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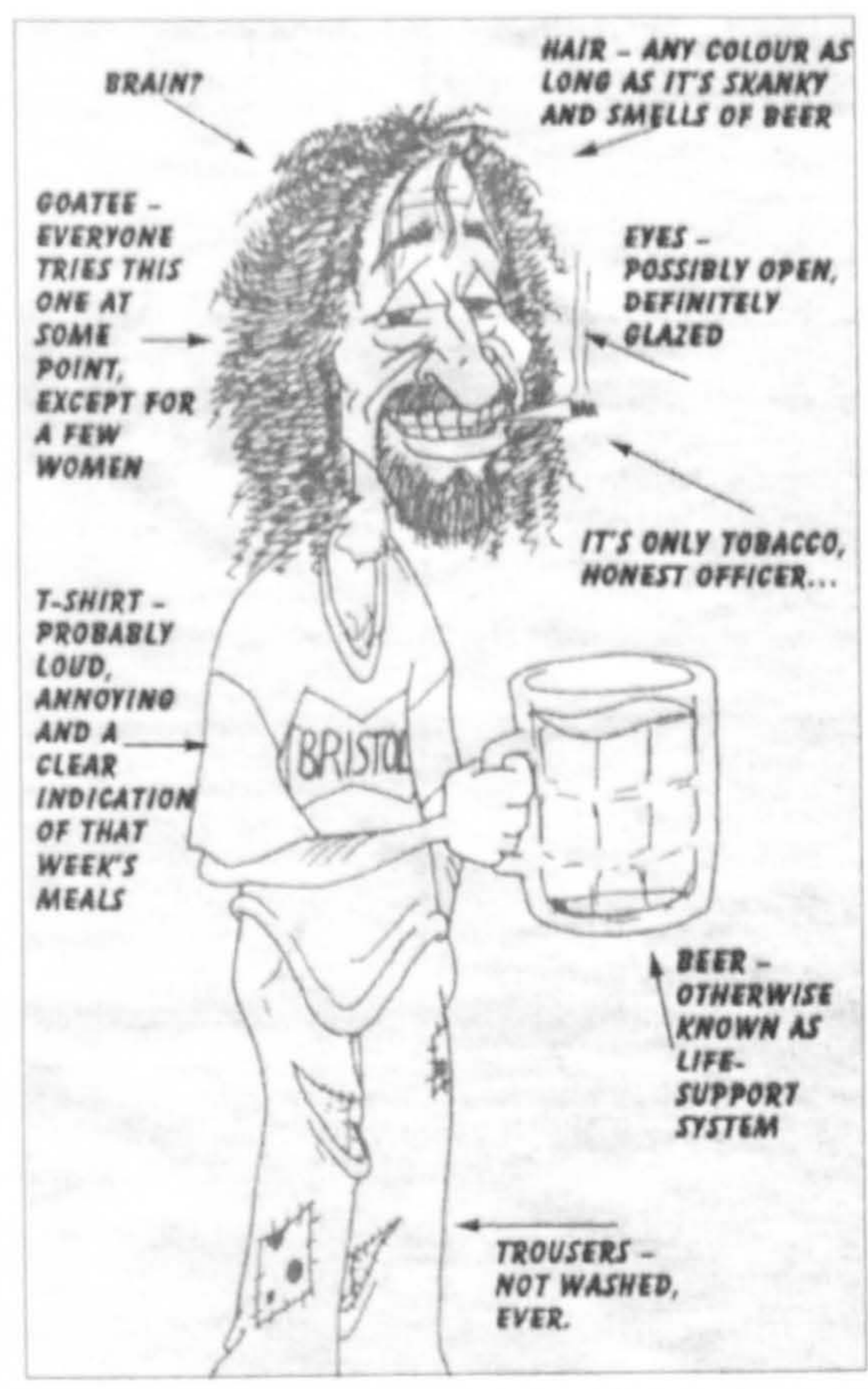
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# THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY: AN EXPLORATION OF THE CULTURAL IMPACTS OF UNIVERSITIES AND STUDENTS ON THE COMMUNITY



## Paul Chatterton

A thesis submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Ph.D. in the Faculty of Social Science, Department of Geography.

January 1998



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Finally, thanks to all the Bristol students and their rambunctious behaviour, without which this thesis would not have been quite as interesting. I dedicate this thesis to all those groups of young adults, currently excluded from British higher education, who may gain access to the privilege of experiencing student life in the future.

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The dissertation has not been presented to any other university for examination either in the United Kingdom or overseas.

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# CONCISE TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <i>Introduction</i> | 1 |
|---------------------|---|

## **PART ONE - THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY**

---

### **CHAPTER 1**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <i>The University and the Community</i> | 12 |
|---|----|

### **CHAPTER 2**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <i>Higher Education and Culture In Bristol</i> | 50 |
|--|----|

### **CHAPTER 3**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <i>The Cultural Impacts of the two Universities In Bristol</i> | 74 |
|--|----|

## **PART TWO - STUDENT LIFESTYLES**

---

### **CHAPTER 4**

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| <i>Situating Students</i> | 116 |
|---------------------------|-----|

### **CHAPTER 5**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <i>Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Lifestyle</i> | 151 |
|---|-----|

### **CHAPTER 6**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <i>The Cultural Impacts of Students on the Community</i> | 202 |
|--|-----|

## **PART THREE - CASE STUDY AND CONCLUSIONS**

---

### **CHAPTER 7**

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| <i>Lessons from the USA</i> | 296 |
|-----------------------------|-----|

### **CHAPTER 8**

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| <i>Conclusions</i> | 354 |
|--------------------|-----|

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>  | <b>1</b>  |
| Situating the Project  | 1         |
| Structure of the Thesis  | 2         |
| Part One: The University and the Community                             | 2         |
| Part Two: Students and Lifestyle                                       | 5         |
| Part Three: Case Study and Policy Implications                         | 9         |
| <br>   |           |
| <b>PART ONE - THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY</b>                     |           |
| <hr/>  |           |
| <b>1. THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY</b>                             | <b>12</b> |
| Introduction   | 12        |
| The Changing University?   | 13        |
| The Idea of the University   | 13        |
| Ideas of the University  | 15        |
| Universities and Communities - Communities and Universities            | 18        |
| The On-going Debate  | 19        |
| Boundary Drawing: The 'University' and the 'Community'                 | 21        |
| The Changing Boundary Between the University and the Community         | 23        |
| Future Directions  | 29        |
| <b>(1) THE IDEA OF THE UNIVERSITY</b>                                  | <b>29</b> |
| The University in Ruins?   | 30        |
| The Postmodern University?   | 32        |
| The Survival of the University: the importance of place                | 34        |
| <b>(2) THE UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP</b>                       | <b>36</b> |
| The Mission Statement  | 36        |
| The Local, the Regional, the National, the Global...                   | 37        |
| Conceptualising the Impact of the University on the Community          | 40        |
| The Economic Impact of Universities                                    | 40        |
| The Learning University and the Learning Society                       | 44        |
| (Re)Conceptualising the Impact of the University: The place of culture | 49        |
| <b>2. HIGHER EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN BRISTOL</b>                      | <b>50</b> |
| Introduction   | 50        |
| Bristol: Place and Culture   | 51        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| The City of Bristol   | 51        |
| The Bristol Cultural Strategy   | 52        |
| The Cultural Infrastructure in Bristol  | 55        |
| Higher Education in Bristol   | 59        |
| The University of Bristol (UB)  | 65        |
| The University of the West of England (UWE)   | 67        |
| The Two Universities and Bristol's Cultural Infrastructure and Strategy                         | 71        |
| <b>3. THE CULTURAL IMPACTS OF THE UNIVERSITIES IN BRISTOL</b>                                   | <b>74</b> |
| Introduction  | 74        |
| The Cultural Role of Universities   | 75        |
| Keepers of the Canon  | 75        |
| The Cultural Re-Orientation of the Mass University  | 77        |
| Students' Unions and the Popular Cultural Infrastructure  | 80        |
| UB Students' Union (UBSU)   | 81        |
| UWE Students' Union (UWESU)   | 85        |
| University-Based Facilities and the 'Official' Cultural Infrastructure                          | 91        |
| The Department of Music and The Victoria Rooms, UB  | 91        |
| The Department of Drama: Theatre, Film and Television and The Glynne Wickham Studio Theatre, UB | 94        |
| The Centre for Performing Arts, The Octagon, UWE-Frenchay                                       | 96        |
| Universities as a Resource in the Cultural Infrastructure                                       | 99        |
| Universities and the Development of the Cultural Industries                                     | 100       |
| The Art Community and Community Art   | 104       |
| Integrating the Creative Community  | 107       |
| Universities and Cultural Management  | 110       |
| Conclusions   | 112       |

## **PART TWO - STUDENT LIFESTYLES**

---

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>4. SITUATING STUDENTS</b>   | <b>116</b> |
| Introduction   | 116        |
| The Tradition of Researching Students                                | 117        |
| The Student Experience: (1) The Educational-Formal Lives of Students | 119        |
| The Student Experience: (2) The Cultural-Informal Lives of Students  | 121        |
| Analysing Student Life   | 123        |
| A Reflexive Approach   | 125        |
| Researching the Familiar   | 127        |



|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Analysing a Population in Transition                       | 128        |
| <b>Understanding Images of Student Life</b>                | <b>131</b> |
| Some comments on the contemporary images of student life   | 132        |
| <b>Students and Youth</b>                                  | <b>137</b> |
| The study of Youth: from delinquency to difference         | 137        |
| Students and the Study of Youth                            | 139        |
| Students: from adolescent to adulthood                     | 141        |
| <b>The Role of Students in City Life</b>                   | <b>145</b> |
| Perceptions of Students in the Bristol Community           | 148        |
| <b>5. THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF LIFESTYLE</b> | <b>151</b> |
| Introduction   | 151        |
| <b>The Study of Lifestyle</b>                              | <b>152</b> |
| The Concept of Lifestyle                                   | 152        |
| <b>The work of Pierre Bourdieu</b>                         | <b>157</b> |
| Bourdieu's Method of Enquiry                               | 157        |
| Field  | 159        |
| Habitus  | 160        |
| Practice   | 162        |
| Capital  | 162        |
| Symbolic Violence and The Game of Distinction              | 163        |
| Bourdieu and Lifestyle                                     | 166        |
| Lifestyle and the New Cultural Intermediaries              | 168        |
| The Construction of the Popular                            | 171        |
| <b>Bourdieu and Higher Education</b>                       | <b>175</b> |
| The Reproduction of Power                                  | 176        |
| A Student Habitus?   | 180        |
| The Transformation of the Student Habitus                  | 184        |
| <b>Postmodern Lifestyles</b>                               | <b>187</b> |
| Postmodern Critiques of Bourdieu                           | 188        |
| The Multiple Determinants of Lifestyle                     | 192        |
| Temporary Lifestyles                                       | 194        |
| Lifestyle: A Reflexive Project?                            | 195        |
| Embracing the Popular                                      | 196        |
| <b>Balancing the Frameworks</b>                            | <b>201</b> |

## **6.THE CULTURAL IMPACTS OF STUDENTS ON THE COMMUNITY 202**

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>Introduction</b>  | <b>202</b> |
| <b>Changing Student Lifestyles?</b>  | <b>204</b> |
| <b>Growth and Change Amongst Students</b>  | <b>205</b> |
| <b>The British Higher Education Sector: student identity and conflict</b>                | <b>208</b> |
| <b>Campus and Course Lifestyles</b>  | <b>211</b> |
| <b>Students: The Problem of Youth</b>  | <b>215</b> |
| <b>Students and Gender</b>   | <b>219</b> |
| <b>Students: mediating work, play and money</b>  | <b>221</b> |
| <b>Summary</b>   | <b>225</b> |
| <b>Understanding Traditional Student Lifestyles</b>                                      | <b>225</b> |
| <b>The Spaces of Traditional Student Life</b>  | <b>229</b> |
| <b>The Hall of Residence</b>   | <b>231</b> |
| <b>Private Rented Housing</b>  | <b>233</b> |
| <b>The Student House</b>   | <b>240</b> |
| <b>Conflict and Tension</b>  | <b>244</b> |
| <b>Summary</b>   | <b>246</b> |
| <b>Structuring Traditional Student Culture: The Student Entertainment Infrastructure</b> | <b>246</b> |
| <b>Learning the Rules of the Student Game</b>  | <b>247</b> |
| <b>Unlearning the Rules</b>  | <b>250</b> |
| <b>The Desire for Association</b>  | <b>252</b> |
| <b>Formal Provision Within the Student Entertainment Infrastructure</b>                  | <b>254</b> |
| <b>The Student Entertainment Infrastructure within the City</b>                          | <b>257</b> |
| <b>Summary</b>   | <b>261</b> |
| <b>Understanding Student Cultural Consumption</b>  | <b>262</b> |
| <b>The Inheritors</b>  | <b>263</b> |
| <b>Still the Inheritors?</b>   | <b>265</b> |
| <b>The Importance of Popular Culture</b>   | <b>267</b> |
| <b>Students and Drinking</b>   | <b>269</b> |
| <b>Drug Use</b>  | <b>273</b> |
| <b>The Role of the Students' Union</b>   | <b>274</b> |
| <b>Night-Clubs</b>   | <b>275</b> |
| <b>Cinema</b>  | <b>283</b> |
| <b>Theatre and Gallery Activity</b>  | <b>285</b> |
| <b>Summary</b>   | <b>291</b> |
| <b>Conclusions</b>   | <b>294</b> |

