking them up, the only ones who talked to me were other service wives. Dunno what they expected us to do. I didn't mind so much, but it weren't nice for the kids and that upset me sometimes. (Able Seaman's wife)

Several wives expressed the view that the label 'service wife' was forced on them, purely because their husbands were sailors. They were, in many cases, aware that it was impossible to escape the image that came with their husbands' jobs. One wife suggested that stereotyping was responsible for the negative experiences of service wives:

I think the Naval wives get tarred with a terrible name, because I wouldn't have thought that their behaviour, when their men are away, are any different to civilian wives whose husbands are...I dunno...long-distance lorry drivers or something. They just get a really bad press really. (PO's wife)

A serviceman and his wife noted:

On the TV, if you watch local TV and they do something on Naval wives. And they always go to the Naval wives club at St Budeaux and show...all those ones, you know the ones like The Fat Slags don't they! (CPO).

Oh my God! That really sums up what people think of Naval wives. But the majority of them aren't like that. Either that or they show all those Devonport women! [laughs]...they always show those types. Why do they always interview those sorts of wives! No wonder people give us all so much stick! (CPO's wife)

It was clear that, for some wives, service identity came as part of the package with their husbands. However, others felt involved and personally attached to the Navy. The acceptance of 'naval' values, and attachment to the Navy by the majority of the men interviewed also applied to some wives. The 'Navy wife' identity and acceptance of navy discourses appeared to vary with the wives' levels of involvement with the Navy:

Naval wife was pretty much my whole identity. Because it was all our life wasn't it? It's what I was. I didn't really know much else. Now he's leaving, I'm trying to branch out a bit...the new job [own] has helped. (Able Seaman's wife)

However, some felt bewildered and kept a distance:

I think increasingly, people who marry into the Service probably find it stranger or harder when they are confronted with service life, whether they are male or female. Sometimes they just can't put up with it so they stay away. (Lieutenant Commander's wife)

Difficulties arose particularly where wives did not match the expectations of the suitable Navy wife:

She became disenchanted with the Navy and she became very left wing and supported CND. I've got nothing against people who support the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, but it does make it very difficult with the work I was working on at the time, which meant that I couldn't discuss the work with her. (Commander)

Other interviewees echoed this opinion, for example:

The political leanings of your wife, your friends and your associates can affect your security clearance and make things difficult for you. (Lieutenant Commander).

Whilst most wives felt that the service impacted on their home life significantly, perceived levels of involvement with the service varied, although most enjoyed parades. Where families lived in married quarters, wives tended to feel more involved, however the majority of the service wives interviewed lived in civilian localities and had few links with the Navy when their husbands were away at sea:

I was more involved, not so much here. That was when we were in Scotland, in married quarters. Then when we moved here we neither of us had it as much, although we do go to functions because you are still a member of the crew, and they have wives to dos, and we all socialise and go bowling. But the wives don't get together so much when they're away. (CPO's wife)

It did seem apparent from the interviews, that those wives who did live near bases, or other service families, did feel more involved, and believed that being a naval wife formed a large part of their identities. Additionally, it was more common for wives who often socialised with other military wives while their husbands were away, and those who formed part of wives' support networks, to feel emotionally involved with the Navy on a personal level:

All the women are left alone at the same time so you all become friends. The women socialise more during the day. I think that helps you cope with life in the Service. (Able Seaman's wife)

The involvement of wives then, in many cases, transcended merely accompanying or 'complementing' their husbands. For many there was direct involvement in the wider 'Service family', particularly whilst men were away at sea:

I had my social life when he was away, I had my social life with the girls. And sometimes I'd go down to the Naval club to dances and so on. That all stopped when the boat came in, because then you would be a couple again. (PO's wife)

Pride in the military husband also made wives feel more involved.

Sometimes you get really fed up with the constant Navy thing, it affects your whole life. But when you see him on passing out parades and things – well you feel so proud. You remember why you were happy to marry a navy man. And you do sometimes feel part of it yourself. (CPO's wife)

However, wives also documented the insecurity of these types of friendships, again reflecting similar comments made by the men:

I have had a lot of really good friends, but when you get moved away, you move away from all those friends that you had. And I have found myself quite lonely at times, yes very lonely. (PO's wife)

Interestingly, although perhaps obviously, the families who reported most harmony in terms of home life were those where the wife did feel involved with the Navy, in her own right as a Naval wife. It would appear that families most well adapted to the military 'way of life' were those where

both husband and wife had a military identity, and shared the same views about how their 'military way of life' should be manifested.

> *It can make you feel that you belong. It's security. And you have something in common with other wives, so they can be like a support for you. So even when [husband's name] is away, I still feel part of the navy – even though it's his job and not mine. (Able Seaman's wife)*

It is clear that families may be affected by the occupational socialisation of one of its members. However what would appear to be the case here is not merely the impact of one person's socialisation, but the socialisation of other family members through different levels of contact and involvement and, ultimately, the creation of further military identities:

> *Even me, I feel a part...a part of the Naval community if you like. Like a service woman, but not doing the job. Which probably seems a bit strange...but there it is. (WO's wife)*

Spouse and partner levels of self-expressed involvement with the navy again indicate an extension of socialisation to partners. Of all men who stated that their partners were significantly involved with the Navy, 93% polarised naval and civilian 'cultures', as opposed to 82% of men whose wives or partners were more detached. It also appeared, from both interviews and the questionnaire survey, that many men and women felt that the Navy was quite prescriptive in its attitude toward family life:

> *The service does make it clear – I mean how a family should be. And I think the Navy is probably great for single men. But you know there are ways you are supposed to behave – like a good little family. Otherwise it can mean trouble...well... if you don't live up to their standards. (Able Seaman's wife)*

Clearly, in the families studied, the Navy is able to pervade the family and is thus able to extend its values into the family sphere. It could be argued then, that some naval families are socialised into military discourse. Friendship networks once again reinforced this:

Of those couples who were 'more involved', 47% had exclusively service friendship networks, 51% a combination of service and civilian friends, and 2% exclusively civilian. In contrast, of the 'more detached' group, only 21% had exclusively service friendship networks, 74% both service and civilian, and 5% civilians only. Perhaps unsurprisingly, families who relied more exclusively on naval friendship networks were those who had more joint involvement, in the naval career and naval life.
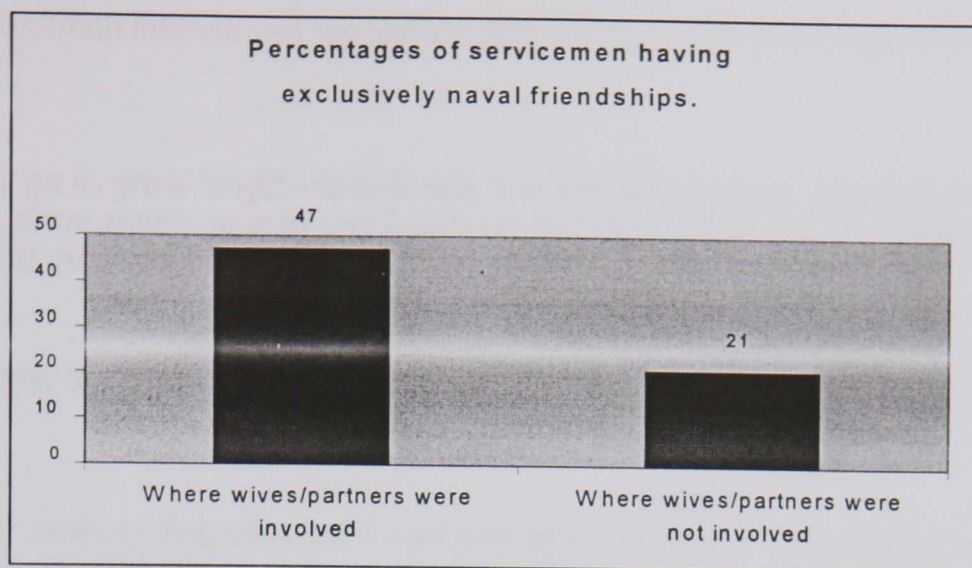
Figure 3 - Servicmen's involvement in exclusively naval friendship networks by spouse's level of involvement with the Navy.

There was often more difficulty in coming to terms with military life where wives did not feel the Navy to be part of their identity. Although wives may not have taken on any sense of military identity, they still felt that the Navy 'ruled their lives'. These wives typically felt oppressed by the intrusion of the Navy into their private lives, although nearly all were prepared to accept it, and saw it as an inevitable part of everyday life.

> I married the man, not the Navy, but I knew the consequences. (CPO's wife)

> I don't have a service background – and I just don't think in the same way some service wives have learned to. I think it gets quite difficult for both of us sometimes. We look at things in different ways. But the Navy has to come first anyway, so… (Lieutenant's wife)

Here, military and civilian discourses appeared to be fighting for space. But even where wives were not successfully socialised, the practical results of military discourse on family life were evident. Many suggested that the Navy, in keeping with traditional family values[67], deliberately attempted to integrate wives into the Naval 'way of life':

> The wife and family's morale is, in real terms, very important to one component of the whole well being of the person serving. (Commander)

One Officer explained:

> If you were my wife and you were enjoying coming along to the mess and all that, and you knew all the other wives and things and had a good time, and you went to the mother and toddler groups, wives' swimming, you were welcome when I was away at sea and that sort of thing, you might be happy. And when you heard that the ship had been delayed three weeks, you'd all support each other, then the crisis wouldn't be so bad. (Commander)

Many of the servicemen interviewed recognised this attempt to 'draw in' the their families:

> *I think they go to great lengths to cultivate a family atmosphere, because the more they can make, draw everyone in to one feeling of belonging, then the more likely they are to have a good managerial situation. (Lieutenant Commander)*

However, for some, this extension of paternalism from the Navy was irritating:

> *(Wife) I got really pissed off, I didn't feel part of it. I suppose I put pressure on him, and he did feel under pressure. (Able Seaman's wife)*
> *(Serviceman) Yeah, it was difficult 'cos I had no choice really, but I could see why she was angry, but I couldn't really do much. (Able Seaman)*

The Impact of the Naval Career on Family Life

Perceived roles and relationships differed, as one might expect, from family to family. However, there were several similarities. The main influence, which has already been noted, was the required and expected centrality of the military career in the serviceman's and the serviceman's family's life:

> *In practice, when the crunch comes, and it's a question of going away with your family or mending the ship's boiler so you can sail on Monday morning, you find yourself mending the boiler! That's true in every bit of the Navy. (CPO)*

The Naval career interfered with what respondents referred to as 'normal family life':

> *In the Navy I can never plan more than a couple of weeks ahead...the number of holidays we never had. Or worrying about them up 'til the day before. They can say, you know, don't think you're going. We had a holiday booked in Greece, and all of a sudden they changed submarines at very short notice. And when I said I'm going to Greece in a couple of days they said Well, you can't go can you, and I thought What do you mean, I can't go?!. I wasn't exactly happy, but there's no choice. The job comes first. Not just in wartime but all the time. That's what I can't handle now. (PO)*

Another couple agreed:

> *(Serviceman) It becomes our whole life, the whole family.*
> *(Wife) It affects everything – there's not one decision that can be made without the Navy being involved somewhere along the line.*
> *(Serviceman) That's very true.*
> *(Wife) Where we live.*
> *(Serviceman) Yes.*
> *(Wife) Where we take our holidays.*
> *(Serviceman) Yep.*
> *(Wife) When you go visiting family.*
> *(Serviceman nods)*

(Wife) Everything. Our lives revolve around the Navy... ...a hundred percent. I sometimes find it very intrusive. Well, it was something I knew I'd have to put up with when I was married... ...so I've never moaned about it, because it comes with loving a serviceman. (PO and wife)

For many of the couples interviewed, the centrality of the service career had become naturalised, a normal part of service life which was accepted, albeit often with resignation. One couple argued that the financial security of the service career compensated the lack of security in other aspects such as long-term planning, absence and so on:

(Serviceman) It gives you [wife] tremendous confidence.
(Wife) Yes, I do feel secure and safe.
(Serviceman) Because at the end of the day, it doesn't matter what you spend, cos you get another good pay packet, and everything is sorted out for you.
(Wife) Yes, that does give me more confidence.
(Serviceman) That's part of your identity then, feeling strong and confident, because you're bomb-proof. Whatever happens to you, you know chances are, it will get sorted out. (CPO and wife)

In the main, family roles and priorities were dictated in accordance with the central Navy career. One aspect of this was the inevitability of nuclear families comprising breadwinner husbands and housewives.

Dual Earner Families

In contrast to the growing incidence of dual earner families in contemporary society, the majority of couples interviewed had opted for a more traditional family formation. Due to the regular, and often long-term absence of men from the home, most of the servicemen's wives had not found it possible to juggle domestic tasks with a career, and most identified themselves as housewives, although a small number had part-time work – often as a financial necessity.

The majority of the sample (81%) had been in dual-earner families for some part of their time in service. 68% of the respondents' wives' or partners' employment was part-time. Only a very small percentage had maintained a career throughout the duration their husbands' service. Reasons given for this came down to having and caring for children. The centrality of the service career put restrictions on the careers of service wives. Even where women did have part-time jobs, the progression of these 'careers' was limited, and the literature documents the ways in which 'careers' are ultimately more fulfilling than 'jobs'[68]:

There's no room in service families for two careers. And I wouldn't have the time anyway... what with this lot and him to look after. (WO's wife)

His career has meant that I haven't been able to do everything I would have liked. I'd planned a lot more when I was younger. But, well...really his career has meant I can't have one. (Lieutenant Commander's wife)

Those who had returned to work were located mainly in the ratings group of respondents, with the main reason being financial necessity. Wives and partners of higher ranking individuals were more able to take time out from their careers in order to look after children, and those who had pursued careers acknowledged the use of private childcare and, in some cases, boarding school. Wives and partners of lower ranking groups referred to their employment as 'jobs', whereas many of the higher-ranking groups talked of 'careers'.

Again, whilst literature documents the organisation of dual earner families into 'leader' and 'follower' careers, often depending on financial positions[69], for this group of military families, the military career had to be central. Servicemen felt the Navy made it necessary, and made this quite clear to its employees. Of all the families that had lived in a dual-career household (81% of the sample), 67% had put the naval career first, in terms of importance.

Where the service career was viewed as a priority, there were higher levels of involvement of wives and partners in service life (58% of respondents from this group reporting involvement). In families where both careers were viewed as being equal, only 21% of wives felt strongly involved with the Navy.

Lower levels of contact with civilian employment meant that women were able to invest more time and offer more support for their husbands' naval careers:

You need to have a wife that's ready to support you in your job, and as well...someone who's ready to put up with the shit that the Navy can pile on you. Because it's more than a job — it's your whole life, the wife needs to be as dedicated as the bloke is. I've been lucky, but I know friends whose wives think it's bollocks... ...you know, the whole navy thing... ...and that can make things difficult... ...yeah... ...like I say, I've been lucky. Sometimes I feel a bit guilty — she puts up with a lot. But she does it. Yeah, she's very supportive. I don't know if it [the relationship] would have worked otherwise. (Able Seaman)
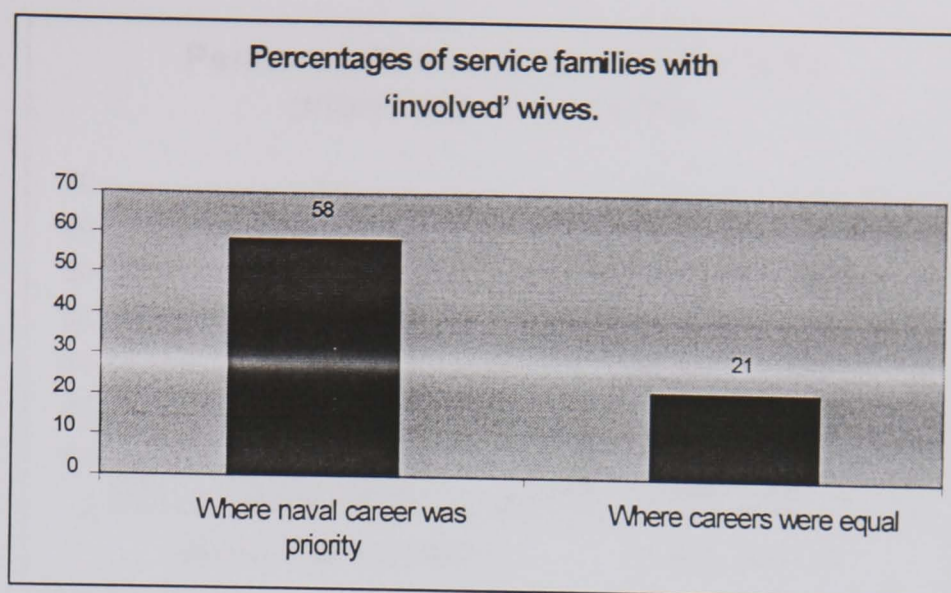
Figure 4 - Level of spouse's involvement with Navy by priority of careers.

As discussed, regular absence and the necessity for a serviceman to be available at any time only reinforced this view. Some of the women, who had been highly educated and at some point had pursued a professional career, where the salaries equalled or even exceeded those of their husbands, had given up their careers, precisely in order to support the military career, and the 'military lifestyle' that came with it.

> *I was lucky enough to have a very good education. But it was a choice really, between marrying the man I loved or a high-flying career. And it's been pretty good. His career has provided us with security, and it's enabled me to direct my energies into bringing up the children. Sometimes I do wonder though, what I might be doing now! (Lieutenant Commander's wife)*

Where two careers were pursued, this often led to difficulties:

> *Well, she was in the Navy when we first got married, and then she left and went to University, then she went to teacher training college, then she took up a job for a few years. Then she did an MPhil and became a chartered accountant, and at that point she became less interested, and almost resentful of her expected involvement in the Navy as my wife. (Commander)*

Equality of careers was also affected by whether or not the couple had any children. Where couples had dependent children, 63% of families had put the naval career first. Conversely, of those who had no children, 60% had viewed both careers as being of equal importance.

Percentages of service families who prioritised naval career.
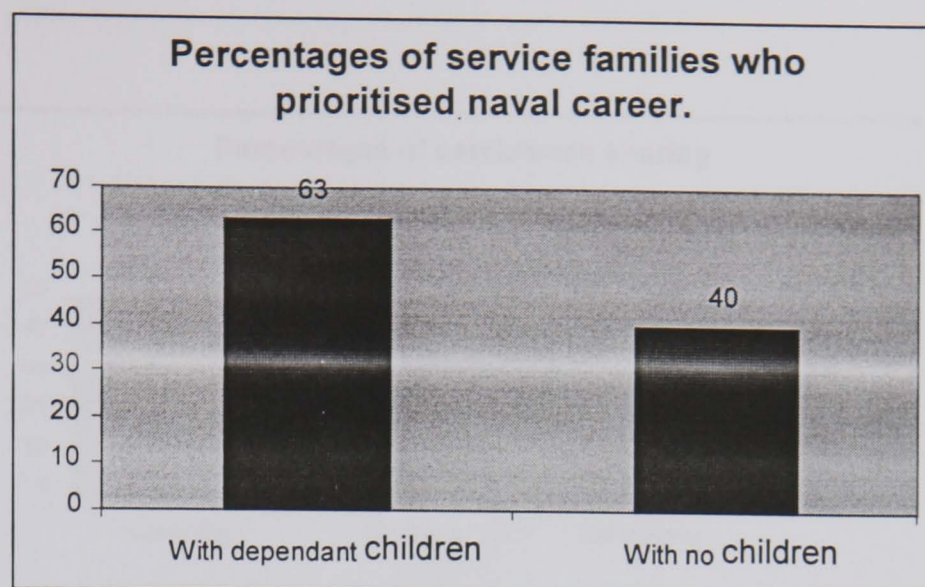
Figure 5 - Prioritisation of the naval career in service families by children.

Comments made about the financial security of the service career may shed some light on this:

At the end of the day...jobs in the service...[looks to wife] you agree...it brings in the money on a regular basis. And if you've got kids, believe me, you need a lot of it! (Able Seaman)

Most of the respondents felt that the military career had, to some extent, influenced the generation of household roles. Throughout the interviews and survey data, military discourse appeared to impact on household formations. The importance of the service career also had implications for household formations. Centrality of the service career meant that household tasks were less likely to be shared and more likely to be undertaken by wives and partners. In families where careers were of equal importance, 29% of respondents shared the cleaning, 42% shared the cooking and 33% shared bill paying. The remainder mostly allocated these tasks to the women. In contrast, where the husband's career was put first, only 8% shared the cleaning, 30% shared cooking and 13% shared bill paying.

In common with inequality in careers, it would appear that the Navy is not an occupation that comfortably allows for a sharing of family responsibilities. Rather it is more compatible with 'traditional notions of the division of labour between breadwinner husband and the traditional housewife'. Indeed, most of the servicemen interviewed reinforced this. They saw themselves as breadwinner and head of the household, and felt uncomfortable with their wives taking over 'the man's jobs' when they were absent, consequently roles were, albeit unconsciously, clearly segregated.

Percentages of servicemen sharing household tasks.
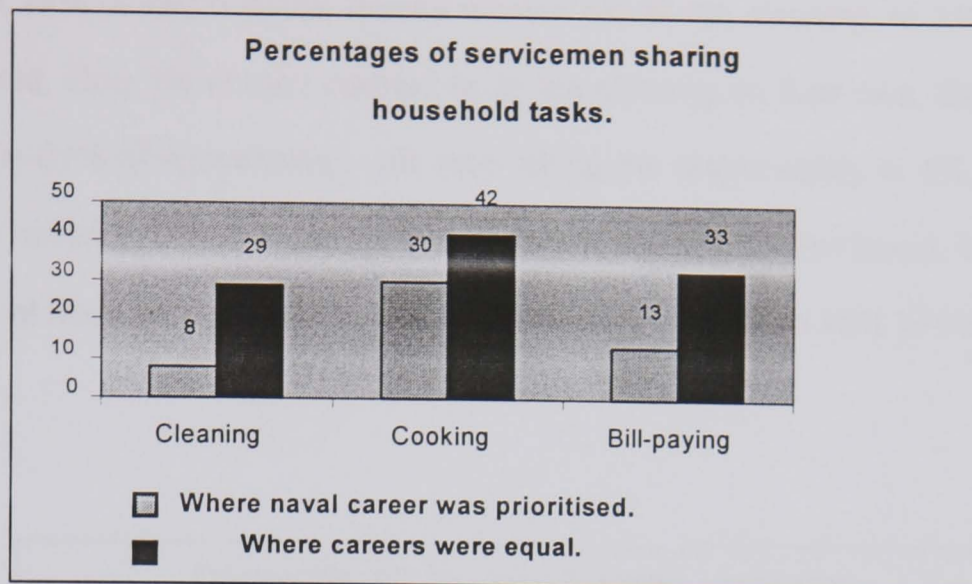
Figure 6 - Division of household roles by priority of careers.

Household Formations

Whilst household formations in contemporary society are clearly gendered, this appeared to be compounded by men's involvement in a service career. Both men and women agreed that when men were at home for long periods, involvement levels were higher. However, where men were away for a large part of the time, such as trips or weekending, their contribution to household tasks when they were at home declined dramatically[70]:

> I'd have more...I'd help her more...But you get home...you're knackered...you wanna relax quite honestly. (Able Seaman)

When household formations were analysed, it became clear that the majority of household tasks were the responsibility of the wives and partners of the servicemen. However, there were differences in involvement levels between what were seen as 'tasks' and 'decisions'. Decisions, such as those regarding money, children's education and so on, were more likely to be shared or taken by the servicemen, as opposed to household tasks, which in most cases were allocated to the women:

> Well, he's away so much...you end up doing it all even when he's back. Hang on though...he still makes most of the decisions – you don't need to be at home so much to do that. In any case, I think he sees that as the man's prerogative. I just get left to do all the exciting bits and pieces around the house, like cleaning, washing...well everything actually...what he probably sees as the woman's prerogative, I've no doubt! (PO's wife)

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The questionnaire data indicated further differences with regard to the extent to which various tasks were shared. In 78% of respondents' homes women did all the cleaning. In 21%, cleaning these tasks were shared. Only 1% of men claimed to do the cleaning on their own. Similarly, ironing fell to the women (in 61% of households), with men taking the responsibility in 1%, and task-sharing occurring in the remaining 38%. Cooking was slightly more equally distributed. Women did all the cooking in 50% of households, whilst men took charge in only 4%. In 46% of households cooking was shared.

Domestic division of labour: cleaning in households

21%

1%

78%

- Solely wife/partner
- Serviceman
- Shared
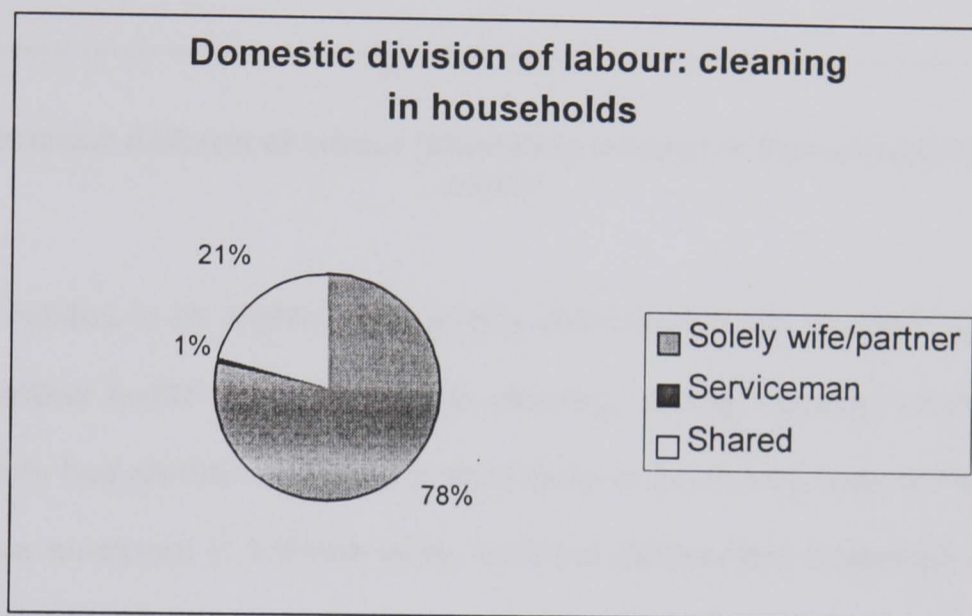
Figure 7 - Domestic division of labour (cleaning) in households during the service career

Domestic division of labour: ironing.

38%

1%

61%

- Solely wife/partner
- Serviceman
- Shared
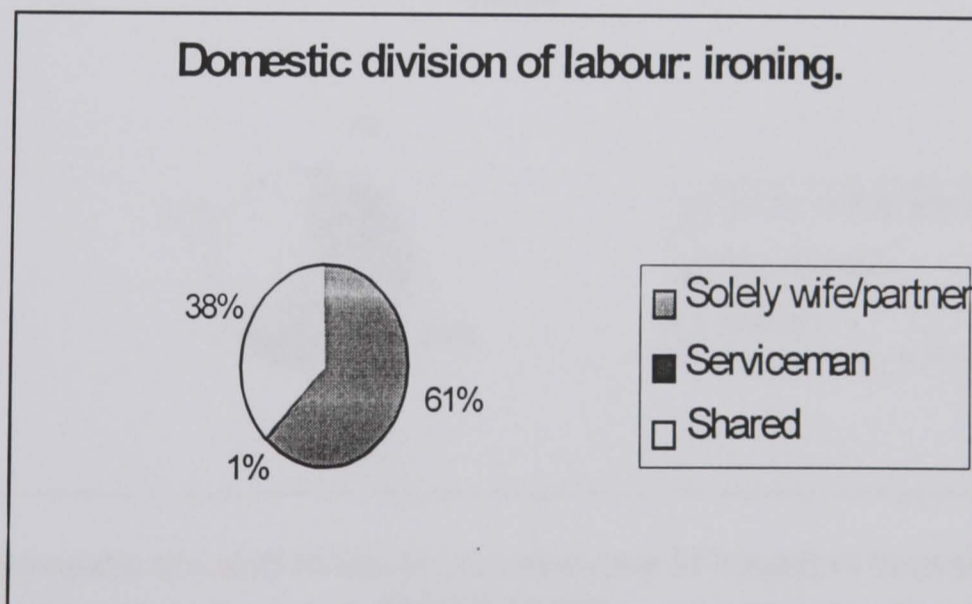
Figure 8 - Domestic division of labour (ironing) in households during service career

In contrast, allocation of money was seen as 'more of a man's job'. For 65% of families, this was the male's responsibility, with women undertaking the task in 10%, and the remaining 15% sharing. Similarly, maintenance and upkeep of the house was more often the male's domain, with 55% of households leaving jobs solely to the men, 7% to the women and 38% sharing the task.

Domestic division of labour: allocating money

10%
25%
65%

- Solely wife/partner
- Serviceman
- Shared
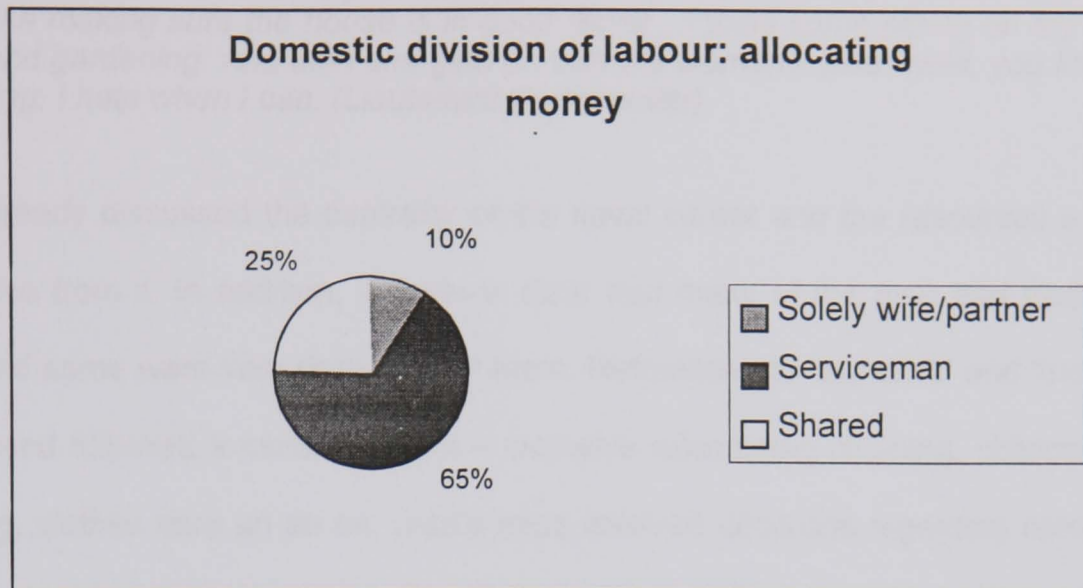
Figure 9 - Domestic division of labour (allocating money) in households during service career

Household roles tended to be slightly more evenly distributed in the younger age groups. Lower ranks also had higher levels of involvement in cleaning, ironing, cooking, shopping and so on. Where respondents had children, roles were more likely to be shared and, similarly, where wives and partners were employed in full-time work, husband involvement increased slightly, although part-time work had no impact.

Domestic division of labour: maintenance of house

7%
38%
55%

- Solely wife/partner
- Serviceman
- Shared
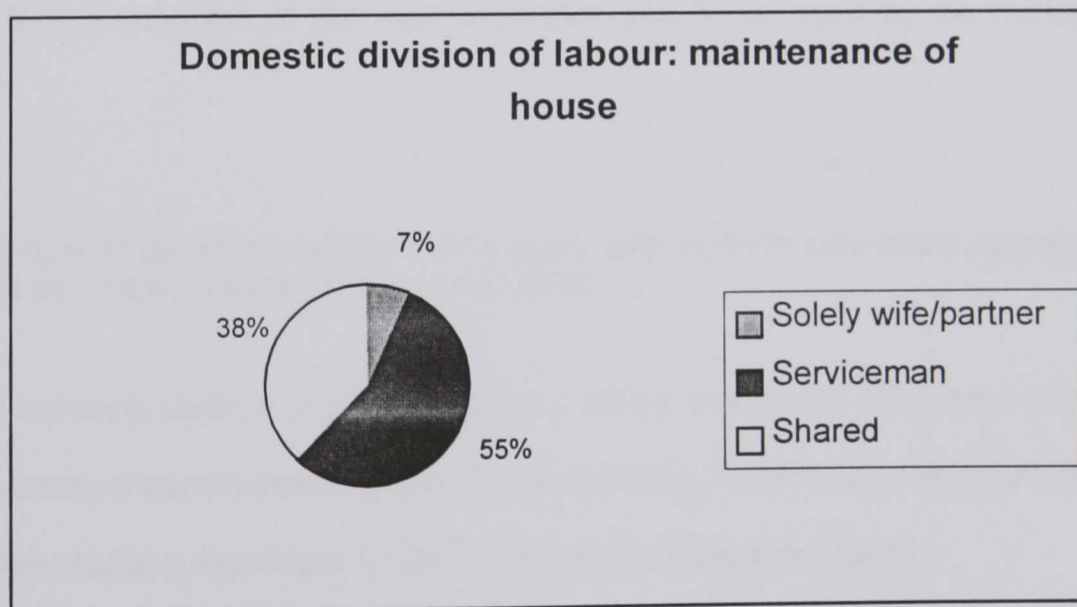
Figure 10 - Domestic division of labour (maintenance of house) in households during service career

Both servicemen and their wives also talked of their most favourite and least favourite household responsibilities. Tasks least enjoyed were cleaning and clothes care. Again these were the tasks that were most likely to be performed exclusively by the service wives, and which the men deemed to be 'women's jobs:

I don't think they're organised as such... no... they've evolved. When you've got a lot of pressures on with your job, you have to prioritise. So obviously I make sure I do the jobs like making sure the house is in good repair...I fixed some piping on my last time off...and gardening. And then she gets on with the women's jobs...well, you know...like cleaning. I help when I can. (Lieutenant Commander)

We have already discussed the centrality of the naval career and the resources a serviceman is able to derive from it. In addition, it became clear that many of the men had traditional sex-role attitudes, and some were very defensive of them. References to 'women's' and 'men's' work were numerous, and followed a certain pattern – women's roles being cleaning, childcare tasks, other than playing, clothes care an so on; men's roles involved decisions regarding money, household repairs and maintenance and so on. It was the servicemen's lack of available time outside their work that made it necessary to define and select these gendered roles:

We don't have the luxury of time on our hands. I know that I'd be able to help her out more if I was around more of the time, but I'm not. It's a case of 'what can't be cured must be endured' I'm afraid. (WO)

The servicemen commonly claimed that such jobs naturally and practically became the wives' responsibility, allowing them to concentrate on the 'men's jobs'. This natural selection of jobs was often said to be 'practical', since the serviceman's time in the home was limited by the demands of the career, thus a selection of the most important jobs, to be done by the husband, had to be made:

I make sure to do what I call the man's work...although I'm sure she'd manage...but...I have to be of some use while I'm home! (CPO)

Whether the domestic division of labour described above was due to enjoyment or the demands of the job and practical consideration is not in question here, but it is hard to ignore the fact that the 'trend' was reported in a significant number of service families interviewed.

Similar findings were made when observing parental roles. Again there was some evidence of gendering. In 80% of responses regarding taking children to school, women took sole responsibility, and in 78% answering the question regarding visits to the doctor, dentist and so on, women were again solely responsible. In 60% of the households of men who answered this section of the questionnaire, women exclusively attended school activities, with the remaining 40% sharing the task. However, when it came to playing with the children, in 94% of responses such activities were shared, with women alone performing that role in the other 6%.

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Parenting: responsibility for taking children to school

20%

80%

- Solely wife/partner
- Shared
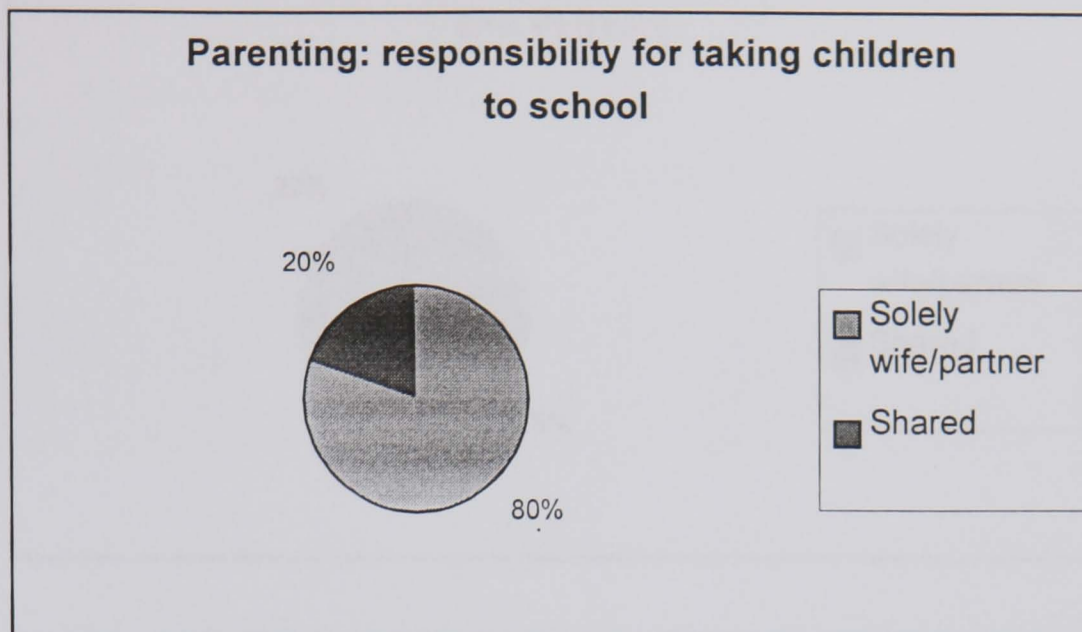
Figure 11 - Domestic division of labour (taking children to school) in households during service career

When answers regarding the allocation of tasks was compared with those about responsibilities for decision making, there were clear differences. Decisions regarding children's education were shared in 82% of families, and 57% of couples shared responsibilities regarding money spent on children. In 51% of responses, decisions regarding play were also shared, the remaining 49% leaving these decisions to the women.