## **PART THREE - CASE STUDY AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

---

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>7. LESSONS FROM THE USA</b>  | <b>296</b> |
| Introduction  | 296        |
| <b>Land-Grant Universities in the USA: Partnership and Service</b>    | <b>299</b> |
| The land grant tradition  | 299        |
| The University of Wisconsin System and UW-Madison                     | 301        |
| <b>The Wisconsin Idea of Public Service</b>                           | <b>303</b> |
| Philanthropy, Stewardship And Partnership                             | 305        |
| Tradition and The Wisconsin Idea                                      | 307        |
| Football Saturday   | 309        |
| Educating for Citizenship: Community Service and Student Volunteerism | 310        |
| Volunteering at UW-Madison  | 312        |
| Leadership  | 316        |
| <b>The Regulation and Professionalisation of Student Life</b>         | <b>318</b> |
| The Professionalisation of Student Life                               | 319        |
| Learning the Rules of American University Life                        | 320        |
| The Second Curriculum   | 323        |
| Making Sense of the Mass University                                   | 324        |
| <b>UW-Madison and The Isthmus Community</b>                           | <b>326</b> |
| The Campus and the Isthmus  | 328        |
| The Attachment to Place   | 331        |
| UW-Madison: The Radical Haven in the Mid-West                         | 332        |
| UW-Madison and the Cultural Community                                 | 334        |
| <b>Comments On Some Student Communities Within UW-Madison</b>         | <b>338</b> |
| Student Drinking  | 339        |
| The Greek Community   | 341        |
| The Co-Operative Community  | 345        |
| The Sports Community  | 346        |
| Hanging-Out: The Home and Life Without The Pub                        | 349        |
| Conclusions   | 351        |
| <b>8. CONCLUSIONS</b>   | <b>354</b> |
| Findings  | 354        |
| Part One: Universities and the Community                              | 354        |
| Part Two: Student Lifestyles  | 358        |
| Research Omissions And Future Research                                | 361        |
| Policy Implications   | 364        |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Universities, Students and the Cultural Infrastructure | 364        |
| The Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education     | 365        |
| The Postmodern City: The Divided City                  | 367        |
| Britain's Great Teenage Transhumance                   | 369        |
| Universities, Culture and Responsibility               | 370        |
| <b>APPENDICES</b>                                      | <b>374</b> |
| Appendix A: Methodological Discussion                  | 374        |
| Appendix B: Students' Union Clubs and Societies        | 390        |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>                                    | <b>395</b> |

# LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| FIGURE 0.1: Thesis Outline   | 11  |
| FIGURE 2.1: Employment by Sector in the old Avon County  | 52  |
| FIGURE 2.2: The Location of The University Of Bristol and The University of the West Of<br>England               | 60  |
| FIGURE 2.3: The University Campuses  | 61  |
| FIGURE 2.4: The Development of Higher Education in the Bristol Area.   | 62  |
| FIGURE 2.5: Students by Mode of Entry 1994/95.   | 63  |
| FIGURE 2.6: Characteristics of UK Domiciled First Year Full-Time Undergraduates                                  | 64  |
| FIGURE 2.7: UWE's Four Main Campuses   | 68  |
| FIGURE 4.1: Universities, Students and The Community   | 118 |
| FIGURE 4.2: Images of Student Life in Britain  | 135 |
| FIGURE 4.3: Images of Student Life from The Banking Sector.  | 141 |
| FIGURE 5.1: Values, Attitudes and Actions  | 133 |
| FIGURE 6.1: The Space of Students  | 207 |
| FIGURE 6.2: The Distribution of UWE And UB Students in Private-Rented Accommodation in the<br>Bristol Postcodes. | 234 |
| FIGURE 6.3: Student Areas in Bristol   | 235 |
| FIGURE 6.4: Whiteladies Road and The Student Love Affair   | 237 |
| FIGURE 6.5: Whiteladies Road and The Fraternity House  | 238 |
| FIGURE 6.6: Student Leisure Activity at Home   | 242 |
| FIGURE 6.7: % of Students Watching TV Programmes, Bristol Students   | 243 |
| FIGURE 6.8: % of Students Watching TV Programmes, National Survey  | 243 |
| FIGURE 6.9: Learning the Rules: The Freshers Fair  | 248 |
| FIGURE 6.10: Main Venues Within the Student Entertainment Infrastructure   | 259 |
| FIGURE 6.11: Student Pathways in the City  | 260 |
| FIGURE 6.12: Student Leisure Time-Use in Bristol: Away From Home   | 268 |
| FIGURE 6.13: Night-Clubs in the Student Entertainment Infrastructure: Odyssey and Wedgies                        | 276 |
| FIGURE 6.14: A Night With the Freshers: Karanga, Odyssey, 29/9/97.   | 278 |
| FIGURE 7.1: The Students   | 298 |
| FIGURE 7.2: The Location of The State of Wisconsin and Its Capital, Madison in The USA.                          | 301 |
| FIGURE 7.3 The Isthmus Community: The State Capital, UW-Madison Campus and State Street.                         | 327 |
| FIGURE 7.4: Student Time Use Away From Home at UW-Madison  | 339 |
| FIGURE 7.5: Student Leisure Activities At Home at UW-Madison   | 350 |
| FIGURE A.1: Student Leisure Questionnaire  | 376 |
| FIGURE A.2: Time Budget Diary from Gershuny et al. (1986)  | 380 |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>TABLE 2.1: Student Numbers by Faculty, UB, All Modes, 1996/97</b>                | <b>66</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 2.2: Student Numbers By Faculty, UWE, All Modes, 1996/97.</b>              | <b>70</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 3.1: Public Projects on the 'Fine Art in Context' Course, UWE, 1996/97</b> | <b>104</b> |
| <b>TABLE 3.2: Residencies on the 'Fine Art in Context' Course, UWE, 1996/97</b>     | <b>105</b> |
| <b>TABLE 6.1: % Participating in Various Activities over Previous Three Months</b>  | <b>268</b> |
| <b>TABLE A.1: Characteristics of Survey Population</b>                              | <b>375</b> |
| <b>TABLE A.2: Characteristics of Selected Diary Participants</b>                    | <b>381</b> |
| <b>TABLE A.3: Codes used to analyse Diaries</b>                                     | <b>383</b> |
| <b>TABLE A.4: Interviews Undertaken During the Fieldwork</b>                        | <b>386</b> |

# **ACRONYMS**

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>UB</b>               | <b>The University of Bristol</b>  |
| <b>UBSU</b>             | <b>The University of Bristol Students' Union</b>                          |
| <b>UWE</b>              | <b>The University of the West of England</b>                              |
| <b>UWESU</b>            | <b>The University of the West of England Students' Union</b>              |
| <b>CPA</b>              | <b>The Centre for the Performing Arts, UWE</b>                            |
| <b>SCA</b>              | <b>Student Community Action</b>   |
| <b>UWE-Bower Ashton</b> | <b>Bower Ashton Campus, The Faculty of Art, Media and Design,<br/>UWE</b> |
| <b>UW-Madison</b>       | <b>The University of Wisconsin, Madison</b>                               |

# INTRODUCTION

## SITUATING THE PROJECT

**T**his thesis extends across several research areas which include urban and cultural geography, cultural consumption, identity and higher education and cultural policy. The impetus originally came from a report jointly undertaken by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) and Goddard et al. entitled *Universities and Communities (1994)*. This report was part of a renewed interest concerning the many impacts and roles which universities have in the community, especially in the light of the near doubling of institutions designated as universities in 1992.

In 1994, as a final year undergraduate at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, I was introduced to the report by CVCP/Goddard et al. (1994). At this time, I had strong research interests in urban and youth cultures and as a result, I became fascinated with the role of universities and students in the city. This was an intriguing topic as it was a time when universities were expanding and campuses and university facilities were bursting at the seams with students. It seemed to me that large areas of Newcastle, especially around the university, were almost exclusively geared towards residential and entertainment provision for the seasonal in-migration of thousands of middle-class adolescents. In the light of this, I formulated a research proposal based upon an examination of the cultural impacts of universities and their students on the community and their role in local cultural innovation and vitality.

However, Bristol was chosen as the context to undertake this research which, in many ways, is a city in stark economic, cultural and social contrast to Newcastle upon Tyne. In particular, Bristol is a city with a larger traditional student cohort of white, middle-/upper-class adolescents compared to other student cities in Britain such as Newcastle. In this sense, the picture of the student on the cover of this thesis which depicts many of the stereotypes associated with student life, has less in common with the average 'Bristol student' who is more characterised by wealth, youth and fashion.



During the completion of this thesis, the university-community debate gained momentum and changed tenor. The whole university-community equation was challenged by, for example, those from Continuing Education who reversed the equation into 'communities and their universities' (Elliott et al., 1996). Several conferences, which I attended, took the university-community debate forward including *Cities of Learning?* (Lancaster University, 1995) and *The University and the City* (Universiteit von Amsterdam, 1996). Further, as the new Labour government took power, the Dearing Commission published its findings and the rhetoric of lifelong learning and tuition fees made their way into the higher education agenda. This thesis, then, was undertaken at a time of lively and provocative debate for higher education and the subject matter was, and is, an area of contestation between various groups.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

The aim of this thesis is to explore the cultural role and impacts of universities and their students on the community and their contribution to local cultural innovation and vitality. To develop this aim, this thesis is structured into three main parts which, although inter-linked, can be read independently from each other (Figure 0.1, page 11):

### **Part One: The University and the Community**

The first part of this thesis explores the cultural role and impacts of universities on the community at a formal level. It addresses the following questions:

- How has the 'idea' of the university and the relationship between the university and the community changed? (*Chapter 1*)
- What are the future directions for the idea of the university and its relationship with the community? (*Chapter 1*)
- In what ways have the impacts of the university on the community been conceptualised? (*Chapter 1*)
- How can we incorporate the cultural 'idea' of the university and its cultural impacts on the community into these conceptualisations? (*Chapters 1 and 3*)
- How do the particular characteristics of each community and university affect the cultural impacts of universities on the community? (*Chapter 2*)
- In what ways are universities and their students incorporated into, and recognised by, the cultural strategy which has developed in Bristol? (*Chapter 2*)

- How has the 'cultural' idea of the university and the 'cultural' relationship between the university and the community changed? (*Chapter 3*)
- What are the cultural impacts and roles of the two universities in Bristol? (*Chapter 3*)
- Focusing upon areas of direct cultural activity at the two universities such as Music, Drama, Fine Art, Media, Design and Animation, what is their contribution to local cultural innovation and vitality? (*Chapter 3*)

Chapter One explores the changing relationship between the university and the community through a number of themes. Firstly, I discuss how the idea of the university changed because of the growth of the British university sector and the incorporation of many 'new' universities. Secondly, I explore the boundary between the university and the community and how this has been altered by the qualitative and quantitative growth of higher education in Britain.

I then look at some future directions for the university and the community. In terms of the university, there are those who have commented that the university is in ruins (Readings, 1996). There are also those who celebrate the diversity of the postmodern fragmented university (Bauman, 1997). However, the survival of the university rests upon its endurance as a special place. In terms of the university's relationship with the community there are a number of challenges which focus upon defining the geographical scope of the community and balancing different spatial scales. Space and place are issues at the forefront of the university agenda in light of the requirement of universities to produce mission statements and the emergence of local, regional, national and international consortia of universities.

The final theme in Chapter One discusses the ways in which the impacts of the university on the community have been conceptualised and argues that previous conceptualisations have focused upon the economic and educational impacts of universities and have undervalued cultural impacts and roles.