Parental decisions were thus more likely to be shared than parental tasks. However, whilst comments were made in questionnaires about the inevitable impact of the service career on parental roles, 60% of respondents had no plans to change them after leaving the service:

We've settled into this way of life. I know you're a ...what...social scientist or whatever. So you undoubtedly think that's sexist, but it works for us...so why change it now? (Commander)

Parenting: responsibility for visits to doctors and dentists

22%

78%

- Solely wife/partner
- Shared
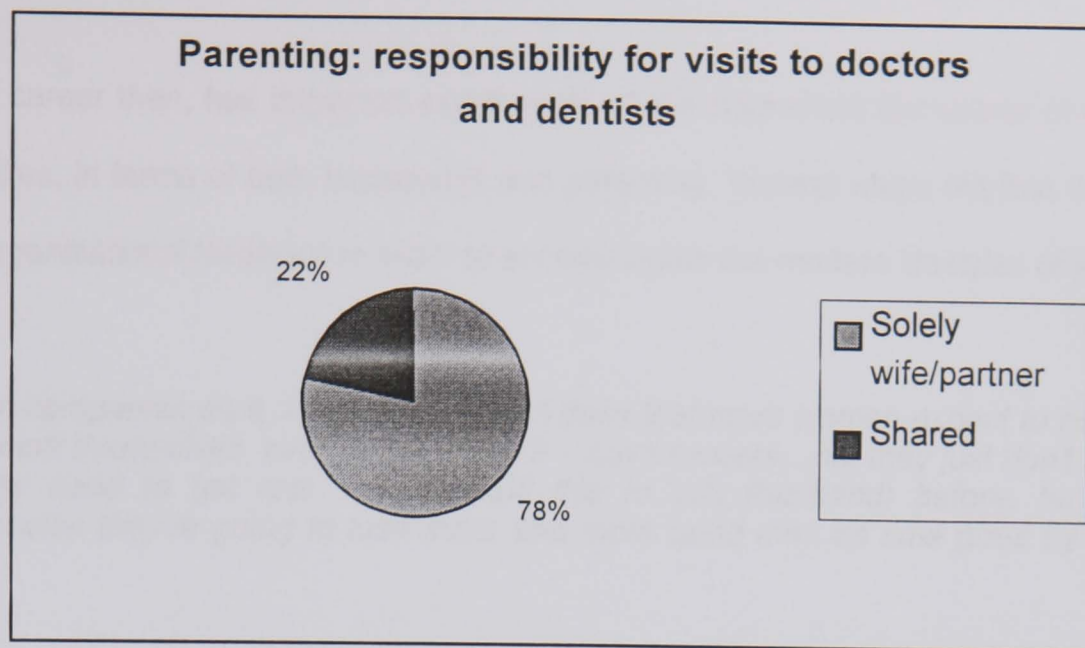
Figure 12 - Domestic division of labour (taking children to doctors and dentists) in households during service career of men who have already left.

Parenting: responsibility for attending school activities

40%

60%

- Solely wife/partner
- Shared
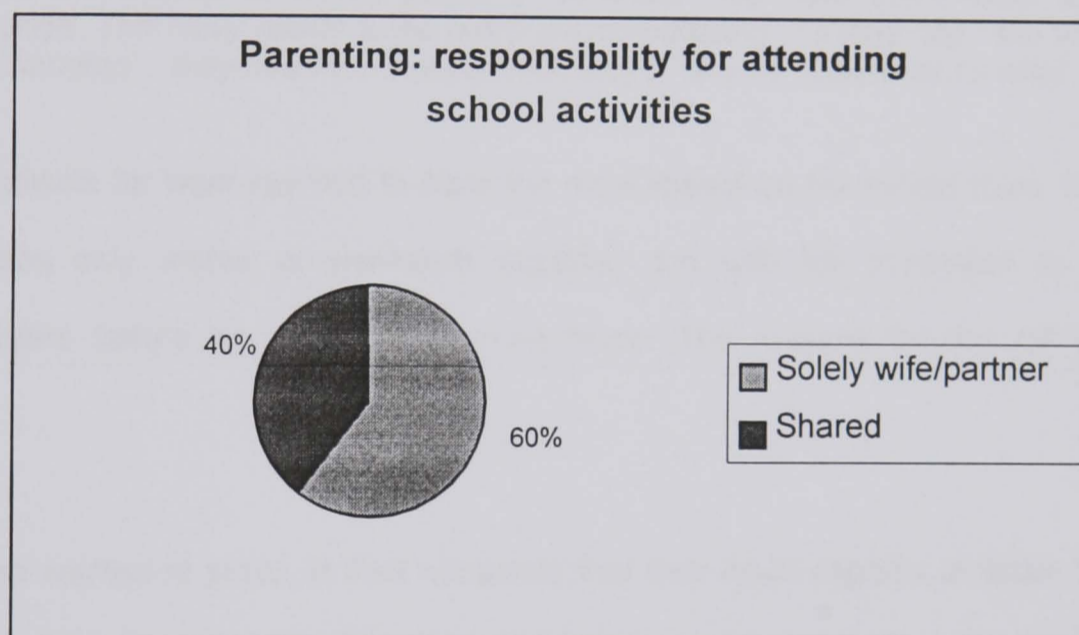
Figure 13 - Domestic division of labour (attending school activities) in households during service careers of men who have already left.

As with household roles, the likelihood of parents sharing tasks increased with decreasing rank, and younger respondents were also more likely to allocate roles more evenly. Again, this likelihood also increased when wives and partners were employed in full-time jobs, although this still had a lesser effect than rank or age.

Again, one of the main reasons given for the extensive maternal role of women was the time that servicemen spent away from the home. Since servicemen were often away, time at home was focused on 'quality time', for example, playing with children, spending time together etc:

I don't get much time with them, with my kids. Obviously, when I do see them, I want it to be time we all enjoy to the full. (PO)

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The military career then, has impacted significantly on the household formations of this sample of service families, in terms of both housework and parenting. Several wives felt that the Navy could update its organisational traditions in order to accommodate the modern lifestyles of its members:

> *Civilian companies do it. I mean, they can't deny that more women expect to be able to go to work themselves, even – dare I say it – have careers...but they just don't allow for it. They need to get real... ...I've said this to you (husband) before, haven't I... ...otherwise they're going to lose more and more good men as time goes by. (CPO's wife)*

Another wife pointed out:

> *I think that, perhaps not so much the older ones, but the younger men are having to consider the wishes of wives, partners...whatever...consider them more and more these days. The Navy needs to be more accommodating. As they say ' the times they are a'changing'...they need to...I really think they'll have to. (Lieutenant's wife)*

The time available for work seemed to have the most impact on household roles. Where couples were spending only weeks or weekends together, the wife felt compelled to complete the household tasks before her husband returned home. The reasons for this fell into two main categories.

Firstly women wanted to prove to their husbands that they could capably maintain the running of the household, as well as looking after the children. As we have already seen, military discourse defines this as what a good naval wife should do to support the military man, and many of the women accepted the role. Indeed women were rightly proud of their ability to be both mother and housewife, and head of the household where necessary.

> *I can do all the jobs around the house, I can do all the jobs that men normally do. Because I have to don't I? There's no point in waiting for him to come home – some things just don't wait. I think it makes you stronger. You don't need to rely on your husband like a lot of civilian women do. I can look after myself, my children and my house...and him when he gets home! (PO's wife)*

Men also recognised the important roles played by their wives in relation to sustaining and advancing the naval career:

> *It helps to have a woman who can handle domestic management competently. (Lieutenant)*

Secondly, servicemen and their wives pointed out the 'artificial' nature of much of the time they spent together between periods of absence, again with particular reference to weekending. They felt compelled to 'make the most' of their time together, through doing things that they both enjoyed:

> I like to get all the mundane things done well before he gets home...you know, so we can enjoy each other's company for just a while before he has to disappear off again. (CPO's wife)

Couples thus manipulated their available time in order to co-ordinate activities. Servicemen and their wives agreed that, where time together was short, they consciously tried to spend that time doing activities they could both enjoy together, at the expense of domestic tasks, which could be done by the wife before the husband returned.

> It's a strain, but what can you do? It's the only time we have together. (Able Seaman's wife)

At the same time both servicemen and their wives also agreed that this form of time-management was, in reality, quite stressful. The pressure to enjoy themselves and 'make the most' of available time meant that they missed out on doing jobs together that they might normally do without the intrusion of the military career.

> Life can be quite strange, quite contrived – it would actually be quite nice for us to be able to do normal things together, like go shopping or do the gardening. But we have to make sure that we have fun, and sometimes it can feel a bit artificial – trying hard to have fun can pile on a lot of pressure. (Lieutenant Commander's wife)

Absence also took its toll on home life. Many comments demonstrated the impact of absence on personal relationships. Many had problems on return: interrupting wives and partners' routines; feeling that they had lost their own roles; suffering from the pressure of having to enjoy short periods together, particularly where weekending was concerned; not having the authority to discipline children; feeling that husband and wife had become 'strangers', and so on.

Husband Absence

The problems caused by husband and father absence were very evident. Absence was a problematic area for most of the individuals interviewed, both servicemen and their wives:

*You tend to lead two separate lives, adapting to the military for months
then trying to fit into a home life routine. (CPO)*

Most felt that absence took its toll on their home lives. The majority (56%) of respondents had been

unhappy with the amount of absence demanded by their careers, whilst 34% found it acceptable

and 10% had actually enjoyed it.

Servicemen's feelings towards absence.

10%

34%   56%

- Unhappy
- Acceptable
- Enjoyed it
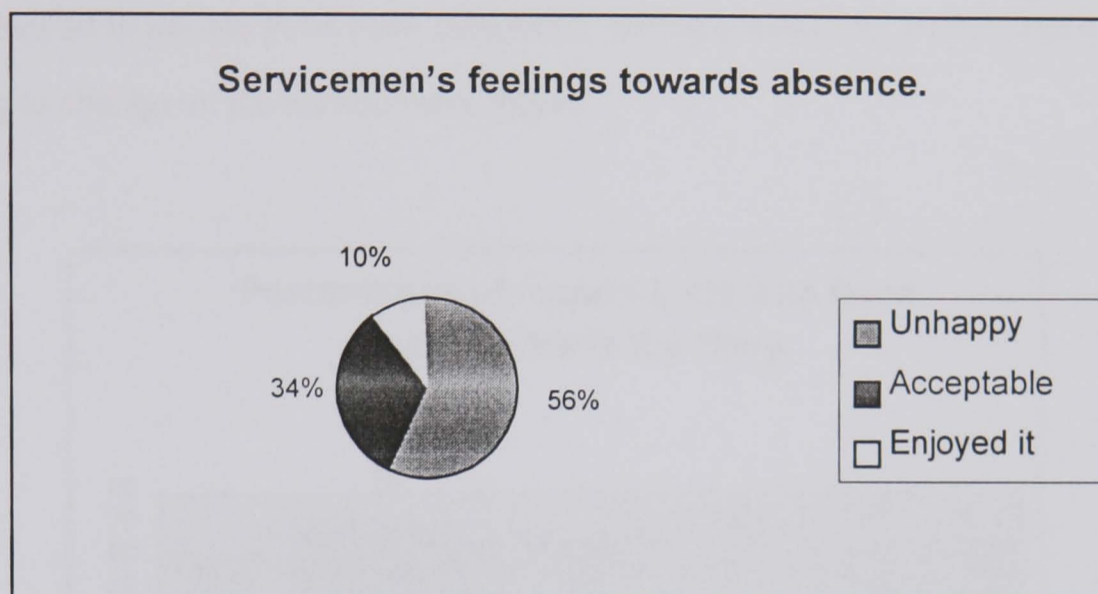
Figure 14 - Feeling towards absence whilst in service.

Most felt that home life would improve once they were out of naval service:

*It'll be strange at first I should think. Look, we've been married for twenty-five, well
nearly twenty-five years now, but you could say we've been together for about a quarter
of that! We'll be able to really get to know each other [laughs]. You never know...we
might get right on each other's nerves! No, seriously though, it'll be really, really nice.
(CPO's wife)*

Where respondents had been unhappy with the amount of time spent away from home, they were

generally happier with leaving naval service (73% of responses from this group), as opposed to

those who had been content with absence, of whom only 20% were happy.

It would appear that the impact of absence might be responsible for the family pressures that

represented the main reason for voluntary redundancy.

*I feel like a gypsy – when you're away a lot you really don't have the home life that
people want and expect – you have no home life really. (Able Seaman)*

*My frequent absence has meant that there has been little real home life to comment on.
(CPO)*

When you're often away at sea, or weekending, you have no home life. (Lieutenant Commander)

These may seem to be extreme examples, but the feeling was echoed in almost all of the interviews. Where couples did not make negative statements about absence, they used expressions such as *'accept', 'put up with', 'resigned to it'* and so on. Only a few servicemen actually felt the periods of absence to be a positive part of the military life. The issues surrounding absence appeared to fall into three main categories; coping emotionally, leading two separate lives and adapting to change on the serviceman's return.

Percentages of respondents who were happy to leave the Navy.
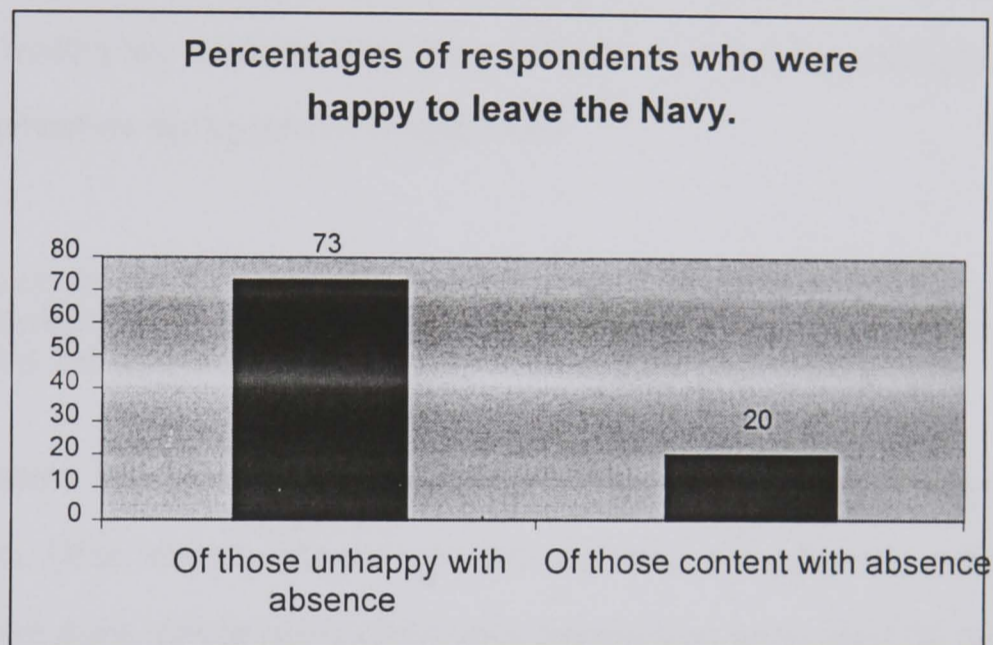
Figure 15 - Feelings towards leaving by feelings towards absence.

Absence, as one would expect, had an impact on the personal relationships between servicemen and their wives/partners. The men were keen to provide accounts of their feelings on the matter, as were their wives. Servicemen felt that regular absence took its toll on their emotional relationships.

[absence] puts something between you and your partner, which is sometimes hard to get back. (Able Seaman)

There is some difficulty in maintaining a close emotional relationship with your wife all the time – especially if you're not there for much of that time. (WO)

Being away a lot makes you very distant from your partner when you come home. (PO)

I spent a lot of time away and when I did come back, I found that we were very different. (Able Seaman)

It's hard when I get back, we're like strangers and we have to get used to each other all over again. And then just when we're used to each other I have to go away again! (Able Seaman)

These themes were recurring, both in interviews and questionnaires. Emotional disruption, however, appeared to be something that both servicemen and their wives, in the main, felt able to deal with and accepted as part of the military way of life:

You know it's gonna be that way...from the start you do...so realistically you can't complain. (Able Seaman's wife)

Similarly, according to their own perceptions, both partners seemed to be able to come to terms with effectively leading two separate lives. They had developed coping strategies, and were used to distancing themselves during periods of separation:

You do learn, I'm not sure how to explain it. You just sort of carry. I've been doing it for year...I wouldn't say it gets any easier...well, actually it does. Like anything you get accustomed. (Able Seaman)

As already explained, women developed household 'routines' and prided themselves on their ability to maintain them. Often women retained links with the navy, through naval wives networks, and found support from them. Where respondents were married they were only 10% more likely to have been unhappy with absence then their single counterparts, which supports the findings documented earlier, that many couples had come to accept the intrusion of naval life on their personal relationships.

Being away is OK, it's the disruption that is hard – getting used to being back at home after a trip is harder to get used to! (CPO)

Disruption at 'both ends' of separation appeared to be problematic. It became apparent that it was not actual separation that the couples hated – most were relatively content during periods of absence. It was the adapting on leaving, and again on return, which caused problems:

I sit and cry...or I did at first...on the first few days. And then I used to tell myself c'mon [own name] get on with it, you chose this life'. So I do. And then, just when I get used to it, being on my own, he's back and I have to get used to that. And that's not so easy either, believe me! (PO's wife)

Many men felt that the situation was actually worse for the serviceman, and that it was also harder for them to adapt – as men felt it was always their responsibility to do the adapting.

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Because she has been at home and has the routines all worked out, when I come home I have to fit in around her. I feel sometimes that I have lost my position as head of the household, and sometimes I don't really know what to do with myself. (CPO's)

In a significant number of cases, the process of adaptation to living together in the family home was experienced with some difficulty, and roles had to be re-defined. Many wives felt that they had developed household routines, which they had proved themselves capable of maintaining when their husbands returned, and felt defensive of their roles:

My wife used to resent me 'taking over' the running of the house when I came home after she had been coping well without my assistance. (Lieutenant)

Towards the end of my career I began to feel in the way at home, as though I were interfering with the household routine. (CPO)

One couple reflected:

(Wife)I miss him when he's gone, but he can be a pain in the neck when he gets back off a trip...well, he sort of gets in the way. I know that sounds tough, but I get used to things...you can't expect someone to change that quick...off and on all the time.
(Husband) Yes, she gets quite agitated sometimes. Don't you love?
(Wife) Yeah, I do, but I have to say, it's never got any easier. The absence has...being on my own like. But adapting...that's always hard. It's not a natural way to live. Too many ups and downs.
(Husband) Cos it causes quite a lot of rows...I know it does for other blokes...it's not just us, honest! It's the life. That's why I'm leaving really, amongst other things. (Able Seaman and Wife)

Some families accepted this way of life:

Unless the wife remains dominant all the time, her constant role change can be irritating for her. (Lieutenant Commander)

Many women likened themselves to single mothers for large parts of their family lives, an experience of which some were obviously resentful, but ready to accept.

You're really like a single mother...you have to do all the things a single mother does. But you don't get the support a single mother gets, cos you've got a husband. Only he's not there is he.(PO's wife)

At the same time the serviceman was searching for his own role some of which had, for necessity's sake, been incorporated into the wife's routine, and feeling 'surplus to requirements':

You feel a bit of a spare dick. [Wife looks horrified] Well, you do. I feel excluded sometimes. (CPO's wife)

Clearly, the men found that their traditional role of 'head of the household' had been damaged by absence, and this identity appeared to be as important to them as did their identity as 'breadwinner'. Simultaneously, wives were feeling defensive, and resistant to changing their routines. Over the years, however, most of the service families had learned to compromise on these issues. Once again, it was seen as 'an unavoidable part of military family life'.

Absent Fathers

Absence from children was viewed with more regret. The military man identity clashed far more with the man's father identity than it did with that of husband. 64% of responses from men with dependent children stated that they had been away more that they would have liked, compared to only 28% of those without children. Men with children were also generally happier to leave the service (50% of answers), than those without (20%).

Percentages of respondents who had been unhappy with absence.
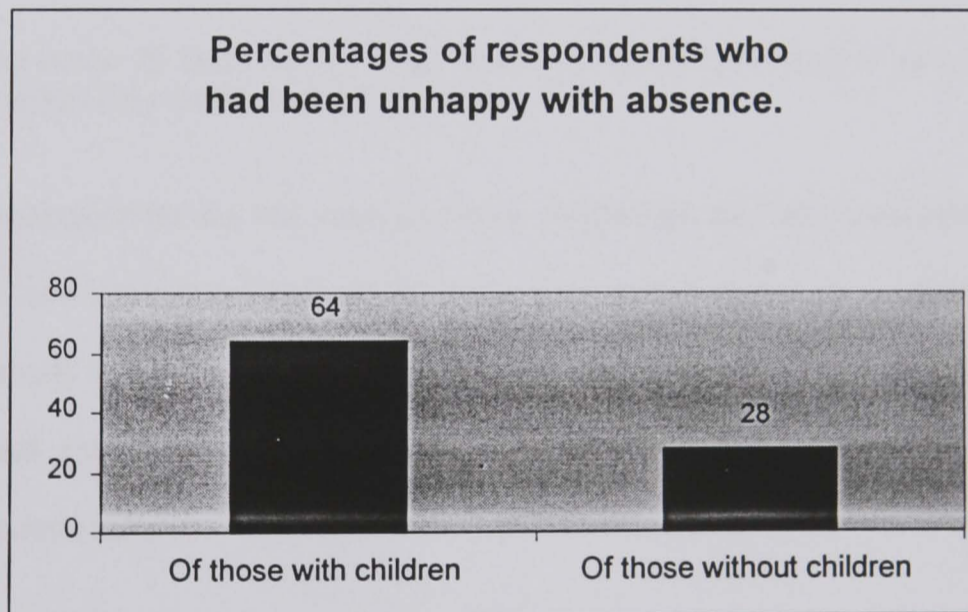
Figure 16 - Feelings toward absence by dependant children.

Spouse/partner reaction to leaving was also influenced by children, those with children being more positive, though not as extensively as men's. Typically men felt that they had often missed important landmarks in their children's lives, such as birthdays, Christmas celebrations, school activities, and even the actual birth of their children. The importance of children and father involvement is also supported by the finding that men had been far more involved in playing with their children than other, more practical parenting tasks like dressing, taking to

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dentist/doctor/school and so on. It may also throw some light on why respondents did not plan to change their current parenting roles after leaving.

Percentages of respondents who were happy to leave.
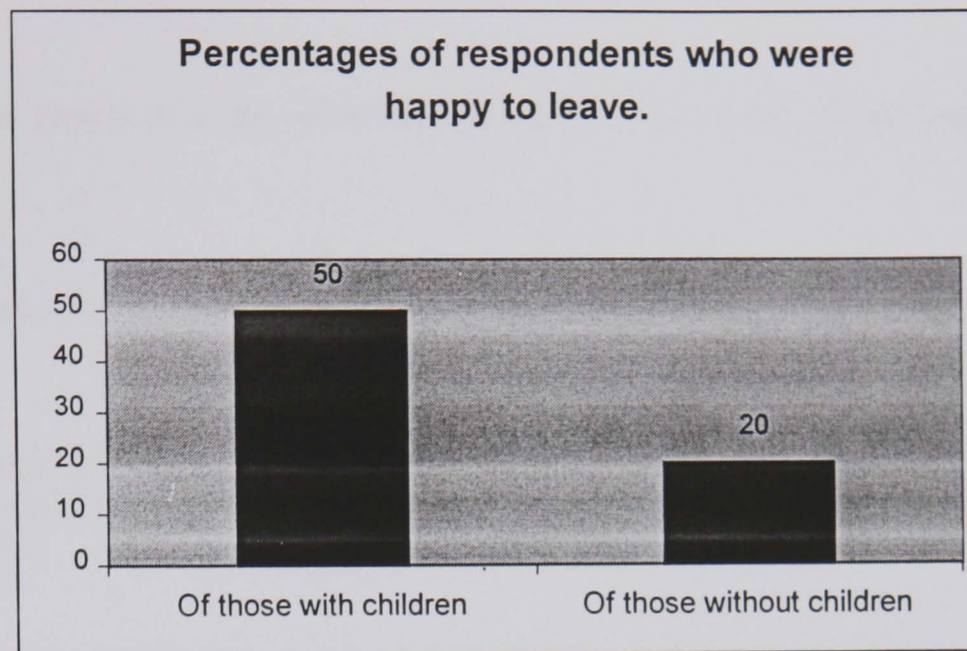
Figure 17 - Feelings toward leaving by dependant children.

At least you [wife] have watched the children grow up, I've missed so many important things in my children's lives. (Lieutenant)

My kids are closer to their mother. It's a shame. I would have liked more involvement – especially when they were younger. (CPO)

Higher-ranking respondents did not have as many misgivings as their lower ranking counterparts (they were 20% less likely than lower ranks to express negative feelings). Again this appeared to be linked to financial issues, in particular the fact that private cleaners could free up time for both parents to spend more time with children, and also that boarding school had meant less interruptions to education:

Service life had very little effect in terms of the relationship I have with my children. The good standard of living we enjoyed undoubtedly made the parental role easier. (Commander)

As one officer's wife said:

It must be hard for some wives...in particular the wives of junior ratings. They don't have the financial support that I've had. That must add to the pressure. (Commander's wife)

Many respondents mentioned children's education as an important issue:

Service life tends to interrupt smooth progress as children mature and injects major domestic changes without regard to important educational milestones. (Lieutenant Commander)

Some men interviewed also felt that their sons had lost more than just someone to turn to:

I have been absent as a role model for a young boy to grow with. (Able Seaman)

In contrast, several of the officers felt that the separation had made their children stronger:

I believe that my service career has made my children more outgoing and confident. Although I was not at home they knew I was still there for them. (Lieutenant Commander)

It made the bonds between us all so much stronger, especially with their mum. (CPO)

However, others commented on the negative effects of absence:

My daughter was affected by my being away from home. She used to take an old handkerchief of mine to bed with her when I was away. (Lieutentant)

My son always needs to know what is going on and where everyone is going...to the point of being quite obsessive. (Lieutenant Commander)

In addition, many felt that they had been distanced from their children, because of their absences.

Many felt that they had become much more authoritarian than civilian fathers:

I am probably more stricter/bossier than non-service parents. (CPO)

I was possibly over authoritarian. (Able Seaman)

However, absence also meant that, on return, they found their children, and often wives, resistant to their disciplining.

It is definitely disruptive. It tends to confuse the children, (like who is the boss at home?). (Lieutenant Commander)

It's no good coming home and telling them what to do...I haven't been around and she's [wife] laid down all the ground rules. Yeah, I feel I lose my authority in a sense. It can be frustrating, but you have to calm down and be reasonable. I can understand. (CPO)

Some respondents felt that their commitment to their careers had even damaged their relationships with their children. Those who felt unhappy at the impact of their career on parenting tended to be more nervous about their children's reactions to their leaving the Navy and being at home more often, although most felt that their home lives would improve.

> *I rather think the damage has already been done. We're very much strangers now. It's my biggest regret about my career. (Commander)*

> *Basically, it has denied me any parental role which upon reflection, I do feel slightly bitter about. Communication between me and my children was very little so it is difficult. (Lieutenant)*

It is clear from the data that the military identity could more easily accommodate the role of husband, than it could parent. Many of the men felt that, where compromise could legitimately be made in marital and household relationships, perhaps reflecting wider gender roles, they were uncomfortable with any compromise regarding their children. Whilst qualitative answers indicated that respondents and their wives had 'become used to' or 'accepted' the influence of service life on their own personal relationships, men appeared to have more misgivings about their relationships with their children, and their roles as fathers.

Conclusion

The Naval identity appeared to be an important factor in servicemen's lives from the outset of their careers. The 'naval' identity gave men a sense of who they were, who others were, and how they should interact with others. Respondents referred to the processes of initiation and training that had helped them to develop their naval identities, and most had clearly gained some sense of pride in belonging to a particularly naval group, identifying themselves through their difference from civilian 'others'. There appeared to be a particularly 'naval way' of approaching life. This is worthy of further attention and, as such, is discussed more fully in chapter Nine.

It also became evident that the naval career extended, quite considerably, to men's family and personal lives, and some families had come to view themselves as 'naval families', thus demonstrating the impact of naval life on the identities of other family members. Friendship networks appeared to be influential in maintaining a sense of belonging to a naval 'group', and in defining and perpetuating the 'naval way' amongst some servicemen and families.

Importantly, two 'groups' appeared to emerge from the data: those who had been more involved with naval life, and those who maintained more links with civilian life. This typology is useful in terms of understanding levels of adaptation to naval life, and is discussed further in Chapter Nine. Problems with adaptation to a particularly naval lifestyle have been identified, such as the required centrality of the service career, absence and separation, 'traditional' household formations and parenting, and coping with 'unusual' family lives. It would appear that more involved families were more able to adapt successfully to naval life than their less involved counterparts, and again the details of this will be discussed further in Chapter Nine. Now we turn to the experience of naval leavers during the period of transition from naval life to civilian life.

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[67] See Chapter Three for discussion of family 'types'.

[68] See Chapters Two, Three and Four

[69] The main issues surrounding dual earner families are outlined in Chapter Four.

[70] It should be noted that the percentages provided in this section are derived from the members of the sample who had already left the Navy, as those still serving completed different sections of the questionnaire, and the section regarding household formations was not completed to the extent where comparisons could be made with confidence.

Chapter Seven - Redundancy and Resettlement: Identities in Crisis?

Introduction

The last chapter documented the main issues that affected servicemen's working lives, in terms of the effects of the Naval career on their own identities and also on those of other family members. The pervasiveness of naval careers and their extension into the private sphere of the family is made clear, and the impact of career and occupational identity on family relationships and household formations is obviously a powerful one.

How then, do men deal with the changes involved in resettlement and civilianisation? What are the issues for them at this stage in their career cycles? If the naval career is such that it affects many other aspects of men's lives, then how do men deal with leaving it? The 'change' aspect of the research is detailed over two chapters, covering the various implications that change has for the men, and also for their families. This chapter explores the data gathered from the research in terms of occupational change and its impact on naval leavers.

All but two of the twenty men in the interview sample had volunteered for redundancy. However, personnel who took part in the questionnaire survey were more diverse in this respect. The sample contained men who had volunteered for redundancy, those who had served their contracts, personnel who had reached retirement, and a few who had been forced to leave by various medical conditions. It is also important to note that, where men were taking voluntary redundancy, they offered various reasons (often a combination of reasons) for their decisions to leave. This is discussed further at a later point.

Reflections on Leaving the Service

A large majority of the respondents felt that leaving the Navy not only represented a change in job or career, but also a major re-direction in their lives, both working and non-working. Some servicemen exhibited positive feelings and some negative, others a mixture of the two. Regardless

of this, the experience of leaving the service, and losing the naval influence on their lives, had a huge impact on all the individuals, as well as members of their families.

Most of the survey sample viewed resettlement as a major re-direction of their lives, and not merely a change of job, and 25% were not at all confident about the prospect of leaving the service.

Well, it's a big thing. When you've got used to something...spent most of your life doing something. It's hard to let go. And of course, it can be quite frightening.(Lieutenant Commander)

No-one's sure really, what to expect like. You got ideas about what it might be like, but it's different in the service. It's hard to be confident when you don't know what it's all like out there. (PO)

Such answers highlighted the fact that leaving the Navy means not just the loss of a job, but also the loss of a whole way of life, and many meanings that people hold and use in order to understand their own lives and the world around them.

It's not just a change of job – my life will be very different, you just can't imagine. It's a huge upheaval. I've got used to being a navy man. (Lieutenant)

There appeared to be two main influences on whether men experienced a smooth, or difficult, transition period: age and rank. In terms of age, feelings of apprehension affected mainly the youngest and the oldest age groups. All of those aged between 25-34 were confident about leaving, and so too were 91% of the 35-44 age group. However, for those aged between 45-54 this percentage decreased to 69%, and none of those aged over 55 felt confident at all. In the youngest age group, of those under 25, only 50% were confident about transition[71]:

I'm still young enough (hopefully!) to try most new things. I feel sorry for the older guys really, who haven't known much different. They gets set in their ways, yeah, it must be hard for them. But...I knows if worst comes I can re-train. And I've got time to find another...to find out if there's other work that suits me OK. (Able Seaman)
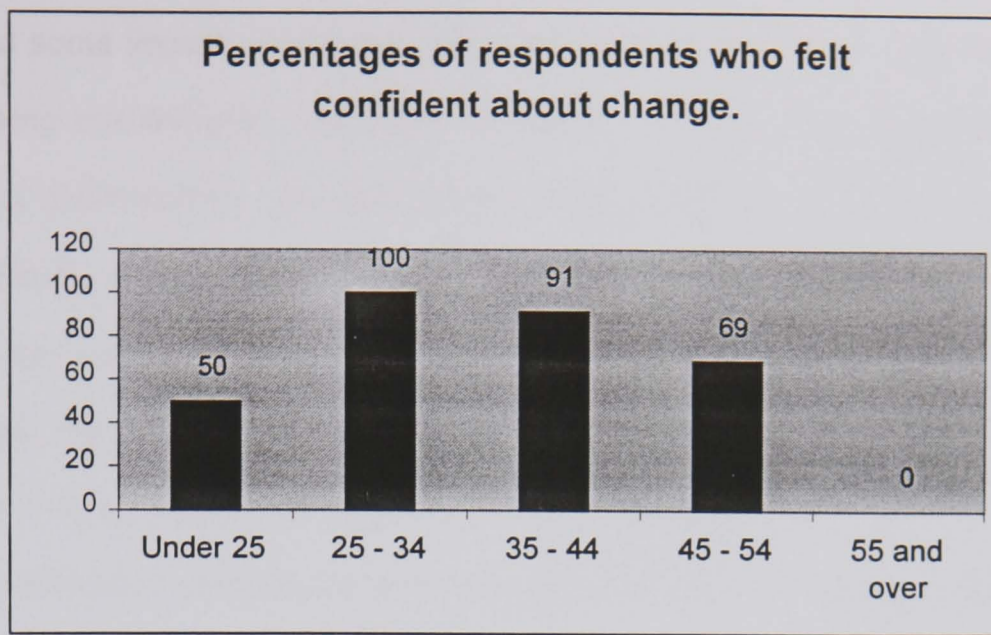
Figure 18 - Levels of confidence in different age groups.

Where rank was concerned, those of higher ranks reported higher levels of confidence. 88% of Commissioned Officers felt confident, compared to 48% of ratings.
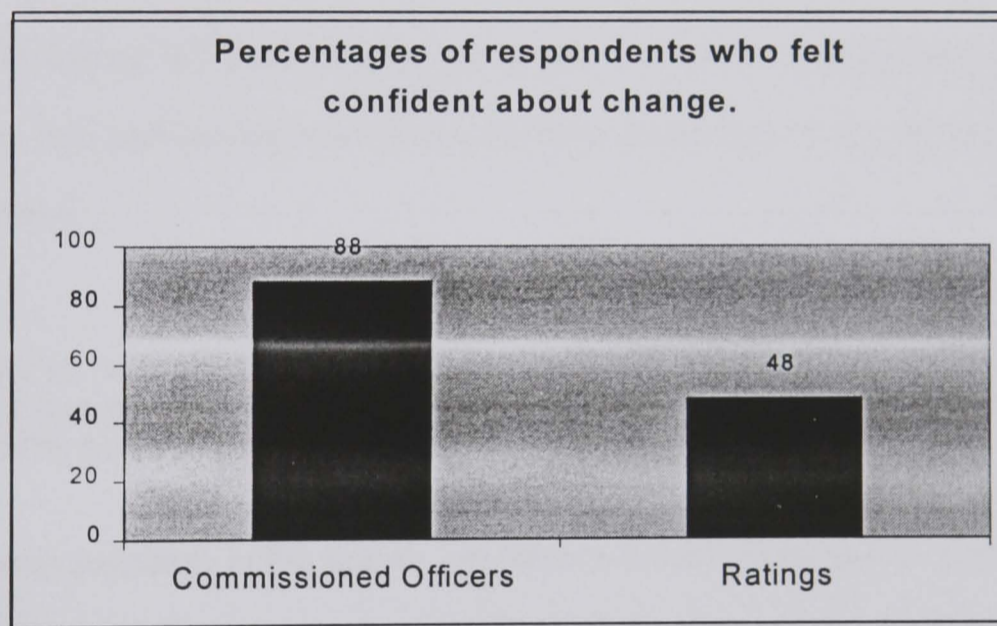
Figure 19 - Levels of confidence about change depending on rank and rating.

I think, speaking as an Officer (it is slightly different for rates)...the world is my oyster...I have experience of management which is second to none, and actually I find the idea of embarking on something new and different vaguely exciting. I view it as a challenge actually. (Commander)

Service was cushy, well...like if you can do a job you get paid alright and the guys are all really, really great. I don't expect civilian life to be so easy...not so many options. Nah...I'm a navy man and it's been good to me. I don't expect it to be so good in Civvy Street (Able Seaman)

These expectations appeared to be borne out, at the point of six months after leaving. There were, overall, four broad patterns with regard to self-perceived, successful adaptation to civilian life.

Firstly, rank had some impact, with individuals emerging from the officer corps faring better than their lower ranking counterparts. Secondly, individuals from the lower age groups, those aged under 35, found civilianisation, and particularly personal change, far less traumatic than older respondents. Thirdly, marital status, especially where there were dependant children, affected the ability to adapt successfully, with married men, and those with children, achieving higher levels of success. Finally, the extent of the original involvement in naval life and previous exposure to civilian cultures influenced the ways in which both men and their families approached and experienced resettlement. Organised planning also seemed to be an important factor.

Transition appeared to comprise three stages: recognition and acceptance of leaving; conscious disengagement from the service way of life and; re-socialisation into the chosen new life. It would seem that smooth adaptation required successful completion of all of these three stages.

However, not all servicemen had accepted, or in some cases even recognised, the changes that lay before them. This had two aspects: the suddenness of leaving and the willingness to accept the change in direction:

> ...it comes up real quick, well I was really busy and didn't have much space to think everything was going to be different so soon – and suddenly I'm here now. It's all come up before I've had a chance to get my head round it. (CPO)

Some respondents indicated, in the spaces provided on the questionnaire for their own comments, that they had not got used to the idea because redundancy had been thrust upon them, rather than being a positive choice. This was particularly so of those who had been discharged. Of those volunteering for redundancy, 50% were happy to leave, compared to 40% of those reaching the end of their contracts, and only 11% of those who had been discharged.

Obviously, many of the individuals in my study had opted for voluntary redundancy in advance and one might therefore assume that they would not feel unhappy to leave. However, the interview data proved that this was not necessarily the case.

Voluntary redundancy was not in all cases an easy step to take. One reason for servicemen leaving was in order to spend more quality time with their families, but most admitted that they had enjoyed their careers, and leaving represented a trade-off between work and family:

I'm not going to slag off the Navy, I've had a good time...and enjoyed my work...and the life in general yeah, it's been an experience shall we say!! But at some point something's got to give...I need to spend more time...quality time I think they call it, with the family, especially the kids...I've already missed out a lot on their growing up...and it'll be nice to be with the wife more.(CPO)

The other main reason was that many had served out their contracts and although they knew they were leaving, and had done for some time, they were not in all cases happy with the situation.

I knew the time would come...but it's come a helluva quick...too quick. Well, as they say, all good things come to an end. (PO)

Finally, of the several leavers who had been discharged on medical grounds, all expressed disappointment at being forced to leave, rather than making their own decision for themselves.

I was alright for them before...I do feel let down [wife nods]...it hasn't done much for my confidence...and I'll miss the life. If I had the choice I would have stayed in for a while longer...disappointed, I suppose that sums it up. Doesn't really put you in the best mind for starting something else. (CPO)

It is clear then, that servicemen who are aware of impending change are not necessarily happy about it, and some may even be in denial of it. Also, where individuals had faced up to the idea of change and felt able to cope with it, they were not always in a position to initiate that change because of job responsibilities whilst in their last months of service.

They say you have to prepare for leaving – oh yes they tell you that. But how do they think I've got time, when I'm still working this hour and that. Loads of me mates have said the same. You could be away at sea – how do you attend briefings then eh? No, most people don't even think about leaving until their time comes. Not 'cos we don't we don't want to, we just don't have the time...and we're all in the same boat, if you'd pardon the pun (CPO)

Where servicemen had accepted leaving service life and readied themselves accordingly, they faced the further task of disengaging their attachment. Interviewees had learned over years how to draw on what they described as typically naval attitudes, values and codes of conduct. The findings

documented in the previous chapter show how such learning was beneficial to individuals in making sense of service life. However, at the point of resettlement, this use of naval discourses served only to make transition more difficult.

> *Like I say – you get used to running your life a certain way. And then you can't any more can you? It's all got to change, even the way you think about things. (Able Seaman)*

It appeared that those who drew exclusively on naval discourses, and were well socialised into their naval identities, faced transition with more trepidation. The tendency to polarise naval and civilian 'cultures' also had some impact on people's feelings about change:

> *It's not like just changing jobs – it's different out there...what you have to understand is that service life is so different to outside...I can't tell you. It's definitely going to take time to get used to it. (CPO)*

Where respondents did polarise cultures they were less happy to leave. 34% of this group was happy, compared to 93% of those who noticed little difference. They were also less confident about finding re-employment (71% of respondents compared to 93% respectively).
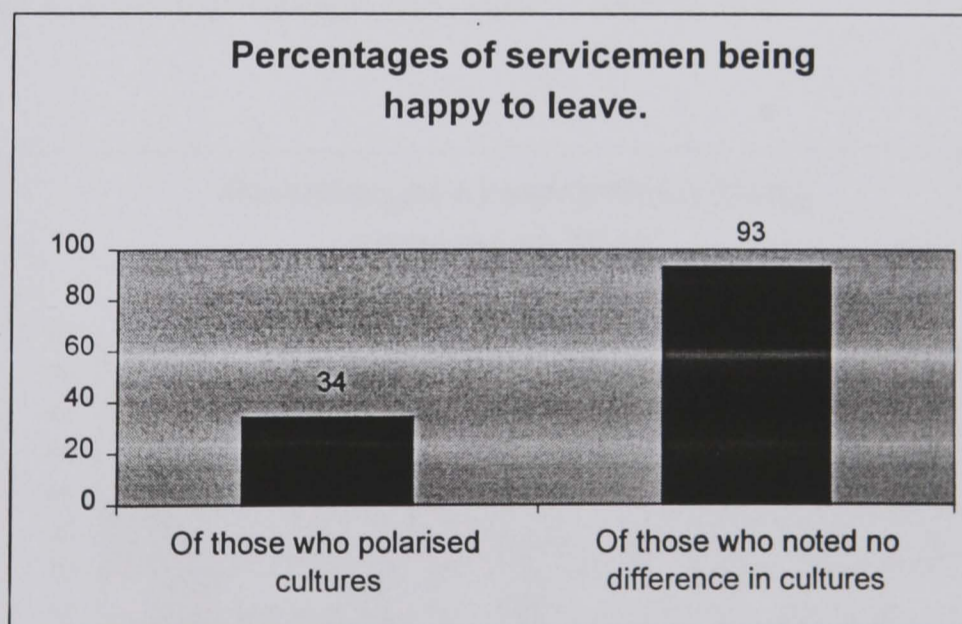
Figure 20 - Feelings toward leaving by perception of difference between naval and civilian cultures.

Many felt that in 'switching' to civilian life, they would become involved in a different set of values and attitudes that were unfamiliar to them. About half the sample believed that they would have to make an effort to change their 'naval ways' in approaching civilian life and employment. This task, however, was a complex one. Many of the leavers had forgotten where they first became exposed

to certain ideas, and whilst some recognised the relevance of their initiation and training, others felt that their attitudes toward civilian life were intrinsic to them and pre-dated their naval careers. A further number were unable to make any clear decisions about where their attitudes originated.

I suppose we've just picked up certain things, certain ways of looking at life. Well, during your service you become part of a clan, you learn how to be and think like a serviceman. (Able Seaman)

It was difficult then, for leavers who were prepared to change, to locate the elements that required transformation. On the other hand, some expressed the view that they had been drawn too deeply into naval life to consciously change on exit.

When you're in you learn to do things in a certain way, which is good, it's very efficient, we get things done. It's harder to come out and then suddenly change all that. (Able Seaman)

See, Civvy Street and the Navy – they're different, I suppose they have to be, but that doesn't make resettlement easier does it? (PO)

87% of the sample noticed difference between naval and civilian cultures. However, on leaving, only 36% planned to adapt their attitudes and values in order to 'fit in'.

Percentages of servicemen being prepared to 'fit in'.

Age group	Percentage
Under 25	69
25 - 34	36
35 - 44	33
45 - 54	0
55 and over	0
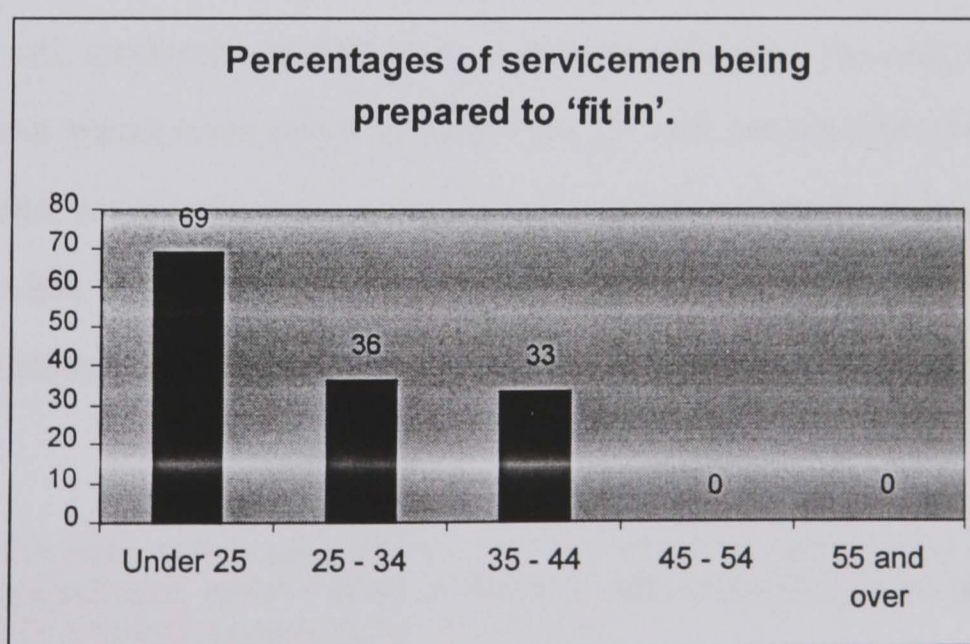
Figure 21 - Levels of willingness to change in different age groups.

Disengagement was clearly more difficult for those who had served, and had been exposed to naval discourse, for a long period of time. Length of service and age affected the willingness to

change. 69% of respondents aged under 25 were willing to effect personal changes on leaving. However this figure fell to 36% of the 25-36 age group, and 33% of the 35-46 age group. None of those aged over 46 had any plans to change.

Interviews also highlighted other contributing factors to strong socialisation into naval discourses, for example; previous experience of 'Civvy Street', friendships and geographical location and housing. Those who had previous experience of civilian labour markets had been exposed to civilian discourses, and had employed elements of these in order to understand and conduct their lives. The willingness to change also increased with prior experience of civilian work (25% of those with previous experience, as opposed to 11% of those without). These individuals were thus able to draw again on the same discourses that may have survived institutional socialisation.

I expect I've got more idea about what goes on in Civvy street...some really haven't got a clue. (Lieutenant Commander)

Having experience of civilian employment probably helps a lot...I know what to expect, probably more than most. I'm glad of that now. (CPO)

Similarly, servicemen who had civilian friends, and therefore more exposure to civilian discourses, were more able to disengage and re-socialise. Where friends were service-centred, respondents were less likely to change (only 39% of respondents with service focused networks, in contrast to 74% of those with combined service/civilian friendship networks). Housing and geographical location had some impact here; where families lived on naval estates and interacted more with other naval families, socialisation was stronger and disengagement harder. But many of the sample lived in civilian areas, and typically here socialisation was weaker, particularly where social lives were conducted 'away from the navy'.

We've always been able to get way from the navy and build relationships with civilians in our neighbourhood, which I think, particularly now, although I didn't realise at the time...well it's probably a good job too! (Lieutenant)

You can avoid 'navy life' to an extent if you want. I think you'd probably find different answers if you spoke to someone from the army. (CPO)

In addition, naval families are increasingly becoming 'dual earner' families, where wives have some level of involvement with civilian labour markets. Involvement of spouses and partners also had some effect. Where spouses were more involved with the Navy, only 25% of men were prepared to change. This contrasted with 44% of those whose spouses and partners were less involved. In addition, where wives were involved in civilian employment, men were more prepared to change:

> At least the wife has got mates…civilian mates…from work mainly. Most of my friends have been matelots, but I get on OK with her little circles. And I'll probably find it tricky keeping it together with me own mates, what with being out and all that. I think…yeah…her friends will probably be on the scene more now. Either that or I'll have no friends at all! (PO)
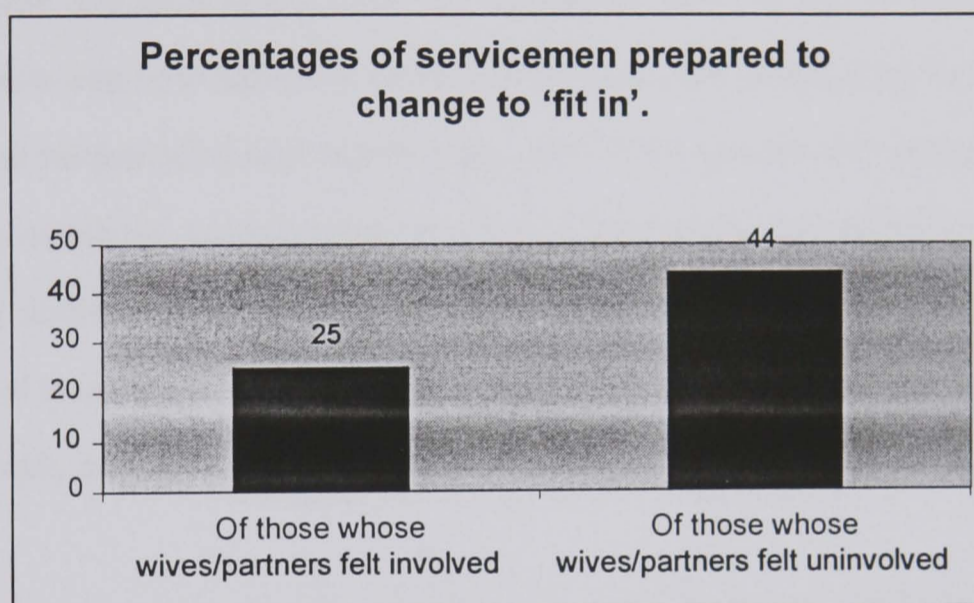
Figure 22 - Levels of willingness to change by levels of spouse's involvement with the Navy.

Again, this increased exposure to civilian discourses has, it would appear, led to easier resettlement. The importance of the family is evident here. Finally, those few who felt that they had never 'fitted in' were more likely to find disengagement and re-socialisation an easier task.

> If you fit in with the navy then it's probably a good life…one you wouldn't want to leave. But I've never actually been into all that stuff – yes, I would think that makes it easier now. (CPO)

> I'll be the different one won't I? Le's face it. All my mates are service…I don't know what will happen there…it won't stay the same though will it?…I've tried to put that to the back of my mind. (PO)

It became clear then, that servicemen who had drawn more heavily on naval frameworks found transition to be more problematic than those who had more civilian experience and input. Disengagement was made harder by the very fact that there was more to disengage from. Whilst

most leavers acknowledged that personal change was inevitable if resettlement was to be successful, many felt that they could not, or would not, make a conscious effort, even where they had reported a significant difference in their perceptions of naval and civilian cultures.

Another important aspect in the disengagement and re-socialisation of my sample was the symbolic break with the old life. Where some form of ceremony marked leaving, men were more likely to consider the need to change in order to adapt to civilian life. Percentages were higher for changing values, as well as friendship networks and household roles, and this is reported later.

However, this was one area where many felt dissatisfied with the way in which they had been 'dispatched'. There was no evidence of formal leaving ceremony provided by the navy, despite the average length of service being over twenty years. 40% of the sample had, or expected to have, an informal leaving ceremony, ranging from dinners to casual 'drink-ups'. Many who had not yet left were expecting some form of 'surprise' leaving celebration, and this had been common also amongst some of those who had already left. The emphasis was on casual celebrations, organised by friends informally and often independent of the Navy.

Findings from the data concerning naval initiation and socialisation illustrated the efforts made by the Navy to create military identities in its members. Further investigation at this stage of transition demonstrates that such identities are inevitably eroded on leaving. However, it would appear that there is no process of de-socialisation provided for those leaving the service. It became clear that this complex task is unaided, left in the hands of the leavers themselves, and those of their families and friends.

They give you all this pomp and ceremony when you sign up, and, well I mean when you go from being an ordinary person to being a naval man...but you don't get any bloody help when you have to come back out again. You're on your own. You don't really think about that when you're in.(Lieutenant Commander)

It's a major re-direction in life really, not just like leaving a civilian job. It's like 'goodbye then' ...and then you're losing your whole identity. (CPO)

There were marked differences between those who did, and those who did not, have leaving celebrations. 67% of Commissioned Officers went through some kind of marked leaving, as opposed to 17% of CPO's and POs, and 16% of ratings.

None of the sample, had been offered any actual formal leaving ceremony. Many felt affronted, and feelings ranged from disillusionment to anger and frustration. Over half of the sample felt that they had been 'used' and that recognition of their loyalty and dedication should have been forthcoming. Without this recognition, some individuals had found their self-esteem had been eroded, for others it had confused their identity as useful members of an important institution.

> It's very sad – you just sign your papers and go – not good enough really is it? (Lieutenant)

> Leaving the service was more of a 'give me your ID card and goodbye' – I felt I had outlived my usefulness and was being dumped. (PO)

> After you go, you sort of think 'well I risked my life for the service', but you get no recognition for it – you're shoved out of the door without a thank you. Makes you wonder what you were doing all that time. (CPO)

> Well, it can all be a bit sudden – one minute you're there and then you're not. It's quite a strange feeling. (CPO)

These men described how the lack of a leaving ceremony impacted on their ability to come to terms with leaving. For some it meant that they didn't actually feel that they had left and for others, at the extreme, they had left feeling used and ultimately resentful:

> I didn't like the way they get rid of you...some scrawny young wren gives you a bit of paper and, well, that's it. You've given a third of your life to the Navy...and that's how it ends. I mean, I fought three wars for them, I've been shot at, blown up. I've had friends...I've had to drag their dead bodies out of the water. I've been through all that and at the end of the day...just to be handed a bit of paper...by a junior wren. Oh, well they just don't care...so why should I? (CPO)

Several leavers explained that it had made them doubt their competence and affected their self-esteem accordingly. The erosion of personal confidence was often reported and this appeared to have implications for feelings toward resettlement.

Those who did have marked leaving were happier about leaving the Navy (46% of this group, compared to 36% of those who did not). 89% of these respondents also felt more confident about transition to civilian employment, in contrast to 64% of those without marked leaving. In addition,

those who had some form of leaving ceremony were more likely to pursue a second career, rather than 'just a job'. 90% of the marked leaving group were following a second career, as opposed to 43% of the unmarked leaving group[72]:

In some ways, it doesn't feel like I've left...there's been no end. So you can't have a beginning to something else then, if you see what I mean? (PO)
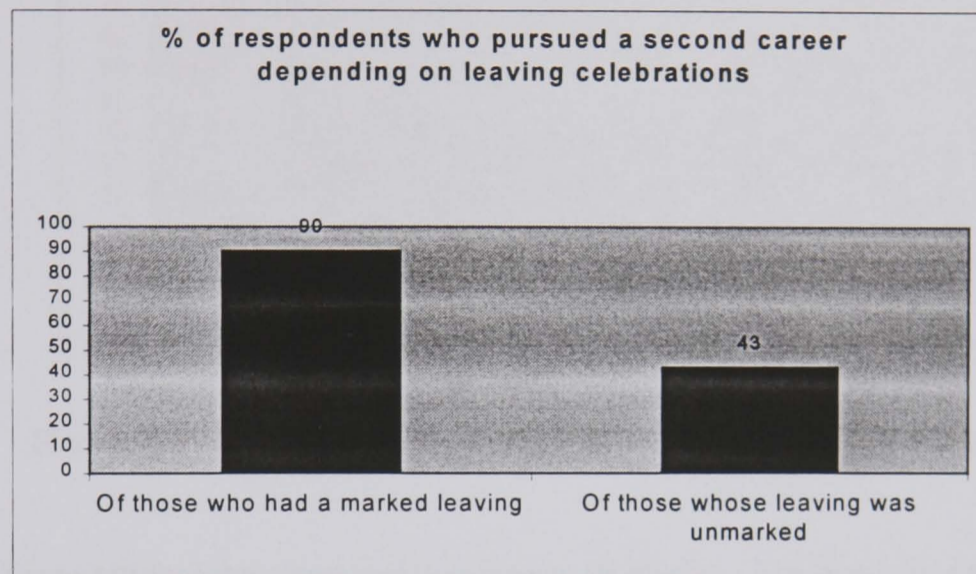
Figure 23 - Servicemen's pursuance of second careers by marked/ unmarked leaving.

It is unsurprising perhaps that many servicemen brought elements of naval discourse and a military identity to their new lives as civilians, and the implications for disengagement and re-socialisation are obvious.

Leaving and the 'military man' identity

Where interviewees were unable to shed their 'military man' identity, socialisation into civilian life became problematic.

You're not a serviceman anymore...but then you're not exactly a civilian either...I don't know really. A bit of a misfit I suppose. (Lieutenant Commander)

The question of identity had not been wholly resolved for many of the men in the sample. Even after six months of disengagement from Naval service, many still saw themselves as military men, which some felt was due to the lack of any ceremony representing a 'rite of passage'. This appeared to have some impact on men's adaptation. Of those whose leaving was marked by

some form of ceremony, formal or informal, 73% adapted well, in contrast to 57% of those who had no ceremony.

Percentages of servicemen who adapted well.
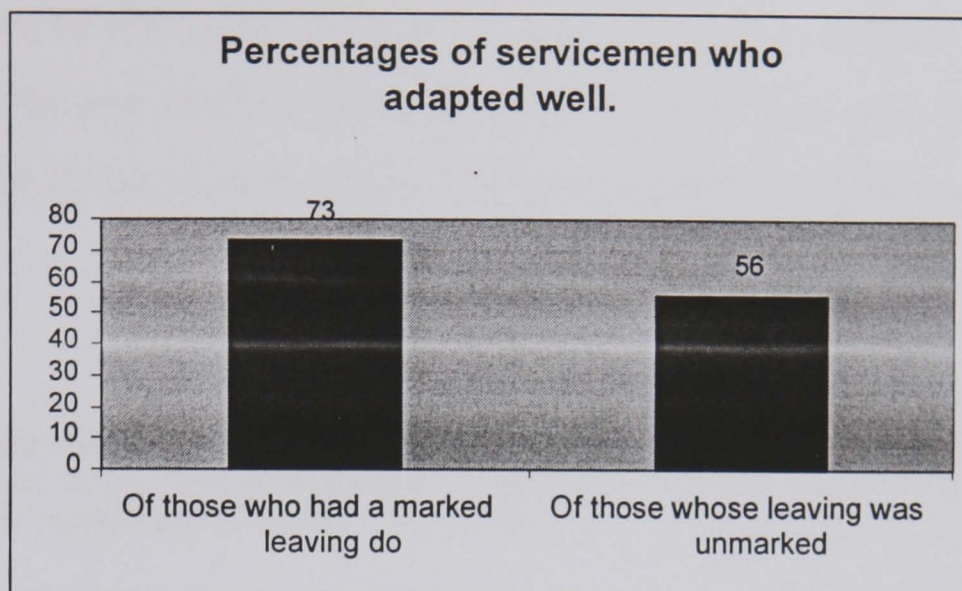
Figure 24 - Success at adaptation by marked/ unmarked leaving.

Many respondents felt that they had lost their sense of identity, and described themselves as being 'in limbo'. That is to say that they no longer identified with the naval role but did not identify particularly with any alternative role. These individuals felt trapped between naval and civilian worlds, and this led to confusion over their own identity.

> *Just because you're out in Civvy Street doesn't mean you feel like a Civvy. I'm not sure I ever will, or at least not for a long time. (Able Seaman)*

Many men talked of 'changing' themselves to fit a more civilian profile, albeit in many cases with apprehension and, in some, disappointment and resignation.

> *I think I will probably have to change in myself, what do I mean...for example, the way I approach things, perhaps even how I think about things. You get into a habit and you think in a particular way when you're in – especially if you're away for a long time. Yes, I think I will have to change, personally, in some things. (Commander)*

Many of the families interviewed then, demonstrated an awareness that individuals must learn to draw on new and perhaps unfamiliar approaches to life, whilst elements of old approaches inevitably persist. Some felt that the transformation from serviceman to civilian represented a long and arduous process.

Once a serviceman, always a serviceman. I'm not sure you ever leave it behind totally...and that makes things difficult. (Able Seaman)

The way in which the servicemen chose new job areas is interesting. The majority of respondents (56%) were looking for work similar to that of their service employment. This was affected again by rank: 69% of ratings were seeking similar employment, whilst this figure fell to 50% of CPO's and POs and also 50% of Commissioned Officers. Ratings were more likely, however, to be looking for 'just a job':

I can do engineering all right, I want to carry on with the same sort of thing that I do now...or have done. I'm not so much worried about a career – just something...I don't want to start something completely new. (CPO)

Those, the majority, who wanted a career also tended to indicate a preference for a career similar to that of the navy. Many felt that they had acquired skills in the service, which were readily transferable to such fields of work.

It also became clear that there was some 'clustering' into several areas of the labour market, the most popular being engineering, management and personnel. The emergency services and the prison service were also popular, and shift work was considered a favourable option among the ratings and non-commissioned officers.

You always find us...the likes of me...doing jobs like them that we're used to doing. We're all the same, well maybe I can't say...yeah, no, deep down we are...probably why we were there in the first instance. (Able Seaman)

Age also affected career choice. 51% of those under 25 were looking for similar work to that which they had been doing in the Navy. This compared with 55% of those aged between 26-35, 56% of those aged between 36-45 and 80% of respondents aged over 45.

Percentages of servicemen seeking a second career.
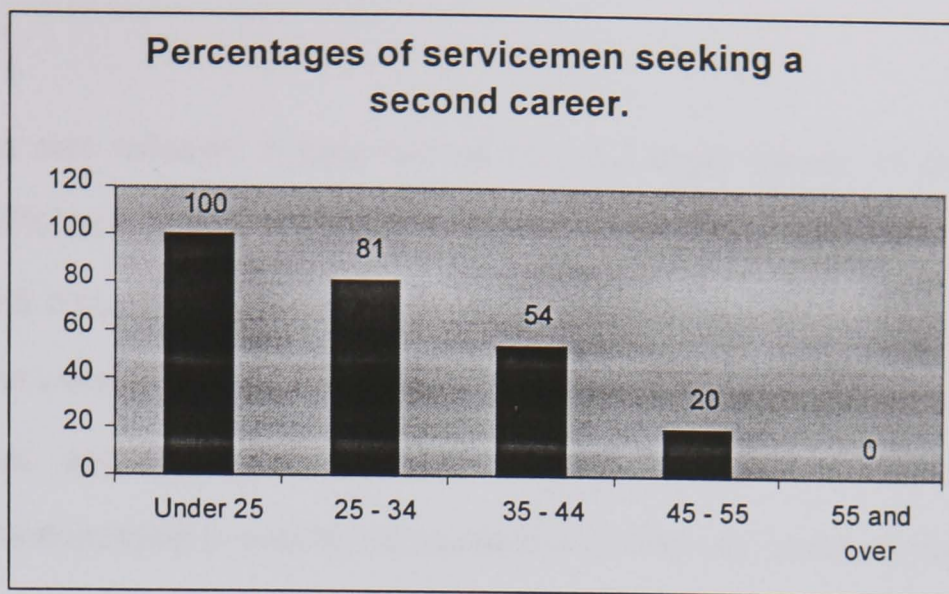
Figure 25 - Servicemen's pursuance of second careers by age.

Younger age groups were also more likely to look for a second career, (all of those aged 25 and under). This compared with 81% of 26 to 35 year olds, 54% of those aged between 36-45 and only 20% of men aged over 46.

At my age [45], it's easier to stick with the same sort of work. If I were a young lad...maybe I'd consider something different...but why would I want to make all that effort now. It's hard enough leaving in the first place...without putting that extra pressure on myself. (CPO)

Percentages of servicemen seeking work similar to their naval careers
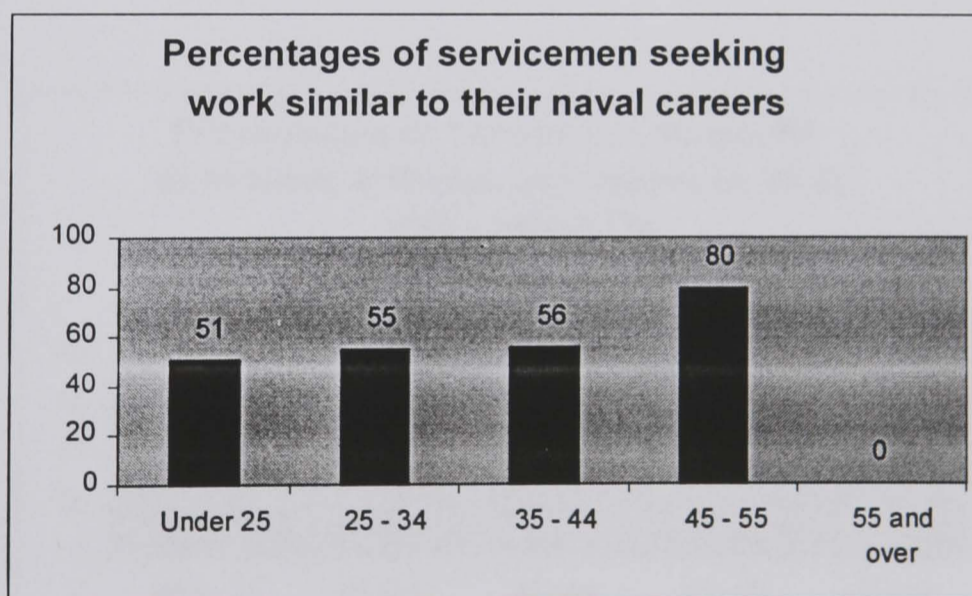
Figure 26 - Servicemen's pursuance of similar work by age.

However, reasons for preference went beyond skill and qualifications, a significant number of interviewees indicated that they felt they could 'fit in' to the culture of organisations that were similar to the Navy. For individuals who reported feelings of 'difference' between themselves and civilians, this was a much-preferred option.

This finding was also reflected in data derived from the larger survey. Of those who polarised cultures, only 22% were prepared to look for work different from their naval career. This figure increased to 39% amongst those who did not polarise naval and civilian cultures. It is clear that these servicemen were looking for a culture similar to that of the navy, where they could draw on a similar discourse, and where re-socialisation may be easier and less extensive. Indeed, disengagement and crossing to another discourse was not then necessary for them:

Ah, I'm too old to start thinking about changing now – what I want is something very similar to what I've been doing – it's OK for the younger leavers, but when you get to forty…you find you've become stuck in your ways. (WO)

Men felt that looking for work akin to their naval careers would help them to avoid what they saw as unwanted change. Of those planning to find similar work, 25% were prepared to change their values, however, of those looking for different work, 38% felt it necessary to change their values. Younger age groups were more likely to be prepared to rethink values in order to 'fit in' with civilian life (68% of those aged under 25). This contrasted with older personnel; 36% of those aged 26-35 and 34% of those aged 36-45. None of those over 46 were prepared to change.

**Percentages of servicemen prepared
to re-think attitudes and values to 'fit in'
with civilian life.**
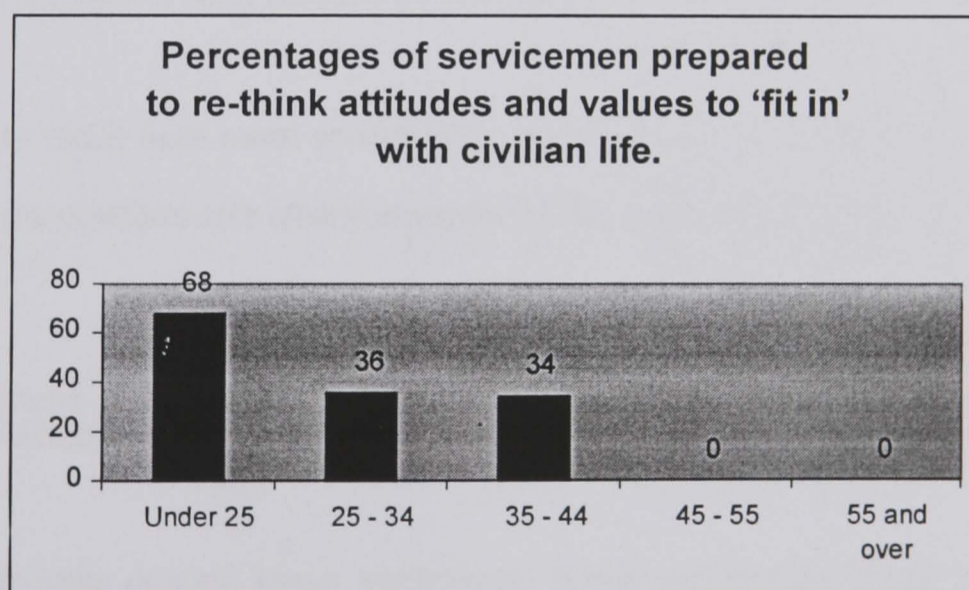
Figure 27 - Servicemen's wilingness to re-think attitudes and values by age.

However, there was a difference in adaptation levels between those looking for 'just jobs' and those pursuing second careers. Of those opting for 'just jobs', 44% adapted well, in contrast to 74% of those with second careers in mind. 100% of those who were ready to try both types felt that they had adapted successfully.

Another aspect of change that had clearly become an issue for many of those interviewed was the sense of pride that men attached to their military identities. This was supported by the attitudes of family and friends. Pride was a recurring element of the military identity, and was clearly an element of naval discourse that had been well sedimented. Those who indicated that they felt they would receive less respect, and that civilians did not take pride in their work, motivated instead by individualism and financial reward, were more negative in their expectations and had more difficulty in adapting to civilian life.

> I'll go from being a well respected Officer in the Royal Navy to being a clerk or something, and pride and respect aren't so important outside anyway. Yes, I will find that hard... ...I think I shall probably miss that most. (WO)

This was often reinforced by the attitudes of service wives:

> I gotta admit, I will see him in a different way. There really is something about a sailor that fills you with pride when you see him. And yes, that will change... ...I know it shouldn't matter... ...but it does. (CPO's wife)

> Men in uniform...there's something special about it. And I know he will still be the same person out of uniform, but it wouldn't be special, you know? (PO's wife)

Pride appeared to result from naval socialisation, and the notion of 'usefulness' that men derived from the military occupational role clearly impacted on the identities of the sample:

> Everyone knows that the navy fulfils an important role, it gives you self-respect...which I don't know whether I'll find in another job. (Able Seaman)

Many other comments echoed these sentiments. Some servicemen talked of protecting their countrymen and women, and especially children, and their usefulness in war:

> It's one thing that was drummed into us from day one...personal pride...pride in your standards and whatsoever...and pride in what you are doing. I mean, at the end of the day you're protecting your country, your friends and neighbours and most importantly your family...the kids. Tell me if there's anything a man could be more proud about...Yeah, you get the wankers who think we're a bunch of thugs...they don't stop to think who's between them and the enemy. But I think really people do know, you

know...what we're doing for them. I think that gives me a right to be proud. (Wife nods in agreement). (Able Seaman)

Conversely, some servicemen had decided to leave the Navy precisely because they felt that they had outlived their usefulness in contemporary society:

I found, particularly when mixing with my civilian friends, that so many people treated it as a bit of a joke – oh well, we're paying your wage again, and you're going to go on another trip around the world, and have a good time at our expense – and I found that my pride faltered...so many people didn't appreciate my efforts. So, because people didn't seem to value it...I may have been a Naval Officer but I didn't contribute anything to the GDP...I used to stop saying 'I'm a Naval Officer'. Because I just felt that many, many people in the civilian world thought that defence was rather a waste of money. You know, we're all friends with the Russians now, so why are we continuing to sail around the world spending money on expensive ships, when education and health are in such a mire? People say there doesn't appear to be any threat – why spend the money? Of course, wars start when you don't expect them. (Commander)

However, servicemen responded to such change in different ways. Where men considered the more recent changes in the global political climate, and no longer viewed themselves as protectors or warriors, many derived their pride from the fact that they were now useful in their capacity as 'peacekeepers'. What is of significance here is that, warriors or peacekeepers, servicemen developed and maintained pride in their naval service. Clearly, naval men viewed their social usefulness as being derived from their work roles and found it hard to accept anything different. Many were actively looking for work that could allow them to maintain their personal pride in this way.

However, six months after leaving, confusion regarding identity was still characterised by this sense of loss with regard to pride and self-esteem. The pride that they had described as being central to their service identity had clearly been eroded, and very few individuals had managed to replace or rebuild it in their new roles. Men still spoke of their disappointment at no longer being 'socially useful', and again, few had found employment which fulfilled this desire to be of use.

One important factor appeared to be the clarity of role models in the adopted new occupational role. Interviewees described how they felt that occupational roles similar to their own, in terms of status, were the most attractive options. Interviews with my sample highlighted the fact that many servicemen were happier joining an organisation that had similar 'cultural' elements as the navy, these varying from man to man, and thus drawing on a similar discourse.

It's obvious really – no-one likes too much change do they? If I can do something like what I'm doing now...all the better. If the navy wasn't so much a whole thing, the whole life thing, it would be different. But that's the way it is. (CPO)

Those looking for similar employment were those who were less happy to leave, and who also felt less confident about civilian employment (47% of these respondents, compared to 75% of those looking for different work). Many of the interviewees' comments demonstrated that these respondents felt differences in navy and civilian cultures made looking for civilian work harder and similar work would be less traumatic in terms of change. Some respondents also noted that this would also be the case for personnel leaving the army.