Chapter Two presents a brief overview of 'culture' and higher education in Bristol. Firstly, I examine the development of a cultural strategy in the city and argue that it is based upon a rather formulaic cultural vision of partnership, place promotion (mainly through flagship developments) and the idea of the creative city. I then discuss the cultural infrastructure in the city and suggest that it has particular strengths in areas such as media and broadcasting and the performing arts, especially with the development of

the Harbourside area. However, an area within the city's cultural infrastructure which is often overlooked is popular cultural activity and in particular the strength of the music and night-club scene, much of which has been responsible for the cultural renaissance of the city.

Secondly, a brief overview of the two higher education institutions in the city is presented; The University of Bristol (UB) and The University of the West of England (UWE) which, in combination, employ 7 000 staff and are homes to 34 000 students. I argue that the particularities of their institutional atmospheres, histories and the characteristics of the student populations are fundamental to grasping the nature of the cultural impacts which these two universities have on the community. I conclude this chapter by discussing the two universities in relation to the cultural strategy in the city and argue that within it there is a recognition of the contributions which the two universities make towards cultural innovation and vitality in the community, but there is no detailed analysis of their many cultural impacts on the community.

Chapter Three draws upon the results of the empirical analysis which explored the cultural roles and impacts of the two universities in Bristol. This chapter begins by discussing the cultural role of the university and it is argued that this role is shifting from universities as 'the keepers of the canon' to a much broader cultural role within the era of the mass university. I then discuss a number of themes through which the cultural impacts of the two universities in Bristol can be understood.

The first of these themes concerns the role of universities, and in particular students' unions, in the development of the 'popular' cultural infrastructure in the city. I argue that entertainment provision by students' unions is being expanded and professionalised to capture the growing lucrative student entertainment market. Such provision mainly offers student-only leisure spaces to ensure student safety.

The second theme discusses the role of university-based facilities within the 'official' cultural infrastructure in the city. Within this infrastructure, the differences between 'old' universities and their paternalistic and more traditional cultural role and the 'new' universities which lack such established cultural conventions are stressed. However, divides such as those between high and popular culture are being eroded and there is a dynamic which is encouraging many universities to invest in new, less traditional areas

of culture, such as multi-media, digital media and recording facilities in an effort to maintain their leading cultural role in the community.

Finally, I explore the ways in which universities act as a resource within the cultural infrastructure of the city. This is evident through contributions to the development of certain cultural sectors such as media and animation, involvement in the art community and community art, integrating the creative community through personnel-based exchanges, graduate retention and the patronising of certain cultural venues in the city as well as, finally, contributing to the cultural management of the city.

In sum, Part One highlights the manifold cultural impacts and roles which universities have on the community. This is an apt conclusion in the light of the diversity of institutions which are now designated as 'universities'. However, what is required is the development of more systematic and thorough ways of monitoring the cultural interface between the university and the community in order to foster greater levels of mutual understanding.

## **Part Two: Students and Lifestyle**

Part Two of the thesis explores the impacts of student lifestyles on the community. The main focus is upon the lifestyles of a cohort of 'traditional' students who are defined as largely white, middle-/upper-class, post A-Level adolescents. The following questions are addressed:

- How has the tradition of researching students developed and why has previous research focused upon the educational-formal rather than informal-cultural lives of students? (*Chapter 4*)
- What methodological issues are raised in terms of researching student lifestyles, especially, in this case, in relation to the lack of 'analytical distance' between the researcher and the object of the research? (*Chapter 4*)
- Qualitative and quantitative transformations within the British university sector have created lifestyle differences between 'traditional' (white, middle-class, adolescent students) and 'non-traditional' (those from previously under-represented groups or studying on different modes of attendance) student lifestyles. (*Chapter 4*) How do these lifestyle differences affect the cultural impacts of students on the community? (*Chapter 6*)

- In the light of these lifestyle differences, how are images of students constructed? (*Chapter 4 and 6*)
- How can the study of youth aid our understanding of students? What are the definitional tensions between 'adolescent' and 'adult' within student life, especially in the context of post-*in loco parentis* structures? (*Chapter 4 and 6*)
- What is the role and perception of students in the city? (*Chapter 4*) How are students perceived in the Bristol community? (*Chapters 4 and 6*)
- What theoretical frameworks are useful in terms of understanding traditional student lifestyles? Are they better explained by the work of Pierre Bourdieu and concepts such as habitus, field and the logic of cultural and social reproduction or by postmodern theory which emphasises the importance of the individual, pleasure-seeking and temporary forms of sociality? (*Chapters 5 and 6*)
- To what extent is there a spatial regulation, structuring and segregation of traditional student lifestyles which generate common ways of being a student? (*Chapter 6*)
- What are the consequences of the spatial regulation and segregation of student residential environments? (*Chapter 6*)
- To what extent is entertainment provision for traditional students segregated and regulated in the city through a student-only entertainment infrastructure? (*Chapter 6*)
- Is cultural consumption by traditional students better explained by concepts of cultural inheritance and reproduction or those concerned with popular culture? (*Chapters 5 and 6*)
- What is the role of traditional students in terms of cultural innovation and vitality in areas of cultural activity such as the city's pub and night-club scene, cinema and the visual and performing arts? (*Chapters 3 and 6*)
- What are the privileged sites of consumption within these activity areas? (*Chapter 6*)

Chapter Four attempts to situate an analysis of student lifestyles by exploring several themes. I begin by reviewing previous research into student life and argue that such research has focused upon the educational-formal rather than cultural-informal lives of students. Secondly, I discuss some methodological issues in relation to analysing student life such as problems of reflexivity and field-roles. Further, there is the issue of studying a

population in transition which is based around a lifestyle contrast between 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' students.

The third theme explores the ways in which images of students are generated and circulated drawing upon specific examples which range from students as a 'privileged elite' to students as 'consumers'. Next, the issue of students as youth is discussed and, in particular, the tension between the concepts of adolescent and adult within the construction of the student identities. Finally, I address the role of students in city life and the context of Bristol in which, to a greater extent than many other student cities, images of students are largely determined by a cohort of traditional students.

Chapter Five presents two frameworks for understanding the concept of lifestyle. The first framework involves Pierre Bourdieu's sociology of culture and his method of enquiry based upon the conceptual triad of habitus, field and capital. Bourdieu's work suggests that lifestyle is located within strategies of capital accumulation and distinction which are played out within the structures of the habitus and the field. I also explore the work of Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) in relation to higher education which interprets universities as institutions of cultural reproduction and students as 'inheritors' within such institutions.

The second framework draws upon postmodern theories and is used to critique the work of Bourdieu. Within this framework, there are those who regard lifestyle as more temporary and affectual forms of social relations (Hetherington, 1992, 1996; Maffesoli, 1996) and as a more eclectic patterning of consumption choices (Savage et al., 1992). In this sense, lifestyle is understood as a reflexive project and a resource in everyday life. Further, drawing upon those who represent 'cultural populism' (Willis, 1990, Fiske, 1989), this framework stresses the central role of popular culture within the formation of lifestyle and identity, especially amongst younger age cohorts. Each of these frameworks has relevance in terms of illuminating the process of lifestyle formation. However, Chapter 6 explores which one has more relevance in relation to traditional student life.

Chapter Six draws upon the above theoretical frameworks to investigate student lifestyles in Bristol and is structured around a number of themes. Firstly, in the light of the recent growth and unification of universities, I explore the lifestyle differences which exist between a traditional cohort of largely white, middle-/upper-class, adolescent

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students and a non-traditional cohort of 'new' students (Silver and Silver, 1997). In particular, I examine these lifestyle differences along contours such as institutional, campus and course cultures, gender and age and increasing work and financial pressures. However, the focus of the rest of this chapter is on the lifestyles of the traditional students because of the way in which they largely determine how the image of a 'Bristol student' is constructed. I explore a number of themes in relation to this group.

The first theme discusses the concept of traditional student lifestyles based around the two theoretical frameworks in Chapter 5. The fieldwork revealed that a Bourdieuan framework retains a higher degree of relevance in relation to understanding traditional student lifestyles because of the way in which such lifestyles are highly mediated by previous social and educational experiences and exist within the framework of the university and other highly regulated and segregated spaces in certain areas of the city. Such spaces foster common sets of dispositions and 'ways of being' a student which can be understood as a form of habitus. Further, an enactment and stylisation of a temporary and hedonistic 'student' lifestyle is an experience which is only open to a certain group in society and is only afforded by the regulated field of the university and its associated spaces. Such comments are particularly relevant to Bristol which has a large and highly segregated traditional student population.

Next, I argue that the entertainment and residential spaces of traditional student life represent regulated and segregated environments. In particular, student leisure-time is structured through an entertainment infrastructure which is comprised of pathways of student-only/-oriented venues. This infrastructure is mediated by a learning process and a desire for association with other students and creates distinctive time-space 'pathways' within the city (Figure 6.11). Such spaces, which are dedicated to the residential and entertainment needs of traditional students can be regarded as a 'geography of exclusion' or, considering the social composition of such groups, an 'exclusive geography' (Sibley, 1995).

Finally, the last section explores the nature of cultural consumption amongst this traditional student cohort and their role in cultural innovation and vitality in the community. Cultural consumption by traditional students represents greater levels of activity throughout a greater number of venues compared to many other groups in the city and they make their greatest cultural impacts within areas of popular culture such as

night-clubbing and visiting the pub. In this sense, consumption patterns by this cohort are better explained by theories which valorise popular cultural forms (McRobbie, 1994, Thornton, 1995) rather than those which focus upon social and cultural reproduction (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979).

### **Part Three: Case Study and Policy Implications**

Chapter Seven presents a case-study undertaken at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison) in the USA. Rather than acting as a comparative study, this case-study was used to illustrate a number of trends which are emerging within British student life as many British universities become institutions of mass higher education. Firstly, UW-Madison was established within the Land-Grant university tradition and the Wisconsin Idea which is rooted in public service to the state and the leitmotifs of philanthropy, stewardship, partnership and student leadership (Campbell, 1995). As a result of this tradition, many students are involved in community service which has important consequences in terms of shaping the student experience (Mohan, 1994a, 1994b, 1996). Secondly, student life at UW-Madison is highly regulated and professionalised through post-*in loco parentis* structures such as 'the second curriculum'.

Further, the campus of UW-Madison is intertwined with the downtown area and, as a result, I argue that the art and cultural facilities of the university play a pivotal role in the cultural infrastructure of the city. This case-study also involved an investigation of several distinctive campus communities at UW-Madison, namely sporting communities, the Greek system of fraternities and sororities and the Co-operative housing movement. Finally, the higher legal age for drinking is an important mediating influence in terms of determining the cultural impacts of UW-Madison students on the community. In sum, UW-Madison represents a much more complex and integrated university-student-community relationship which could increasingly serve as a model for British universities as many of its universities grow into mass higher education institutions.

Chapter Eight concludes this thesis by discussing the implications of this research in terms of higher education and cultural policy. The first of these implications relates to the place of the universities and their students within the cultural infrastructure of the city, especially in terms of redefining the cultural role of the university in the era of mass higher education. In this sense, there should be a greater recognition of the contributions which students make towards popular cultural innovation and vitality in the community.



Popular cultural pursuits are central to traditional student life and universities could play a much larger role by providing more popular entertainment facilities which could be separated from students' union facilities. This not only guarantees revenue and student safety but increases the cultural role of the university within the city and can overcome images of elitism.

The second implication concerns the transition from elite to mass higher education and the large student 'ghettos' which have been created within many cities which are populated by students of fairly similar social and educational backgrounds. This leads on to issues surrounding the 'divided city' and the fact that swathes of most two- or multi-university cities are devoted to the residential and entertainment needs of the seasonal student population. These spaces effectively create 'geographies of exclusion' (Sibley, 1995).