But what provided similar 'cultural elements' to the navy? The interviews explored the common features identified by the servicemen themselves, and the implications these had on their reaction to change.

Moving from 'Us' to 'Them'

Firstly, the majority of servicemen, both before and after leaving, showed some sense of 'being different' from, and being treated as different by, their civilian counterparts. As we have seen, those viewing cultures as polarised were more worried about leaving the Navy and entering what, to them, represented a completely different world. Where newly employed leavers had met other military leavers in their new jobs, they found support and 'someone who understood' their position:

> *...and there was this army bloke...we got on well...understood each other. We could appreciate how both of us...each other felt...we were both kind of out on a limb...out of depth at that time. Not with the job you understand...well we were probably the best there what with our training...but all the same, I think we both felt a bit excluded. (PO)*

Whilst some elements of naval and army discourses may vary, it might be the case that many of their perceived key signifiers are common to military service in general. Further research into this area could perhaps throw some light on these issues, and this is discussed later. This notion of exclusion, however, appeared to be pertinent for many respondents.

Something that affected almost the entire sample was the way in which they had lost their membership in a naval group culture. Many expressed the feeling that they had not been fully aware of how much their involvement in such a culture had formed a large part of their lives, on almost every level, and that this had made transition very difficult.

I found it a lot harder than I anticipated, and so I took a long time to settle down. (Able Seaman)

The Resettlement service briefings may have been prone to inflate the opinion of Civvy Street to the serviceman, with hindsight. It was not so easy to fit in as expected and was very, very different to service life. (PO)

Very difficult to adjust to civilian life, the Navy gave you a lot of info on the job scene but none on the 'outside' in general. It was a big learning process, and came as a shock. (CPO)

Where men had recognised and accepted that resettlement represented a major re-direction in their lives, 100% adapted well, as opposed to 60% of those who viewed it as merely a change of job. Some felt suddenly isolated, and some felt that they would take some time to 'fit in' in their new work cultures. But a number of individuals described how they had begun to adapt to their new occupational role, and how they had slowly become more involved in new organisational cultures. From both interview and questionnaire data, it was possible to identify two stages that led to successful adaptation to a new work culture.

Firstly, we have already seen that it was necessary for men to disengage from the norms, attitudes and values that comprised the old naval culture of which they were a part. This was mainly a conscious decision, and a process that required much effort. It was slightly more common amongst men who pursued second careers, rather that 'just jobs', and those entering fields of work which were quite different to their naval employment.

It wasn't easy, but change and progress is inevitable and we all do our best to adjust! (Lieutenant Commander)

Secondly, once disengaged from their previous culture, men had to accept and begin to learn the elements of their new one. Again, this appeared to be easier for men who had sought different careers. Although others had deliberately sought similar work, precisely in order that they would be

able to fit in more easily, it was these individuals who had found adaptation more difficult. Of those men seeking similar work, only 47% had adapted well, as opposed to 75% of those willing to try something different.

All of these respondents described how their new employment involved subtle complex differences from naval life, and it would appear that adaptation proved easier where difference was more obvious. Re-socialisation into new work cultures was also easier for men who had previous experience of civilian work organisations. For some, elements of civilian work cultures appeared to have survived their naval socialisation, and they were able, with some effort, to draw on their previous knowledge in order to make sense of civilian employment.

> It must be bad for the kind of guys who do the whole Navy thing, who eat Navy, drink Navy, sleep Navy...that type. (CPO)

> I think my time in civilian organisations...during my time in the Navy, but teaching with civilians...helped enormously. (Lieutenant Commander)

It was also easier for men whose wives had been involved in civilian organisations, exposing their husbands to more elements of civilian cultures. On the other hand, men with wives who had been more jointly involved in naval, as opposed to civilian, life were less likely to re-think values and re-socialise. Of those with 'involved' wives, only 26% made the change more voluntarily, compared with 44% of those who had been less jointly involved in naval life.
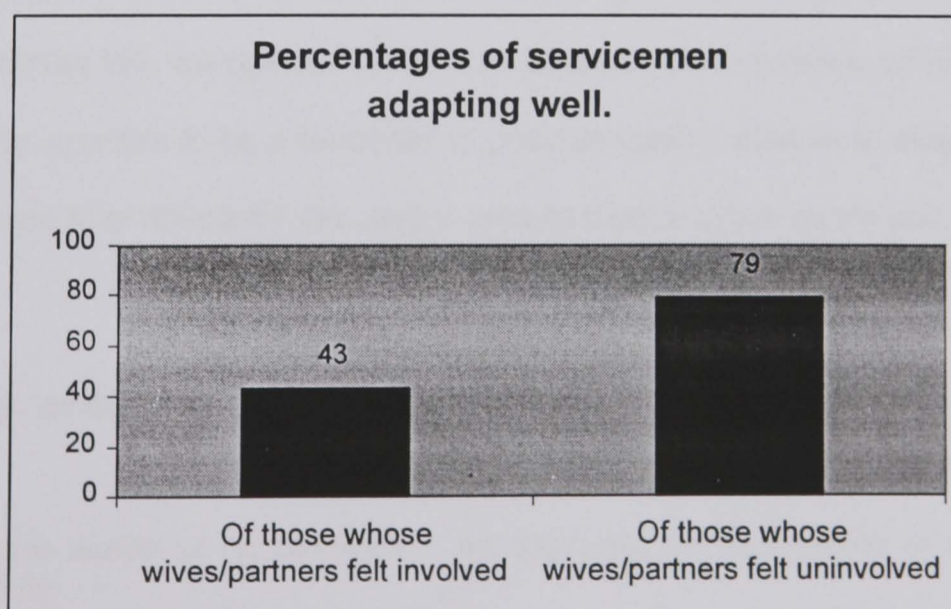
Figure 28 - Levels of successful adaptation by spouse's involvement with the Navy.

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Men and families who adapted more successfully appeared to be those who perceived less difference between naval and civilian cultures. Of those who polarised cultures, 61% adapted well, compared to 85% of those did not note difference. Many did, nevertheless, feel that civilian life was very different from the service.

> *Personnel should be given more information on how hard it is to adapt to civilian life, especially those who have spent a long time in the service...it is very different out there. (CPO)*

> *It is very different in Civvy Street, in its views and outlooks. Takes some getting used to. (Able Seaman)*

When interviewees were asked to expand on their notions of difference, several themes were recurring and when asked where these perceptions originated, most could not remember, and where they could they referred to conversations and attitudes held collectively by service members. Particular attitudes toward civilians appeared to have been commonly embraced during naval service.

> *There's some things we all...some ways of seeing things...we all tend to think the same way about some things. Like, for instance, civilians are different...if you asked a hundred servicemen I think you'd find they'd give you the same answer. (Lieutenant Commander)*

This could draw us to the conclusion that much of the serviceman's view of 'Civvy Street' may be based on stereotypes. It would appear from the interviews that many servicemen and civilians alike, in their everyday talk, exaggerate differences between, and minimise differences within, their' two groups. There appears to be a tendency to polarise issues: what is a military man, what is a civilian and what are their different roles, and to refer to them in crude terms and typologies:

> *They're lazy, no discipline. (WO)*

> *I will miss the sense of camaraderie – it's everyone for themselves in Civvy Street. (Able Seaman)*

> *There's no sense of loyalty or dedication...:or respect. (Lieutenant Commander)*

> *I'm not looking forward to being in the rat-race, people in civilian jobs are more selfish...or more self-orientated.(CPO)*

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they are completely different – in too many ways to mention. (PO)

Key themes appeared time and time again. The most often referred to differences were: individualism and the lack of camaraderie and loyalty (20% of all answers), lack of respect for people in various stages of hierarchy (19%), and a lack of discipline (13%) in civilian employment. Other differences included: obsession with money, rather than the good of the organisation (8%), laziness and lower standards of work (8%), lack of observable hierarchy (8%), less flexibility (6%), lack of professionalism (4%) and a lack of tradition in 'Civvy Street' (4%). 10% commented that service and civilian 'identities' were 'different in every sense'.
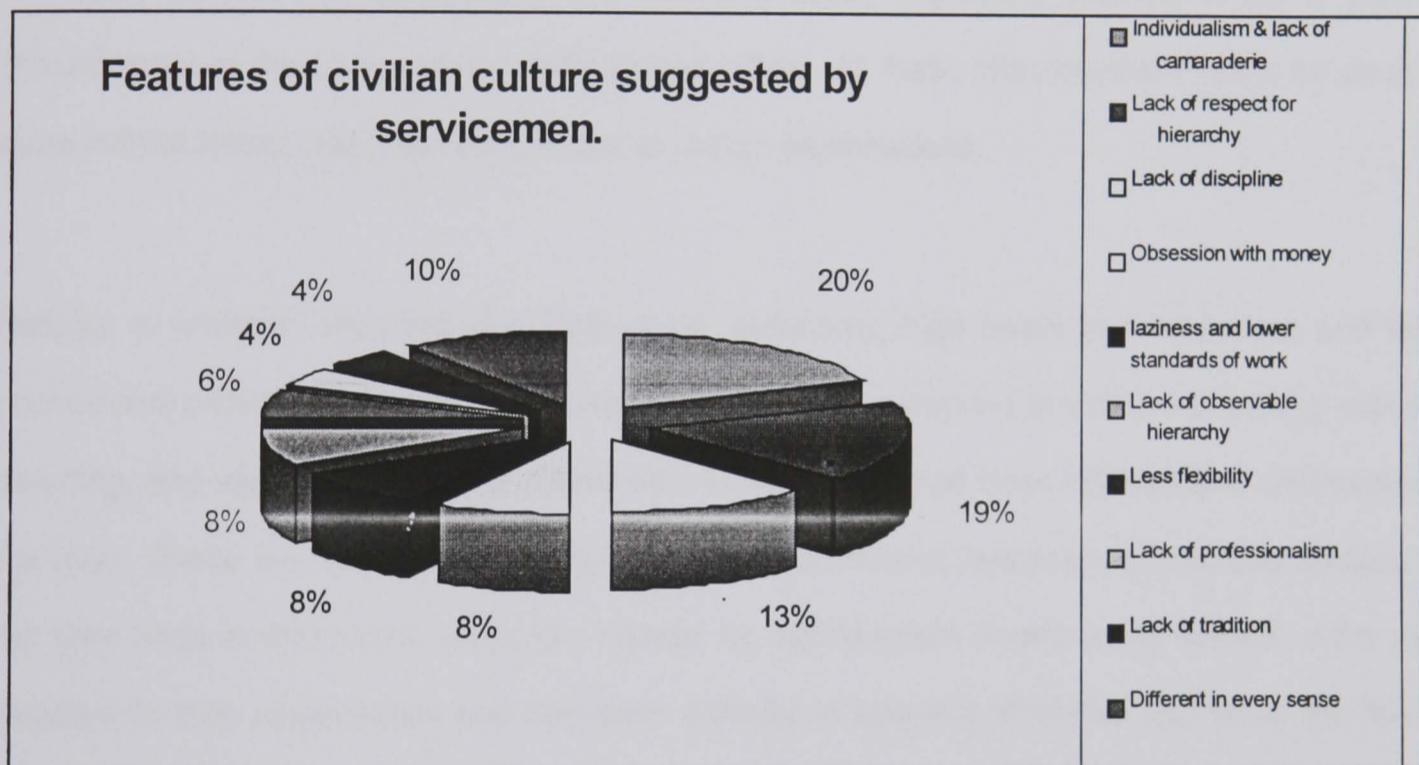
Figure 29 - Servicemen's perceptions of civilian culture.

Collectivism to Individualism

The perceived lack of dedication, loyalty and collectivism in civilian life was a theme that came up time and time again. Collectivism was one element of naval culture, which had been internalised by almost all the individuals interviewed, and hostility toward 'selfish' civilian work attitudes was recurring throughout the interviewing. Servicemen felt that a tendency to camaraderie was an integral part of the service identity, as individualism was to civilian identity.

As a military man, you put the job first...and I mean everyone will benefit, but civilians...no, they're different. (CPO)

Although there was mainly consensus over the lack of collectivism, and its implications for servicemen desiring a collective culture in their new career, coming to terms with the shift towards individualism was more problematic for some than others. Rank was influential, in particular, in that more Commissioned Officers were concerned about the lack of respect, but less concerned than the lower ranks about the likelihood of increasing individualism.

Commissioned Officers on the whole found it easier to adapt to an individualistic orientation. This may be because Commissioned Officers appeared to have more autonomy in the Navy than ratings, as well as more flexibility with regard to routines. Upward mobility, based on performance and qualifications, and promotions with resulting salary increases seemed to be a common characteristic of the career of a commissioned officer. All these characteristics could be taken as more individualistic, and thus more similar to civilian organisations.

Ratings, in contrast, reported very little, or no, autonomy, high levels of routinisation and fewer promotional prospects. These men found the prospect of a working environment lacking solidarity daunting, and very different to the collectivism in which they had been initiated and sedimented in the navy. Those who indicated that they felt they would receive less respect, and that civilians did not take pride in their work, motivated instead by individualism and financial reward, were more negative in their expectations and had more difficulty in adapting to civilian life. Many felt that, in order to succeed in civilian employment, it was their own attitudes that would have to change.

> *I don't think I will be able to rely on colleagues for support. And I can't expect them to change can I? I'll have to try to be more like them. (Lieutenant)*

Most respondents acknowledged the necessity of personal adaptation and their statements demonstrated the ways in which respondents felt that they would have to change. The most frequent answer (24%) was that respondents felt they might have to relax and not strive for the standards they had become accustomed to.

This was closely followed by comments about becoming more competitive, more individualistic and ultimately more materialistic (17% of answers). This may be explained by the fact that some

respondents felt they could not rely on any team spirit (15% of answers), and 18% of responses showed that leavers felt that they would have to get used to the idea of little respect being shown to them by colleagues. 4% of answers also illustrated how some respondents felt that they would be forced to 'modernise', become 'less traditional' and 'less Victorian' and so on:

I'll have to update myself a bit more probably...I hold many of the old traditional views you come across quite often, I would suspect, in the Navy. (Commander)

The ability to adapt to individualism appeared to be related to successful adaptation to civilian organisational cultures. Those who were able to adapt to more individualistic orientations toward work fared better than those who regretted, and who in some cases were bitter about, the lack of camaraderie in civilian organisations:

It would have been good to have been prepared for Civvy work...to be told how much of a rat race civilian life is. (WO)

Again, higher-ranking individuals found themselves more able to adapt in this sense, reflecting the expectations of the sample on leaving. A key aspect of these changes involved autonomy in decision-making and routinisation.

Decision making and autonomy

Servicemen again made references to their training and socialisation, describing how they had interpreted situations through their knowledge of naval procedure and protocol. Their naval norms, values and attitudes, they explained, provided a framework through which they could develop solutions to potential challenges or problems. The naval identity then, with the accompanying practical implications outlined here, enabled men to face decision-making with confidence.

You do think for yourself, obviously you do, but then we [servicemen] probably all think in a particular way... you can't go through all that training and not. (CPO)

As I said to you before, there is a 'navy way'...it's like an outlook on life. If civilian employers have their own outlook, I'm going to have to forget now and learn the new way. Otherwise I would think you could get left behind. (WO)

However, it also meant that their perceptions of the chances of taking responsibility for decision-making outside the Navy far more negative. Since they felt that 'naval' approaches to decision-making had been so ingrained, because they had worked so effectively within the Naval system, interviewees felt that it would be difficult to break with them and over-write them with more 'civilian' approaches.

> *I keep thinking that I'll find myself doing things like I did in my old job...and I'm sure they do things differently...it's worrying, but I guess it'll come with time. (Able Seaman)*

This represented another difference between themselves, and their work, and 'Civvy Street'. They displayed apprehension when talking about the way that civilians would use a 'civilian way' of making sense of organisational life. Most viewed this new type of situation with trepidation, some with resignation and others with a 'live and learn' attitude.

> *If I want to survive, I'll have to learn won't I...no getting away from that one! (Able Seaman)*

> *What's that saying...if...yeah – when in Rome... (CPO)*

Many Commissioned Officers however, with the exception of those who were aged over forty years, felt confident about the challenge that lay before them This may be explained in part by some further comments from interviewees, regarding the nature of their work. It appeared that decision-making varied, both quantitatively and qualitatively, between Officers and Ratings. For ratings, decision-making in certain situations had been largely prescribed and activities subject to procedure and protocol:

> *Ratings, a junior rating in particular, can be looked after until the day he leaves...and seldom have to make a decision on his own – he'd be told when to get up, when to have breakfast, when to work, what work to do...exactly what work and where...and when to stop. And he could refer any problems to his Officer in charge. If he wishes, he can go from cradle to grave being totally looked after. Officers...and I suppose a lot of senior ratings can't, because they have a management function. (Commander)*

Officers were more frequently responsible for their own decision-making, albeit still within the broader context of naval protocol:

I would expect, on a daily basis, to be discussing problems with people much more senior than me who I had to prove wrong, say, for want of a more straightforward term...he may be an Admiral, he may be a Captain. The further up the rank structure you go, the more blurred are the boundaries in terms of problem solving and decision-making...although it does depend on who you're serving. (Lieutenant Commander)

That's why we're Officers. We take the responsibility. We have the know-how...the where with all...and quite basically we take the flack, so to speak, if it all goes wrong. (Lieutenant)

Higher ranking individuals felt more drawn to jobs or careers with high levels of autonomy, and since most had applied for jobs where there was a reasonable level of autonomy, in jobs similar to their previous naval ones, they were, in the main, content with this aspect of their work. Indeed, some planned to become self-employed precisely to avoid a decrease in autonomy at work.

I'm used to being in charge of men – I think I would find it hard to have someone else in charge of me, telling me what to do all the time. (CPO)

Lower ranking individuals however, whilst mostly taking jobs with lower levels of autonomy, found the lack of a reference group or ideology problematic. These individuals had been required to make mainly prescribed decisions in their naval jobs, and where more complex decisions did have to be made there was a naval discourse to draw on. Since the men were unfamiliar with particular civilian work discourses, autonomy in decision making became a harder task, which many viewed with apprehension, although most also saw it as a challenge, a problem which in time could be overcome. This may also throw some light on the way in which higher-ranking respondents in the sample were looking for second careers, while lower ranks wanted just a job.

Whilst higher ranks were happy with high levels of autonomy in their new work, there was still some adaptation and to be done, before they began to settle in to their new role. This appeared to be so for the same reason as outlined above:

As an Officer, you have to know what's to be done and why it's to be done. You have to know that otherwise you wouldn't have been given the responsibility in the first place. I'm sure it will be the same in any civilian organisation, although obviously they will all have their own organisational ethos, which I suspect may take some getting used to. (Lieutenant Commander)

Men thus reported different levels of apprehension at being forced to make more un-prescribed decisions on many different levels in their work. However, after some time in their new employment, most men became more familiar with organisational frames of reference for such decision-making. Where this was the case, men began to learn their new roles and became happier about taking decisions that represented higher levels of autonomy.

I am enjoying belonging to myself and deciding my own priorities and programme. (WO)

Reflecting the expectations outlined above, it was higher-ranking individuals who found this an easy task. But in most respondents adaptation was possible following a period of re-training. By the time that they had spent six months in their new employment, most men had acclimatised to their increased autonomy in their new occupational roles. In this respect, expectations of difficulties with self-management were borne out only temporarily. They were also able eventually to come to terms with different organisational structures.

Hierarchy and identity reference frameworks

Another referential framework that men had become reliant on in the Navy was the strict marked hierarchy. In most of the civilian work areas referred to by the sample there was far less attention given to 'rank', 'order' and so on. The implications of this appeared to have two dimensions.

Firstly, rank had been effectively used by servicemen as a frame of reference as to who other people were, what their social role was, and how they should be treated. Secondly, this frame of reference was often internalised and used by individuals in making sense of their own social roles and identities. Rank appeared to have had implications that went beyond work, extending into the social life of servicemen and their families, as discussed in the previous chapter. Ranking systems then, were seen to be central to identity formulation, both of oneself and of others.

Oh yes, there is definitely hierarchy. And you have to be seen to respect it. And I would suspect that is why the Navy is so efficient – because people have their different jobs to do. (Lieutenant)

According to the interviewees, there was a very definite ordering of individuals and relationships, both in terms of work responsibilities and, importantly, the status accredited to different groups. Many couples interviewed, as well as some questionnaire respondents, identified a considerable distinction between working and personal relations within the Navy and those that they felt existed 'outside'.

Whilst relationships to civilians were viewed in terms of difference, within an 'us and them' context, relationships between servicemen were viewed as difference in another kind of way. Here, relationships were not polarised as with us and them, naval/civilian distinctions, nor were they perceived as being threatening or antagonistic. Rather they were ordered into strict hierarchies, characterised by the subordination of ratings and lower ranks, by the Officers Corps, and naturalised through extensive naval socialisation:

> You can't have everyone running around willy-nilly doing just as they like. There has to be order. That's how it works and everyone is certainly clear about it. (Commander)

Again, six months after leaving the Navy, different groups viewed the lack of a distinct hierarchy in different ways. In general, lower ranking individuals were happier with this particular change, in that it allowed them to develop their own personal frames of reference. Many higher-ranking men secured employment in which they retained their high status, and therefore the resentment towards new, less hierarchically organised occupations was minimised. They also retained their ability to discipline staff, albeit in ways different from naval discipline.

Discipline in naval and civilian worlds

The issue of hierarchy led to another, that of discipline, which again appeared to be central to naval life, for the same reasons as those outlined above. A large proportion of the servicemen interviewed expressed a concern over the perceived lack of discipline in civilian work organisations, and naval discipline had clearly been internalised as part of their naval socialisation.

Servicemen felt that discipline in the Navy had been clearly communicated, and that they had become accustomed to fixed rules and penalties. As such they were able to conduct their work accordingly, fully aware of what rules they should follow, with rule compliance being supported by

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collective understanding and acceptance. They expressed some concern over the role of discipline, and their own reactions to it, in civilian organisations.

> Oh yes, you know exactly what you can and can't do. Not just in your job either – there are also rules about behaviour at messes, for example. And then there are many unwritten rules that you just come to know. (CPO)

It would appear then, that the interviewees found it easier to observe rules where they were clear and unambiguously communicated, where they were viewed collectively as legitimate and represented the interests of everyone in the organisation, and where they were enforced in an impersonal way. There was a significant awareness that this aspect of their new employment would involve some adaptation and re-socialisation, along with the other concerns raised above.

> It'll be a helluva job to get used to it...you know to get in tune with the way things are done. (Able Seaman)

6% of responses indicated that leavers would have to try to understand people and situations more, rather than referring to explicit instructions or 'company code'. These comments came mainly from the lower ranks, and coincided with more negative expectations about civilianisation.

In the later set of interviews, men reported that discipline was an aspect of work that was indeed different in civilian organisations. Men reported surprise at the ambiguity of rules, which contrasted greatly with the numerous rules and regulations that were spelled out to them and strictly adhered to in their naval careers. Surprise was also expressed in relation to punishments relating to rule breaking. Again these were ambiguous, and many felt that they were much less evenly applied. Men felt that learning the rules of their new work required some effort. However, most found that when it came down to it, they were happy with the new situation. Some positively enjoyed the personal freedoms that came with less strict organisational rule.

Financial Security

Men had expected, and indeed been informed, that their training had equipped them with readily transferable skills. However, it was only on the point of leaving the service that they came to realise that these skills would not be rewarded with as much financial security as they had at first believed.

Many felt that their expectations had been over-optimistic, and this had implications for their feelings toward their change in lifestyle:

You definitely get spoiled in the Navy...we've been financially secure...I'm not sure about the future in that respect. (WO)

We've had to think about her [wife] going out to work...I can't rely on my own salary anymore. (CPO)

Some of the sample also expressed concern over potential discrimination, against ex-service personnel, in civilian labour markets. This once again reflected the 'us and them' themes that had been consistent throughout interviewing, as well as in questionnaire responses:

There is an attitude toward service people. (Able Seaman)

They don't like ex-servicemen down here. It's definitely worse in port towns...there are a lot of unemployed here and they think that when we finish in the Navy, we should just get out of the area and not take the local jobs away from the civilians – they don't see it as your home – you're different to them. (CPO)

One wife who had worked in employment agencies suggested that employers deliberately avoided recruitment among service leavers:

They think that the guys can't cope...they've always had everything done for them and so on and whatsoever...so they don't take them on. Not officially of course, but I know...I've seen it many a time. (Lieutenant Commander's wife)

Pride, social usefulness, collectivism, hierarchy and difference, discipline and somewhat stereotyped representations of 'the other' (and perhaps the stereotyping of themselves by civilians), appeared to represent key characteristics of naval culture as defined by the sample, and differences between these and the key characteristics of civilian culture appeared to have been exaggerated and polarised. Moving from one to another thus represented an understandably daunting task for many of the sample. Some felt that resettlement advice could have highlighted these issues, as well as providing support in terms of job-search.

Resettlement and change

The fact that many servicemen felt unprepared for the differences between naval and civilian life only compounded problems with transition. Where respondents were asked to add any further comments at the end of the survey questionnaire, many referred to their resettlement training. Whilst this advice had been, in the main, gratefully received, several points were made time and time again.

Firstly, many respondents pointed out that they had not been able to make full use of the resettlement training due to the demands of the service job that they were still employed in. Respondents commenting on these issues felt that they had not had time to spare for preparation for civilian employment whilst still performing their service jobs.

The resettlement advice received by them was about job search, but no advice about the cultural changes involved was included in briefings. Moreover, and particularly amongst those who had already left, respondents felt that resettlement advice been too narrow in the sense that it focused exclusively on career change and job search. Many suggested that some advice or preparation for civilian life in general would have been beneficial, as on leaving they had not realised the potential impact of career change on their lives.

This may help to explain why those planning to leave did not expect to make as many changes outside work, for example, to friends, household formations and so on, as those who had already left reported. Most respondents felt that the full extent of change had not been conveyed to them, and would have appreciated 'more warning prior to leaving'.

This ties in with another comment that was often repeated; the exclusive use of naval and ex-naval personnel in resettlement offices. Whilst the efforts of these personnel were largely appreciated, it was suggested that the use of civilian advisors, alongside the naval advisors, would perhaps serve to highlight more successfully the cultural differences and the further-reaching changes involved in the resettlement process.

It is important not to overstate the negative aspects of resettlement and civilianisation. Many of the leavers viewed the prospect of change as 'a challenge', and some thought that they had made a satisfactory transition into a further stage of their lives.

It is exciting at times, but I do get anxious as well ...though, in general, things have been overcome and I think I'll get on OK. (CPO)

I feel I can actually be a 'real' person now. (Able Seaman)

If you give yourself time to accept matters and plan ahead for them, I think it's really not too bad. (WO)

It's important not to jump in too quickly. As I've said, it's a major re-direction in life ...that is the nature of it...and you need to give it time to settle. (Lieutenant)

It's no good whining about 'them' being different to us, because at some point we're (or some of us) are going to be 'them' too. (Able Seaman)

Where confrontation, disengagement and re-socialisation had effectively taken place, interviewees were far more optimistic about their future in 'Civvy Street'. Those more open to civilian discourses clearly found civilianisation less problematic than those clinging to naval discourses and identities.

There were some indicators of factors then, which aided a smoother transition. Those who had 'got used to the idea' prior to leaving felt better equipped to cope, and sufficient preparation for the event provided another key to experiencing change with less trauma. Time spent in transition was also significant, and for those who were prepared to retrain for their new employment, civilianisation was viewed more favourably. Indeed, those who faced up to career change with enthusiasm, and demonstrated a willingness to re-socialise and succeed in civilian employment fared better that their more reluctant counterparts. Furthermore, since naval life represented for many a 'whole way of life', those who had other non-work goals, such as leisure and sport, felt that this filled a gap which civilianisation had created.

Navy life does affect your whole life – work, family, friends, your relationship with your children...and your social life...actually it's nice to have that to ourselves for a change. (CPO)

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(Leaving) frees up time, you can take up the things you've been meaning to do for years. It's a good opportunity to do something different, outside work…. So life isn't just the job. (PO)

Expectations of what ultimately represented 'the unknown' were not always borne out in reality. The reality of resettlement and adaptation is discussed in the following chapter.

Planning and Preparation

Another important issue then, was that of preparation. Where men had been able to plan ahead of leaving, and this was not always the case, they had generally been able to face impending change with more clarity of mind, and tended to adapt more successfully in a shorter period of time.

I became aware quite early on I would say, relatively speaking. You would have to see when others started planning. I believed it to be just another challenge, and looked forward to the transition. With the planning over the last ten years, I found my move to civilian life to be fairly painless. (Lieutenant Commander)

Resettlement requires a lot of planning, it should ideally be started at least three years prior to leaving. (Lieutenant)

Planning, then, appeared to be important. Of those respondents who said that they had planned well in advance of leaving, 83% adapted well. In contrast, of those who had not given such time to plan prior to leaving, only 39% adapted successfully.
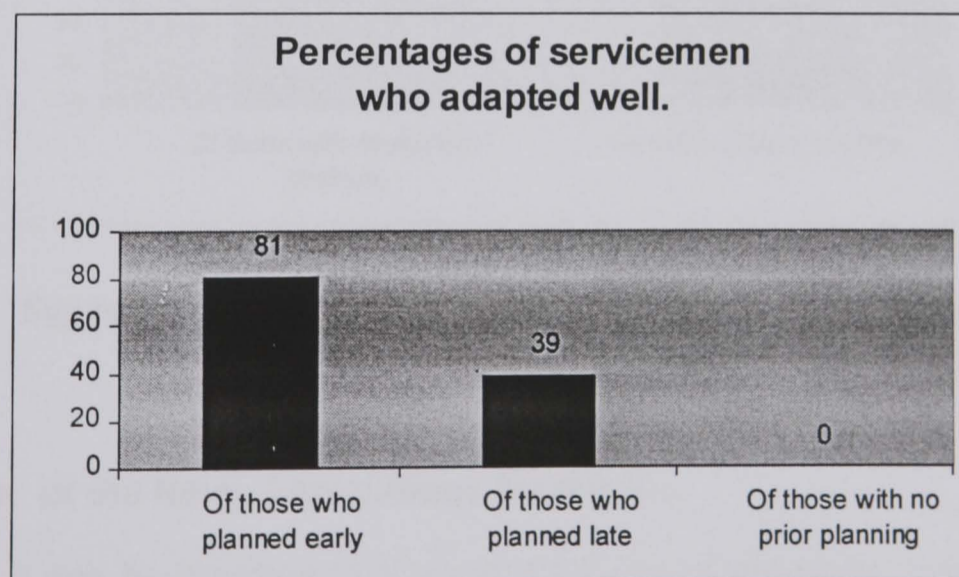
Figure 30 - Levels of successful adaptation by the extent of planning.

It would appear that some groups were more likely to plan in advance. Of those who were married, 47% had planned early, as opposed to only 20% of those who were single. This difference was

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also noted between those with dependent children and those without, the former planning earlier than the latter. It seemed that family responsibilities might have led men to make plans for the future before they had left the Navy.

Percentages of servicemen who planned well for re-employment.

Of those married/co-habiting: 48
Of those single: 20
Of those separated/divorced: 100
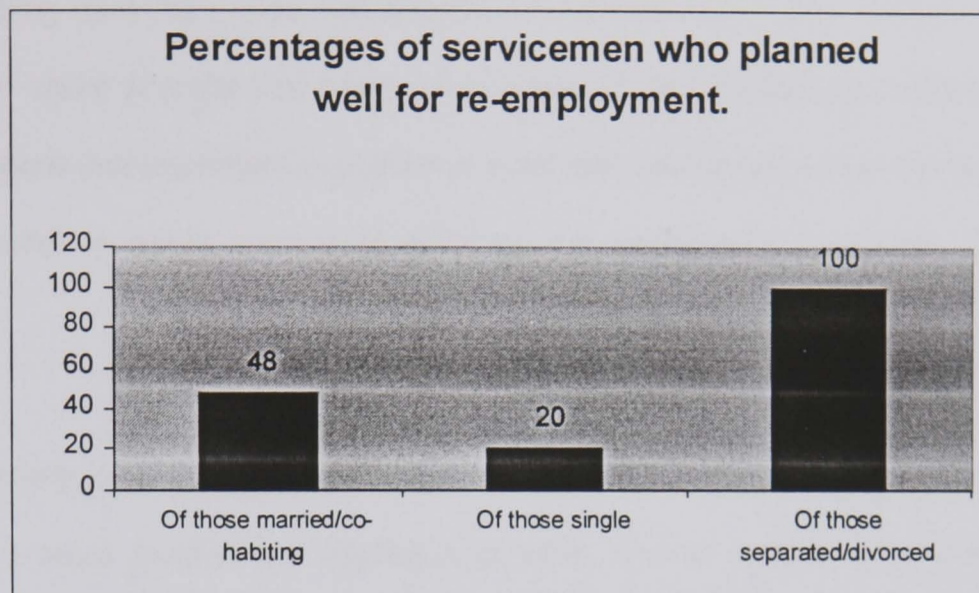
Figure 31 - Levels of planning for re-employment by marital status.

Percentages of servicemen who planned well for re-employment.

Of those with dependant children: 66
Of those without children: 32
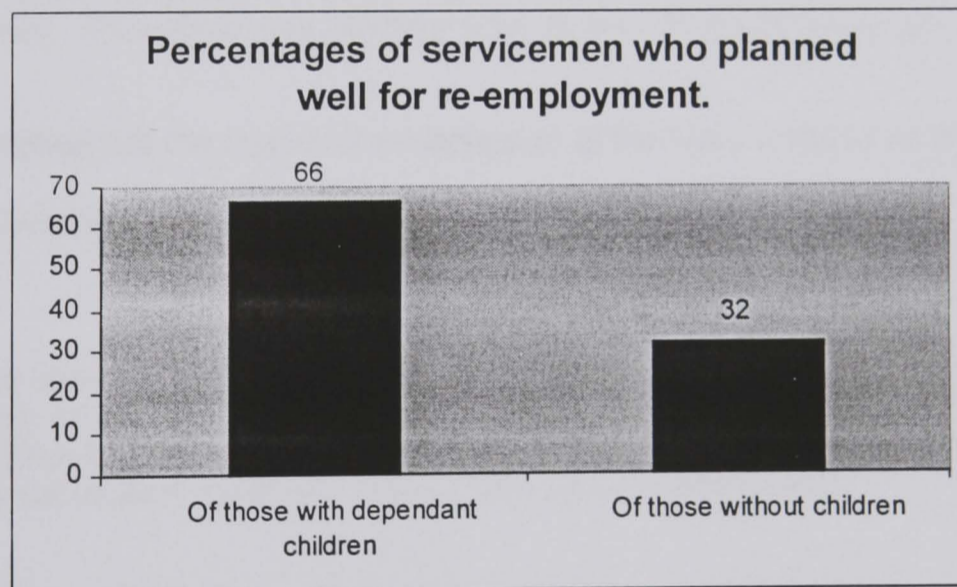
Figure 32 - Levels of planning for re-employent by children.

'Civilianisation' of the Navy: Implications for leavers

As a final point, it may be important to note that a number of individuals, both in questionnaire answers and the interviews, had raised the issue of civilianisation. This issue was one that had not been raised, in any sense, by me, and the fact that it had recurred throughout the study, may imply that it is one worthy of consideration.

Much smoother transition than I had expected – the modern Navy is much closer to civilian life than previously was the case, I suspect. The navy is becoming more integrated into civilian life for a number of reasons: smaller and less self-contained services; greater use of civilian labour and services; modern lifestyles and attitudes of young servicemen. I suspect that the transition to civilian life is therefore far less traumatic than say, 30 years ago. (Commander)

The general feeling here then, was that despite the reported difficulties involved in change, many men felt that the entire process had been made easier by the increasing 'civilianisation' of service life. It would appear that increased exposure to what men perceived as elements of civilian life and culture had resulted in men's increased, although not necessarily conscious, familiarity with the civilian world.

This was characterised by examples such as: an increase in owner-occupancy in civilian areas, the introduction of a more multi-skilled approach to work, shorter periods of absence, more shore-based work, a slightly more relaxed attitude toward family responsibilities and more exposure to civilian personnel.

It's all civilians in the jobs. It puts a lot of pressure on a lot of people and you can see the difference. It's a completely different Navy to what it was 20 years ago. (CPO)

The interviews highlighted the impact of civilianisation of the Navy in terms of the relationship with civilian 'others', including within the work setting.

'A lot of the shore-side jobs are civilian jobs – they've got rid of a load of Navy people, it's cheaper to employ civilians. And civilians don't understand – how can they understand naval life? So they don't understand matelots at all. And that has its effects on the way we all work together...not so much camaraderie' (CPO)

The effect of cuts on working relationships appeared to be an important issue.

There's been cuts but in the Navy, workload wise, its like there's World War III on, but there's not. It affects friendship in the service. (Able Seaman)

That's another thing – the friendship thing has gone now too...people are more in a rush to get home at night now. Yeah. They don't want to eat and drink Navy anymore. (PO)

They work too hard now – you can't sit down so you tend to get on each others backs more and you don't tend to be so friendly anymore. You might go abroad and have a yahoo, but when you come back to Plymouth, there's very few people who'll be round your house or doing things with you – they used to years ago. (WO)

Interviewees suggested that this also had implications for family life:

> *That has an effect on the serviceman's family. I used to have a service 'family' to turn to when he wasn't around – some place I could turn to, you know, to get me through. But not in the last few years. (CPO's wife)*

> *And years ago the Navy used to be an extended family – they used to have welfare, they used to have people you could contact, if one kid was ill, you'd think, who can help with the other one, and everyone would help everybody else. But that doesn't happen. I think it's been eroded by the cuts. (CPO)*

This increased civilianisation, when taken together with the findings of the study, in terms of exposure to civilian life for identity and adaptation, represents an important issue with regard to resettlement and the civilianisation of ex-service personnel, and as such, will receive consideration in the next chapter.

Resettlement and Adaptation

In general, however, most of the sample studied appeared to have developed strategies for coping with the quite considerable impact of change after leaving service life. Whilst this had not, in most cases, been an entirely comfortable experience, and for many had raised significant problems, the majority were, at the time of interviewing, on the way to resettling in civilian life, although there were of course variations in experiences.

> *At times I feel happy about becoming a civilian and yet during other periods of time, I wish I could get away from it all. I do, from time to time, miss my RN social life and sense of freedom but overall I think I am happy as a civilian. (Lieutenant)*

> *I have adapted very well, I don't miss the service now at all. (Able Seaman)*

> *I like being free of the Navy and being able to drive my civilian career in a way I like. (Lieutenant Commander)*

> *I should have done it sooner. I am enjoying being a civilian. (CPO)*

> *I should be able to plan for events and become a real person now. I'm working on that still but it's within my reach. (PO)*

> *Becoming a civilian? Well…it's not even close to the service, but it will do. (CPO)*

> *Sometimes I think – should I have left? But it is a great opportunity for change if you can get through it. (PO)*

My time in the Navy was excellent, but it had run its course – I am relatively happy as a civilian – perhaps it is after all just another job, but I am definitely now more in control of my own destiny. (Lieutenant)

I am glad that I went through with leaving, even though it's a big commitment...and not easy to do. (Able Seaman)

Conclusion

Occupational change heralded an important stage in service leavers' lives. Whilst some were able to adapt to civilian life quite successfully, most of the respondents reported some difficulties in coming to terms with change and adapting to a new way of life that differed quite substantially from their days as service personnel. Some felt that their identities had been threatened by such change, and there were those for whom occupational change represented an ongoing identity crisis. This appeared to be particularly the case where leavers had not experienced any 'rite of passage' in the form of marked leaving. Advanced planning and preparation was also influential in adapting to civilian life.

Qualities that appeared to ease anxiety over occupational change included those referred to in Chapters Two and Three as being more akin to those required in civilian careers (individualism, instrumentalism, familiarity with civilian occupational approaches to working and personal lives and so on – see Moskos' (1977) Institution/Occupation hypothesis pp19-20 and Fallows' (1981) ideas about military civilianisation pp43-47). Officers, in particular, found resettlement a challenging but well-planned experience, and generally faced change with more confidence than other ranks. Lower ranking individuals, on the other hand, were more often faced with the prospect of re-defining their aspirations and rethinking their outlook on life, learning new, more appropriate social and cultural working norms. The implications of rites of passage, advance preparation, civilian familiarity and confusion over identity are addressed in more detail in Chapter Nine.

Membership of one of the two different groups of leavers outlined in chapter six, the 'involved' and the 'non-involved', appeared to have implications for adaptation to civilian life. Those leavers who had been more involved in naval life, and who had adapted well to the lifestyle, seemed to have more problems on leaving the Navy. The tendency to polarise naval and civilian cultures and individuals, and the employment of stereotypical images only compounded this. On the other hand, those who had been more involved in civilian life had found civilianisation a less traumatic task.

This also applied not only to leavers themselves, but also to family members and family experiences, as we shall see in the next chapter.

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[71] The figures regarding expectations and feelings towards change are taken from answers provided by the smaller section of the sample that had not yet left.

[72] This may, in part, be explained by the fact that there were more Commissioned Officers in this group. The calculation refers to a simple cross-tabulation, due to the limitations of numbers in the sample (discussed in Chapters Five and Six).

Chapter Eight - Men, Families and Occupational Change

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the ways in which leaving the Navy affects the family relationships and household dynamics of servicemen. Chapter Six reported various issues pertinent to servicemen, in terms of the impact of the naval career on their lives, and the lives of other members of their families. If we accept that families are affected quite considerably by the service career, then occupational change must also have significant implications. This chapter documents the experiences of families as they come to terms with resettlement and civilianisation and the strategies that they develop in order to deal with such change.

Transition and Expectations

A particular worry for naval leavers, extending beyond work issues, was adaptation to a new family lifestyle, with changing involvement in social circles. Many discussed issues that made transition more difficult, with respect to familial and friendship relations, and the effect of leaving on personal and social lives. Whilst most of the sample had left the Navy in order to spend more time with other family members, many were aware that adaptation to full-time family life might present its own challenges:

> It's not just leaving the job is it? The effects on your personal life are massive...and no less harder to deal with. (Lieutenant)

Indeed, a number of respondents exhibited concern over what they saw as a transformation of their own roles within their households. As we have seen, for some, their identity as providers or breadwinners was likely to be threatened, as discussed previously, and since this had been a central characteristic of their service employment, their changing circumstances represented a worrying prospect:

I'm not the man who brings the money in any more, well not in the same way. I may not be able to provide for them all like I have done in the past. That can make a man feel quite low...although it does give you the motivation to get sorted as soon as possible. (CPO)

A number of interviewees also expressed anxiety over their families' potential reactions to their permanent residence in the familial home:

They've got their routines, and then suddenly there's me. I don't know how that's going to be yet...I'll tell you next time you come along! (PO)

It's a worry – I mean people say, wow, you've been together for years, which we have see, but how many of them have we spent together. It might be strange to be together so much. (Able Seaman)

For this reason, those who had sought employment similar to that of their service career, often with elements of shift-work or even longer-term absence, felt less concerned about these issues. This pre-occupation with changing relationships extended to social lives. Most of the sample had service-centred friends and, where this was the case, respondents were anticipating difficulties in maintaining such networks.

I'm guessing that it will gradually fade...the service connection. How do you stay friends with people who are doing something so different. I mean, what will we have to talk about? Perhaps it would make me feel left out. (WO)

Some had consciously begun to establish friendship networks within civilian circles, precisely in order to avoid isolation once out of naval service. Men talked of the benefits of having bought accommodation in civilian areas, and thus gaining access to civilian communities:

I have deliberately become more involved with civilians. I think that you have to make the effort. And living in a nice little community like this one certainly makes things easier. I'm becoming more a part of that...rather than part of something else [the Navy]. (Commander)

This fitted in with another finding. Once again, and perhaps obviously, those who had previous exposure to civilian friendship or community networks were more confident about sustaining their social lives:

I guess you have to face up to change. And it came to me consciously that I was going to leave. So I got myself organised for it a long time in advance. I started getting myself lots of friends who were civilians, almost exclusively civilians...getting away from the whole Navy thing. That gave me more confidence when I left. I was no longer entirely dependent, so to speak. (Lieutenant Commander)

Also of importance was marital status; those with families were less likely to be concerned about their social lives than were their single counterparts, who had relied almost exclusively on naval networks. It was also these single men who had higher levels of involvement with the navy on a personal and social level. They, along with most other respondents, felt that change would have a huge impact on their lives, both inside and outside work.

For a single man, my life has been 100% Navy. And it's going to be 100% difficult to change. (Lieutenant)

I haven't got the wife and family waiting at home...the Navy is my family in a way. I feel gutted. (CPO)

On the other hand, where men and their families had been unhappy with service life, particularly with reference to absence, reactions to change were far more positive. Here, transition was less problematic for those confronting, and in some cases even embracing, change.

Both men and wives, then, were aware that many changes lay before them, and these were viewed differentially by various groups. However, as with changes associated with work, expectations did not always match reality. We turn now therefore, to the data gathered from both interviews and questionnaires, that focused on respondents feelings about adaptation.

Occupational Change and Family Relationships

In line with the finding that the majority of the sample had volunteered for redundancy due to family considerations, most of the men interviewed expressed positive feelings about being able to spend more time with their families. This may help to explain why single men faced change with more reticence than those with families.

It's been hard, I couldn't deny that. But having more time to do things with the family, and see other family members...and everything. It's been worth leaving for that. (Able Seaman)

My home life has changed dramatically. My wife and children are almost different people. It's what I left the Navy for. (CPO)

Percentages of servicemen who adapted well
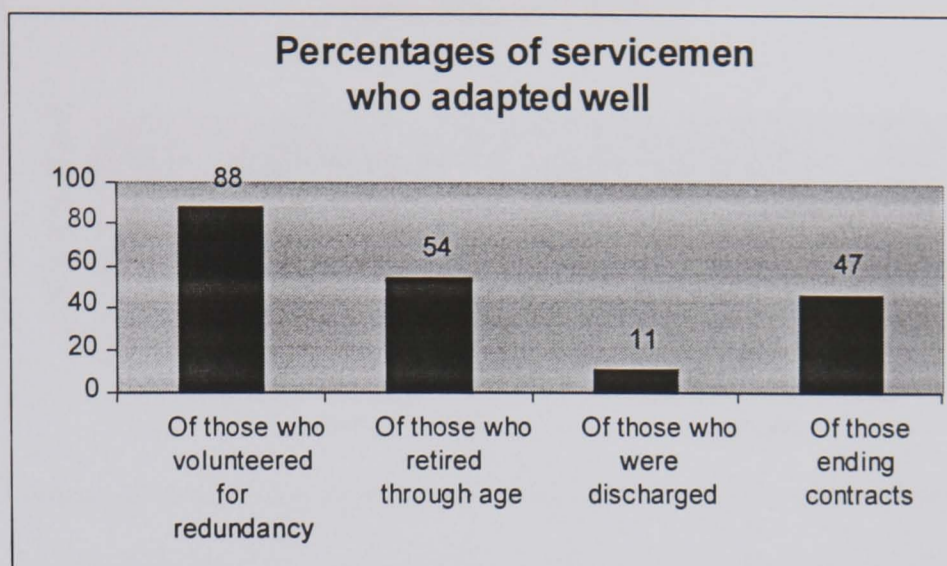
Figure 33 - Levels of successful adaptation depending on choice in leaving.

The interviews demonstrated that whilst men may have been discharged for medical reasons, their physical conditions were not so severe to exclude them from local labour markets. Rather, these individuals had found adaptation difficult as they had found it hard to accept their disengagement, and therefore re-socialisation had represented an uneasy task.

Many men and women commented on the positive effects of leaving on their marital relationships. This was particularly so where absence had been viewed as a problem, and whilst approximately half of the sample had taken some time to adapt, most were happy with their new marital situation. Of those for whom absence had formed a negative aspect of naval life, 72% adapted well. On the other hand, of those who had been happier with absence, 51% adapted successfully.

(Serviceman)I'm able to take the wife out more and do activities with the children…you wouldn't even know how good that is.
(Wife)I would! It's been brilliant. I've been waiting a long time for this. (PO and wife)

The permanent residence of men in their own homes had other implications, and couples told of how they were able to behave more naturally with one another in contrast to forcing themselves to enjoy 'snatched moments' between periods of absence. Even stressful periods and arguments were appreciated, as couples had time together to work problems through at an appropriate pace, again in contrast to rushing to 'kiss and make up', before the men were called away.

We can even row in our own time if we want to! You wouldn't believe it but that's freedom that is! (CPO's wife)

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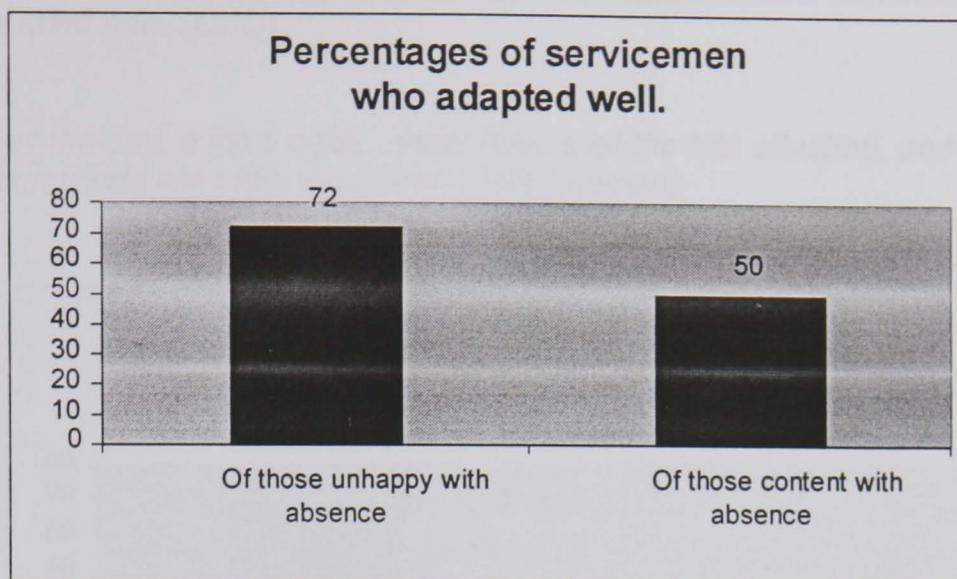
Figure 34 - Levels of servicemen's adaptation depending on feelings towards absence.

Couples in general felt that this more natural pace of life made for increased marital satisfaction, particularly amongst those for whom service life had been demanding of time.

> *I am so glad...well we're both really glad to be settled into civilian life...being able to have a normal family routine...knowing when I'm working and when I'll be home. (WO)*

> *I now don't have to worry about doing all the house maintenance, decorating in one two-week period. We have even been on holiday together...for the first time in seventeen years! (PO)*

The ability to spend more time in the familial home was reported as being a particularly positive change where children were involved. Of those respondents with dependant children, 69% adapted well, compared to 46% of those without.

Again reflecting the pre-occupation with part-time parenting documented in Chapter Six, men felt that higher levels of involvement with their children's lives compensated for the loss of their careers, and the lifestyle that accompanied them. Comments from both interviews and survey answers demonstrated that this was perhaps the most important issue affecting men during their service with the navy, and their willingness to adapt to civilian life.

> *My wife accepted that she had married a serviceman...and that part of that meant having time apart. But I'm glad that I won't have to be apart from my children anymore. I really appreciate being with them...I could never go back, for that reason. I mean, I*

have no complaints about the Navy really...except the absence obviously...but that's a big part of it. And there comes a time that you realise what's important. I wouldn't change my mind now. (CPO)

At the end of the day, a job's a job...yeah there's all the bits attached, and I won't deny it's fun...but my kids are more important. (Able Seaman)

Percentages of servicemen who adapted well.
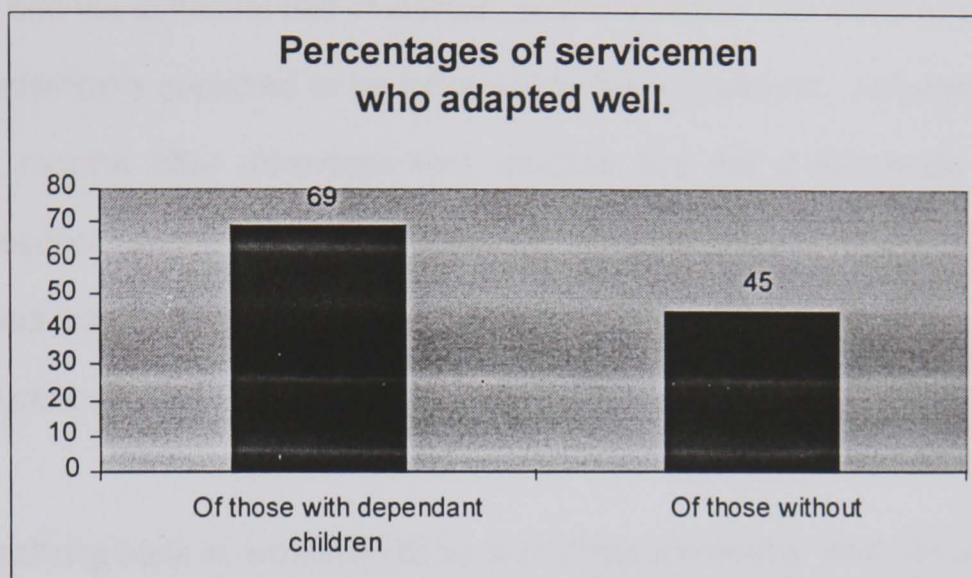
Figure 35 - Levels of successful adaptation depending on having children.

Other issues were raised, which were not unrelated to that of dependant children. Many couples, and particularly wives, felt liberated by the decreasing dominance of the male occupational role. The centrality of the service career had been well documented throughout the interviews, often viewed in a negative light because of its impact on family life.[73]Respondents referred to the 'freedom' they had experienced in being released from the hold of the Navy and this was particularly related to the new found ability to make long-term plans. At this stage of interviewing, both men and women reiterated their frustration at the high levels of naval intrusion into the family sphere, and their resulting inability to plan for the future. Planning was a factor in their new lives that they had come to appreciate.

Much, much happier...now that I don't have to check availability or permission before planning holidays...well planning anything...now that that constant threat of absence has finally been removed. (CPO)

Attitudes toward family life after leaving, then, were generally positive. However, there were several problems that appeared to be common to a number of respondents, and that were also related to the permanent residence of husbands and fathers. The main problem arising from changing residence in familial homes was that of power relations between husbands and wives. As discussed in Chapter Six, most women had adapted to particular roles in response to their husbands' intermittent absence. In general, this had provided women with high levels of domestic

power. The problems of adaptation on the return of servicemen have already been documented, but couples reported some difference between this and the new situation of permanent residence.

Where men had been intermittently absent, they had generally accepted particular family and household roles, and the dominant role of women, as an inevitable side effect of service life. Their positions as breadwinners appeared to be influential in this acceptance. However, at this point of interviewing, six months after disengagement, couples had felt it necessary to address the redefinition of household and family roles, and this had not always been without problems. In some cases women had been resentful of their husband's integration, particularly where men had expected a more central role.

He came waltzing back in, expecting to be man about the house. Well...in a way it was more my house...I was the poor bastard...oops, should I....well I was the one who did everything. No, I wasn't going to have that. It caused a few problems to start off. (Able Seaman's wife)

I think he really did expect to just come back and take over. Service life makes women, or wives, very strong and independent and I thought 'why should he, it's probably more my house than his'...in terms of who took responsibility for it the majority of the time...and I still think that's true. But we did manage to compromise eventually. After a few fights first! (CPO's wife)

Accordingly, some men expressed disappointment at their wives' reluctance to accept the importance of their own male role. And some felt that they were strangers in their own homes.

I said to her 'what am I supposed to do?'. I did appreciate everything she'd done and that...but it was like I'd just got back to be with her more. And it was like she didn't want me to be there. It was quite hurtful. I did wonder yeah, if I'd made the right decision like...for a while. (Able Seaman)

My wife is used to coping with matters on her own...she now finds it difficult to accept...when I am home all of the time...that I do have an opinion on matters that often differs from hers. (Lieutenant)

In cases where wives had been particularly resistant, men had become confused, or felt they had lost their family role, and again this situation was worsened where they had not secured employment and could not therefore revert to their traditional breadwinner status. Once again, some men had faced problems in maintaining their own identities, this time in the context of family and household, and this appeared to be further heightened where wives had assumed the leader career.

I felt pretty bad for the first month or so, or even the first few months. My wife and children were very independent and they objected to having to compromise just because I was home. It probably would have been better had I got a new job, but I hadn't at that point in time...and I felt that they resented me for that. We've talked about it now and they say that that was never the case...I suspect that was them feeling strange at having me around again...and me feeling...strange as well I suppose. And relatively insecure at not having been providing, or contributing to the family in any way. I don't know if that would have continued had I remained unemployed. I'd rather not think about that thank you! (Lieutenant)

In contrast to those who expressed the desire to be reintegrated into their families and households, there were several interviewees who felt 'tied down' or restricted by the increased demands of their family roles.

We just got under each other's feet. (Able Seaman)

I often do still feel trapped. Not that I don't love them all...I do. But I do feel tied down sometimes. It's just so different to service life. (PO)

This was especially true of men who had not originally found absence to be problematic. It would seem that these men had been less dissatisfied with absence and had therefore adapted more successfully to service life. However, this also resulted in them facing more difficulty when adapting to civilian life, as discussed earlier.

It is important here to note the various idiosyncrasies of husbands and wives that impacted on couples as they sought to adapt to living together permanently. Some couples reported a period of 'getting to know each other again' following leaving. This generally manifested itself in certain behaviours. Whilst some described differences in attitudes, for example, towards roles, sense of humour and preferences, they had generally been aware of these prior to leaving. But time spent apart had, in some cases, led to the development of habits with which partners and spouses were unfamiliar.

We found it hard at first to settle down and to adapt to living with each other. (CPO)

We had to get to know each other properly...it's amazing how much you don't know about each other when you're always being separated. (CPO)

One couple provided an example:

(Husband) For a while I just wandered around with a can of Mr Sheen all day. It drove her mad..
(Wife) God, yes. I found out that he really is a very tidy guy!
(Husband) Yes, I am...when you're on a ship, everything has its place and it can't be anywhere else. It's got to be in that place. She's slightly different.
(Wife) A service life is a tidy life...and so is mine now! ((PO and wife)

In the main, realisation and acceptance, or transformation, of such behaviours, represented the period of getting to know one another, and resulted in few long-term obstacles to adaptation.

It is also important to note the adaptation to living with children. For most of the sample, this had not been particularly problematic. However, there were some who faced this change with more difficulty. This appeared to be accentuated amongst men with children under sixteen (69% of whom adapted, compared to 88% of those with older children). As with marital relationships, re-building relationships with children was, in some cases, a concerted effort.

Service life had kept me away at sea, away from my children...away during their formative years. It resulted in my reduced closeness to my children, and I had to deal with that when I came out. (Lieutenant Commander)

Many children had developed particularly strong relationships with their mothers whilst their father had been intermittently absent, and some, although relatively few, were resentful of their father's intrusion. In such instances, re-building parental relationships was a slower and less comfortable process. Again, reflecting marital relationships, fathers and their children spent periods of re-familiarisation, although this appeared to be far less extensive than that of husbands and wives. This appeared to be more difficult for men with more children. Of those respondents who had one or two children, 81% adapted well, in contrast to 34% of those with three or more. For a small number it was particularly difficult.

Having spent so long in the service, I missed a lot of my now adult children's growing up and consequently I felt that I can't understand their problems in life...their attitudes for example. Also...there seems to be no bonding from myself. Showing love and affection to my children is presently impossible for me...which often causes arguments between me and my wife. (CPO)

So whilst absence had been a key problem for the majority whilst in naval service, permanent residence generated its own problems in some cases. This finding may be related to the way in which some men found it necessary to take up new employment involving periods, although less extensive, of absence.

Career Interplay

Where the centrality of the service career had resulted in many wives being forced to give up their own positions in the labour market, the change in circumstances after men left the navy had implications for women's employment.

Leaving the Navy meant that we had more flexibility in terms of her career. (Lieutenant Commander)

We discussed it before I left, she wanted to give it a go and I wasn't really in a position to say no. Service life really doesn't leave room for wives to have jobs...unless you've got no kids...but we manage now...and anyway, we need the money. (CPO)

Some interviewees had found themselves to be more financially secure, these individuals mainly being from the higher ranks. These men and their families had, in almost every case, drawn on their generous redundancy or retirement packages in order to purchase their homes, and some had used them as a basis for setting up their own businesses.

However, there were many men whose employment options had left them in a more difficult financial position, such men being unable to secure work with equivalent financial reward to their naval career. In such circumstances, it was common for women to enter, or re-enter, labour markets in an attempt to make up the shortfall in income.

This change had three main implications for service wives. Firstly, becoming involved in the labour market impacted on the identity of service wives in that they began to identify with the role of provider. In some cases women had become, at least temporarily, the main family breadwinners and their new occupational role offered the potential for an occupational identity, particularly for those returning to professional employment.

I'm a carer now, which might not sound that great to other people, but at least it's what I do...rather than just being a matelot's wife. (Able Seaman's wife)

Yeah...oh...it's been really good for me. To get out and do something for myself. Yeah, it's really nice. It was OK when the kids were much younger...but once they started school I got quite bored sometimes you know. I wanted something else I could do, but I still had to pick them up from school and be there in the evening and stuff. But now it's really, really nice. Gets me out of the house! (CPO's wife)

It's been good to get back into teaching (at college)...for some time I thought I would never be a teacher again. But I'm very happy to be back in the thick of it. (Lieutenant's wife)

This involvement in work could also be related to the way in which new friendships, for both husband and wife, were often focused on wives' work-related networks.

A second issue for wives was interaction with local labour markets. The majority of wives returning to employment had done so following several years withdrawal, their time filled with childcare and household management.[74] Most of this group found that markets had changed in nature, and older wives (those aged over 30) found that seeking employment was a harder task than did their younger counterparts.

Who wants someone my age. It's the same as it is for him. (CPO's wife)

I think that in a lot of cases it's probably insiders who get the jobs. I suspect that my having taken years out of work will probably be my undoing, as I haven't really been offered the type of employment I was hoping for. It's been more a case of making do until now. (WO's wife)

Furthermore, for many women, resuming their career previous occupations would require re-training. The alternatives were mainly manual waged work. Such problems were more common in wives of lower ranking individuals – those of higher ranks were able to fall back on professional training and in most cases did not have to work since redundancy packages provided financial security in their own right.

Thirdly, and related to the identity of both husbands and wives, household and occupational roles became more blurred, with slightly more equality in attitudes. Whilst women's participation in the labour market increased, so too did men's participation in the home, albeit to a lesser extent. Relationships then became more based on equivalence in much the same way as men's work and friendship relations. However, where family relationships had been typically gendered during men's service careers, roles were in some cases redefined, particularly amongst younger families.

Household Formations

Both interviews and questionnaire data revealed that some changes had been made to household formations in the majority of families. However, such changes were not always extensive. Men's

participation in parenting did appear to increase, reflecting statements made in the earlier interviews and reasons offered for leaving in the first instance. But this participation varied from task to task.

Men spent more time playing with their children and attending child-related activities. Their levels of involvement in more child management orientated tasks, such as cleaning and washing clothes, taking children to the dentist and doctor and so on, remained low in comparison to those of their wives, regardless of whether or not women had returned to employment. This was also the case in terms of household tasks. While levels of involvement in cooking tasks increased slightly, as did responsibility for bill-paying, there was little change in men's participation in tasks involving cleaning, ironing and washing.

It would appear, then, that although men's limited involvement in household tasks was originally blamed on the required centrality of the service career, on leaving there was little evidence of change, regardless of other changing circumstances. On being asked why this should be the case, many interviewees pointed out that they had become used to such arrangements. However, data from the survey revealed that adaptation appeared to be more successful where men attempted to increase their household participation.

At the stage of planning to leave the Navy, of those men who thought that roles would change, 25% expected to adapt successfully. Of those who did not expect to change roles, 88% felt that they would adapt. Men felt happier with less change.[75] However, when this was compared to respondents who had left, and been civilians for some time[76], a different picture emerged. Where roles did change, 75% adapted well, in contrast to 60% who did not change their roles.

Percentages of servicemen who adapted well.
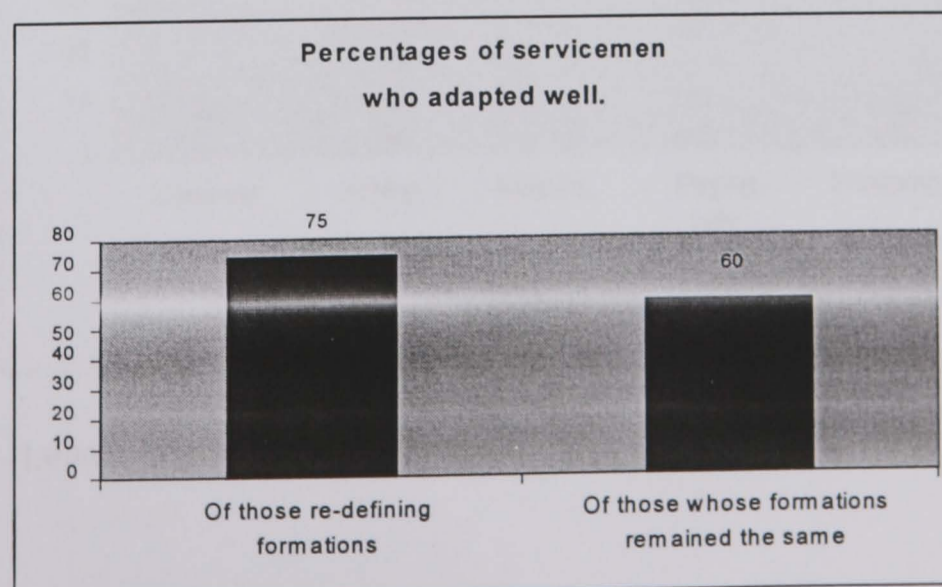
Figure 36 - Levels of successful adaptation depending on re-definition of household roles.

It was also interesting to discover the apparent impact of roles on men's feelings towards their new situation. The loss of the naval role, and men's insecurity at having a lesser family role than their wives, has already been discussed. The findings here showed that where men had originally shared more tasks, they were able to maintain some contribution to their households, and this seemed to have more favourable implications for their adaptation to civilian life.

In families where shopping had been shared, 70% of respondents adapted well, as opposed to 58% of those men whose wives took sole responsibility for the task. Similarly, where cleaning had been shared, 73% of men adapted, compared to 60% of those whose wives had done this alone. This finding was similar to those relating to other household tasks. Of those families who shared cooking tasks, all adapted well, whilst this number fell to 50% amongst those men whose wives did all the cooking. Where couples had shared ironing, 78% of men adapted well, as opposed to 55% where women took sole responsibility[77].

And, once again, answers relating to childcare paralleled these findings. Where women alone had played with children, 56% of men had adapted well, as opposed to 81% of the men who had shared this task. Similarly, where women took sole responsibility for taking children to school, doctors and dentists etc, 50% of men adapted well. This figure, however, rose to 69% where men had shared the responsibility.
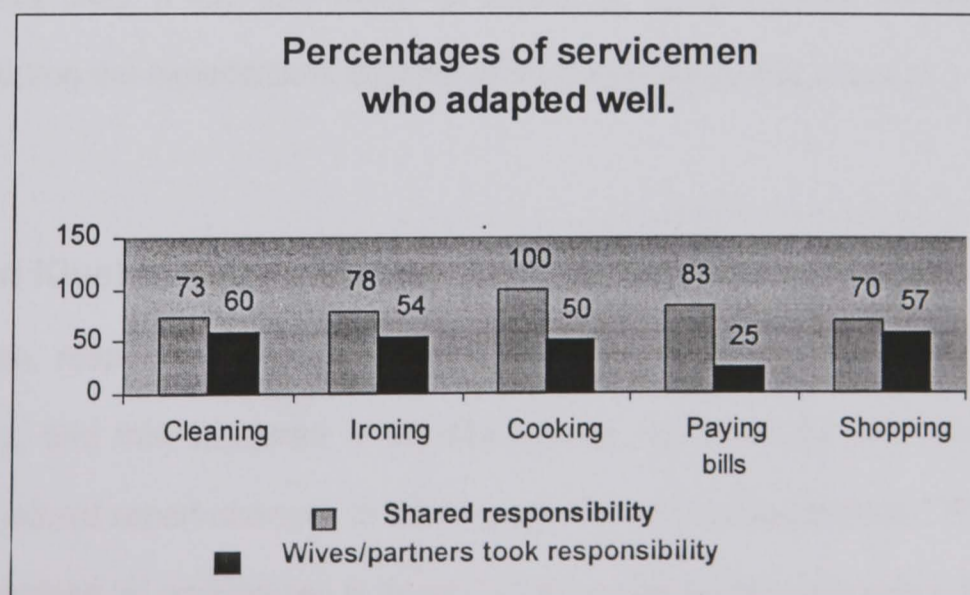
Figure 37 - Levels of successful adaptation depending on levels of sharing tasks.

More involvement with children appeared to be related to higher levels of successful adaptation. This is perhaps unsurprising, since parenting was a major issue throughout the study. Whilst some men had expressed insecurity at the fragility of their breadwinner role, many felt that any loss incurred by their leaving service life had been compensated by the gains they had made in terms of marital and, most importantly, parental relationships.

Percentages of servicemen who adapted well.
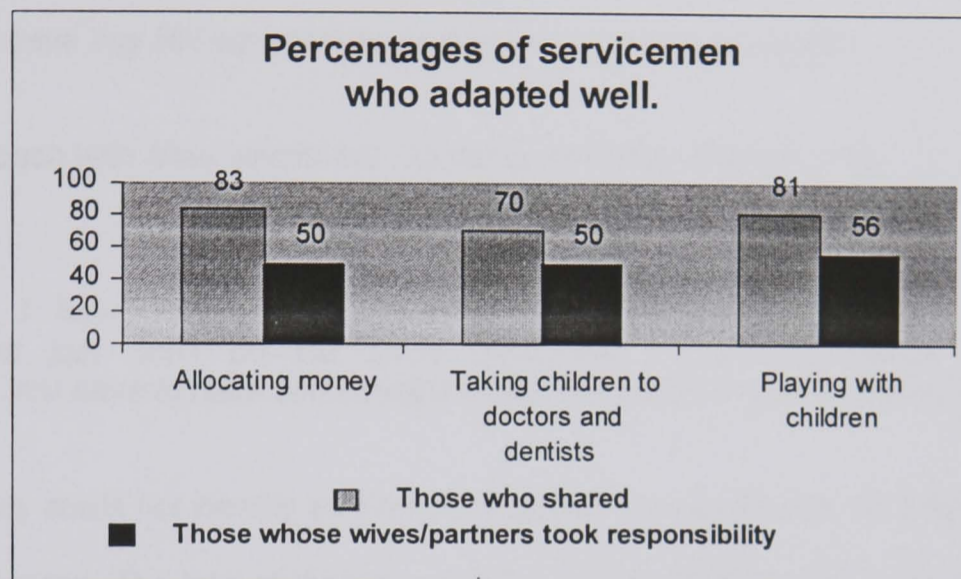
Figure 38 - levels of successful adaptation depending on sharing parenting tasks.

It would appear that, six months after having left the service, men and their families had undergone many changes. Many of these changes had been unexpected, and by comparing the results of the data reported in the previous chapter with those emerging here, it is possible to see that whilst some expectations had been borne out in reality, others had not. In these cases, change had been a complex process, and some respondents were still coming to terms with its impact on their working and family lives. It had also made an impact on the social lives of both men and their wives, often reflecting the expectations outlined at the beginning of this chapter.

Friendship and Kinship Networks

As we have seen, respondents had expected their friendship networks to be affected by their leaving the Navy, and this appeared to be often borne out in reality after men had left. Most respondents did indeed report changes to the formation of social relationships. This was, in almost all cases, characterised by an increase in dependence on non-service friendship networks.

I see few service personnel now. (CPO)

I now rarely mix with servicemen. (Able Seaman)

My combination of friends now has a more civilian emphasis. (Lieutenant)

Friendships became less service-centred as men disengaged from other elements of their naval careers. Interviewees explained that their new lack of involvement in the 'service way of life', made it difficult to sustain their social lives within a service context.

I just don't have any RN connections or neighbours anymore. (CPO)

You lose touch with Navy personnel...make more civilian friends. (PO)

Inevitably, I have lost touch with service colleagues, and made more civilian friends...we just don't do the same thing any more...don't have anything in common...you have to have something to base friendship on don't you? (CPO)

Many felt that they could not identify so strongly with their service friends, as they no longer shared the same experiences. The loss of their own service identity had resulted in many feeling 'left out' and no longer part of the service community.

I have fewer functions to attend...Nothing to be part of anymore. So I've had to mix and make friends with more civilians. (Lieutenant)

I no longer attend 'mess socials' etc. So I no longer meet anyone in the service...or if I do...well, it's just not the same now. I'm not one of them. So all my present friends are civilians. (WO)

Now I'm not in a service environment, I've changed...and so my friends have inevitably changed...well to be realistic...what would we talk about...no, you have to just get up and move on...it just doesn't feel right...just prolongs the agony. (CPO)

Some men expressed disappointment at this change in lifestyle, describing how they missed their involvement in a tightly knit group.

The problem is, well I can't go back to my old friends. That's not an option. But civilians are less likely to socialise with their work partners...there's a lack of bonding there...yeah, that's something I miss...shame really. (WO's wife)

Reflecting these findings, where men had been originally involved in more service-centred networks, adaptation was understandably a more difficult process. Some tried to maintain such networks for this very reason.

I joined the Navy straight from school. My wife enjoyed passing out parades and felt involved...I very much hope that my contact with service personnel will continue. (CPO)

Of these men, 50% felt that they had adapted. However, of those with mainly civilian friends, 80% adapted, as did 70% of those with a combination of both service and civilian friends.

I've attempted to keep my old pals...but we go out less and less these days. (Lieutenant Commander)

The loss of particular type of life style was often reported, mainly associated with a busy social life centred on drinking and fun. Many felt that their social lives had suffered and some expressed their regret at becoming less socially active.

[My] social life is nowhere near as much fun – the guys were very special. (CPO)

Mess life in the Navy was very active, socially. Civilian life is much quieter in this respect. (Lieutenant)

There is certainly far less socialising. (CPO)

I have more Civvy friends, but there's a lot less time spent drinking...and earlier night in bed! (PO)

I hardly drink at all now. Actually, I just don't go out as much anymore. (Able Seaman)

I am resigned to taking up a way of life that is less active...and less challenging. (Lieutenant)

Some service wives, who felt that they would miss their own personal involvement in service-centred networks, also reported this sense of loss. For women this loss was two-fold. Firstly, they missed the official mess functions to which they had become accustomed – many had talked of their enjoyment at dressing-up and 'doing the mess thing' – and it became clear that their disengagement had implications for their own identities as valued service wives. Secondly, the service wives' networks, on which many had relied when their husbands were absent, were inevitably affected by their husbands' leaving. Reflecting the transformation of men's identities and friendships, women felt that their relationships with other wives were eroded, as they no longer shared 'service wife' experiences.