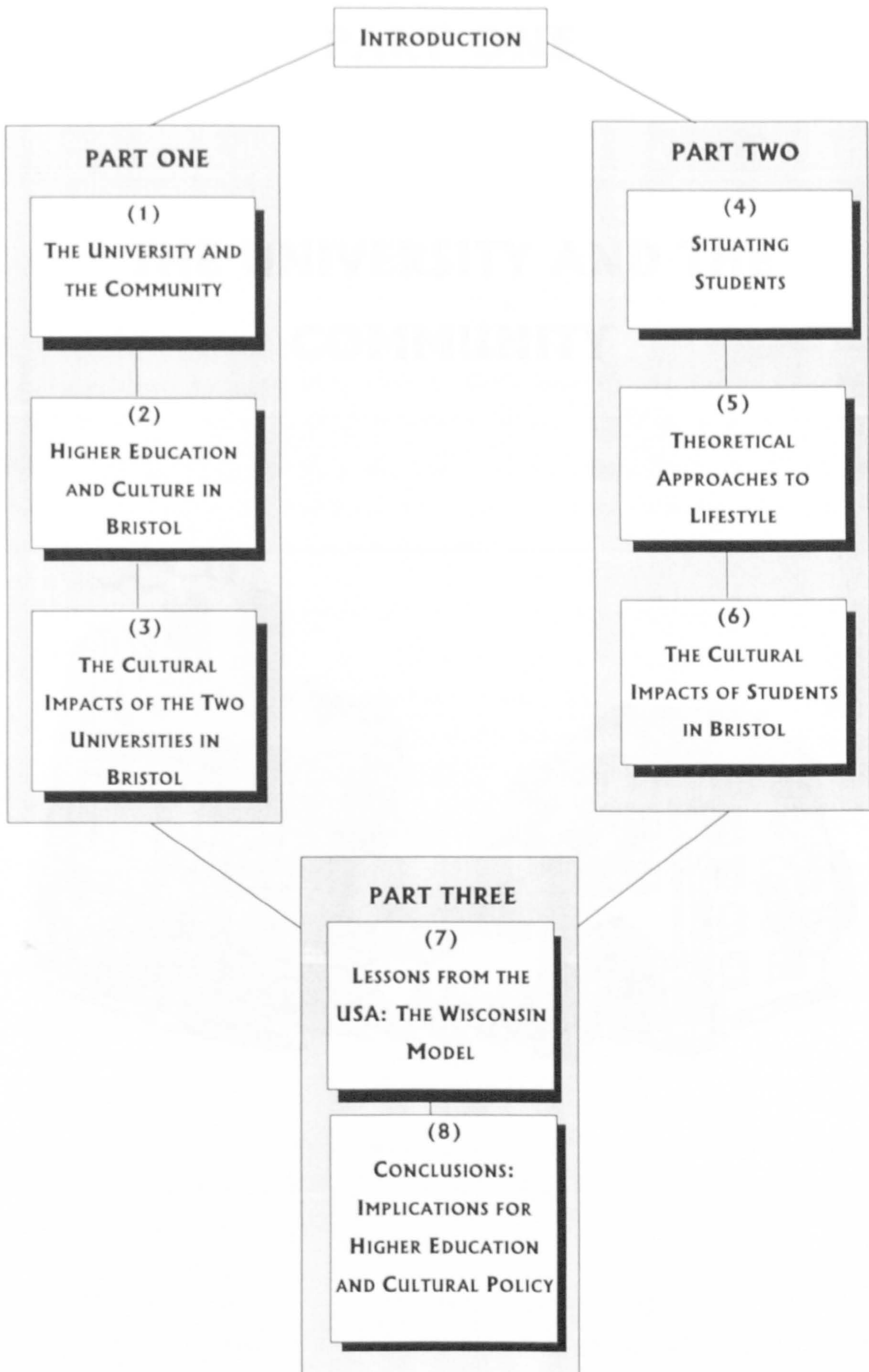
Further, what has been described as 'Britain's Great Teenage Transhumance'<sup>1</sup> - basically, the residential tradition within most British universities which involves the migration of middle-class youth to other areas in Britain - concentrates large numbers of people with roughly similar social and educational backgrounds in certain areas within many cities in Britain. This has serious implications for certain British universities if they wish to consider themselves as institutions which reflect the diversity of the society in which they are placed, by creating a public sphere which offers 'dialogue and difference' (Bender, 1988).

Following on from this, universities, as institutions of authority and respect within the community, face problems when many of their customers (the students) are treated with contempt or suspicion by the local community because of their connotations of youth, hedonism and privilege. But, there are many ways to ameliorate these negative perceptions by drawing upon examples from the USA where student life is more regulated and structured and involves a component of community-service. In sum, the distinctive British 'student experience' based upon autonomy, freedom and creativity, should be preserved, yet issues of widening participation and access to it need to be seriously addressed.

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<sup>1</sup> This phrase is taken from Walker (1997).

FIGURE 0.1: THESIS OUTLINE



# PART ONE

## THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY



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# THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY

## INTRODUCTION

**T**he purpose of this first chapter is to discuss the growing literature based around two inter-related debates; firstly, the idea of the university and, secondly, the relationship between the university and the community. These debates are not new, but they have received impetus and direction by recent publications (for example, CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994; Robson et al., 1995; Bender, 1988, 1996; Elliott et al., 1996; Scott, 1995; Readings, 1996; Smith and Webster, 1997) and policy debates (The National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education - The Dearing Report, 1997).

The first debate refers to the growing body of literature which is concerned with the changing and contested idea of the university. In particular, in the light of the changes within the higher education sector in Britain, there is a recognition that the university today differs from more traditional ideas of the university espoused by, for example, Cardinal Newman. In this context, I argue that it would be appropriate to pursue a more pluralised conception of the university, or perhaps the 'multiversity', rather than a unifying idea of the university.

The second debate explores the changing relationship between the university and the community and is characterised by many, often conflicting, voices. In this sense, there are those who stress a localised community service role for the university, whilst others stress the university's economic role in the community. There are also those from the older universities who stress a more autonomous, critical and international role for the university. I also argue that the university-community relationship is largely determined by the historical development of the two and other external factors such as the emergence of competing sites for knowledge generation.

These debates are then discussed in relation to future challenges and directions for the university and the community. Firstly, future ideas of the university seem caught between that of decline and death or the celebration of postmodern fragmentation.

However, I suggest a middle course for the university which stresses the importance of the university as a special 'place' where certain traditional ideas of the university can be reworked. Secondly, in terms of the future of university-community relationships, there are a number of future directions which include the need to articulate mission statements and the challenge of balancing communities at various spatial scales from the local to the global.

Finally, the last section discusses the ways in which the impacts of universities on the community have been conceptualised. These conceptualisations have mainly concerned the economic impacts of universities, often using multiplier analysis, and the social impacts of universities, through their contribution to the learning and skills infrastructure of the community. What I stress is that there needs to be a broadening of our understanding of the relationship between the university and the community to include the cultural impacts of universities on the community and the role of universities in cultural innovation and vitality in the community.

## **THE CHANGING UNIVERSITY?<sup>1</sup>**

Higher education in Britain has developed through the accretion of several layers from the medieval universities to the incorporation of the 'new' universities of 1992. The notion of a university originally referred to a small number of elite institutions. But it has been subject to change and contestation and is now a pluralistic concept covering many diverse institutions. One of the biggest challenges facing the current higher education sector is to find an idea for the university which embraces the diversity of university-designated institutions whilst retaining some of the founding traditions.

### **The Idea of the University**

Historically, attempts have been made to establish a unifying idea for the university. Over the last century or so, commentators such as Newman, Arnold, Humboldt and, more recently Eliot and Leavis, have suggested that the idea of the university was based upon the pursuit of knowledge and truth which were to be defended from the excesses of

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<sup>1</sup> This is taken from Schuller's book, *The Changing University* (1995).

industrialisation and mass society. Such a sentiment was reinforced by Lord Robbins in his 1963 report on higher education:

Finally, there is a function... that is none the less fundamental: the transmission of a common culture and common standards of citizenship... It is a proper function of higher education... to provide in partnership with the family that background of culture and social habit upon which a healthy society depends.<sup>2</sup>

However, such elitist notions, based largely on the Oxbridge model of perpetuating social privileges and high culture, have been eroded as a unifying idea of the university in the last few decades. Subsequent models for the university have instituted different unifying ideas such as Bentham's utilitarian idea for the modern, urban university of London from which many civic universities emerged, the technological and greenfield universities of the 1960s, the new universities of the 1990s and open-access universities such as the Open University (Filmer, 1997).

These various models for the university can be characterised by two types of higher education which have co-existed in Britain; the *Western humanist or liberal ideal* whose origins are in the ancient Greek and medieval worlds and involved knowledge for its own sake and the *socialist ideal* of the polytechnic education which arose from the industrial revolution and involved knowledge for a practical purpose (Ainley, 1994, 10).

The foundations for most of these models of the university has been the idea of the university as a knowledge disseminator. Yet, this role is under attack. In what is seen as the information age or society, knowledge flourishes in non-institutional contexts outside the timeless values of the university (Kumar, 1997, 29). If the idea of the university is no longer distinguished by its role as the main knowledge generator in society, what else can it be based upon?

Kumar (1997, 29) suggests that this distinctiveness is located in the university's monopoly over imparting credentials rather than knowledge. Further, instead of aping other organisations in the provision of vocational skills, universities should concentrate on what they are best at providing. In this sense, what needs to be preserved is the idea of the university as a special place where students engage in shared public activity and

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Barnett, 1990, 95.

explore themselves (*ibid.*, 1997, 32). Brown and Scase (1997, 96) suggest that the distinctiveness of the university is maintained by the 'reputational' capital of the degree compared to other tertiary and FE accreditors and the cultural and social capital gained through the residential experience.

Other attempts have been made to suggest the emergence of new unifying ideas for the university. Scott (1995) points to the emergence of the strategic university in the 1990s characterised by multiple missions, a plethora of stakeholders and the reconfiguring of academic cultures which renders the mass university unmanageable "but with creative rather than destructive consequences" (Scott, 1995, 70). In a similar way, McNay (1995) suggests the emergence of the enterprise university whose guiding principle is the client. McNay believes that the development of an enterprise culture within university organisations will create a new form of 'cultural glue' which will contribute to the university's "long historical record of adaptive genius which has allowed it to outlive most institutions" (McNay, 1995, 114). In this sense, the present period of confusion over the idea of the university may be the precursor to a new unifying idea. This seems likely if we acknowledge that the reason the university has survived so long is because it has changed so much (Scott, 1995, 12).

Yet it would be unproductive to search for a distinctive idea amongst the diverse collection of institutions currently designated as universities. Paradoxically, then, it seems that the newly unified higher education sector is unable to coalesce around any unifying idea and it may be more profitable to explore the notion of several co-existing ideas of the university.

### **Ideas of the University**

The transmission of a common culture, quite properly held by Robbins in 1963, has now to be transmuted into the transmission of cultures fitting for a multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic society (SRHE, 1996, 3).

Recent changes in British universities have been characterised as a transition from elite to mass higher education (Scott, 1995). "Nowhere in western Europe have the changes in the nature of the university as institution accelerated so rapidly as in Britain" (Smith and Webster, 1997, 1). For example, from 1938/39 to the present day, the number of students attending institutions defined as universities has increased from 50 000 to 1.5 million

(Silver and Silver, 14, 1997) and the latest period of change since unification in 1992 saw student numbers increase from 943 000 in 1988/89 to 1 441 000 in 1993/94 (CVCP, 1994).

Such growth represents participation rates at above 30%. Universities now incorporate many non-traditional groups which Silver and Silver (1997) call the 'new' students. Most notably, of the 1.5m students in higher education in 1994/95 half were women and just over 50% of all home entrants were classified as mature, half of whom were studying part-time (Silver and Silver, 25, 1997). However, university growth has not as successfully attended to other traditionally under-represented students such as those from less privileged social origins and certain ethnic groups and students with disabilities.

The important point about such change is that: "if one third of the age range, as well as many more adults, can be helped to think creatively, logically and independently by their higher education experiences, this represents a major cultural change for society (Ainley, 1994, 29). Such changes radically alter the idea of the university, especially from its medieval, elitist origins.

Growth has occurred within a higher education sector characterised by a number of quantitatively and qualitatively different institutions. However, this institutional diversity is not new. As Scott (1995, 43) suggests:

The binary shape of British higher education, until 1992, suggested a simple, and misleading, dichotomy of institutions... The abandonment of the binary system, whether or not it encourages future convergence, highlights the pluralism which already exists in British higher education.

Scott (1995, 43) describes this pluralism by identifying 17 distinctive sub-sectors within the post-secondary education sector of 115 university institutions and 68 colleges of HE in the UK:<sup>3</sup> Oxbridge, London, Welsh, Scottish and Northern Ireland Universities, Civic, Red Brick, Technological and 1960's greenfield universities, Durham and Keele because of their special histories, the former polytechnics, the Open University, Liberal Arts Colleges, Colleges of HE, Colleges of FE and mixed Colleges of FE and HE and Special and Agricultural colleges.

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<sup>3</sup> CVCP (1994/95) *Index of Universities*.



However, the problem is that growth and increasing diversity within the university sector as a whole in Britain, masks the nature of change at the level of the institution. Schuller (1995, 1) asks: "Is the University changing?" Such a question stems from a concern that "sectoral change may wash over individual institutions, with the reality of change in one part of the sector bestowing the fictitious appearance of change on the rest" (Schuller, 1995, 4). It is true that many changes are taking effect within the British higher education sector, yet such changes are affecting individual institutions differently. For example, the ancient universities in the 'golden triangle' of London, Oxford and Cambridge demonstrate a particular resistance to policy changes in the university sector compared to many newer universities. The claim that Britain has acquired a mass system of higher education, then, remains contested (Scott, 1997, 37).

In particular, diversity of intake is clearly only evident in certain sections of the higher education system with some institutions able to resist change and perpetuate their former, more elitist, roles. As Bourdieu (1988, 164) comments:

But the main thing is that the increase in size of the population of an educational establishment, and above all the concomitant transformation of the social composition of this population, are a function of the position which it occupies actually or potentially in the academic (and social) hierarchy of establishments.

Considering this institutional diversity what kind of idea does the unified British higher education sector represent? In 1992, Duke commented: "Is it helpful to speak of a new paradigm of the university... Has a new idea of the university emerged from the chrysalis of the old... Do prevailing assumptions obscure new practices?" (Duke, 1992, 1). It seems that an out-of-date idea of the university is being perpetuated which does not reflect the current diversity with the higher education sector:

The proportion of young people going on to higher education has risen from fewer than one in ten to almost a third. A social revolution has been accomplished... Yet despite these rapid and radical changes in the 'public life' of higher education, the rhythms of its 'private life' are less regular... The result is a disjunction, even a paradox. British higher education has become a mass system in its public structures, but remains an elite one its private instincts (Scott, 1995, 2).

The external changes have produced a mass higher education system whilst the lack of internal change has resulted in the retention of the values of an elitist system. This

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imbalance is the cause of many of the tensions and dysfunctions which higher education presently experiences (Wagner, 1995, 15).

This perceptual problem can be understood in the following way; in general, the British higher education sector is no longer differentiated from universities in other western countries by a system of exceptionalism rooted in intimacy and the class basis of our society (Scott, 1995, 1997). Yet, despite the end of British exceptionalism, there is a nostalgia in Britain, or any rate England, for a lost academic Arcadia. This nostalgia is not “a peculiarly academic regret. It has its analogues in the informal solidarities, tacit values and archaic institutions which mark the British (or English) experience” (Scott, 1995, 7).

The transition from the provision of elite to mass higher education in Britain, then, has thrown the idea of the university into confusion. While the term university evokes images of changeless traditions, ancient buildings and unworldly intellectuals, three-quarters have been founded since the 1960s and 30 since 1992 (Smith and Webster, 1997, 99).

The mass system of higher education which is unfolding in Britain is anti-organic, anti-systematic and anti-totalizing and resists all but the most ephemeral classification (Scott, 1995, 3). “Its keynote is not homogeneity, as is commonly alleged, but institutional diversity” especially so if the whole post-secondary education is conceptualised within this system as in the USA (Scott, 1995, 49). In sum, “the two most important features of the structure of mass higher education... are fuzziness and permeability” (Scott, 1995, 169). In this sense, it is more realistic to discuss the co-existence of several ideas of the university in Britain, which, for many years has been the case.

## **UNIVERSITIES AND COMMUNITIES - COMMUNITIES AND UNIVERSITIES**

This section explores the issue of the relationship between the university and the community. Debates concerning this relationship are not new, but they have a novel focus in that the equation 'university-community' has been balanced and redressed. In particular, many universities are increasing their involvement in the community. However, other universities are retreating into elitist, often non-local, academic communities.

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## The On-going Debate

The relationship between the university and the community is not a new issue. In 1982, the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation talked of a new dilemma for higher education:

a new dynamic is already at work to change the position of universities and higher education in general in the economic, cultural and social system, and more especially the role that these institutions play in their immediate environment (OECD, 1982, 9).

However, in the 1990's the topic has been subject to renewed and intensified debate:<sup>4</sup>

The question of how universities should relate to the outside world - and how the community at large should relate to universities - is as old as universities themselves... The fact that the topic remains of intense interest is indicative of the need to strike a balance between the three key elements in the mission of universities - the generation of knowledge, the passing on of this knowledge to future generations and serving the needs of industry and the community (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994, 5).

Our starting point then is that, "there have always been links between universities and their communities... What has changed over time is not the existence of a mutual relationship, but the way in which this is shaped" (Hardy, 1996, 11).

The CVCP/Goddard et al. report *Universities and Communities* (1994) was seen as an important watershed in emphasising the current contribution of each university in its local community. The report presented results from a survey of 64 universities which was structured around the ways in which senior academics and administrators from 'old' and 'new' universities have different perceptions of the community.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Literature to emerge in this area in recent years includes *The University and the Community* (OECD, 1982), *Universities and Communities* (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994) and *Communities and Universities* (Elliott et al., 1996). The work of Bender, mainly in an historical and urban context, is also extremely useful, especially *The University and the City* (Bender, 1988). A number of conferences which the present author has spoken at have also debated the theme of universities and communities such as *Cities of Learning?* (Lancaster University, 1995) and *Urban Universities and their Cities* (Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> 37 universities did not reply to the questionnaire, 8 of which were based in London.

The report presented a brush-stroke account of the impacts of universities in the community through several themes; the direct economic impact of universities, the contribution of universities to local economic development, the university and the built environment, social and community development and the contribution of universities to cultural vitality. From these themes, the report proposed a number of ways to manage the university-community interface which focused around practices such as better monitoring and structuring of community relations. Clearly, there are several limitations and omissions with such a report, especially considering its emphasis on economic issues within the university-community interface (Elliott et al., 1996). For example, it concentrated on links with local and central government, business and industry. Other links such as those with community and voluntary groups received less analysis and the importance of the student as a major constituent within the university-community interface was under-explored.

Since this report, the issue of university-community relations has gained new momentum and direction. The subsequent CVCP conference at Lancaster University, *Cities of Learning?* in 1995 was used to take forward many of the themes addressed in the 1994 report. However, similar issues were discussed such as managing the university, university contributions to economic and regional development and the future for science parks.<sup>6</sup> The conference was used, then, to re-inforce rather than broaden the message conveyed by the CVCP/Goddard et al. report.

However, a subsequent conference organised by the Amsterdam study centre for the Metropolitan Environment under the auspices of the Network of Universities from the Capital of Europe (UNICA) entitled *Urban Universities and Their Cities* presented a broader understanding of the role of universities in the community. The conference was premised on the idea that urban universities contribute to the local capacity for innovation in all fields of human activity. In particular, it discussed topics such as the urban university's contribution to the city's knowledge base, the university as an actor in the local economy, the university's role in city life, and the university and the world of arts. It also stressed the need to appreciate the urban context in terms of influencing not just the history of

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<sup>6</sup> The author presented a session at this conference entitled the 'Cultural Impacts of the Universities in Bristol on the Community'. This contrasted with much other work presented at the conference which focused upon issues such as economic development, training and university management.

certain universities, but the very idea of the university itself. This renewed urban theme will be discussed later as it is of increasing importance that urban universities adopt a more self-aware role within their host cities.

It is important to note that there are also many other, often dissenting, voices involved in this debate. In particular, a book emerging from the 1995 Annual Conference of the Universities Association for Continuing Education was provocatively titled *Communities and their Universities* (Elliott et al., 1996). This collection intended to invert the relationship highlighted by the 1994 CVCP/Goddard et al. report, particularly due to the latter's focus on the role of the university through the economic benefit and community service model at the expense of community empowerment model (Ward, 1996, 208).

The issue of the relationship between the university and the community, then, is being carried forward by a number of competing agendas. There are those who stress the importance of the university couched in the language of technology transfer, economic impacts, regional development, national economic prosperity and employment prospects and there are those who stress the importance of the university couched in the language of access, opportunity and community empowerment. Further, this debate is occurring in a new context: "the post-Robbins changes took place in a mood of optimism and confidence about the future whilst the more recent ones have been accompanied by pessimism and gloom" (Wagner, 1995, 17). The rest of this section will discuss the changing conceptions of the boundary between the university and the community.

### **Boundary Drawing: The 'University' and the 'Community'**

Any discussion which explores the role of universities is flavoured with the long standing conceptual divide between that which falls inside and that which falls outside the university. An enduring problem is that "[e]ven to grasp what is a 'community' or a 'university', still less to delineate their inter-relationships, is especially elusive in the 1990s" (Elliott et al., 1996, xiv). Further:

The interface between universities and communities is indeed problematic and characterised by fundamental contradictions. These contradictions reflect the variations in the 'relative autonomy' of universities as institutions within the social formation, and their role in the reproduction of social relations" (Hake, 1996, 48).

It is a time of change and also of tension. As the OECD commented:

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... above all there is conflict between the university and society... the traditional relations between the university and the community are invariably formulated in terms of the university's subordination to the community, not in terms of interaction and co-operation. This only accentuates their failure to get on together, and leads the university to strive for autonomy that sometimes amounts to isolation (OECD, 1982, 11).

The problem is also an historic one:

Along with ivory towers, town and gown is one of those cliché-ridden phrases that evokes a persisting sense of division and elitism; universities were not so much a part of their community as apart from it. The one was withdrawn from the everyday world of work and commerce, and those ordinary mortals who entered the hallowed precincts of a university crossed a *social and cultural divide* (Hardy, 1996, 12, my italics).

Tension between the university and the community emerge from their different aims and objectives. The OECD identified three such objectives within the university which are largely hostile to better community relations: (1) the development of knowledge for its own sake; (2) excessive devotion to the occupational needs of the economic system; (3) perpetuation of the aristocratic cultural myth (OECD, 1982, 16).

However, the mid 1990s represents a specific time within the development of the debate concerning universities and communities: "By the start of the 1990s, although vestiges of town and gown were still in evidence, it was apparent that higher education was experiencing significant changes, one outcome of which was a renegotiation of traditional relationships with the community" (Hardy, 1996, 13). It is clear then, that there is "a growing realisation that the relationships between universities and wider society are being, and should be, re-defined" (Elliott et al., 1996, xiii).

In particular, there is an awareness that the university-community relationship needs more balance:

Rather than the conventional formulation 'universities and their communities', the reversal of the order makes clear that communities, however defined, should have clear and growing expectations of their universities (Elliott et al., 1996, xiv).

Stronger university-community links, then, are emerging. Yet what characterises such relationships? "[I]nstead of one party or the other (usually the university) setting the

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terms - the prerogative of an elite - the watchword for the new order is *partnership*" (Hardy, 1996, 14).

There also needs to be a recognition of the diversity of university-community links within this partnership. From the outset, "it has to be recognised that a university will be dealing not with a single community but with many" (Hardy, 1996, 19). The university-community interface, then, can be interpreted as a distinct set of 'publics' which address each other. These may be unorganised 'publics of individuals' or they may be organised 'collective publics' (Hake, 1996, 50). Hake identified seven potential publics in the community for the university which include four *individual publics*, namely the full-time student, the part-time or mature student, the short course student involved in liberal adult education and the non-traditional student, and three *collective publics* namely professional, voluntary and social organisations, the business community and local, regional and national governments.

The university can also be understood as a number of publics which form to address and interact with the outside world. These may include the whole university or groups of universities, faculties, departments, research groups, the Students' Union, political, social, cultural or sporting groups and individual members of staff and students. In essence, then, there are many decentralised and established points of interaction between the university and the community rather than one interface between two monolithic entities. There is also an increasing number of newer and more creative interfaces such as regional and voluntary offices which complement established ones such as continuing education and industrial liaison.

Conceptually, then, both the university and the community are changing entities. As Bender (1988) comments, both are incompletely bounded fields open to certain processes which constantly reconstitute them. It is evident that the boundary between the university and the community is constantly being redefined. The next section explores this.

### **The Changing Boundary Between the University and the Community**

The boundary between the university and community is characterised by constant change and negotiation. The legacy of the medieval university was the search for truth. In contrast, the pre-occupation of the contemporary university is to produce knowledge. The

former aim demanded erudition and freedom from local concerns, whereas the latter demands professionalism and more local, and national/global, involvement (Claval, 1996, 5). The contemporary university, then, has relinquished some of its autonomy to collaborate with other producers of knowledge. For example, there are the concepts of life-long learning and the Learning Society, discussed below, where the university simply becomes one component within a much larger educational process. However, it is important to thoroughly understand the consequences of excessively eroding the historic autonomy of the university and the scholarly values of basic and critical research.