As documented in Chapter Six, naval wives had built relationships on the shared experiences they encountered particularly where these relationships had provided support in difficult times. Wives had developed different types of relationships and networks from their husbands.

A number of wives interviewed had relied exclusively on these networks for their social relationships, and many had expressed the view that they were part of a community in their own right. Their husband's disengagement had serious implications for these women, as they felt powerless to rectify their own situations, which they realised were so dependent on their husband's work. These problems were heightened for wives who had been more involved in the navy and especially amongst those who had incorporated 'service' into their own identity.

> *I don't feel much a part of anything now and I miss that. Yes, I definitely miss the nights out with the girls when he's not...well, when he wasn't around. (Able Serviceman's wife)*

> *Aside from the bad bits, like when he was away a lot, and the general sort of intrusiveness of the Navy, at least you felt like you belonged. I feel a bit lost now...I suppose in the same way he does. (Lieutenant Commander's wife)*

Of those families where wives had felt involved with the Navy, 43% of men had adapted well, compared to 79% of those whose wives had been less involved.

Percentages of servicemen who adapted well.
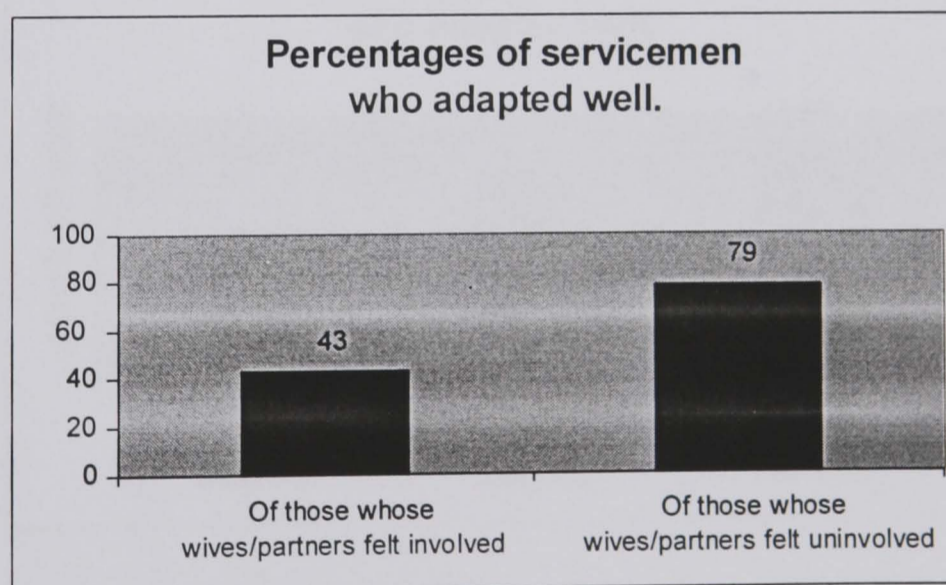
Figure 39 - Levels of successful adaptation depending on spouse's involvement.

Clearly, as with the men, whilst higher levels of involvement with the navy had led to a more fulfilled life whilst men were employed in the service, it also made for more difficulties with adaptation to civilian life.

Many men and women in the sample, then, had viewed their changing relationships with a sense of loss. However, some time after leaving, it appeared that those who had made some effort to change their friendship networks had actually adapted to civilian life with slightly more success. Where networks had changed, 71% of men had adapted well, as opposed to 56% of those who had attempted to sustain their original typically service-centred networks.

When you leave, you have to do your best to make the most of being in a new situation. Making friends with civilians makes that a hell of a lot easier…you need to have that support. And it helps to talk to civvies. It's part of the learning process. (WO)

I think that really it's up to you to make the effort to change, and that means making an effort to get on with civilians. You have to be realistic you see, it's no point…there's no point in trying to hang on – they have, service personnel that is, they have different social rules and attitudes. You have to be a bit of a chameleon, and fit in with your new circles. It takes some while, but it makes life easier in the long run. (Commander)

The marked leaving (rite of passage) process may have had some effect on changing friendships. Where men had some form of ceremony, 90% changed their friendship networks, whereas of those who did not, only 67% changed.

I guess I saw that last time as a sort of 'goodbye' or something. I mean, I did see some of them again…but really I think that's how we were all seeing it. It made the end, if you like, more definite…more real. (PO)
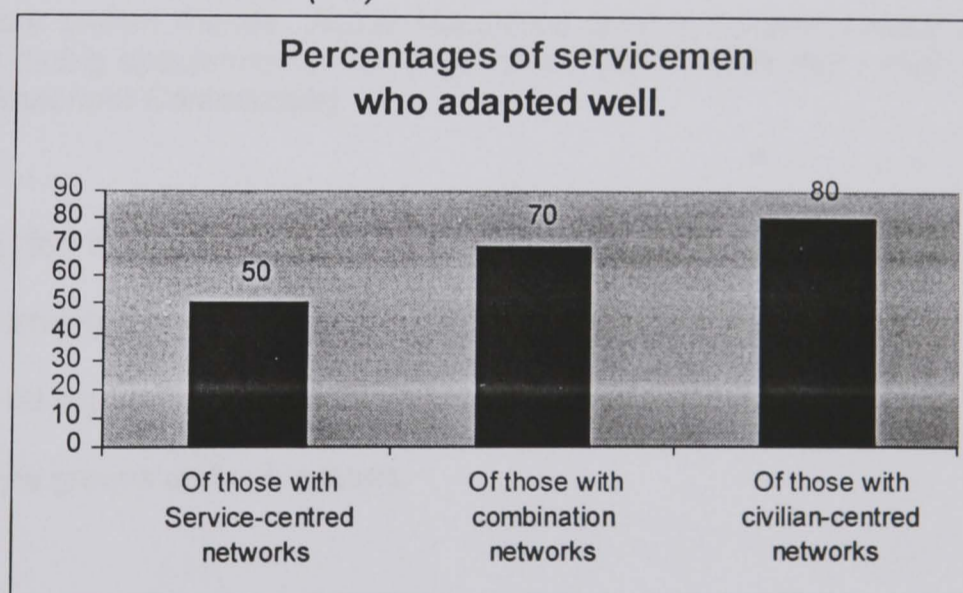
Figure 40 - Levels of successful adaptation depending on friendship networks.

To return to the redefinition of relationship types, this mainly affected the men in the sample. Whilst friendship networks had clearly changed in terms of membership, there were also more relational changes to deal with. In Chapter Six, men and women described how relationships had been defined in terms of rank and hierarchy, whereby men identified their relationships through reference to naval hierarchies, socialising mainly with others in similar positions to their own.

However, as with work relations, interviewees found that this frame of reference was inappropriate for understanding more civilian-centred relationships.

Once out of the rigidly defined naval hierarchy, men found positions in civilian life to be far more ambiguous. Identities were less work centred, and more formulated around different lifestyle choices.

> *In Civvy Street everyone tends to do their own thing. So it's not all work...you tend to get into different types of social circles. (WO)*

Whilst this was reported to have at first made identification with friends more difficult, most men found the lack of hierarchy liberating in the long-term. They began to form friendships based around similar interests and many interviewees felt that this strengthened relationships and transcended the more transitionary networks described in Chapter Six.

> *I have really enjoyed myself...the people I work with are better friends than I ever had in the service. I've tended to make friends with people that have similar interests, rather than this 'you're all one company' thing. Yeah, I'm very happy. (Able Seaman)*

> *I have more civilian friends...Naval friendships tend to be transitionary in any case, especially during appointments. I've made some good friends that I think will last a bit longer. (Lieutenant Commander)*

It was perhaps for this reason that many men had established positions within community networks, and certainly these men found it easier to adapt to civilian life. Others had compensated for their loss by taking up non-work activities, such as sports or crafts, and had become members of different lifestyle groups and subcultures.

> *I have much greater contact with civilian friends in work...but in leisure as well, yeah that's true, I've got more involved in other things, sport and everything. (CPO)*

> *No more naval functions, they've been replaced though with the local yachting club...without that I would have missed naval life more. (Lieutenant Commander)*

Conversely, where couples had been jointly more involved in the navy, they had filled the gap resulting from their disengagement with similar work-related involvement. Some other patterns also emerged, with respect to social relationships. A number of interviewees and survey respondents reported that networks had become more centred around those already established by their wives.

Most of the people we socialise with now were her friends first...they're civilians. (CPO)

The only social life I have now is with my partner and her friends and we have to decide together what we are going to do...but it's usually her decision, cos they're her friends. (Able Seaman)

This was particularly so where wives had maintained links with civilian networks, but also where wives had resumed employment and made work-related contacts with civilians. Generally, then, both men and their wives had experienced a sense of loss, both in terms of their identities and their friendship networks. However, most of the sample had made some effort to compensate for these losses. There was some variation in this willingness to change.

Once again it appeared to be a more difficult process for those who had been more involved in naval life, and their tendency toward similar networks, may reflect this. Interviews demonstrated that length of service also had some influence, with those serving longer finding it harder to change, as had age, with those in older age groups facing more problems.

If you're younger then it's probably easier...all I've known for years are service personnel...I tend to go out with just the wife now, and see the lads when I can...it's not the same, but it's been too long to change. Probably seems quite sad to you! But, you think about it...you live your life a certain way...with certain people. It's hard to make a break from that. (CPO)

Previous exposure to civilian life resulted in higher levels of change and adaptation, and wives' involvement in civilian labour markets, whether part-time or full-time, contributed to this.

Coming up to leaving...about a year or so...I made a conscious decision to take my friends more seriously, the ones who were civilian like. I gradually got less and less involved with the service ones. It was deliberate and I think it's helped in the long run. (CPO)

It stands to reason that if you're gonna be a Civvy, you're better off if you've already got a few Civvy mates. (Able Seaman)

It was a bloody good job she did know people from work, [to wife] wasn't it love?...else we wouldn't have any friends now! (PO)

Wives were important in terms of men's ability to change friendships and identity. Married men were able to adapt with more success (66% of married men adapting well, in contrast to 40% of single men, and none of those who were separated or divorced).

Percentages of servicemen who adapted well.
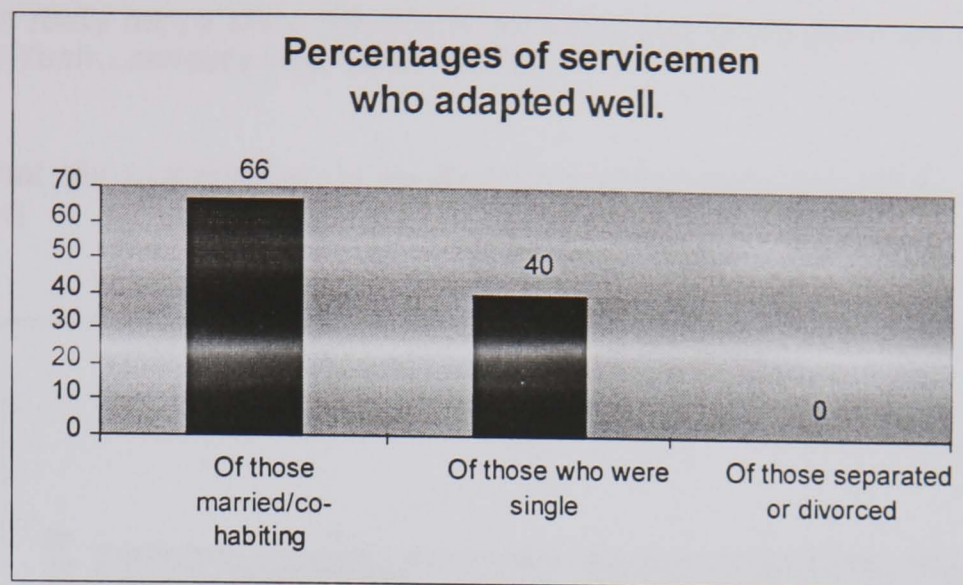
Figure 41 - Levels of successful adaptation depending on marital status.

Single men, and those who had been separated, had tended to be more involved in naval life and service-centred relationships[78], and the differences in ability to change between 'involved' and 'uninvolved' groups, has already been noted.

As a single man who has always lived in the Navy, a change has been 100% difficult. (Able Seaman)

There's less opportunity to socialise with serving members now. It used to be great. But no so great now. (WO)

I don't go out anymore – I don't have a social life anymore. (CPO)

I keep myself to myself nowadays. (Able Seaman)

I suppose I'll have to get on with it...face the challenge and all that...but it won't be the same. The Navy has a lot to offer the single man...perhaps I should get married! (CPO)

Single men had also been less resentful of absence due to service commitments (with some reporting actual enjoyment), and they had, in most cases, felt unhappy about leaving the service. Since acceptance and positive disengagement was related to adaptation, it is perhaps unsurprising that this group found it hardest to change.

Support from wives and families was an important factor in men's changing lifestyles. Where spouses and partners were happy with their husband's leaving, 74% of men adapted well, in contrast to only 34% of those whose wives were less happy.

She's been really happy since the minute we found out. That's given me something to hold on to. Yeah…certainly very happy. (CPO)

Knowing that she supported me in my decision and that she's OK with it…well it helps. (Lieutenant)

Percentages of servicemen who adapted well.
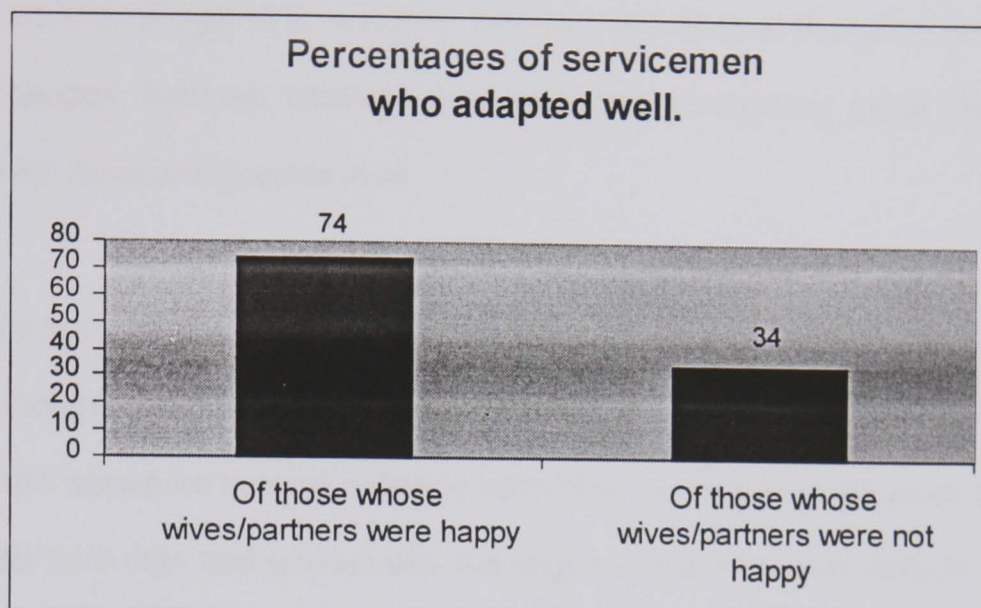
Figure 42 - Levels of successful adaptation depending on spouse/partner reactions to leaving.

Conclusion

It would appear that occupational change had implications not only for service leavers themselves, but also for members of their families. The impact of change had two dimensions. Firstly, family relationships were subject to change, and this in itself was traumatic for many of the respondents. Men and women had to develop strategies for dealing with the unfamiliar situation of permanent co-residence, and in most cases this required a period of adaptation and 'getting to know one another' again. Men were particularly aware of the impact of change on their relationships with their children and were clearly troubled where this represented a difficult task.

As with adaptation to service life, men found that their relationships with their children were most important in civilian life. Most expressed very positive feelings toward being able to spend more time with their children, confirming that their decision to leave the Navy was an appropriate one. Of course this also had implications for successful adaptation, particularly where relationships with wives also improved. Men in general began to increase their participation in parental roles, although this was not reflected in domestic involvement.

Secondly, occupational change had similar implications for the identities of other family members as it did for leavers themselves[79]. Therefore, wives also had to adapt personally to the new way of life, and this impacted on the overall family experience of occupational change. Whilst most were able eventually to adapt, some families, at the point of six months after leaving, were still facing some difficulties as they struggled to re-define their own identities at the same time as adapting to more practical changes, such as: permanent co-residence, decreasing naval friendship networks and, in many cases, diminishing social lives.

Generally, service leavers and their families had begun to adapt, and many respondents felt that their lives had changed for the better. Whilst permanent co-residence may have caused some initial problems, this appeared in most cases to have been a temporary issue as families adapted. The main issue for both men and women was the way in which men were able to spend more time with children, and derive more satisfaction from father roles than had been possible during the naval career. This perhaps highlights the lack of compatibility of the naval career and family responsibilities that has been documented throughout the thesis.

It is important to note that, as with the findings reported in the previous three chapters, resettlement was experienced differently by different groups of leavers. Once again, those families who had been more involved in naval life found adaptation to civilian life more problematic than those who had more exposure to civilian lifestyles. It was generally members of the more involved groups, both servicemen and wives, who were still suffering more negative experiences six months after leaving. These emerging differences will be addressed in more detail in the following chapter.

The previous three chapters have pointed up the main issues facing naval men and their families in the periods before, during and after resettlement. These issues will now be discussed within the wider context of current knowledge about careers, identity and the family.

Chapter Nine - Discussion

Introduction

The previous three chapters have presented the findings of the research, describing the feelings, attitudes and practices of service personnel before, during and after resettlement. However, such description, at least on its own, is insufficient for a full understanding of the experiences of naval leavers and their families, and the processes of adaptation to the naval career and occupational change. Therefore, this chapter draws on the concepts outlined earlier in the thesis[80], in order to pull together the various threads of the research and provide more in depth analysis and discussion.

As previously stated, analysis is achieved through reference to notions of discourse[81]. Mere description of attitudes and practices forms only part of the story, thus efforts are made in this chapter to analyse servicemen's perceptions, feelings and behaviours in terms of the discourses within which they occur. For this purpose, it is necessary to observe the meanings that naval leavers assign to 'what is Naval?' and 'what is Civilian?', and what elements of discourse they have drawn on in order to make sense of their lives in different contexts, as well as the constitution of their own identities.

The premise of this analysis, then, is that naval discourse, naval institutions or even servicemen are not concrete 'things' with fixed essential characteristics. This thesis is rather more concerned with how certain discourses are generated amongst naval personnel, how they are employed in everyday life, and the consequences they have for resettlement and the transformation of identity. Importantly, the analysis does not lend itself to the argument that service personnel draw consciously on such discourses. Whilst it does appear that distinctly naval discourses are available to provide a frame of reference upon which personnel can draw, their deployment is not necessarily deliberate. The ways in which personnel interpret and interact with both naval and non-naval discourses is variable, and contingent on a complex of personal, occupational, familial and social factors. It is the interplay of these elements in servicemen's lives, and the implications that they might have for identity and behaviour, that are at issue. Notions of naval identity then, provide the starting point for this discussion.

Identity and the Naval Career

From the outset of the research, notions of identity were raised as a central concern for servicemen and their wives. Questions regarding men's reasons for joining the Navy provoked answers that focused heavily on identity formation. Enlistment rarely reflected a particular 'calling' or instinctive 'leaning' toward the Navy. Rather, men described how naval life offered them a sense of identity, and personal fulfilment, regardless of their social background or employment histories.

For some, service represented a sense of pride in being a naval man, a recognition and internalisation of their social usefulness. Others had followed family traditions, and generations of other men with military identities. Although there were variations between men's motivation for joining the Navy, one theme was constant: becoming a naval man. This, by implication, demonstrates the importance of identity to the respondents. So how exactly were naval identities created, and what process affected their maintenance or transformation?

Much sociological literature highlights the way in which individuals and groups identify themselves and others through certain social relationships.[82] The creation and maintenance of identity depends on adaptation to particular environments, and the reflexive capacity to engage in symbolic forms of communication. So, whilst meanings are not intrinsic in anything, human beings associate with common symbolic features of social groupings. Such symbolic features are understood through interaction. It would appear here that naval men had associated with particularly 'naval' features, and it is therefore necessary to reveal how this was effected.

Issues surrounding the creation of a naval identity became pertinent from the beginning of men's naval careers. Men described how their enlistment was marked by very visible initiation into their new way of life, and how it was here that they were first exposed to 'naval' ways of understanding that new life. Most men interviewed were conscious that this 'naval way' of understanding life was wholly different from any other they had encountered before joining the Navy.

The literature regarding entry into socialising institutions[83] indicates that it is possible to see that this 'naval way' represents a unique set of meanings, which were conferred on various aspects of working and social life. What we are concerned with here then, is men's introduction to a

particularly 'naval' frame of reference, through which they could understand their own position and their relationship with significant others. This has implications for the development of particular attitudes and behaviours.

At this point it is useful to consider notions of discourse, in order to illustrate the processes that these servicemen had undergone, and their further influences on identity and experience. As discussed in Chapters Two and Five, debate about discourse is concerned with the role of meaningful social practices and ideas in social and political life. It aims to study the effects of different systems of meaning (discourses) and how they shape individuals' understandings of their social roles. Borrowing from this notion of discourse, we can shed light on the way in which things or ideas became meaningful to the servicemen in this study. In order for ideas to become meaningful, they were located within a particular naval discourse, the naval 'frame of reference'.

Different discourses assign different meanings to the same object, person or situation, and the identity of an individual is thus influenced by the particular discourse which confers meaning on them at any given time or in any given situation. The fact that men referred to the 'naval way' as being entirely different from anything experienced before prompts the suggestion that this was an example of naval meanings replacing existing ones, within an overall system of naval discourse. This notion is supported in other theories of occupational socialisation that rely on concepts such as 'divestiture' and 'assimilation'[84]. However, it also allows for consideration of the subtle variations in the experiences of servicemen and different levels of adaptation.

Servicemen, then, on recruitment to the Navy, began to learn that they must refer to the overall context of ideas and practices within a distinctively naval discourse, and they variously employed those meanings and actions in conducting their everyday lives in naval service.

Men and 'Naval' Discourse

What is the nature of the naval discourse that was reflected in the responses of so many men? Men described what they commonly held to be typical naval ideas and approaches to life. As reported in Chapters Six and Eight, several themes recurred throughout the research: loyalty and camaraderie, prestige hierarchy, rule and regulation, order and effectiveness, machismo, traditionalism and an 'us and them' perspective toward civilians. Here we can view such ideas as

representing elements of naval discourse through which naval life could be understood and conducted in the 'appropriate' manner.

Considering these naval 'signifiers' described by the men, and reflecting on some of the observations made, it is possible to see how their articulation in a system of naval discourse unifies a series of ideological, political, economic and social ideas, each having no essential meaning to service life on their own. If we refer to these signifiers of naval discourse, we can begin to understand how men draw on them to make sense of service life.

For example, men explained how loyalty was important in maintaining the collectivism or camaraderie that was imperative to their organisation. Isolationism, or the 'us and them' perspective, valued by many members, helped sustain collectivism. Similarly, discipline was made easier to observe, by all, through the hierarchical organisation of authority that characterised naval relationships. Moreover, patriarchy, essential in maintaining the centrality of the service career to men's families as well as the extension of hierarchy into the family sphere, was bolstered by the machismo and male-centred social elements of naval discourse. Further, conservatism and traditionalism made it possible for men to close off other alternative signifiers from differing discourses, protecting naval discourse from radical change and achieving relative fixity.

Using this framework it is possible to see how men were able to draw on these signifiers in everyday life, and how their internalisation resulted in the creation and maintenance of naval identities. Their adherence to naval discourses in most aspects of their lives impacted on their own self-image, and many men interviewed had themselves identified direct links between naval ideas and behaviours and their own emergent naval identities.

Precisely how did men come to internalise key signifiers of naval discourse? We can see how this process was effected, by returning to the interview data. Most men referred to their initiation into naval service. Whilst many could not remember exact details regarding individual attitudes and behaviours, they nonetheless identified their initiation as an important introduction to naval discourses. The literature discussed in Chapter Two demonstrates how introduction to, and immersion in, a new organisational culture may result in the development of organisational identities. For my sample this introduction was highly ritualised, and naval identities were deliberately conferred on men through repeated symbolic ceremonies.

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Socialisation and Naval Discourse

For the purposes of this thesis, introduction to signifiers is conceptualised as 'primal baptism'[85]. It would appear from the data that initiation into the Navy represented some form of primal baptism, as men were first exposed to organisational naval discourse. Discourse may also be helpful in further illustrating the socialisation process of the servicemen interviewed. The symbolic primal baptism initially exposed men to key signifiers of naval discourse, but their internalisation by service members required more extensive socialisation.

Interviews demonstrated that socialisation extended beyond initiation ceremonies. Day to day training resulted in a 'layering on' of naval ideas and meanings, this process being reinforced through both naval organisational protocol and social etiquette. The concept of the 'naval man' was therefore sedimented over time, and interview data show how, for many respondents, this resulted in the internalisation of certain attitudes and behaviours, signifiers and their practical consequences, to the extent that they became routinised and often uncontested.

The fact that many interviewees could not remember the origins of their own self-referenced naval perspectives on life may represent a further stage of men's socialisation into naval discourse, whereby discourse became 'naturalised'. That is, discourses informed taken for granted attitudes and behaviours, as the naval career assumed central importance in men's lives.

It appeared that men had developed an occupational role understood through naval discourse, the impact of which extended beyond their jobs. The naval occupation became a whole way of life for many of the individuals studied, and organisational attitudes and behaviours reflected the signifiers that comprised naval discourse. Often, men feared losing attachment to them. This may help us to understand how naval discourses were initiated, sedimented and naturalised in servicemen.

However, levels of dependence on such discourses varied amongst different groups of individuals. With some probing, it became clear that almost all the respondents had drawn on naval discourse as a frame of reference through which to conduct their work. However some individuals had drawn more heavily on naval discourse than had others. For these men, adherence to the signifiers of naval discourse had led to the development of strong naval identities. So, whilst some drew on

different civilian discourses outside their work, many others relied upon naval discourse in guiding different, non-work, aspects of their lives.

Chapter Two discussed previous research that has shown how individuals increasingly identify with non-work activities in contemporary industrial society. However, a large number of interviewees had expressed a sense of identity that related almost exclusively to naval life, and most concurred on the appropriateness of naval discourse for making sense of life both inside and outside of working hours. How, then, was this dependence on naval discourses so effectively, and extensively, achieved? Referring to the research findings, it is possible to identify several features that supported such dependence. This analysis also illustrates further the purposive articulation of signifiers in naval discourse.

Firstly, isolationism – one of the most frequently stated signifiers of naval discourse – allowed men to develop an 'us and them' attitude toward civilian life. The symbolic polarisation of naval and civilian worlds resulted in many respondents' immersion in service life to the extent where they came to understand both working and social aspects of this life through extensive reference to naval discourse. This 'us and them' theme appeared to become so extensive that some men had polarised the relationship between themselves and civilians to the point where civilians represented an 'other' so marked in their difference that interaction was not a viable option.

Commonly stereotypical descriptions of civilians derived from the employment of metaphor, imagery and contrast in naval discourse, within the wider context of 'us and them' attitudes. This would appear to support the view that isolationist signifiers in naval discourse had been effectively sedimented to an extent where they were not traceable or visible in anything but conversations or naval banter. Of course, in internalising attitudes and values, and then replaying them through talk, men demonstrated how this aspect of naval discourse may be sustained by personnel themselves.

Reference to Barthes' notion of myth entering discourse[86] illustrates this stereotyping and polarisation effectively, and highlights the way in which subjective meaning became accepted as fact in naval discourse. As men progressed in their naval careers, the 'civilian myth' created a distortion of original images, strengthened by isolation from civilians and extensive immersion in naval discourse. This created an antagonistic 'frontier' between naval and civilian discourses and identities, which made it difficult for men to cross from one to the other. This is a persuasive

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argument, in that it would help to explain why many interviewees felt they could not adapt to civilian friendship networks, and instead based their social lives on service-centred circles. Of course, this observation is also important in terms of identity formation and maintenance. Men identified their own positions in relation to others and thus formed naval identities in opposition to more civilian ones.

Whilst it may be fair to say that myths serve to create and sustain stereotypical images that servicemen held about civilian 'others', this is not to dismiss the commonly perceived features of difference raised by the sample. They have important implications for the way in which men formed naval identities, by exaggerating differences from civilians and minimising those between servicemen. Importantly, they demonstrate the significance of naval discourse in defining relationships, as well as shaping attitudes towards them.

If identity is relational and contingent, then some discussion is essential here. 'Us and them' themes were strengthened by the nature of service friendship networks. Shared attitudes and actions were reinforced by experience of naval organisational culture, reproduced in naval social life. Whilst much social activity revolved around the mess, interviewees also described how they relied on service-centred networks to the point where many felt they represented an extended naval 'family'. This further excluded civilians from many servicemen's lives, thereby reducing exposure to civilian discourses. It would appear that this helped to close off alternative civilian discourses while fixing, to a large extent, naval discourse.

This service-centredness in relation to social lives also involved observance of other signifiers of naval discourse. Many reports focused on the hierarchical nature of networks operating at a social level, where identities of individuals were organised through the naval ranking system into strict hierarchies. Could it not then be argued that this type of organisation implied difference between ranks that is not dissimilar to that noted between naval and civilian groups?

The interviews demonstrated that this was not the case. Whilst some wives described social hierarchies as 'ridiculous' or even 'pointless', men were in almost all cases accepting of social hierarchy as a 'fact of service life'. It is interesting to note why differences in civilian life were not assigned the same meanings accorded to the difference in ranks within naval groups. Firstly, it could be argued that these two variations of difference were due to many shared signifiers and

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understanding of naval discourse amongst servicemen. Naval relationships, though hierarchically organised, were not polarised within quite the same 'us and them' context as naval/civilian relations. Relationships were thus qualitatively different in their construction.

To re-iterate some points made in Chapter Two, relationships can be seen as being organised by two types of logic: difference and equivalence. Types of logic organising these relationships are shaped by the discourses from which they are drawn. It would seem that naval relationships, both in work and on a social level, are organised within an underlying logic of difference, where relationships are multiplied by establishing points of syntagmatic articulation. Positions are not polarised, instead they are put into a specific order (hierarchy). Therefore, in the Navy, different positions are not seen as threatening each other, instead hierarchical stratification is naturalised as subordination, and is not therefore visibly antagonistic.

It is easy to understand why working relationships in an institution such as the Navy, which exercises high levels of control over its members, should be organised in such a way as to reflect the available discourse. As previously discussed with reference to Foucault, and Gramsci's ideas on hegemony[87], controlling institutions attempt to minimise visible antagonism in order to maintain their control. This is particularly true when the Navy's organisational reliance on camaraderie and 'esprit de corps' is taken into account.

However, discourses may be challenged and politicisation of relations is clearly threatening to hegemony. Naval discourse has to sustain its key signifiers, as it represents a hegemonic relationship with its members. As such, it must not appear antagonistic to those members it attempts to control but rather persuade members of its appropriateness for understanding naval life.

Of course, the naval contract forces adherence to naval discourse to some extent. However, its effectiveness was enhanced where men found discourse to be relevant to their lives and where they had internalised its signifiers. As explained in Chapter Two, actions embody social meanings that are drawn from different discourses. If naval discourse is accepted and internalised by the servicemen, then they are more likely to behave in a way most appropriate to service life.

Signifiers thus support an understanding and acceptance of organisational aims and objectives and, in so doing, strengthen the hegemony of the naval institution. Thus conflict and alternative attitudes and behaviours are suppressed, providing what Deetz refers to as 'the capacity to close off certain discursive options'[88]. Some of the men interviewed expressed recognition of this, making reference to 'control', 'power' and 'ideal recruits'. This idea of 'ideal recruits' is important, since it becomes clear that the Navy attempts to select the right kind of 'material' for socialisation into naval discourses.

It could be argued that many organisations or institutions represent hegemonic projects, and make efforts to minimise antagonistic relations within their staff. What is important here however, is that hierarchical relations in the Navy are also played out on a social level, thus reinforcing the discourses that direct men's working lives. Both in work and outside, naval men's relationship to others is highly structured, and if identity is contingent and relational, as I have argued, then this is a salient issue. Men appear to have drawn on notions of hierarchy in order to define themselves, and also to identify others, both in work and in social situations.

These relationships, then, are quite distinct from those with civilians, where relationships appear to be organised in a converse fashion, within a logic of equivalence, subverting differential identities by highlighting their equivalence and polarising positions ('us and them' situations). Since such relationships are polarised, they are therefore more visibly antagonistic.

This polarisation does, as discussed earlier, reinforce naval discourse amongst naval men. However, viewed in the above context, polarised antagonism between naval and civilian discourses may help to shed light on the variation of levels of socialisation between different groups of individuals. As highlighted in Chapter Two, few paradigms have addressed the issue of differential acceptance of organisational identities. Reference to discourse and the findings of this study may help to achieve this.

We have seen how naval discourse comprises many different social and political elements, known as signifiers, which together form a cogent system of understanding or perspective. Signifiers are fixed over others through persuasion, argument and debate. Therefore servicemen are able to adapt certain signifiers from Naval discourse. However, where they are not useful as part of a frame of reference, men may substitute signifiers from other discourses. This concept may go

some way to illustrating the process of civilianisation of the Navy at a later point, as signifiers evolve depending on their usefulness to naval discourse at different times.

Reviewing the findings from the interview and survey data, it is possible to identify differential levels of importance assigned to signifiers. Collectivism and camaraderie have been viewed in various ways. So too have the issues of hierarchy and discipline. Nevertheless, where varying meanings were adapted to naval discourse, they were seldom directly at odds with the overall context, and therefore rarely caused problems.

Adapting to Naval Life

Naval discourse had, in the main, provided a system of meaning to which men could refer. Where key signifiers had been internalised, men employed naval discourses in order to understand their lives, inform decision-making and justify action. Those drawing most heavily on naval discourse were able to adapt most comfortably to service life. These were commonly men whose lives were conducted around the central naval role, and whose involvement levels with the Navy, both inside and outside working hours, were high. Many of these men had very little contact with civilian life in any sense. It is interesting to note that most of the single men surveyed were located in this group. Others were married to women who felt personally involved in the Navy and who, in some cases, had developed their own service identities. These individuals I shall refer to hereafter as the 'involved' group, since they embrace naval discourses with a certain enthusiasm.

On the other hand, there were men who drew less on naval discourse, developing strategies for drawing on different discourses in their day-to-day lives and representing what I have called 'less involved'. These individuals were typically more exposed to civilian life than those in the involved group. They were more likely to have a mixture of service and civilian friends and to reside in mainly civilian localities and not in naval quarters. Further exposure to civilian life resulted from wives' participation in civilian labour markets and they were less likely to have adopted an exclusively naval identity. Since this 'less involved' group conducted part of their lives, at least in a social sense, with civilian contemporaries, they had become familiar with civilian discourses and had drawn on them to make sense of certain features of their lives.

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Some discourses were more polarised than others. For example, the civilian/navy polarisation was clearly a sharp distinction. However, some men mentioned the ways in which they had a similar outlook on life to that of the Army personnel they had encountered. We cannot assume that Army discourse is the same as Navy discourse, as discourses are contingent on various issues such as environment, goals, socio-historical background and so on. All the same, it may be the case that army and navy discourses share some signifiers, whilst those that vary are not directly in conflict with one another. Further research may shed light on this issue, but it does perhaps illustrate how signifiers can be adapted, so long as they are positioned in a discourse that comprises complementary signifiers.

Within the less involved group there were also those who had drawn on different discourses, but less successfully. These men had problems in referring to certain, although not necessarily all, key signifiers. In most cases they had been able to adapt this alternative element of life to the overall context of naval discourse. However, key signifiers of different discourses were occasionally entirely at odds with naval discourses.

A clear example here is that of the centrality of the service career over family life. Many men found that their identity as full-time servicemen was not fully compatible with their role as husbands, and particularly fathers. Their withdrawal from male-centred social life and service-centred networks caused problems for some in other aspects of their life and some were viewed as being less loyal, failing to demonstrate sufficient levels of camaraderie.

Similarly, where absence became unbearable, as opposed to an accepted part of naval life, men had in most cases volunteered for redundancy in order that they could replace their centrality of career with centrality of the family. Others had left when their social usefulness had been doubted, either by themselves or others, or where they felt the naval hierarchy or strict discipline unacceptable.

This illustrates how reference to a combination of incompatible signifiers had the effect of breaking down the system of articulation which held signifiers together in a stable and coherent naval discourse, and rendering it unworkable. Where values, attitudes and behaviours derived from non-naval discourses were at odds with naval ones, it was more difficult to adapt them into a service life so dominated by naval discourses.

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Different levels of reference to naval discourse then, were noted amongst this sample and it is perhaps unsurprising that this was related to different levels of adaptation to service life. Involved individuals were able to rely on naval discourse in most aspects of their lives and generally demonstrated more enthusiasm for their service careers. The less involved group, if able to draw on different discourses with little disruption to the overall context of their particular frame of reference, adapted relatively well though this was often characterised by a trade off between certain key signifiers. Where men were unable to combine signifiers without creating antagonisms, however, adaptation to service life was more problematic.

The use of this typology represents a useful analytical tool here, as differential levels of dependency on naval discourse appeared to have implications for levels of confidence or trauma on leaving, as well as for experience of resettlement.

Naval Leavers and Change

As reported in the previous chapters, most men perceived their change of occupation as a major re-direction of their lives. In most circumstances, employment may form an important aspect of an individual's life, and often a large part of their identity. Therefore, on leaving an occupation, people may need to replace or transform the signifiers that relate to their occupational role.