Thomas Bender's work (1988, 1996) is extremely enlightening in terms of discussing the relationship between the university and the community, although it does have an urban focus. However, this urban focus is entirely justified as one becomes aware that the very idea of the university grew out of the great medieval cities such as Paris, Oxford and Bologna.<sup>7</sup> Peter Hall (1996, 1) echoes this sentiment: "Traditionally, from their very origins in medieval Europe, universities... were urban, not rural-monastic... Right through the age of industrialism, that tradition continued."

Work of this kind, then, emphasises the historic importance of the relationship between the university and the city and the need to rework this tradition into a contemporary context. Bender suggests that the university needs to renegotiate its relation to the city's many diverse habitats of knowledge, and given the contemporary rejection of grand theory should move towards a partially localized and purposive academic knowledge (Bender, 1996, 11). "Metropolitan academics ought not work so hard at keeping the city at bay: it is a source of energy, of wonderful complex intellectual problems, and of non-academic intellectuals who have much to offer" (Bender, 1996, 11). The university, then, has to renegotiate its boundaries with other producers of knowledge, especially in an urban context.

However, the concept of boundary is more difficult to apply to universities than other types of organisations because they have always been more permeable. Universities are a

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<sup>7</sup> Bender's book *The University and the City* (1988) explores the changing relationship between the university and the city, but stresses whatever the state of the relationship, the city plays a central role in the history of the university.



different type of organisation. They have been described by Burton Clark<sup>8</sup> as the legitimisation of disorder and by Karl Weick (1976) as a 'loosely coupled system'.<sup>9</sup> They are "a unique form of organisation because of their multiplicity of missions and absence of a single absolute authority. They are a genus apart, a non-organisation, or an organised anarchy" (Duke, 1992, 12).

Despite their permeability, some notion of boundary is needed, otherwise there would not be an idea of a university. Yet activities of certain, mainly 'new', universities are becoming increasingly locally embedded in many respects such as student recruitment, continuing education and applied research. Currently used notions such as service learning, the university as service-station and the learning society draw our attention to efforts which promote a less inimical boundary between the university and the community. This makes perfect sense especially in the more urban universities where the location of the university diminishes the idea of a boundary between the university and community, at least in a physical sense.

How we think about the boundary of the university, then, is influenced by its location. The idea of the urban university makes us think about the relationship between the university and the community in different ways. "The city and the university seem to share a common sociology, or - in a language a biologist would probably prefer - ecology" (Bender, 1996). Bender, of course is a vehement advocate of a university of, not simply in, the city. Yet to be of the city is not to be assimilated to the city. There is an heuristic value of proposing a homological relationship between the city and the university, yet considerable restraint needs to be used with this line of thought.<sup>10</sup> Rather, he refers to a particular relationship between universities and cities - the urban university representing *semicloistered heterogeneity* in the midst of the *uncloistered heterogeneity* of the city.<sup>11</sup> The relationship between the university and the city is characterised by coherence and fragility; historically the relationship between the two has swung between harmony and antagonism. Within an urban setting, then, the university is part of the city's urban fabric but it has sufficient isolation from it to develop its own distinctive flavour.

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<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Scott, 1995, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in McNay, 1995, 105.

<sup>10</sup> Bender, 1988, 290.

<sup>11</sup> Bender 1988 and 1996.

The university and the city are necessarily different; they are a counter-weight to each other producing different types of culture and knowledge (the former more abstract and rigorous, the latter more descriptive and pragmatic). "The university has its distinctive culture to be brought into dialogue with the city; it ought not become impossible to differentiate it from the city" (Bender, 1996, 18). The architectural style of many urban university buildings reinforces this notion of separateness with propinquity in relation to its community. This distinctiveness of the university is not to be mistaken for aloof detachment. In one sense, the university is a valuable asset for the city as it:

may provide the best space available in contemporary cities for the enactment of a public culture... Metropolitan universities enable the work of the contemporary public sphere; they offer the possibility of creating a dialogue across the difference that largely defines metropolitan life in our time (Bender, 1996, 20).

It is one of the few spaces which is characterised by difference *and* dialogue: "The most important gift of the university to its metropolis is the creation of such a space (ibid., 1996, 21). The university of the community, it seems, should resist suburban values and commercial culture and strive for ever greater inclusion, engagement with strangers and multiculturalism. This type of university does not become the community, but it enriches the community and becomes enriched by it (ibid., 1996, 22).

However, it is also important not to stereotype either the university or the city:

What is interesting about each of these institutions, the city and the university, is the incredible plurality they contain. There is in each a complex ecology of intellectual cultures and social purposes (or interests) that are organized on multiple scales of time and space, with varying degrees of institutional closure and boundary permeability (Bender, 1996, 6).

"If the city and the university are both highly differentiated entities, we must ask whether particular parts of the university have distinctive relations to different parts of the city" (Bender, 1988, 291). This brings us back to the idea of multiple points of interaction between the university and the community, involving a range of scales, user groups and activities.

In defence of the urban university, Bender (1996) comments on the dangers of 'the suburbanisation of the intellect'. In this phrase, he is referring to the expansion of higher education systems to locations outside of the city core. To draw an analogy with the

suburb is to contrast the monotony and sterility of such a setting with the energy and creativity of the city. The community of isolated scholars in such non-urban settings, he warns, breeds scholasticism and self-referentiality (ibid.). To draw such conclusions from different settings clearly oversimplifies the diversity of geographical settings of universities and the necessity to expand out of cities due to financial and physical constraints and changing patterns of educational demand.

Redefining the boundary between the university and community, then, is part of questioning the ways in which the higher education sector can be useful to society, especially in the context of its recent growth in Britain. Some believe that "universities will need to transform themselves from elitist institutions to ones significantly contributing to the creation of a more just and equitable society (Elliott et al., 1996, xiii). However, others believe that society would benefit from preserving the more historic and scholarly role of the university.

Is further community integration or detachment and academic rigour the answer? Much of this question can be answered by looking at the specific context and history of each institution. Some urban universities, for example, are interwoven into a context which includes many problems such as inner-city decay, economic restructuring, and homelessness. In these contexts, such as the older urban industrial regions in Britain, universities are becoming more conscious of their role as *a part of* - not *apart from* - the community (Wright, 1994). Echoing this sentiment, the CVCP/Goddard et al. report (1994) stressed that there is a greater need for a university *of*, not simply *in*, the community as the university recognises the problems located in its immediate environment.<sup>12</sup>

The benefits which actually accrue from closer university-community links is also an issue of concern. "Ostensibly, closer links between universities and local communities can

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<sup>12</sup> These comments come from Newcastle and Sunderland where there is a notable awareness of the role Universities can have, in partnership with other organisations, in the regeneration of the North-East region. Other examples of direct involvement include Sunderland University's Regional Office, which acts as a one-stop shop to promote more constructive flows of knowledge, skills and people between the University and the community and Sheffield University's PLUS scheme which enables the regional community to tap into project work undertaken by students.

offer something, if not for everyone, then at least for the major players - universities, business interests, cultural groups and residents (Hardy, 1996, 15). Hardy believes that benefits from closer community links include promoting access to higher education, stimulating technological change, contributing to economic regeneration and making the full use of both human skills and capital assets.

However, there are also many disbenefits which include the potential contradiction of embracing different ideological perspectives, the possibility of raising false hopes and expectations in the community and the costs involved in this new type of activity. One must be wary, therefore, of prescribing closer university-community relations. "The danger is that universities can become tainted by a process that is inimical to their own values" (Hardy, 1996, 20). Further, "university links should not be regarded as a panacea for too many community ills" (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994, 4). Universities, then, have certain roles to play within the community which require greater intervention and closer links, yet some degree of distance and autonomy is required for both the university and the community to recognise their individual strengths. The university would perhaps be more useful for being able to withdraw from the political fray in order to play a more traditional, and historic, role of honest broker and arbiter of disputes based on its enduring intellectual strengths and values (Hardy, 1996).

Much of the tension within the university-community interface may derive from misplaced criticism from the community. "The university is thus criticised for remaining an ivory tower, yet that is in the main what it is expected to be" (OECD, 1982, 32). Those external to higher education foster a sense of detachment from the university to perpetuate its image as something different, special and almost magical. In terms of the university's place in society, the OECD talks of an irreducible tension between the dual roles of citizenship and accountability on the one hand and critique and independence on the other (ibid.).

In essence, universities have a dual role to play as a participator in community problems and as an honest broker or neutral generator and disseminator of knowledge. The varying historical developments of universities in their communities has resulted in a myriad of approaches in terms of identifying and ameliorating community 'problems'. The differences in terms of actual university intervention in the community can be stark;

ranging from the symbolism of science parks to more well-intentioned but often unproven mechanisms such as think-tanks, consortia of institutions and regional offices.

It is clear that many universities are increasingly seen as large and potent actors who have a role to serve the community. It is also clear that many universities see the best way to serve the community is by encouraging 'trickle-down' from autonomous, critical research on a non-local level. In this sense, the international reputation of many universities can act as growth catalysts in local and regional economies (Chatterton, 1997). There are many different models, then, for university-community relations, influenced to a significant degree, by the historic development of the university in the community.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

This next section discusses some of the future directions for the idea of the university and the issue of university-community relationships. The idea of the university seems torn between demise and postmodern fragmentation, whilst the relationship between the university and the community is rendered more complex by the introduction of mission statements and the varying spatial definitions of the 'community'.

### **(1) THE IDEA OF THE UNIVERSITY**

There has been a growing discussion concerning the future of the idea of the university in recent years.<sup>13</sup> In particular, the incorporation of the polytechnics within a unified university sector in 1992 has forced a revision and rethinking of the idea of the university. I want to explore two views which depict future developments of the university. One speaks of the demise of the university and a nostalgia for a lost Arcadia and the other, through the language of postmodernism, celebrates the fragmentation and plurality of the university. These shall be considered in turn below.

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<sup>13</sup> The Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE) has been extremely useful in directing this debate. Recent SRHE literature on this topic include *The Idea of Higher Education* (Barnett, 1990), *The Learning University?* (Duke, 1992), *The Changing University?* (Schuller, 1995), *The Meanings of Mass Higher Education* (Scott, 1995) and *The Postmodern University?* (Smith and Webster, 1997). *The University in Ruins* (Readings, 1996) also furthered the debate in an American context.

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**The University in Ruins?**

“There has been a good deal of comment recently speculating on the decline, even the death, of the university as an institution” (Smith and Webster, 1997, 106). This claim is supported by the emergence of alternative sources of knowledge which undermine the university’s monopolistic position, changing ways of teaching and learning outside the university and the emergence and success of alternative sites of research provision (ibid.).

Many have suggested that universities face a new economic environment in which the whole process of knowledge production is questioned (Bender, 1988, 1996; Scott, 1995, 1997). In particular, in a fast-changing society, there are no agreed codes of knowledge to be systematically developed and taught (Kumar, 1997). “As a result, universities... are less able to guarantee students access to a privileged body of knowledge, because such a body of knowledge no longer exists” (Scott, 1997, 42).

Gibbons et al. (1994) have introduced the concept of the new production of knowledge to locate such changes. It is their contention that there has been a shift from Mode 1 knowledge production to Mode 2. According to this thesis, Mode 1 knowledge is homogeneous, disciplinary and hierarchical and Mode 2 knowledge is heterarchical, transient, transdisciplinary, socially accountable and reflexive and undertaken in a context of application (ibid., 1994, 3).<sup>14</sup> The important point for the university is that this new type of knowledge production has implications for the way in which institutions operate.

Bender (1996, 7) has suggested that within this new knowledge or information based society, the university loses its putative monopoly on knowledge production. Many sites, such as private or semi-private research organisations, emerge as alternatives or complementary partners to university knowledge production. The university needs to reinvent itself to keep apace of such changes:

To the extent that traditional academic disciplines have withdrawn from the public culture in their pursuit of purity and autonomy... society has been inventing (or recovering) alternative and often metropolitan-based sources of knowledge (Bender, 1996, 10).

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<sup>14</sup> The work of Gibbons et al., in the book *The New Production of Knowledge* (1994), has been echoed by Scott (1995), Bender (1996) and Smith and Webster (1997) in relation to the university.

The idea of the university, then, seems to be at a watershed. Pierre Bourdieu, in his book *Homo Academicus* (1988) discusses how the university, as it grows, faces a critical moment in its history as old values are replaced by new ones. In particular, the equilibrium of the old university system is broken by the incorporation of new students and staff whose identities and allegiances are not exclusively with the academy.

A recent book by the late Bill Readings (1996) explores some of the reasons for the demise of the university. Readings (*ibid.*, 2) comments that "it is no longer clear what the place of the University is within society" and suggests that "we need to recognize the University as a *ruined* institution, one that has lost its *historical raison d'être* (*ibid.*, 1996, 19)." In effect, it is a posthistorical university - a university without an idea (*ibid.*, 1996, 118).