However, where an occupational role affects the whole life of an individual, and where most, or all, elements of the discourse upon which they draw are centred around that role, then individuals have far more signifiers to replace, and fewer to rely on for consistency.

This may explain why men felt that their leaving represented such extensive change. Fear of the unknown was an issue that was raised time and time again. This fear was particularly marked amongst the involved group. Most of these leavers were unsure of what they could expect in civilian life, and therefore faced change with trepidation. They were not confident about their own approaches to civilianisation and exhibited apprehension at the prospect of learning anew and making sense of civilian life. Conversely, those in the less involved group were more pragmatic about change. Their greater exposure to civilian discourses had prepared them to some extent

and, clearly, fear of the unknown and learning an unfamiliar discourse was not such an issue for them.

This raises the issue of how are individuals are to identify and relate to other discourses through which they can make sense of their new lives, if they have little or no familiarity with them? The findings of this research highlight the way in which advanced planning and preparation for resettlement had positive implications for confidence in transition, as well as adaptation to change.

However, certain individuals were unable to achieve this, since they were unsure about their expectation of different cultures and discourses and particularly where polarisation of naval and civilian discourses was present. This may help to explain why some men made a conscious effort, prior to leaving, to expose themselves to civilian life through establishing positions within civilian friendship networks or local communities and interest groups.

It would seem that where men had drawn extensively on naval discourse, they had more happily adapted to naval life. However, the implications for change were different. The discourses employed by these men and alternative civilian discourses had been polarised. For this reason then, naval discourses were not entirely appropriate for acting as a frame of reference for civilian life.

Men who had developed strong naval identities were conscious that such identities would be unsuitable if carried through to civilian life, and that some form of adaptation and transformation would help them in transition. However, where men were very dependent on their occupational roles for their frames of reference and identities, such change was not always an easy task. Interview data demonstrated how complex a process change proved to be. But if men had been so easily socialised into naval discourse, then why would they experience problems in leaving and adapting to another?

This could be one result of the previously mentioned targeting, by the Navy, of suitable individuals for socialisation to naval discourse. Such individuals may be personally more resistant to other, alternative, discourses. However, even where this was not the case, most respondents had forgotten the origins of socialised behaviours, which had become natural elements of everyday life.

To return to an earlier point, socialisation into naval discourses was a visibly aided process, characterised by a ritualistic 'primal baptism', sedimentation and, in most cases, naturalisation. This represented a clear and unambiguously communicated process of socialisation to discourses, with a clear symbolic beginning. However, on leaving, adaptation and re-socialisation was left in the hands of the leavers themselves, or those of their family and friends. The implications of reliance on friends and family are discussed further at a later point.

The process of change itself then, was a complex one. It may be useful to illustrate this process of transition amongst servicemen with reference to Jolly's notion of confrontation, disengagement and re-socialisation. Confrontation comprised two aspects; suddenness of change and willingness to change. The latter was particularly relevant, since most of the sample were not altogether happy about leaving the Navy. Whilst a few had experienced antagonisms in everyday life, most men had enjoyed features of service life and voluntary redundancy was often a trade off between family life and the benefits of their occupational role. Most expressed regret to some extent towards the loss of some elements of the service career.

So whilst they may have found one element of their lives incompatible with the overall context, to the point where antagonism became un-resolvable, they were not always happy to be losing other aspects. Some of these men still had naval discourses informing their self-identity. This meant that their willingness to leave was not always total, and for this reason they did not always confront change easily.

Where individuals had been forced to leave they were, in the main, unhappy at the prospect. Most of these men had strongly identified with the Navy and felt fully involved in service life. It was much harder for these individuals to come to terms with leaving the Navy and accept change willingly. Since discourses represent systems of meaning, it is difficult to force men to draw on particular alternatives, if they can relate to an already chosen one. The lack of control over leaving also affected some of these men, where the involuntary change from a way of life they identified with made them feel bitter or, at the extreme, eroded their sense of self-worth.

The provision of resettlement advice deserves a mention here. As discussed in the data chapters, men generally felt that resettlement advice was useful in terms of job search. However, they expressed disappointment at their limited access to such advice, due to ongoing work

commitments and the range of courses on offer (see Chapter Six). This appeared to affect willingness to change in the first place, as men felt unprepared for what they viewed as the unknown. This is an important point when it is considered that advance planning and preparation appeared to aid smoother transition to civilian life, and sudden leaving made this planning a less easy task.

As noted in Chapter Three, Jolly suggests that individuals must disengage from their current situation before they can start a new life. Where interviewees had confronted change then, they had to disengage from service-life and service identity. Since we have already seen how most men drew on naval discourse and identity in order to make sense of their lives, it is understandable that most felt anxious about disengaging from them. And disengagement was not in any case an easy step to take.

Consideration of disengagement raises an important issue regarding the experience of service leavers. One factor that added to men's crises of identity was the absence of any marked leaving ceremony. Interviewees talked of being 'despatched' in a manner that was inappropriate for such a complete change. What we are concerned with here then, is the absence of any rite of passage, from one stage of life to another, and from one discourse to others.

As discussed earlier, the acceptance of naval discourses was facilitated by initiation (the symbolic primal baptism), locating recruits in an 'us and them' context from the outset. This clearly signalled the end of one (civilian) stage and the beginning of another (naval) one. It would perhaps follow that this process should be repeated in order for men symbolically to end their attachment to naval life (confrontation and disengagement) and form a basis for re-socialisation to a civilian one. But the data showed that this did not take place. The majority of the sample had no such marked leaving ceremony and where one had occurred, it had been informally organised.

This is an important point, when the ritualistic and symbolic nature of naval life and discourse is taken into account. Men had regarded rituals and ceremony as the symbolic confirmation of the usefulness of their own role. For this reason, some were confused and others exhibited feelings of self-doubt in interviews at this stage. Some interviewees also felt frustrated, disappointed or resentful about the absence of any rite of passage, especially when they had viewed ceremony as a valuable feature of service life. It is worth pointing out that the erosion of self-worth, confusion

and disappointment or resentment, are elements that appear to hinder successful adaptation to civilian life[89]. Even so, many interviewees expressed their recognition of the need to disengage from service life, and to re-socialise themselves in another direction. However, closing off one discourse or identity was not uncomplicated.

Many men felt apprehensive at closing off naval discourse when they were not familiar with civilian ones. This was reflected by their repeated concerns that resettlement advice had lacked breadth. Provision of information regarding job search was welcomed, however men raised the issue of information about lifestyle or cultural change. Resettlement advice, it would therefore seem, did not address differences between naval and civilian discourses.

More guidance with reference to different signifiers in civilian discourse may have been useful for leavers. Individualism in what men later called the 'rat-race', more equivalent relationships, autonomy, multi-skilling, less visible rules and codes of conduct and so on, provide relevant examples. As a further point, this may have been more effectively achieved through the use of both service and civilian instructors. Research has shown[90] how professional educators may be positioned within particular professional or organisational discourses, and several interviewees and survey respondents commented on the lack of civilian input.

To return to an earlier point, reliance on oneself, family and friends for support and advice about resettlement had various implications. For the less involved group of servicemen, this proved to be helpful in terms of aiding adaptation and change. Attention to reference groups and exposure to civilian discourses appeared to prepare men for the changes that lay before them. For the involved group, however, lack of access to such reference groups, and discourses in general, made for more difficult transition.

Re-socialisation may therefore be more problematic for those having less familiarity with alternative civilian discourses. It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that those individuals in the involved group faced more difficulties with re-socialisation. Similarly, individuals had found disengagement harder when they had naturalised key signifiers to the extent where they were unable to decipher which were naval and which were rather more suitable for reference in civilian life. This ambiguity appeared to be particularly salient for those men who had served in the Navy for a considerable

period of time, and where there had been a longer period since their last exposure to civilian discourses.

It may come as no surprise that men who anticipated problems with re-socialisation, or those simply unwilling to adapt so drastically, often directed their job search toward employment similar to their naval occupation. It would appear that these individuals chose this path in order to minimise the impact of change and, by implication, the need for extensive re-socialisation. Many suggested that it would be easier to refer to similar frameworks or discourses, in order to understand their situations.

This was common in older interviewees, and those who had served longest (largely the same respondents). They expressed the view that it was too late a stage in their lives or careers for them comfortably to experience extensive change. Where men polarised naval and civilian discourses to the extreme, regardless of age or rank, they were also more resistant to change. These two trends may explain the clustering of ex-service personnel into particular segments of labour markets. They may also go some way to understanding the selection of particular types of re-employment.

Reflecting the findings of previous research[91], leavers clustered into three main areas: management, engineering and the emergency services,. This can be explained partly, in the transference of technical skills to similar work. However, the considerations outlined above may shed more light on these findings. Selection of employment types appeared, at least in part, to be due to similarities in a social and cultural sense. If we look at the types of employment men were seeking, (such as the emergency services, probation services, the nursing profession and teaching), it becomes clear that these are jobs which provide a service to the general public, rather than individualistic careers in the much talked about 'rat race'. What is important here, in terms of the social and cultural aspects of work, is that the service centred segments of the labour market represent those that are based on values, and not profit. It is understandable that service leavers sought such work, particularly when we consider the pride they had always derived from their naval values, camaraderie and perceptions of social usefulness.

Those who sought management positions described how they would be able to draw on frames of reference similar to those noted in their service occupations. This reflected reference to signifiers such as hierarchy, discipline and career progression, and represented the ambitions of mainly

officer groups. It might be assumed that management in civilian organisations would perhaps be incompatible with naval signifiers such as routinisation and lack of autonomy. However, attention to the data concerning men's interpretation of naval discourse highlights the way in which the careers of officers can be distinguished from those of ratings, in terms of differential levels of autonomy[92]. As self-confessed 'leaders', officers had expressed the view that they felt responsible for high levels of unprogrammed decision-making. Conversely, ratings followed orders and made more programmed decisions[93].

The acceptance of individualistic signifiers in civilian career orientations may be explained with reference to promotion and career progression processes, which have been noted as peculiar to the careers of those in the officer corps. It is possible that these men had already been exposed to elements of work that were similar to those drawn from civilian discourses. Management seemed to appeal to higher-ranking individuals, in terms of their visible location in the organisational hierarchy. Similarly, this enabled them to draw on signifiers which maintained their self-image as one with a certain status and pride. Some officers became self-employed for similar reasons, financially supported by generous redundancy packages.

Of those who were seeking occupations in engineering[94], most were seeking 'jobs' as opposed to careers. They reported relatively low levels of autonomy and more routinisation in their civilian work, although this still represented higher levels of autonomy than was the case in their naval occupations. Many adapted to an identity based partly on this occupational, rather than organisational or institutional role, and drew also from other discourses, such as those related to non-work interests. Individuals entering the emergency services were more directly attempting to avoid change. They were primarily concerned with locating themselves in similar positions to those held in their service careers. Many of these men were those in the less involved group, and this appeared to be the case for two reasons.

Firstly, these individuals felt that they could relate well to such jobs, in that they comprised elements similar to those in naval life. Specific services provided men with a strong sense of identity in terms of their isolation from other groups. Men also expressed the view that they would be able to maintain their sense of social usefulness, a signifier that in turn had implications for a positively referenced identity.

This is particularly relevant, since self-worth gained from perceptions of social usefulness was essential to the centrality of occupation in men's lives. They felt that they were also more able to refer to visible hierarchies and observable discipline, in order to make sense of their lives. It would appear, then, that the majority of the sample were aware of their occupational histories and dependence on certain discourses, and acted upon this awareness in pursuing second careers or jobs.

Whilst many leavers attempted to secure employment that was compatible with the discourses on which they had previously drawn, others felt able to make more conscious changes in their lives. This tendency appeared to be more characteristic of the less involved interviewees. Those who were younger, and who had been exposed to naval discourses over a shorter period of time than the older respondents, were more familiar with civilian discourse. This included men with more access to civilian friendships and community networks, those with wives in civilian employment and with less 'involved' wives, and those who resided in mainly civilian localities. At the extreme, there were interviewees who had never been able to successfully relate to naval discourse[95], and most of these individuals felt confident about resettlement. Less involved individuals had also demonstrated more willingness to change than their more involved counterparts, albeit to varying degrees.

Stronger identification with naval discourse, then, and lower levels of identification with civilian discourse, seemed to lead to more problems in facing change and disengaging from service life, as well as initiation and re-socialisation in civilian life.

Adaptation and Resettlement

At the point of six months after leaving the Navy, men were generally beginning to adapt to becoming civilians. However, various difficulties had been experienced by different groups of men in the sample. Some interviewees described suffering what they saw to be an 'identity crisis'; commonly characterised by an inability to disengage and re-socialise.

In order to make sense of civilian life, some effort has to be made to change discourses and related behaviours. Since naval discourses are so heavily sedimented and naturalised, it is not always possible to recover their origins and overwrite them with civilian discourses, New discourses, in any case, will have to be learned or internalised over time. Many men found themselves in a state of

limbo, floating somewhere between naval and civilian worlds, and drawing on both naval and, often increasingly, civilian discourses. In other words, the service leaver stands on the frontier of two discourses, attempting to draw on elements of both, but unsure of which signifiers to refer to and how to refer to them in order to understand and direct the changes in his life.

Clearly, not all the men had been able to re-socialise or assume a new social identity and take on a different role in society. This involved being perceived differently by peers and also by oneself. It appears from the interviews that those still perceiving themselves as 'naval men' had faced more problems with re-socialisation. As discussed in Chapter Four, re-socialisation is problematic when a prior discourse has been deliberately so ingrained.

This can mean that re-socialisation becomes an extended period in the life cycle, some researchers arguing that it can sometimes last indefinitely. This may be reflected by some of the respondents in this research. Research has shown that socialisation will not be established efficiently if people do not want it and that, once accepted, the speed of change is dependent on many factors[96].

Where individuals had made efforts to change and identify and rely upon new discourses, their perceived levels of adaptation were generally higher. This is not to say that change had been an easy task for them. Men talked of having to face challenge and make uncertain decisions. Learning new frames of reference took some time. Officers, who had deliberately secured employment involving high levels of autonomy, often reported the trials of learning a new frame of reference or professional 'ethos', for guidance in decision-making.

It is interesting that those who had sought similar work, in order to maintain strong identities, found re-socialisation perhaps more difficult than those who had chosen new directions and attempted to change accordingly. Further examination of this issue reveals that re-socialisation for men seeking similar employment was difficult in that differences were subtler and in some cases more ambiguous. The polarisation of civilian and naval discourses, in contrast, provided for more visible signifiers. Initiation and sedimentation of new discourses was, perhaps surprisingly, a more complicated process in rather more subtly different occupations.

Stereotypical images of civilians did not aid adaptation. Where men had polarised cultures in this particular way, they had taken a longer and more difficult route to identifying signifiers in new and different situations. Civilians were in some cases the focus of blame for the effects of cutback in the Navy, and this was demonstrated by the annoyance of several leavers at 'seeing civilians cars parked in their (naval) car park'. This form of scape-goating maintained polarisation, even where men had worked alongside civilians. This occurred mainly in the involved group, who tended to find adaptation more problematic.

This typology, of involved and less involved groups of personnel, helps us to understand the impact of naval discourse on men's lives. Although most of the sample felt that they had begun to adapt six months after leaving, involved men were the least certain. Some had maintained an identity that The added benefit of this typology is that it can also be used to analyse the experiences of naval families, in relation to the impact of the naval career and occupational change.

The Impact of the Naval Career on Families

Many of the men had left the Navy precisely because of their inability to combine family and work roles. Their servicemen identities, referencing signifiers drawn from naval discourse, appeared to clash with family identities that were derived from family discourses. In most cases, the occupational or organisational role extended into the family to a point where both identities fought for space in the familial home. This was evident in many of the families interviewed, generating antagonisms and frequently disrupting family relationships. This disruption appeared to have had three types of consequences for members of the sample studied. For the purposes of this thesis, I have termed these consequences: antagonism, compromise and familial involvement.

Antagonism occurred when men were unable successfully to combine their naval and family roles, and this will be discussed at a later stage. Where families were able to compromise, on the other hand, they were relatively able to accommodate both naval and family discourses, and to adapt to service life with few major problems. However, comfortable adaptation to service life appeared to be achieved most successfully where families were drawn into naval discourses. Increased involvement with the Navy seems to have been essential to this process.

It would seem that the Navy deliberately encouraged the involvement of families in certain aspects of naval life. Wives were exposed to naval discourses, and to a lesser extent so were their children. Where they were able to draw on them, there tended to be fewer work/family antagonisms in the family sphere.

We can see the processes of socialisation reported by men reflected here in women's attachment to the Navy. Women were actively encouraged to attend parades and to participate in the symbolic celebration of men's initiation to the service. This may represent, for some women, their own primal baptisms. It was this stage that had first marked a sense of belonging among some wives, and pride had certainly enhanced the experience, thus making the naval way of life more attractive. Women's internalisation of key signifiers in naval discourse appears to have resulted from their involvement with the Navy in the capacity of 'naval wife'. Whilst wives identification is arguably based on the more social aspects of naval life, this may still represent the sedimentation of naval discourses into other members of servicemen's' families.

This is an important point, in terms of occupational identity and its extension into the family sphere of occupational members. The extension of occupational socialisation to the families of members appears to have occurred in the cases of a number of individuals in this study. The involvement of families to an extent where they become familiar with occupational discourses, through social involvement and occupation-specific friendship networks, is evident here. But the findings of this research demonstrate how the socialisation of some service families may go beyond this. Some women had personally developed service identities. It could be argued that this was merely the impact of men's socialisation on their wives. Involvement in men's social lives, and with men's social networks, may result in a form of secondary socialisation for wives.

However, this was not precisely the case in all families interviewed. There were those who felt involved with the Navy independently of their husbands. That is, following the initial introduction of wives to the Navy through their husbands' attachment, some had proceeded to direct their own involvement, in wives' groups and networks. They had learned certain attitudes and behaviours in relation to service wives and in some cases relied heavily on such networks. Furthermore, some of these women had subsequently developed service identities of which they were often fiercely defensive. The implications for resettlement are discussed later in this chapter.

Once again paralleling the men in the sample, women's reference to naval discourse was strengthened by their isolation from civilian discourses, again within an 'us and them' context. Higher levels of involvement in naval life, whether through husbands or in their own right, were more likely to be found amongst wives whose husbands were particularly involved in their approach to naval life, and this compounded isolation from the civilian world.

These women actively absorbed discourses with increased involvement in naval groups, reinforcing signifiers through interaction and, particularly, dependence on networks when husbands were absent. Wives also spoke of the hierarchical nature of service-life, and were acutely aware of their own positions in relation to other service wives within a context of difference. They also demonstrated knowledge of and, often, adherence to, naval etiquette.

Sedimentation of naval signifiers was thus strengthened in such involved wives, through polarisation of civilian and naval discourses, just as was the case for their husbands. Women also appeared to naturalise myths about civilians and replay them through interaction with other service wives. Wives' polarisation of civilian and naval individuals was reinforced by the discrimination they felt they had suffered from civilian women. This was a uniquely service wife, as opposed to serviceman, issue, and was experienced in traditionally female spheres of life, such as outside the school gates, attending school activities, youth clubs and so on.

Wives, then, appeared to draw on naval discourses where they were more involved in naval life, and particularly where their husbands were fully involved in observance of naval discourse. The internalisation of naval discourses, and corresponding success in adaptation to service life, may help to explain why the Navy had made efforts to involve wives and families. Several leavers also expressed this view, in one way or another. This drive appears to have two dimensions: firstly to minimise men's exposure to civilian discourses and secondly to reduce antagonisms in naval families.

Both these dimensions can be seen to help achieve the relative fixity of naval discourse in servicemen's lives, and the exclusion of alternative civilian discourses. Therefore the hegemony of the Navy is sustained. So when wives asserted that the Navy would 'like to own men and their families' as naval 'property', they may not have been altogether incorrect. At the extreme, some wives rebelled against the naval occupational role for this very reason. However, where there was

less compromise and more antagonism, some wives resented the Navy's drive to impose and sediment naval signifiers in spouses.

Therefore, whilst the Navy appeared to have been successful in extending socialisation to some other members of servicemen's families, this was not true in every case. Some women resisted being drawn into service life, and frustration, at being 'labelled' as a result of their husbands' jobs was expressed by a number of respondents and interviewees. Typically, these women also identified with elements of civilian discourses and resented the intrusion of naval discourse into the family home. Higher levels of involvement in civilian life, through friends and social networks, increased women's exposure to civilian discourses. Many had employed them in some aspects of their daily lives.

Exposure to civilian discourses was particularly marked amongst wives who were employed in civilian occupations. Some women had identified with their own occupational or organisational role and, in some cases, developed personal identities through reference to their own occupational discourses. Internalisation of such discourses appeared to be effected in much the same way as that of the servicemen interviewed[97].

Once again then, two types appeared to emerge from the data: involved and uninvolved families, the former drawing extensively on naval discourse and the latter employing other alternative civilian frames of reference. On closer inspection, these types appear to correspond with the original serviceman typology described earlier in this chapter. A central characteristic of involved men's relationships with the Navy, was an involved naval wife. Where naval discourse had been dominant in involved families, there tended to be fewer antagonisms. A particularly 'naval' lifestyle had often become naturalised.

On the other hand, where naval and civilian discourses fought for space, antagonisms were more pronounced. Very few families were entirely 'civilianised', but clearly neither naval nor civilian discourses had purchased a significant hold over less involved families, as neither had been fully naturalised. Such families may have been initiated to both discourses, and it was obvious that elements of both may have been employed in day to day family life. However, in some cases, mixed signifiers had not been compatible for use in the family sphere and therefore relative dominance of one discourse over another had not been achieved. It was these families that

expressed the desire to lead more 'natural' family lifestyles, the emphasis here being very much based on civilian notions of 'natural'.

Whilst not all wives were extensively exposed to civilian discourses, many nevertheless found it difficult to identify with naval signifiers. These were generally wives who objected to familial and social relationships being organised through difference in a hierarchical structure[98]. This issue had implications for men's relationships with their families. As we have seen, naval relationships are typically organised within a logic of difference, where differential identities are organised into different characteristics in a hierarchical context. Literature has demonstrated that family relationships, drawing from family discourse, are becoming increasingly organised by equivalence[99], where family members negotiate their roles and positions relative to one another.

Due to the required centrality of the naval role however, and where naval discourse was heavily sedimented and naturalised, some family relationships had become characterised by difference, rather than equivalence. Different family members then, were accorded different identities and positions, and the importance of the naval identity enabled men to maintain a position of considerable status within a hierarchical family network.

It is important to mention here, that where men referred to naval discourse in relating to their families, household formations were likely to be organised around biological notions of gender roles. Household formations appeared to be affected accordingly. Men's participation in the domestic sphere was minimised by their naval, breadwinner status, whilst women's participation increased to the point where they came solely to represent the housewife and, in most cases, mother. A number of women had withdrawn from labour markets in order to accommodate their housewife and mother identities.

Household Formations and the Naval Career

Literature has shown that family roles may be evolving, and men's participation in the domestic sphere increasing as families become characterised by dual-careers. However, the centrality of the naval role, with its prioritised responsibility to the Navy, meant that this change was less marked amongst the naval leavers in this sample.

Hierarchical family organisation was evident in many households, and was generally more accepted in involved families. Where naval discourse was more heavily sedimented, gendering of family roles had become naturalised. This is perhaps illustrated by the way in which many men referred to the 'evolution' of specific roles as a 'natural' response to service life. Wives professed to be happy with the role of service wife in the absence of their own personal occupational role, and often did so with pride. Even so, there were many wives for whom the service way of life represented a hindrance to their preferred lifestyles.

Intermittent periods of absence, representing the total withdrawal of men from domestic spheres, weakened women's ability to maintain attachment to a work role. Many women had developed domestic routines and assumed primary responsibility for household tasks. Most of the sample, whether involved or otherwise, accepted this arrangement as inevitable. For the majority of wives, it strengthened commitment above and beyond the housewife role as they became rightly proud of their ability competently to assume total responsibility for the smooth running of domestic affairs. Most felt that they had taken over many of the roles that would traditionally be allocated to their husbands, and this had implications for the re-integration of men to the home, which will be discussed further at a later point.

The need to perform this 'superwoman' role,[100] successfully reinforced the logic of difference through which most households were organised, even where women professed some resistance to naval discourses. Furthermore, it also strengthened the position of men as breadwinners as they consciously avoided any interruption of women's routines on return from trips away. Women's increased, and men's decreased, participation in the home was a common consequence.

The same gendering of roles appeared to be applied to parenting. Women generally fulfilled all parental responsibilities, with the exception of men's participation in children's leisure and recreational activities. Referring to the family literature discussed in Chapter Three, it would seem that this is typical of traditional family and parenting roles. However, recent moves toward increased father participation were less marked in this sample of men, and intermittent absence may go some way to explaining why.

Absence, then, reinforced male breadwinner and female housewife and mother roles. This was well documented in the considerable number of questionnaire answers that highlighted the importance

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of 'competent' naval wives in sustaining the naval career. Both husbands and wives had naturalised such arrangements and it did, in many cases, reinforce the normative service wife identity.

This was particularly so where women were highly involved with the Navy. Some spoke of the external image they had portrayed to other service-members and their spouses, which was rewarded by confirmation of their being 'good service wives'. At the extreme, there were women who extended all their efforts into nurturing a perfect service home, particularly in married quarters where 'inmusters and outmusters'[101] could potentially cause embarrassment or shame at failing in this role. The direct intrusion of the Navy into the family sphere further bolstered value-judgements about the competent service wife, and wives often internalised such judgements. It is perhaps unsurprising then that most service wives were fiercely defensive of their domestic roles, particularly when such direct intrusion of the Navy was evident.

This is an important issue. The effects of absence, and notions of the perfect service wife, may be seen to help sustain the hegemony of the Navy over its members, and also over wives. However, it was also this aspect of service life that threatened that very hegemony. Firstly, whilst wives generally accepted the effects of the central Naval career on household roles, they were often begrudging of it. Secondly, this aspect of naval service sat most uncomfortably with family life, as long-term absence is quite the antithesis of even traditional family discourses.

This was demonstrated by the way in which some women regarded themselves as 'single' mothers, married to men who were not there for long periods of time. Adaptation to shared family life on return was, in almost every case, characterised by some difficulty, as discourses and identities fought for space, and couples talked of the 'unreal' and superficial nature of the time spent together between periods of separation.

It is interesting to note here that where families found it particularly difficult to adapt family life to the service career, they had not always sought the help that had been available. Whilst the Navy makes clear its commitment to families in terms of the support it offers for family welfare, wives did not always feel able to utilise such services. There appeared to be some form of stigma attached to enlisting the help of official welfare services. Women in particular expressed the view that contacting naval support represented a sense of failure of their own role as service wife, and this

relates to the concept of the 'perfect' naval wife. In addition, men also expressed the view that they would be disappointed or embarrassed at work, should their wives need to seek help outside immediate family members and friends. This may go some way to explaining why family welfare services were generally regarded as a final and desperate resort.

It is also interesting to note that information provided to families in the form of a booklet entitled 'Coping with Separation', was directed to wives' coping strategies, normalising problems and outlining the ways in which women could competently adapt to separation. Since only one paragraph was devoted to the experience of separation amongst service personnel themselves, it is easy to understand why women felt that the role of competent service wife included responsibility for the development of familial coping strategies. Once again, this sentiment was echoed in the general attitudes of husbands.

Most couples then, had developed coping strategies for separation. Adaptation to a life characterised by absence of husbands and fathers was achieved particularly well by involved families, who drew on naval discourse in order to understand and come to terms with such situations. Signifiers were, after all, sedimented at every opportunity, justifying discourses and situations through the pride and sense of belonging derived from parades and ceremonies. Wives, if they so wished, were involved in busy naval social lives whilst men were at home, and wives' networks whilst men were away. Marital relationships therefore benefited where discourses could be drawn on in order to normalise the more troublesome features of service life.

Many of the men interviewed, whilst tolerating the effects of service life on their marital relationships, were far less accepting of its impact on their father identities. These men had begun to draw on more contemporary family discourses in terms of attitudes toward parenting. This issue is one worthy of further consideration.

Though men were able to develop strategies for coping with stresses on marital relations, they were less happy about being absent from their children. Almost all explained that they felt they had 'missed out' on important stages of their children's development. Their naval identities did not sit comfortably with these aspects of their father roles. Therefore, in the case of children (as opposed to wives) men generally could not justify lower levels of participation through reference to naval discourse.

This was, of course, reinforced by the fact that children were less likely to draw on naval discourses than were wives. In the main, they had experienced less exposure to the Navy, and often more exposure to civilian discourses (through schooling and social networks).[102] Children were less likely than their parents to understand or accept absence. For this reason, some men spoke of reduced closeness to their children, as children and fathers found it harder to relate to one another following periods of absence. This reduced closeness was made a more bitter pill by the tendency of children to develop increased closeness to their permanently resident mothers.

It is also interesting to consider here that where men attempted to apply naval discourse to an understanding of the parenting aspect of their lives, this was not always successful. Where approaches were based on naval signifiers, such as discipline and hierarchy for example, they were often met with resentment from children who were less able to understand the underlying discourse, and particularly where civilian friends' parents were perceived to be more egalitarian in their outlook. Of course, resentment was stronger where both wives and children had developed routines and negotiated rules whilst men were absent.

Some men described how they had applied 'naval principles' to parenting children, enforcing what they themselves perceived as over-disciplinarian regimes in the family. Others talked of their tendency to identify family members hierarchically, through a logic of difference. And of course separation clashed considerably with most efforts to fulfil what men saw as 'natural' father roles.

Taking note of the above considerations, and reflecting some points made earlier in this chapter, it would seem that naval identity was incompatible with contemporary family discourses, and particularly father, identities. For some, this incompatibility generated antagonisms that became insurmountable. It is fair to conclude then, that for all the antagonistic features of naval and civilian discourses, most were managed through well developed coping strategies, but combining naval and parenting roles represented an issue that was, for most, problematic.

This perhaps reflects the growing emphasis on the importance of the father role in contemporary society, particularly where women are increasingly sharing breadwinner roles[103]. Men felt that they had not been able to perform this role as well as they might have done without the constraints of service life. It could perhaps be expected that change to a civilian family lifestyle would thus be a

welcome transformation. However, adaptation of naval families, to occupational change, represented a far more complex process.

Naval Families and Occupational Change

At the point of transition, most couples expressed some concern at the prospect of leaving service life. Most men viewed occupational change as a major re-direction of their lives. The effects on home life, particularly when the extensive impact of the naval career is considered, were not always easy to deal with. For a start, whilst change had its practical aspects, such as permanent co-residence and re-definition of household roles, to view these as purely technical challenges would be to treat them superficially. Such issues embodied symbolic elements and change was therefore more complex than it would at first seem.

Firstly, roles and identities were threatened in many families, and the importance of identity in making sense of life has already been discussed at length.[104] Both men and women had adapted to identities that were, due to the demanded centrality of the service career, organised through naval discourse in an underlying logic of difference. In the main, servicemen were identified though their roles of breadwinners and providers, enhanced by their social usefulness, and therefore headed families where wives and children were accorded supporting roles.

However, once out of the Navy, most men found that their new employment required less centrality, involved less or no absence and, as a consequence, enabled family roles to be re-negotiated through an underlying logic of equivalence. Many men had left precisely in order to spend more 'quality' time with their families. However, on return to the family home, some expressed a feeling of exclusion by other family members. Positions thus began to be redefined, based on the new situation. It was at this point that many men described facing some form of identity crisis as they struggled to define their new role within the family.

Such crises were particularly marked where women had been able to return to work, and therefore became breadwinners in their own right, as well as housewives and mothers. Some men described how they had experienced a sense of disappointment at losing or sharing their 'provider'

identity. This is important when it is considered that the naval role had been very visible[105], and that most men reported downward occupational mobility on leaving the Navy.

It was not just men, however, that experienced crises in respect of identity. Resettlement also had implications for the identities of some service wives. Some wives had been involved with the Navy to the extent where they had developed friendship networks, conducted 'naval' social lives and drawn on naval discourse, along with their husbands, in order to make sense of their lives. For these wives, adaptation to civilian life was often problematic.

It could of course be suggested that the impact of such change for servicemen was extensive to the point where it affected their wives. However, on closer inspection of the data, it would appear that wives' involvement with the Navy also had implications for resettlement being experienced as personal change. Clearly, where wives had developed service identities or personalities, they too found themselves suffering identity crises in the same way as their husbands. This would explain why wives who had been less exposed to civilian discourses found adaptation a more difficult process. If we look to the experiences of change reported by involved women, they very much reflect those experiences described by the men. Confrontation and disengagement were, once again, important stages that some women had found problematic.

It should be remembered that men who had been forced to leave were more likely to have difficulty in confronting change. Where women were concerned, most were aware that they had less control over the central naval career because of the simple fact that it was not their own career. So whilst wives may have built networks, developed service identities and conducted 'naval' lives in their own right, they now came to realise that this had only been possible in the first instance due to their husbands. The relative lack of control over change, in these women's lives(since it was in essence their husbands' change), added to their inability to confront resettlement and disengage from their own service-related lives. It is clear that involvement meant men's occupational change had serious implications for wives' experience of the resettlement process. The identity issue however, affected almost all wives in the sample in one way or another.

At the beginning of this chapter, we discussed the primal baptism of service recruits, and the advantages of involving wives in ceremonies, parades and other reinforcers of naval discourse. We have also discussed the need for a similar symbolic rite of passage at the close of service life,

and the fact that this had been lacking. The implications for confrontation and disengagement have been raised.

If wives, then, had been involved in men's initiation and sedimentation to naval discourses, it should perhaps follow that they also require involvement in symbolic rites of passage at the end of their husband's career. Of course, even where men had arranged their own leaving 'dos', wives were afforded no such mark of change. This surely has implications for their own confrontation and disengagement, however involved they had been, and may help to explain why some women continued to perceive themselves as service-wives, despite changes to their naval social lives.

Again, this appeared to parallel the experience of more involved men in the sample. In the same way as men, wives attached importance to the social usefulness of their husband's roles, and derived pride from them. Some spoke of the loss of this usefulness and pride, and this certainly had negative effects on men, particularly where they had expressed the same feelings of loss in themselves.

These notions, of pride and social usefulness, had become more of an issue for some service wives, mainly, but not exclusively, in involved families. Women had developed their own pride, firstly through their husband's role but also in their own roles as competent service-wives. They spoke of their pride at supporting their husbands' positions through good service housekeeping and the nurturing of both husband and children. Men's recognition of their wives' support and their successful adaptation to service life, of course, reinforced this. The space left after the naval career had ceased was, for some women, difficult to fill.

Furthermore, some women also derived pride from their own positions within service-wife networks, as well as their observance of naval etiquette and social traditions. Pride thus reinforced reference to naval discourses, and this may explain why these more involved wives found disengagement difficult.

Wives who had already been exposed to civilian discourses experienced confrontation and disengagement more positively. As was the case for men, women who were prepared to adapt through reference to more civilian discourses found the task of re-socialising easier than more

exclusively service-involved wives. Once again, this was more effectively achieved where women were attached to a civilian work role or related to civilian-centred friendship networks.

The above findings may illustrate how involved families found resettlement difficult, particularly where both men and wives had their own identity crises to deal with. Even where confrontation and disengagement was achieved, these individuals then faced the challenge of re-socialising to new and often unfamiliar civilian discourses.[106] Whilst involved families tended to find this task more difficult than their less involved counterparts, almost all of the leavers felt that they had to deal with emotional and symbolic personal transformation, and at the same time adapt to practical changes in the domestic sphere.

Change and Family Relationships

Resettlement inevitably had implications for marital and parental relationships. It is useful here to reiterate the fact that many men volunteered for redundancy due to the impact of the dominant service career on family relationships. Most, therefore, believed that these relationships would benefit from leaving the Navy, although men whose families had been more involved had adapted their familial relationships to service life, and were less concerned about such changes. The ability to prioritise family issues appeared to make adaptation appear more positive for men who had drawn on civilian signifiers and who had been uncomfortable with the demanded centrality of the service career. But even where men had prepared for the change and were supported by their wives, marital relationships were affected by leaving.

Firstly, service men and their wives, once rid of the intermittent periods of separation, reported a phase of getting to know each other again. Most had recognised that some kind of re-familiarisation would be necessary, and this appeared to affect most of the sample that spoke of it. Whilst many had been aware of more general attitudes and behaviours of spouses, there were those with which couples had to re-familiarise themselves. This may explain the 'stranger' syndrome, reported in Chapter Six.

It was this point that marked realisation, for many, of the practical consequences of reference to certain discourses. Couples now faced adaptation to the particular attitudes and behaviours that

were exhibited by their partners. This was highlighted by wives' reactions to men's habits that had been formed around naval identities (the 'extremely tidy guy' or the 'disciplinarian' examples documented in Chapter Six). Similarly, men also found that women had developed habits in their routines that clashed with those of their own.

Adapting to such differences involved re-defining the 'acceptable', in terms of behaviour. Where behaviours resulting from reference to different discourses were not wholly compatible, they appeared to be accepted. However, where particularly naval behaviours were inappropriate for family or civilian life, they required adaptation to the new situation.

Of course, it could be argued that men and women had already experienced this type of adaptation following periods of separation. However, whilst this may be true to some extent, it is perhaps worth considering the fact discussed earlier, that most couples had developed coping strategies and had built them into service life. In this way they had not been completely problematic in that individuals negotiated this way of life through reference to discourse and firm differential identities. Frequent adaptation to a temporary situation had largely become an accepted, if not welcome, way of life.

However, redundancy and resettlement represented far more permanent change, for which previously developed coping strategies proved to be inadequate. This was reinforced by the way in which identities had to be re-assessed and also how withdrawal from naval reference groups affected adaptation to new lifestyles. As service-centred networks were gradually left behind, most men and their wives began to spend more time together, both in the home and socially. Whilst information about adaptation after separation in naval life has been available, similar material regarding adaptation to long term resettlement into the home has been less forthcoming. The adaptation of families, to a new situation of more permanent togetherness, provides a rich area for further research.

For most of the couples, this aspect of change required adapting certain attitudes and behaviours, drawing from various discourses. Generally though, this was a temporary stage, and couples learned to adapt as they had with intermittent absence. However, servicemen also had to adapt to being fathers, with children to care for, in much the same way as they had adapted to their husband roles. Since it would appear that parenting issues had forced men to leave the Navy, that

is where men found it impossible to comfortably combine naval and father roles, it is perhaps unsurprising that most men were particularly committed to adapting to this aspect of their lives.

Men expressed the feeling that they had experienced a stage of getting to know their children, just as they had with their wives. However, men felt that children were different, and it would appear that children were less able to relate to particularly naval attitudes and behaviours. Some children, again reflecting the experience of wives, had established their own roles in the family. In some cases, they were resentful of the changes enforced by their father's permanent residence in the now civilian home.

Where this was the case, men expressed more disappointment here than toward any other change. Resentment from wives was clearly hurtful to most of the men who spoke of it, however this was something that they felt they could overcome. They were, however, particularly hurt and concerned where resentment came from children, and this was reinforced where close relationships with mothers brought the fathers' relative distance into sharp relief.

This is an important point, when it is considered that it was the father role that men found it most difficult to adapt to their naval identities, and the reason that most offered for their leaving. When they had given up their careers, it was parenting issues that had re-confirmed their decision to leave and provided some sense of confidence. Where adapting to their children was a difficult task for men they were clearly upset. This represented a traumatic experience, even where this stage was temporary.

However, since most leavers were so committed to their father role, most appeared to be adapting by the time of the last set of interviews. Many expressed the view that increased closeness to children, and higher levels of participation in their children's lives, more than compensated for the loss of other aspects of their own lives, and the level of change they had faced.

Conclusion

This discussion has brought to light several key issues regarding military careers and the experiences of service personnel. Different levels of involvement in the Navy have implications not just for the men interviewed, but also their family lives and their experiences of resettlement. Such

discussion provides an important and much needed contribution to current sociological literature about the military, as well as that which is concerned with occupations, organisations, career change and work/family interfaces. In addition, the thesis prompts suggestions for further research, as well as having clear implications for policy regarding the military. These issues, together with the more general conclusions of the thesis, are now outlined in Chapter Ten.

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[73] See Chapter Six.

[74] See Chapter Six for detail.

[75] These calculations were made from data provided by the smaller number of respondents who had not yet left the Navy.

[76] This refers to the larger group of those who had already left, and for this reason, direct comparison should bear it in mind.

[77] These figures are derived from data provided by the respondents who had already left the Navy.

[78] See Chapter Six.

[79] See Chapter Seven for leavers' experiences.

[80] See Chapters Two, Three and Four for the conceptual framework of the thesis.

[81] The methodological bases of which are explained in Chapter Five.

[82] See Chapter Two.

[83] See Chapter Two.

[84] Outlined in Chapter Two.

[85] Outlined in Chapter Two.

[86] Again, see Chapter Two.

[87] This is discussed, with reference to organisations and power, in Chapter Two.

[88] See Chapter Two

[89] As pointed out in Chapter Two.

[90] Again, documented in Chapter Two.

[91] See Regan, 1995.

[92] See Chapter Six.

[93] Programmed and unprogrammed forms of decision-making are discussed in Chapter Two, with reference to occupational role.

[94] Excluding management in engineering.

[95] Discussed earlier with reference to antagonism.

[96] See Chapter Two.

[97] It is important to note, here, that women's identification with occupational discourses was generally less marked than their husbands.

[98] This contrasts with men, who almost exclusively viewed it as an acceptable feature of service life.

[99] See Chapter Three.

[100] See Friedman's 'Superwoman Syndrome', discussed in Chapter Four.

[101] On entering and leaving service housing, properties were subject to extremely thorough examination for cleanliness and state of repair (according to normative naval standards).

[102] With the exception of some children, from more involved families, who had been educated at naval schools.

[103] This has been discussed, with reference to literature, in Chapter Four.

[104] See Chapter Two.

[105] Even where women had maintained attachment to a work role, men's breadwinner qualities remained dominant.

[106] The difficulties of which have already been discussed in relation to men.

Chapter Ten - Conclusions and Final Remarks

Introduction

This thesis has highlighted issues that are relevant to existing sociological knowledge about work, families and occupational change, as well as occupational socialisation and identity. It has also provided information about the unique characteristics of naval life and resettlement, information that is relevant to a number of contemporary policy issues.

Sociology, Discourse and the Naval Career

The research has examined the ways in which naval personnel and their families experience military life and occupational change. It becomes clear that individuals' perspectives on the world influence the ways in which they conduct their day to day lives in naval service, and subsequently their experience of leaving the Navy. We have seen how people draw on different discourses in order to make sense of their own positions, and to deal with different life situations. It is therefore important to understand the processes of socialisation to different discourses and to uncover the ways in which these discourses are intentionally or, more commonly, unintentionally incorporated into everyday life.

The study has demonstrated how a particularly naval discourse is used by service personnel to understand and cope with the distinctive features of naval lifestyles, through the development of appropriate perspectives, attitudes, values and behaviours. It is important to note, however, that the Navy and naval discourses are not concrete, fixed entities exhibiting essential or definitive characteristics.

Nevertheless, a number of patterns and themes have emerged from the research. We have identified several naval signifiers, such as collectivism, isolationism and polarisation of naval and civilian cultures, rule and regulation and retributive discipline, hierarchy, machismo and so on. This analysis enables us to observe the subtle, and not so subtle, ways in which the Navy is able to exercise control, above and beyond the naval contract. However, the processes of socialisation

and identity formation investigated by this research are more complex than the mere acceptance of occupational ideologies by passive recruits to naval service.

Whilst working and living within the constraints of service life, it is clear that service personnel are able to select and interpret various signifiers of both naval and civilian discourses in ways that most suitably help them to approach and explain their own positions and life experiences. The relationship between the Navy and its members, and members of their families, is thus multi-dimensional. There are clear reciprocities between the deliberate socialisation on the part of the Navy, and the internalisation of naval discourse by service personnel.

Servicemen and their families associate differentially with naval discourses, some drawing on them more extensively than others. It is possible to distinguish two main types of service personnel: 'involved' and 'less involved'. Such a distinction has gone some way to aiding an understanding of how different service personnel and families variously experience the naval career and, particularly, occupational change.

Naval discourses provide the most appropriate frame of reference for understanding service life. Alternative civilian discourses represent frameworks more useful for civilian life. It would follow, then, that individuals would adapt more successfully in both environments if they draw most heavily on the more suitable discourses for each.

This appears to be the case. For leavers, occupational change and resettlement represents an often traumatic, and always challenging, re-direction of their entire lives. However, there were differences between the experiences of involved men and their less involved counterparts. Involved men and involved families drew more extensively on naval discourses, and therefore enjoyed naval life, suffering more traumas during resettlement. On the other hand, less involved men and their families drew also on civilian discourses. They sometimes encountered problems with the requirements of the naval contract, but found resettlement a more positive experience. Notions of discourse help us to understand the complexities of the different responses to occupational change.

Understanding Occupational Change

A discourse theory approach has facilitated a deeper understanding of the resettlement process. Whilst this process may at first seem straightforward, detailed analysis uncovers the complexities of servicemen's experiences. This approach helps us to gain a purchase on an understanding on issues of occupational socialisation, identity formation and experience of change, in terms of the way in which individuals are differentially affected. It allows us to describe and analyse the elements of servicemen's lives that influence their experiences both of service life and of resettlement.

Several points are pertinent to any consideration of the processes involved in resettlement. The thesis highlights clear issues with regard to the elements that act as either gateways or barriers to successful adaptation to civilian life, and these are worthy of noting. It would be easy to suggest that leavers should merely confront change, accept it, and move to the new situation with a willingness to disengage from the last discourse, and recognising the need for efforts to learn new ones. The findings of the research, however, demonstrate that this task is far from simple.

If socialisation has been effective, then individuals may not remember learning signifiers of naval discourse, and therefore may experience difficulties in distinguishing them from more appropriate civilian ones. In the meantime, they may feel confused or apprehensive, as they learn discourses more suited to their new situations. Crises of identity are often the result.

Many of the servicemen in this sample had very little experience of civilian life. Most had joined at a young age (usually sixteen or eighteen), and naval discourses had long been naturalised. The implication for those with little or no awareness of civilian discourses was a more negatively experienced resettlement, and many men found themselves in some form of 'limbo', unable to successfully conduct their lives as either servicemen or completely adjusted civilians.

Resettlement also significantly affects the families of service leavers. Wives may suffer similar identity crises to men, as their own personal and social worlds are thrown into disarray by the ending naval career. This highlights the importance of more research into military families that considers the very real implications of the service career for the social and personal lives of other family members who may themselves have developed quite complex identifications with service life.

Military Families and the Naval Career

Issues arising from the exploration of military career/family interfaces stem largely from the lack of compatibility between naval discourse and contemporary family roles. Whilst marital, household and social relationships can generally withstand the pressures of service life, and are commonly accommodated around its requirements, the demands of parenting have the effect of challenging the required centrality of the naval career. The constraints on performing parent roles and developing fulfilling parental relationships were the most often cited, and always the most irreconcilable, problems faced by men with families.

This is an important point, and one that the Navy must address, particularly where its new recruits are young, and are therefore more likely to draw frequently on contemporary family discourses. The last Strategic Defence Review brought the relevance of personal and family issues into sharp relief by being the first to place a high priority on personnel issues. Recognition of their importance by the MOD has become more evident over recent years, highlighting the need to review the current situation, and fears over decreasing retention levels serve only to heighten this.

The requirements of the naval contract may make difficult any attempt to ease the problems associated with absence and separation, but it will nevertheless become necessary to review the elements of service life that are based on notions of the voluntary total involvement of service wives and the institutionalised husband. The growing incidence of dual career families, and increases in father participation, make this need for review even more marked.

Some effort to up-date discourses centred on normative images of the 'perfect' service wife would prove beneficial. Further, any attempt to reverse the apparent demonising of naval family and welfare services would also represent a positive development, in terms of the support available to families who are undergoing the difficulties outlined in this thesis. Challenging traditional discourses that are concerned with self-sufficient, perfect naval wives and families could, over time, help to break down the more negative connotations that currently plague external intervention at times of crisis. Younger families are demanding treatment that is based on more contemporary approaches to family life and roles, and the Navy's response will have implications not just for the recruitment and retention of its staff, but also for its hegemony over them.

Implications for the Future of Military Cultures

Issues of power and hegemony necessarily form an important theme of this thesis. It appears from the findings that the Navy will have to respond to the growing resistance of some service personnel to certain normative codes of conduct, particularly where these reflect naval morals and cultural mores. This research has shown that service personnel are likely to become increasingly critical, especially amongst younger age groups that continue to join as their elders retire. As mentioned previously, the traditional values and behavioural norms that are bound up in military cultures are ones that they often find constraining to a 'normal' contemporary lifestyle. As time passes, the Armed Forces will need to directly address these issues, in addition to those arising from the Strategic Defence Review.

It is not suggested here that the Armed Forces should become synonymous with civilian organisations. The advantages of some elements of difference have already been noted. Nevertheless, if the conclusions of this thesis are taken into consideration, it is possible that service personnel could share some elements of civilian organisational cultures and, at the very least, familiarisation would prove beneficial. This familiarisation has two implications.

Firstly, it would aid personnel in their transition to civilian life, for the reasons already outlined. Alongside transferable skills, some awareness of civilian working cultures and practices is crucial to successful adaptation. For example, Commissioned Officers are likely to experience resettlement positively, more so than any other ranks or rates. It could be argued that this is something to do with the fact that these individuals appeared to fit the profile of the 'elite pool' described by Edmonds (in Chapter Two). It may well represent a class-based issue. Financial security, along with more cultural capital, certainly helped officers to adapt more successfully to civilian careers and social networks.

However, analysis of discourse points up findings which suggest that certain naval signifiers are available to officers that are more compatible with civilian situations, such as individualism, autonomy, management and integration. The implications for extending such signifiers to lower ranks are complicated due to the tightly structured organisation of the Navy. Nevertheless, several patterns could perhaps be accommodated within the working and family lives of these personnel, in

terms of improved multi-skilling, increased autonomy in lower levels of decision-making, more residential location and integration in civilian areas, and the provision of ceremonies on leaving. There is a need for flexibility and initiative whilst maintaining the essential requirement for obedience to command.

Secondly, identifying and understanding the barriers between naval and civilian discourses would ultimately serve to enhance relations between military, state and public. This is particularly important in the light of the increasing involvement of military services in civil society, as well as moves toward more civilians working alongside service personnel.

There is a crucial point here. Measures to increase familiarity with 'other' cultures and discourses cannot be uni-directional. For the purposes of this thesis, naval signifiers and identities have been examined in the light of alternative civilian ones. It is imperative, then, that exposure of civilians to naval organisations and personnel, as well as the values and the important service they provide to society, is as positively encouraged as familiarisation of service personnel with civilian life. Increased working co-operation, high profile recruitment drives and more balanced representations in media portrayal of service life are all avenues for improved integration.

The findings of this research indicate that increased working relations with civilian organisations should not only bring about an awareness of civilian discourses, they should also help to challenge prevalent myths regarding the nature of military personnel. It is recognised here that such bringing together of military and civilian services will not be without problems, and will provoke inevitable comparisons, with implications for policy issues. Whatever the case, this thesis suggests that the military will be forced to consider the effects of increasing individualism, flexibility of working practices, and social equality in civilian society, especially where long-term relations are forged with non-military organisations.

These may not necessarily represent negative developments. Military writers have suggested that civilianisation, the increases in owner occupation, and the continuing dispersal of service personnel into more civilian residential locations, may present a threat to naval hegemony and therefore a challenge to a committed and efficient force.

The research has produced no evidence to suggest that this is the case. Both in-depth discussions and the wider ranging survey have demonstrated that, whilst service families living in civilian communities may be more exposed to alternative discourses, this does not necessarily weaken their allegiance to the Navy. Naval signifiers still provide a reference framework for many different dimensions of service life, and familiarisation with civilian discourses, whist aiding resettlement, does not render this framework invalid. It is not simply the availability of discourses that is at issue, but rather the way in which people come to draw on them.[107]

Notwithstanding the problems outlined in Chapter Two, civilianisation of the Armed Forces could represent a positive change. As the military has adapted slowly to changing discourses in contemporary society, its key signifiers have gradually become more compatible with civilian life. In the light of recent discussion, we can see how it enables leavers to cross into the 'unknown' civilian life with more confidence and direction. This consideration raises several, more specific, issues.

Some Specific Suggestions for Change

We have seen that polarising naval and civilian cultures is not conducive to easy transition. This may be related to the overall context of 'us and them' perspectives apparently drawn from naval discourse. Increased exposure to civilian discourses appears to facilitate resettlement into civilian life, and also to civilian occupations. Whilst some reactive psychological counselling is made available to many service leavers, more proactive familiarisation with cultural elements of civilian life and organisations is vital.

For this reason, it is suggested that resettlement advice could prove an appropriate avenue for initiating leavers to their coming situation, in terms of the more social and cultural aspects of civilian life. Alongside naval instructors, the recruitment of civilians to the provision of resettlement training would provide an added dimension to resettlement advice, by providing for more familiarity with civilian people and practices. Involvement of more ex-service personnel, who could share their experiences with those facing resettlement, could also represent a beneficial step.

In addition to preparation in terms of advice and training for civilian life, de-conditioning from the old service life may also facilitate successful transition, and this informs the second suggestion. Some form of de-socialisation, taking a form not dissimilar to that of the original naval socialisation, may

help to break down ties to particularly naval discourse and set the stage for re-socialisation into another situation.

The need for some type of symbolic 'rite of passage' is an important issue here, one which reflects the absence of leaving ceremonies for servicemen, and their resulting feelings of rejection, self doubt and apprehension. Should the Navy consider the provision of more routine leaving ceremonies, this could help leavers to come full circle, and enable them to feel that one life-stage has legitimately finished before another begins. It would also help to maintain positive self-image and confidence amongst leavers, in their own ability to make positive contributions to civilian work and family roles.

Furthermore, more involvement of wives and partners could be of benefit to their own experiences of resettlement, bringing together men and women at the start of their new life, and confirming the usefulness of both of their positions during the man's naval service. The literature reviewed in Chapters Three and Four, along with the findings of this thesis, have already demonstrated the importance of such qualities to successful transition.

It is also useful to consider the time made available for resettlement training and leaving ceremonies. It is clear that planning and preparation are crucial to smooth transition, in terms of the technical, practical and social aspects of civilian life. Most men acknowledged the great benefit of their resettlement advice, but not all had been able to accommodate it into their continuing work schedules. More available time is crucial if personnel are to successfully complete the stages of confrontation, disengagement and re-socialisation that are so necessary to successful adaptation.

The thesis therefore adds emphasis to the important contribution that has already been made by the Resettlement Office of the Royal Navy. It highlights the potential role of resettlement services in further helping servicemen to come to terms with leaving military life, and embarking on new civilian directions. The findings of this thesis may be usefully employed in informing the advice and training which currently goes some way to aiding the transition of service leavers to civilian life.

Suggestions for Further Research

As well as prompting debate regarding policy, the thesis also raises issues for further research. Most importantly, the experiences of female service personnel have not been examined in this thesis, due to the limitations on the scope of the work outlined in Chapter Five. Service personnel are not only male, and the increasing integration of women into the Navy[108] offers an area ripe for study. It is suggested here that comparative study of the experiences of servicemen and servicewomen could yield fruitful results, not least in terms of further understanding the complex interplay of gender and work/family interfaces, in relation to both male and female naval careers.

The employment of notions of discourse has implications for other related research. It makes possible the detailed examination of differences between different groups in similar situations, for example, between different services or between services from different nations. This is particularly relevant in an era witnessing more international military co-operation, and increasing co-working arrangements[109]. On viewing the results of this enquiry, the relevance of comparative study with Army personnel becomes clear. Once again, using a discourse perspective may reveal differences and similarities between naval and army careers that could offer further insight into the identity producing processes of individuals belonging to different organisational cultures.

For example, if socialisation into the Army is as extensive as that of the Navy (as could be expected from the literature), then we could expect similar over-identification with occupational and organisational roles. However, with further analysis of discourse, it would be possible also to examine the effects of Army signifiers, and compare their use with those more naval signifiers, as well as the practical consequences they hold for personnel and their families.

This approach could also aid research which seeks to understand differences in terms of gender, ethnicity and sexuality, all of which have important implications for study of the military. And here is a further point. One of the suggestions arising from the thesis is the provision of more balanced representations of military organisations and their members. The approach employed in this thesis could be effectively used to examine media portrayal of military organisations and staff, the implications this has for civilian images of service life and, ultimately, for military-civilian relations.

Conclusion

More contemporary research into naval careers and naval families is both desirable and necessary. This work has addressed issues that are important not just in terms of their relevance to knowledge about individuals and careers, work/family interfaces and career change. It also makes a contribution to debates surrounding possible policy implementation, and may shed light on some of the challenges posed by the Strategic Defence Review. In a changing social and political climate, where the Armed Forces are forced to face new challenges from both state and public, focussed study can only be of benefit to an understanding of the relationships between military organisational cultures, service personnel and their families.

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[107] At the same time, it is recognised here that similar research into Army families, and the more 'tribal' demands of the regimental system, may throw up different findings.

[108] See Chandler et al. (1995).

[109109] See Jessup (1996).

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Appendices

Glossary of Terms: Ranks referred to in this thesis (with abbreviations used).

Ratings:

Ordinary Seaman (junior rate)

Able Seaman

Junior Officers:

Petty Officer (PO)

Chief Petty Officer (CPO)

Commissioned Officers:

Lieutenant

Lieutenant Commander (Lt Cdr)

Commander (Cdr)

Analytical Framework for managing categories within NUD*IST.

Analytical Framework : Naval Careers, Men and Families

```
                            Naval Careers
                    ┌─────────────┴──────────────────────────────┐
        Impact of career on servicemen              Impact of career on families
                    │                          ┌───────────────────┴──────────────┐
                 Identity              personal relationships            family organisation
                    │              ┌──────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┐           │
              "us and them"   family friends  marital      parenting    career interplay
                 │              and kin    relationships       │               │
          ┌──────┴──────┐                      │               │               │
  collectivism and   autonomy and          wives'        father absence  household formations
  individualism      decision-making        identities          │               │
       │                  │                     │                         male absence
  relationships:      discipline           husband absence
  logic and
  equivalence
       │
  friendship networks
```

Analytical Framework : Occupational Change, Men and Families

```
                            Occupational Change
                    ┌─────────────┴──────────────────────────────┐
        Impact of change on servicemen              Impact of change on families
                    │                          expectations of change in family life
                 Identity                                       │
                    │                    ┌──────────────────────┴──────────────┐
              expectations      impact on personal relationships    impact on family organisation
                    │              ┌──────────┴──────────┐                      │
        job search/career     marital        implications            career interplay
        aspirations           relationships  for parenting
       ┌────────────┴─────────────┐     │              │                        │
  collectivism to      making decisions   adapting to    permanent    redefining household
  individualism        in new situations  permanent      parenting    formations
       │                  │               residence          │                  │
  relationships:      changing         adaptation to   adapting to    adaptation to home life
  difference to       discipline       marital         relationships
  equivalence            │             relationships   with children
       │             civilianisation issues
  changes in              │
  friendship networks
       │                adaptation
   adaptation
```

Interview schedule one

Setting the Scene

1. Home Issues

In what ways has Service life influenced your home life?

Do you discuss household decisions and responsibilities with your spouse/partner?

In terms of household roles, who does the following tasks when you are

at home?

Allocation of money

Maintenance and upkeep of house

Paying bills

Shopping

Cooking

Washing up

Cleaning

Washing

Ironing

Why are your household responsibilities organised in this way?

What impact does your career have on household responsibilities?

What impact does your spouse's/partner's career have on household responsibility?

How has your home life been affected by your leaving the Service?

2. Housing/Locality

What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Did Service life involve your having to move homes more than you might have wanted to?

Have you discussed moving home with your spouse/partner?

Are you planning to move home following your leaving?
Are you planning to move out of your current location?
(If applicable) How do you feel about this?
(If applicable) How does your spouse/partner feel about this?

How important is staying in the locality to you and your family?

Would you consider moving for the 'right job'?

3. Children (where applicable)

In terms of parent roles, who is responsible for what, relating to your children?

Decisions regarding education
Decisions regarding play/leisure activities
Decisions regarding money spent on children
Taking children to school
Attending school activities (parents' evenings, sports-days, concerts etc.).
Taking children to doctors/dentists
Taking children to extracurricular leisure activities
Playing with children
Washing and ironing children's clothes
Washing/dressing children

Has your Service career had any impact on your role as a parent?

How has any absence in Service affected parental roles?

How has your role as a parent been affected by leaving the service?

4. Community/Kinship/Friendship Networks

How often do you go out with your spouse/partner?

Where do you go when you go out together?

How often do you see friends?

Are these friends mostly mutual friends of yourself and your spouse/partner, or are they personal friends?

How often do you go out separately?

Who do you go out with on these occasions?

Where do you go?

How often do you see family members?

Is this usually on your own or with your spouse/partner?

Where do you usually go to see family members?

5. Careers - plans and expectations.

What were your reasons for leaving the service?

Did you discuss this matter with your spouse/partner?

Do you usually discuss your career decisions with your spouse/partner?

Do you see both your careers as equally important, or is your Service career central?

Do you view the Service as a job, or more of a 'way of life'?

In what ways has your career been affected by family responsibilities?

How has family life been affected by your career?

How has your spouse's/partner's career been affected by your own?

How has your career been affected by your spouse's/partner's career?

Do you discuss these matters together?

Has your partner ever had to adapt her career in order to fit in with your own?

What were your career aspirations before you joined the Service?

How did these aspirations develop or change during your time in service?

What do you now want from a career, after leaving the service?

What type of career or job are you looking for?

What are your reasons for this?

How do you think this will differ from your career in the Service?

What methods of job search have you tried so far?

What other job search methods are you planning to use?

6. Community/Kinship/Friendship Networks

Does socialising play an important role in both your lives?

In general, whom do you socialise with (friends, family, service community etc)?

Are many of your close friends in the service?

Do you generally share the same friends?

How were these relationships affected by Service life?

Do you think that redundancy from the service will have an impact on these relationships?

Interview Schedule Two

1. Aspirations/Identity

What were your reasons for leaving the Navy?
How did you feel about leaving?

Can you describe your experience of leaving.
(quietly, marked etc.)

How did you feel towards the Navy when you left?

Was your decision to leave a relatively sudden one, or had you been considering it for some while?

Did you have time to get used to the idea before you actually finished service?

After leaving, did you feel any ongoing attachment to the military?

Did you suffer any sense of loss?
Or gain?

2. Civilianisation/Transition

How much was being a military man/wife part of your personal identity before leaving?

How do you think that your leaving has affected your sense of identity? How do you feel about this?
Do you think that your image/attitude toward each other has changed now that you are both civilians?

Do you see resettlement as purely a change of job or a significant change in lifestyle?

How do you feel about 'civilianisation'?
In what ways do you think civilian life differs to service life?
Which do you think you prefer?

Do you believe that there is a difference between military and civilian attitudes and values?

Which do you identify with the most?

How do you think this will affect your transition to civilian life?

How determined are you to adapt to civilian life?

What are your hopes and fears?

3. Re-employment

Do you have any prior experience of civilian employment?

How do you think civilian employment differs to service employment?
How do you feel about this?

Do you feel confident and capable of making the transition to civilian employment?

Do you expect it to be ultimately more or less rewarding?
What are your reasons?

When did you begin to seriously think about re-employment?

Did you leave the Navy having an underlying sense of purpose and
direction, or were your ideas more vague?
Are you looking for a second career or 'just a job'?

What affected this decision?
Is employment your main priority, or are other considerations more important to you? (Family,
housing, locality etc.)

What type of employment are you hoping to secure?

Are you looking for work similar to, or different from, your service career?
What are your reasons for this?

How much time did you spend thinking about the most suitable work?

How prepared were you to learn new skills, approaches to work etc?

How optimistic do you feel about civilian re-employment?

4. Home Issues

How has 'civilianisation' affected your home life so far?

Do you believe that you new employment will have as large an impact on your home life as your service career had?

In what ways has your home life changed since your leaving the Navy?

Has leaving involved you re-assessing you personal and family values at all?

(If yes) In what ways?

What are your priorities in terms of home life and household?

Have these changed from when you were in the Service?

Did the whole family have time to get used to the idea of your leaving before you actually left?

Has anyone's behaviour changed since your leaving?

Has leaving affected household responsibilities?

Have you had to re-define household roles?

How easy have you found it to adapt to any changes in home life?

Have you been able to do things that your service career restricted you from doing in the past?

Do you think that your home life has improved (or otherwise) since your leaving?

5. Housing

Will your leaving have any impact on your current housing situation?

6. Children/Parental Roles

Has leaving meant that you have re-assessed your values toward children and parenting?

What impact do you think it will have on your role as a parent?

Will child care responsibilities change in any way?
Had you discussed these considerations together (or with the children) prior to your leaving?

How do you feel about any changes?

How have your children reacted to your leaving?

Has their behaviour changed in any way?
How do you think the children feel about the change in circumstance?

7. Kinship/Friendship Networks

How did friends/family react to your leaving the Service?

Had you discussed leaving with them beforehand?
Did you find it easy to tell people of your decision?

Has leaving had any effect on any of your relationships with friends or relatives?

Has their attitude toward you changed in any way?
Has your attitude toward them changed?

Have you found friends and relatives helpful and supportive?

Do you feel any sense of loss of friendship or support from the wider military community?

Or have you felt more support?
Do you believe that you will retain any friendships that you may have with service personnel/families?

Has your social life changed in any way?

Do you expect that it will change following civilianisation?

Interview Schedule Three

1. Civilianisation/Adaption

How do you feel about naval life now that you have been detached for some time?

Do you feel any ongoing sense of attachment to the Navy?

Do you ever still think of the Navy? Please elaborate.

Can you tell me about your adaption to civilian life?

Was it easy, or difficult? In what ways?

Would you say that you have comfortably adapted now? What do you think are the reasons?

What, if anything, helped you adapt? Or hindered you?

Do you think that civilian life is very much different to life as a serviceman?

(If so) in what ways?

Do you have a preference for either style of life? Please tell me your reasons.

2. Identity

Do you think that you personally have changed in any way since leaving?

(If so) in what ways, and why?

Was personal change deliberate on your part, or a natural development?

How has being a civilian for some while affected your sense of identity?

How do you feel about this?

Have your attitudes towards each other changed as a result?

Do you now think that there are any differences between military and civilian attitudes and values?

Which do you identify with most?

3. Re-employment

Have you been employed since leaving the Navy? Please give me some details.

How long after you left did you secure employment?

What extent of retraining was required?

Have you found civilian employment to be any different to service employment?

(If so) in what ways?

What was your transition to civilian employment relatively smooth or did you encounter àny problems on the Way?

Have you found civilian employment to be ultimately more or less rewarding than service employment?

4. Home Issues

How has being a civilian affected your home life?

Does your new employment have as much impact on home life as your naval career?

In what ways has home life changed during your time as a civilian?

Since leaving have you found yourself re-assessing your personal and family values at all?

(If yes) in what ways?

What are your priorities in terms of home life and household?

In terms of family, has anyone's attitude or behaviour towards you changed since your leaving?

Have your household responsibilities changed since leaving?

Have they settled into any routine pattern?

Do you think that home life has improved (or otherwise) during your time as a civilian?

5. Children/Parenting Roles

During your time as a civilian, have you re-assessed your values toward children and parenting?

How do you see your role as a parent at this present time?

How do you feel about any changes that may have taken place?

Do your children act any differently towards you, as a civilian?

(If so) in what ways?

6. Kinship/Friendship Networks

Have your relationships with friends or relatives changed in any way since you became a civilian?

(If so) in what ways? Why do you think this is?

Have the attitudes of friends and family towards you changed at all? Has your attitude

towards them changed?

Have you retained friendships with other service personnel/families? Has your social life

changed in any way? (If so) how?

My sincere thanks for all your kind co-operation with my research. Should you wish to receive a short report on the findings of the study, I would be grateful to provide one when the thesis is completed.

This questionnaire has been designed both for personnel who are planning to leave the Navy, and for those who have already left.
Please tick the appropriate boxes, or write in the spaces provided.

You will notice that I have not asked for your name. Please be assured that details given will remain anonymous and answers will not be traceable to respondents.

Section One.

Please tell me about yourself.

1. **Have you left the Navy, or are you planning to leave?**

    Left the Navy ☐

    Planning to leave ☐

2. **What is your rank/what was your rank before leaving the Navy?**

    ....

3. **What is your age/what was your age on your date of leaving?**

    Under 25 ☐
    25 – 35 ☐
    36 – 45 ☐
    46 – 55 ☐
    55 and over ☐

4. **Are you ...**

    Married/living with a partner ☐

    Single ☐

    Separated/divorced ☐

5. **Do you have any dependant children?**

    Yes ☐

    No *(please go to Q 8)* ☐

6. **How many dependant children do you have?**

    ....

7. **Please indicate the ages of your children.**

0 –5 years	☐
6 – 10 years	☐
11 – 16 years	☐

8. **Are you ...**

Male	☐
Female	☐

Section two.

Now I would like to ask you a few questions about your experience of leaving the Royal navy.

9. **What is/was your leaving date?**

....

10. **What was/will be your length of service at date of leaving?**

....

11. **What are/were your reasons for leaving the service?**

....

12. **How do/did you feel about leaving?**

Pleased to leave	☐
Sorry to leave	☐
None of these*	☐

*Please specify ....

....

13. **Was your decision to leave ...**

Relatively sudden	☐
Planned ahead of leaving	☐

14. Was your leaving/will your leaving be marked by any formal ceremony?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

*Please specify ....

....

15. Do you view resettlement as ...

Just a change of job ☐

A major change in the direction of your life ☐

16. Have you noticed any difference between military and civilian attitudes and /or values?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

*Please specify ....

....

17. Have you had to re-think/do you think you will have to re-think any of your values or attitudes after leaving?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

*Please specify ....

....

18. How well do you think you have/will adapt to civilian life?

Well ☐

Not well ☐

Don't know ☐

Section three.

I would now like to ask you for a few details about your household. If you are not married/living with a partner, please go to section five.

19. In what ways has service life affected your home life?

....

....

....

20. Does/did your spouse/partner feel much involvement with the service?

Yes*   ☐

No   ☐

*Please specify ....

....

21. Has your spouse's/partner's reaction to your leaving the service been ...

Pleased you're leaving/have left   ☐

Sorry you're leaving/have left   ☐

None of these*   ☐

*Please specify ....

....

22. Did you discuss leaving with your spouse/partner before making your final decision?

Yes   ☐

No   ☐

23. Do you and your spouse/partner discuss household decisions and responsibilities together?

All of the time   ☐

Most of the time   ☐

Some of the time   ☐

Rarely ☐

Never ☐

24. If you are currently still serving in the Navy, who does the following tasks when you are at home?

Allocation of money ☐

Maintenance and upkeep of house ☐

Paying bills ☐

Shopping ☐

Cooking ☐

Cleaning ☐

Ironing ☐

25. Do you think these household roles will change after you leave the Navy?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

*In what way ....

....

26. If you have left the Navy, who used to do the following tasks when you were at home?

Allocation of money ....

Maintenance and upkeep of house ....

Paying bills ....

Shopping ....

Cooking ....

Cleaning ....

Ironing ....

27. Did these household roles change at all after you left the service?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

*In what way ....

....

28. Has your spouse/partner been employed while you were in the service?

Yes ☐

No *(please go to Q 30)* ☐

29. Was/is this employment ...

Full-time ☐

Part-time ☐

Other* ☐

*Please specify ....

....

30. What effects (if any)did/does your service career have on your spouse's/partner's career?

Please specify ....

....

31. If you have already left the Navy, what effects (if any) has your leaving the service had on your spouse's/partner's career?

Please specify ....

....

32. During your time in the Navy, have you seen your careers as being ...

Equally important ☐

Mine was more important ☐

My spouse's/partner's was more important ☐

33. Has this changed since you left/when you leave the Navy?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

*In what way ....

....

34. Whilst in the service, have you been away ∴

More than you would have liked ☐

As much as you would have liked ☐

Less than you would have liked ☐

35. What effects (if any) has absence had on your home life?

Please specify ....

....

36. How have you/do you think you will both adapt to you being at home more?

Please specify ....

....

37. If you have already left the service, do you think that your home life, since leaving, has ...

Improved ☐

Become difficult* ☐

Neither ☐

*Please specify ....

....

Section Four.

I should now like to ask you about your role as a parent. If you have not had any dependant children, please go to Section Five.

38. During your career in the service, who is/was responsible for the following decisions?

Decisions regarding education ☐

Decisions regarding money for children ☐

Decisions regarding play/leisure activities ☐

39. During your career in the service, who is/was responsible for the following tasks when you were at home?

Taking children to school ☐

Attending school activities ☐

Taking children to doctor/dentist ☐

Playing with children ☐

40. Do you think these parental roles will change/have changed since your leaving?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

*In what way ....

....

41. What effect does/has your service career had on your role as a parent?

*Please specify ....

....

42. How did your children respond to hearing that you were going to leave the Navy?

*Please specify ....

....

43. Has it been easy/do you think it will be easy for your children to adapt to you being at home more?

Yes ☐

No* ☐

*Please specify ....

....

Section Five.

Now I would like to ask you about your friends and family.

44. Whilst you were in the service, were most of your friends ...

Other service personnel and their families ☐

Civilians ☐

A combination of both ☐

Other ☐

45. Has this changed/do you think this will change in any way after your leaving?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

*In what way ....

....

46. How did your friends and wider family react on hearing that you had decided to leave the Navy?

*In what way ....

....

47. Has/or do you expect your social life to change after leaving?

Yes* ☐

No ☐

*In what way ....

....

Section Six.

Finally, I would like to ask about your experience and your intentions for re-employment after leaving the Navy.

48. Did you have any prior experience of civilian employment?

Yes* ☐

No ☐ ·

*Please specify ....

....

49. If you are planning to leave, have you been thinking about civilian employment?

For some time before you are due to leave ☐

Just before you are due to leave ☐

Haven't thought about it yet ☐

Please go to Q 51.

50. If you have already left, when did you begin to think about civilian employment?

For some time before you were due to leave ☐

Just before you were due to leave ☐

After leaving ☐

51. Are you/were you looking for ...

A second career ☐

'Just a job' ☐

other* ☐

*Please specify ....

....

52. Are you/were you looking for work ...

Similar to your service employment ☐

Different to your service employment ☐

Either/both ☐

53. Do you think you did/have done a lot of planning for civilian employment?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Don't know ☐

54. Do you/did you feel confident and capable of making the transition form service to civilian employment?

Yes ☐

No* ☐

*Please specify ....

....

55. In general, how do you/did you feel about resettlement and becoming a civilian?

*Please specify ....

....

....

If you would like to offer any comments or suggestions regarding this questionnaire or the research in general, please use the space provided below.

....

....

....

....

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.