Readings (1996) suggests that the university is in ruins because the idea of the university has shifted from that of Culture, based upon Humboldtian and Kantian notions of reason, to that of Excellence, based upon the techno-bureaucratic model of the transnational corporation. Herein lies the source of the university's ruin; the watchword excellence has no content to call its own (*ibid.*, 1996, 24) - it is "entirely meaningless" (*ibid.*, 1996, 22). Excellence has no referent and so what gets taught matters less than how well (or excellently) something is taught. This argument is summarised below:

|                        | THE UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE        | THE UNIVERSITY OF EXCELLENCE    |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| REFERENT               | Reason/Culture/National Identity | Excellence                      |
| ROLE                   | Ideological                      | Bureaucratic                    |
| SCALE                  | Nation-state                     | Globalisation / Americanisation |
| DEFINITION OF STUDENTS | National Subjects                | Consumers                       |
| GOAL                   | Knowledge Accumulation           | Information Processing          |

Readings (1996, 127) suggests that this weakening of identity for the university results in a community of *disensus* rather than *consensus*: "Anyone who has spent any time at all in a University knows that it is not a model community, that few communities are more petty and vicious than University faculties" (*ibid.*, 1996, 180). In this sense, the new referent for the university is institutional pragmatism and the recognition that the modern university is a *ruined* institution (*ibid.*, 1996, 129).

There is a concern, then, that internal and external changes are breaking the university apart:

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The diversity of roles they (the universities) acquired, their multiplying missions, led inexorably to a weakening of common purpose. Increasingly incommensurability between disciplines, themselves ceaselessly reconfiguring, meant that universities could no longer be glued together by shared academic culture (Scott, 1995, 65).

However, there are also those who see this institutional fragmentation as a central element to understanding the emergence of a 'postmodern' university.

### **The Postmodern University?**

A postmodern discourse has recently entered into the debate on higher education which suggests that "it may have become absurd to seek to express any grand organizing principle" (Webster and Smith, 1997, 3). This language challenges previous ideas of the university, its authority as a producer of knowledge and the usefulness of disciplinary boundaries. As a result, heterogeneity is celebrated as the university transmutes into a radically new phenomenon (Frank and Webster, 1997, 104). Bauman (1997), one of the main advocates of a postmodern university, proposes that we locate changes in the university in a wider context of change:

I suggest that the overwhelming feeling of crisis we all, in a greater or lesser measure, experience... have little to do with the faults, errors, or neglects of the university academics, but quite a lot to do with the universal melting of identities, dispersal of authorities, and fragmentaries of life which characterize the world in which we live - the world I prefer to call 'postmodern' (1997, 20-21).

As a result, he asks: "is there any 'common feature' left to the variegated collection of entities called universities" apart from their joint legal definition?" (Bauman, 1997, 20). In this respect, he is worried that a search for a new consensus to bind higher education together will fail because "postmodern troubles cannot be adequately handled with modern means" (ibid., 1997, 25).

For Bauman, postmodern times are, in essence, inhospitable to the university's aim of 'coming together in the pursuit of higher learning' (ibid.). In contrast, universities should celebrate their multi-vocalism: "the recognition of many and varied ways to, and many and varied canons of, higher learning is the condition *sine qua non* of the university system capable of rising to the postmodern challenge" (ibid., 1997, 25).



Another recent addition to this postmodern debate comes from Scott (1995, 1997). His book *The Meanings of Mass Higher Education* (1995) is an attempt to situate the mass university within the discussion around such concepts as the post-welfare state, post-industrialism, post-fordism and post-modernity.

Scott's thesis contends that the system of mass higher education is radically different to its elite predecessor and requires new conceptual apparatus to understand it: "Mass, unlike elite, higher education cannot be summed up in a single totalising idea. Instead, it has plural meanings, being one of a series of multiple modernizations - of society, economy, culture and science as well as the academy" (Scott, 1995, 168). Although universities have always been profoundly functional institutions, with many growing up alongside the industrial revolution in the nineteenth century and the technological universities and polytechnics serving the needs of the twentieth century economy, in the late twentieth century environment, with its implications of postmodern and postindustrial change, the place of the university as an institution, not just as an idea, is at risk (Scott, 1996).

Like Bauman (1997), Scott (1995, 90) boldly claims that "[a] profound transformation of western, now world, society and of advanced economies is under way which... coincides intriguingly with the growth of mass higher education in Britain" and that:

The growth of mass higher education, therefore, is taking place at a time not only of urgent socio-economic change... but also when the dynamics of modernity itself are being radically revised. Higher education systems are no longer simply 'knowledge' institutions, reproducing the intellectual and human capital required by industrial society; they are becoming key instruments of the reflexivity which defines the post-industrial (and post-modern) condition (Scott, 1995, 117).

The current changes in higher education, then, are occurring at a time of concurrent economic, social and cultural changes. More than this though, "the development of modern culture, the elaboration of a scientific technological tradition, the growth of secular urban-industrial society... and the expansion of higher education systems - all have been contemporaneous, and arguably congruent, phenomenon" (Scott, 1995, 119). Universities, then, have been implicated in the evolution of *culture* as transmitters of privileged cultural norms; of *science and technology* as producers of expert scientific

knowledge and technology transfers; and of *socio-economic change* through their role in professionalisation and aiders and abettors of social hierarchy.

In fact, Scott (1995) posits that there have been *moments of affinity* between socio-economic and intellectual-scientific transformations and the expansion of higher education:

It is argued that we are in the middle of a fifth moment of affinity. Its elements are the transition from elite to mass forms of education; the shift from a conception of innovation, whether technological or social, as predominantly produced by scientists and other experts to a more pluralist interpretation emphasising the creative role of users and other stakeholders; the contested rise of a playful post-modernism in literature and the arts which denies claims of universalism and despises an ordered aesthetics; the absorption of such ideas into the mainstream of intellectual culture; the growth of a post-fordist economy, all flexible organisations and flat hierarchies; and, in the social and political arenas, the apparent enthusiasm for market rather than social solutions (Scott, 1995, 123).

Drawing upon postmodern theory, there is a language, then, of a new type of university in Britain. Scott (1995, 10) posits the emergence of the strategic university characterised by reflexivity, synergy, flexibility and volatility which he associates them with post-Fordist notions of organisation which are endlessly open, radically reflexive and in ceaseless flux and Bauman (1997) discusses the plurality and multi-vocalism of universities.

Yet Filmer (1997, 53) is concerned about the extent to which speculations of possible changes in universities associated with 'post-'s (postmodernism, postfordism etc.) have actually been established in institutional form. Because of the speculative nature between post-modernism/-fordism etc. and institutional correlates, Filmer's contention, in contrast to Scott's (1995) assertions, is that universities are far from key institutions within modernization and that changes within the university largely concern a redefinition of, rather than revolution in, functions (Filmer, 1997, 55). However, Scott (1995, 98) does concede that much of the 'post-'s debate is overstated. As he comments: "The superficial similarity between the post-Fordist firm and the collegial university is treacherously misleading."

### **The Survival of the University: the importance of place**

It is likely that rather than falling into terminal decline or fragmenting, the university will survive, if only because it will retain its virtual monopoly on awarding legitimate

credentials. Many see the idea of a university worth defending (Barnett, 1990; Bender, 1988, 1996; Smith and Webster, 1997; Kumar, 1997; Filmer, 1997). Yet what idea is to be defended, when in the postmodern age the ideas of the university as privileged knowledge generator or carrier of high culture are obsolete?

There are those who defend an outdated, idealist notion of a community of scholars. This nostalgia for a golden age of the university is understandably compelling for those who have experienced the transition from elite to mass higher education. However, such nostalgia is regressive to the continued survival of the idea of the university.

I agree with Kumar (1997) that the continued survival of the idea of the university is premised upon the importance of place. The university is a special place apart from the community which offers a unique experience as a site of cultural exploration and engagement (Kumar, 1997, 31). Its distinctiveness is that:

In an increasingly home-based, privatised society, universities are among the few surviving institutions that draw people out of their private spaces and, for a brief and crucial time, encourage them to engage in shared public activity (Kumar, 1997, 34).

The future direction which would revitalise the idea of the university, then, is that which points towards the university as a public sphere which encourages impartial, rational debate (Smith and Webster, 1997). Universities offer an experience and environment which is, and always has been, necessarily different from the external social and economic worlds by offering a site for rational communication; or as Bender (1996) suggests, 'dialogue and difference'. This retrieves the notion of intellectuals as an 'affirming flame' for the cultural life of society, rather than hopelessly specialised and fragmented (Smith and Webster, 1997).

Without returning to the elitism of the ivory tower, it is necessary to preserve some of the traditions of the university such as autonomy and detachment. In this sense, Filmer (1997) believes that rather than being participants in processes of social and cultural change, the role of the university is also to reflect, critically and disinterestedly, upon them. Universities may best serve the community if they retain characteristics of critique, independence and internationalism rather than just citizenship and accountability and play a role as honest broker or neutral generator and disseminator of knowledge in the community. The historic role of the university may best be reworked if it does not retreat

into the semi-cloistered world of the ivory tower or play hand-maiden to community issues or transnational capitalism.

The university, then, is necessarily different. The university needs to thrive upon what it can alone do, rather than in terms of what it can do as well as other institutions (Kumar, 1997, 29). Instead of aping other organisation by providing vocational training, there are many qualities within the university which need preserving. For example, Barnett (1990) believes that the idea of higher education is essentially emancipatory, yet has recently been undermined. Barnett (1990) asserts that its former emancipatory promise could be reinstated through critical self reflection, open learning, inter-disciplinarity and a more philosophical and sociological perspective for the curriculum.

In sum, then, there is still a unifying idea of the university to be pursued. Despite institutional fragmentation and (re)hierarchicalisation, academic dissensus and tribalism, the university will survive because of its power of credentialisation, but more importantly, because of the special nature of the university experience and its uniqueness of place as a public sphere for discourse and difference. Rather than being based upon totalising ideas of culture and community as in the nineteenth century university, the future idea of the university should simultaneously embrace concepts of community which exist at different spatial scales, as discussed below.

## **(2) THE UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP**

There are a number of future directions for the university-community relationship. In particular, the concept of the university mission statement is creating a highly individualised relationship between the university and the community and the university has to interact with communities on many spatial scales from the local to the global.

### **The Mission Statement**

One of the most important mechanisms through which the university-community relationship is being directed is through the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) requirement for each university to produce a mission statement. Such mission statements require each university to express an individualised identity. The emergence of the university mission tailored to the specificities of the institutions context and history, then, will be one of the most significant influences on the re-stratification and differentiation within the mass higher education system in years to come: "At present, many

institutional mission statements are similar, even identical. But this is likely to change as the burden of past ambitions and expectations is lifted and missions become more individualised" (Scott, 1995, 170).

The introduction of mission statements has been important in that all universities have an officially expressed concern in the concept of 'community'. By defining the communities in which the university operates, the mission statement is likely to reinforce the boundary between the university and the community. Mission statements vary from the affirmation of independence, scholarliness and quality amongst old universities to the declaration of more local and regional commitment amongst newer universities.

However, tailored mission statements may force many institutions to be more locally sensitive and accountable to local contexts. This has brought to the surface "the extent and ways in which different institutions see their role in relation to local communities", and as a result, "to differing degrees, and in different ways, all modern universities now have an interest in strengthening local links" (Hardy, 1996, 14). Through the mission statement, the community, however defined, is becoming a central concern for the university. Despite the local origins and indebtedness of many universities, the issue of defining the community has become much more complex for the university, as the next part of this section discusses.

### **The Local, the Regional, the National, the Global...**

...the university is embedded in many different types of "community": some local, some global; some overlapping and interacting, some barely recognising each other (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994, 11).

One fundamental issue which the university has to reconcile is negotiating communities at different spatial scales. For the university, definitions of community range from the immediate locality, the growing importance of regional networks, the historic attachment to the nation-state, the global community of scholars and transnational capitalism and hybrid communities such as university consortia. The university, then, is a point of mediation between many different spatial scales:

The pluralized culture of the university resembles the complex life of contemporary immigrant neighbourhoods, where residents live in local urban neighbourhoods and

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diasporic networks. Teachers and students in a university... must constantly bring together in fruitful ways... the local and the translocal (Bender, 1996, 24).

The relationship between the university and its community may enter into a phase of relocalisation after a period of nationalisation and delocalisation of higher education in the 1960s:<sup>15</sup>

The modern academic disciplines were born in alliance with the rising nation state, not the city... for its first century the modern university and nation have been more closely tied than the university and the city. Today, however, there is a question of whether the nation is secure enough to host either science or scholarship... Might the metropolis supersede the nation as the sustaining milieu for the modern university and its disciplines in its second century? (Bender, 1996, 17).

Further:

By reorienting academic culture from the nation to the metropolis, and from national cultures to the metropolitan cultures in which they are deeply implicated, one might thereby acquire important new resources for the making of a pluralised public culture (Bender, 1996, 23).

There is a growing level of local collaboration, then, between universities and other development agencies within which universities play a central role. In this sense, "[s]ome universities have come to the perhaps ironic conclusion that the only way to achieve international significance is through local collaboration" (Utley, 1997).

There is also an increasing awareness of the regional role of higher education (Dearing, 1997; Robson et al., 1997; Goddard, 1997a, 1997b). The National Report of Inquiry into Higher Education (The Dearing Report, 1997) devoted a chapter to the issue of the local and regional role of higher education and commented that regional involvement of higher education institutions was 'patchy' and as a result universities needed to 'turn to active and systematic engagement'. Regionalism has been a neglected part of the higher education agenda especially considering that the regional distribution of universities are

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<sup>15</sup> This theme was emphasised by Goddard at the Conference on Urban Universities and their Cities (1996) and refers to the localisation of universities through recruitment, funding, industrial and business links, and partnership building.

'accidents of history' and that there has been an historical problem in terms of fostering regional collaboration (Goddard, 1997a). However, the regional dimension to higher education is set to grow in the future, particularly in the light of the new regional agenda of the Labour government and the proposed regional development agencies. In this sense, there is a growing interest in regional collaboration between universities in some parts of Britain such as Yorkshire (the Yorkshire and Humberside Universities Association) and the North East (Higher Education Support for Industry in the North - HESIN).

Yet, universities still have an important role to play at the level of the nation-state. Following the German model, the university played a crucial role in nation-state building and functioned as an ideological arm of the nation-state. This role still exists, especially in terms of university funding. However, the shift towards globalization has led many universities into partnerships with transnational corporations rather than fostering a "capacity to realize the essence of a nation-state or its people" (Readings, 1996, 51).

There are strong processes of de-localising, then, affecting the university such as the establishment and growth of greenfield universities, changing patterns of educational demand through sub- and counter-urbanisation and the increasing dependency of universities upon activity undertaken in industrial and international rather than urban and local settings. In this sense, there are growing trends towards international and pan-European networks of universities, such as the Coimbra and Santander Groups, which upwardly link universities into a more global community of scholars and research activity. There is also the emergence of non-place communities of universities such as the Russell Group which are established to further the specific interests of their members.

The university, then, works within communities on several different spatial scales. "The university has always claimed the world, not its host city, as its domain. Whatever its local roots, the university historically has striven for learning that at least reaches toward universal significance" (Bender, 1988, 294). The basic problem, then, is how to manage the university locally in an increasingly global world.

It seems the idea of the university is stuck between a rock and a hard-place; I agree with Readings (1996) that it should abandon both a notion that its mission is to pursue an organicist notion of culture by trying to realise a national identity and tendencies to court a globalised, corporate economy and its discourse of excellence. But how do we re-

imagine the relationship between the university and the community once such guiding ideas have been rejected? The following comment by Readings (1996, 124) allows us to think about possible answers:

I do not think we can save the idea of the university by proposing new referents (...) [r]ather we need to recognise that the dereferentialization of the University's function opens up a space in which we can think about the notions of community... differently.

Rather than hiding behind the pretence of a unified higher education sector, then, in a pluralistic system it is possible for individual universities to adopt specific roles and conceptions of the community which range from the very local to the global. The final section will discuss some of the ways in which the impact of the university in the community have been conceptualised and suggest ways in which an understanding of these impacts can be broadened to include the 'cultural'.

## **CONCEPTUALISING THE IMPACT OF THE UNIVERSITY ON THE COMMUNITY**

The roles and impacts of universities in the community have, in general, been conceptualised in two ways. The first conceptualises the economic impacts of universities, often through multiplier analysis. The second is through the concept of the 'Learning Society' and associated processes such as lifelong learning and recurrent and adult education. This section will discuss each of these in turn and then introduce a largely neglected area of university-community interface - the cultural impacts of universities.

### **The Economic Impact of Universities**

Universities are truly one of Britain's growth industries - in terms of student and staff numbers, income from academic fees, services rendered, research activities and space needs. A number of recent studies have studied in some detail the economic impacts of UK university sector (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994; McNicoll et al., 1997). In particular, it was calculated that in 1995/96, higher education in the UK generated employment for over 3% of the total UK workforce and the gross output generated by it was over £43 billion (McNicoll et al., 1997).



It would be difficult, and foolish, then, to criticise the economic contributions universities make towards local, regional, national and even international well-being and development. Most universities would see it as their *raison d'être*: "Technology transfer is one of the main external linkage activities of the universities, and is identified in mission statements as perhaps the most important issue in terms of local interaction" (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994, 20).

The role of universities in building knowledge networks and agglomeration economies is an important component of this economic role of universities (Armstrong et al. 1995, 1997; Lambooy, 1997; CURDS, 1997). Much effort is focused upon developing frameworks for analysing and guiding university engagement with the regional economic development process (CURDS, 1997). However, Hall (1996, 1997) has commented that the most successful recorded cases of university-industrial synergy are all American - at MIT, Stanford and Caltech. In Europe and Japan, universities have played less of a role in creating local industrial synergies. The only real exception was the 'Cambridge Phenomenon' (ibid.).

What I discuss below is the limitations of a number of studies undertaken since the 1960s in the UK concerning the local economic impact of higher education institutions. In the 1960s, these studies:

were concerned to discover whether public expenditure on university education might reduce regional imbalances thereby improving the macroeconomic performance of the economy. Many of the post 1980 studies reflect a growing concern on the part of the HEIs themselves to demonstrate that they make a significant contribution to their local economy, particularly given the expansion of student numbers (CVCP, 1994, Appendix II, 61).

There are a growing number of such economic impact studies as universities compete to demonstrate the economic impacts they generate in their local and regional economies.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Many recent studies have examined the impact universities have on the communities which include *Building Lancaster's Future*, (Armstrong, Darrall and Grove-White, 1994); *What does a university add to its local economy?* (Bleaney et al., 1992); *The Economic Impact of Bristol Polytechnic on the County of Avon* (Braddon et al., 1982); *The Economic Impact of Bristol Polytechnic* (Taylor, 1989); *The Local Impact of the University of Durham*, (Lewis and Townsend, 1994); *The Economic and Social Impact of Greater Manchester's Universities* (Robson et al., 1995), *The Economic Impact of Middlesex*

Most of these studies have drawn upon economic multiplier analysis which are calculated through three categories:

1. **The Direct Impact** refers to the impact effect of the direct employment of staff at the University. In essence, it is the proportion of total net wages spent in the defined area by University staff.
2. **The Indirect Impact** relates to non-salaried expenditure by the University and Students' Union (i.e. purchases) in the area under consideration and the expenditure generated by the additionally impacting students (i.e. expenditure by students who are resident in the area under consideration solely because of the existence of the University).
3. **The Induced Impact** refers to the additional impact resulting from expenditure on goods and services in the area under consideration by recipients of both direct and indirect income. It is calculated by applying a multiplier to the sum of the Direct and Indirect Impacts. The multiplier is based on the percentage of University purchases made within each defined area and an assumption on the amount of this which is available to be subsequently spent.

However, there are many problems with such narrow econometric modelling. Firstly, there are many informal and unmonitored university impacts which are not amenable to quantitative assessment, for example the contribution of the university to issues such as quality of life and inward investment and its contribution to a learning environment, not to mention the economic impacts accruing from other social and cultural roles of the university: "While econometric modelling approaches are useful in assessing 'expenditure impacts', they are of less use in gauging 'knowledge impacts'".<sup>17</sup> As the SRHE commented: "The full impact of an educated society is difficult to measure objectively" (SRHE, 1996, 2). Impact models cannot grapple with the less tangible and very localised impacts, whether it be in terms of student spending, localised and small scale technology transfer or the effects of the university on the local built environment (Robson et al., 1995).

Secondly, a worrying tendency is the rather narrow and similar methodologies adopted by these studies. Most models include a Keynesian economic multiplier value which does

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*University*, (North, 1995) and *The Impact of Strathclyde University on the Economy of Scotland*, (McNicoll, 1993) and *The Economic Impact of The University of Bristol on its Region* (Chatterton, 1997).

<sup>17</sup> Florax (1992), quoted in Robson, B. et al., *The Economic and Social Impact of Greater Manchester's Universities* (1995).

not show a great deal of variation. Most fluctuate around a value of 1.20 (i.e. for every £ spent by the university, a further £0.20 is generated in the area under consideration). Most reports suffer from over-interpreting and over-emphasising this one figure. It is a figure which is susceptible to error because of the amount of other variables and calculations it depends upon and hence its actual meaning is open to limited interpretation. The SRHE (1996, 2) commented that although there is a recognition of the importance of the economic impacts of higher education, there is far less certainty as to what the impacts are and how they are to be measured:

The economic impacts of higher education are of vital policy importance. They can, however, be measured at several different levels; the individual, the local or regional community, the national economy and international trade and competitiveness. Our current knowledge of these impacts is both partial and time-limited.

What is required is a more dynamic model which incorporates a wider conception of the impact of a university on the community. A number of reports have developed such a model. The CVCP/Goddard report (1994) led the way in this respect by suggesting that not only are universities 'an important growth element in regional economies' but they also contribute 'to more self-aware and knowledgeable local communities' and are 'therefore a major resource in terms of the functioning of local "civil society"' (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994). This approach was built upon by Robson et al. (1995) which discussed that in cities, "the HEI impact is a broad one, covering not only the measurable elements of financial and employment generation, but also the wider cultural and social aspects of local and regional life" (Robson et al., 1995, 3).

We can see, then, that it is important to acknowledge the direct economic impacts of universities, yet to understand them as only one component of the broad impacts universities have on the community: "While the economic impact is undoubtedly critical, it should not be seen as pre-eminent... What we need is an education-led economy, not industry-led education" (SRHE, 1996, 3).

Clearly, the 1994 CVCP/Goddard report has created a specific way of looking at the university-community interface which has been followed by many in a rather rigid and

formulistic manner.<sup>18</sup> While this should be welcomed for getting certain issues on to the agenda, it must not be uncritically accepted as *the* way to describe and manage the university-community interface. Although examples like the CVCP/Goddard and Robson reports have broadened the discussion to include social and cultural impacts, it is my contention that the nature of the cultural impacts are not fully understood and explored. Before we proceed to explore this cultural role, the role of universities as learning institutions in a Learning Society will be explored.

### **The Learning University and the Learning Society**

There has been a growing debate on the concept of the Learning Society, and how the university, as an organisation, can be conceptualised as a Learning University.<sup>19</sup> As one may expect with such a widespread use of the term, it has been imbued with a variety of different meanings. Ainley (1994, 155) described the Learning Society as one "which systematically increases the skills and knowledge of all its members to exploit technological innovation and so gain a competitive edge."

A recent book entitled *The Learning Society* (eds. Raggatt, Edwards and Small, 1996) highlights that the idea of the Learning Society, and associated terms like lifelong learning and learning organisations, is not new, but is now mainly used with reference to issues like economic competitiveness and skill levels, rather than earlier conceptions of it as a condition for democratic citizenship. The book stresses that although economic changes are touchstones for the growth of lifelong learning, cultural changes, especially the growth of identity politics and consumer cultures, create a new interest in, and opportunities for, learning (ibid., 1996). In the Learning Society, then, education should enact a cultural revolution rather than a skills revolution (Ainley, 1994, 187).

In this sense, the Learning Society is one "in which lifelong learning may contribute not only to economic and labour market objectives but also to wider cultural, social and equitable goals", and so the type of learning society which develops is influenced as

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<sup>18</sup> The present author acknowledges that he has followed the structure of the 1994 CVCP report in a rather recipe-style way for the purposes of analysing the economic and social impacts of the University of Bristol.

<sup>19</sup> Ainley (1994), Scott (1995), Duke (1992) and Raggatt, Edwards and Small (1996) have all discussed the concept of the Learning Society.

much by the lifestyles and motivations of the learners as it is by their disposable incomes and the needs of the economy (ibid.).<sup>20</sup> The concept of lifelong learning includes recurrent and continuing education rather than initial pre-experience education which places learning experiences not just in the hands of certain groups in certain places such as universities, but in many places and circumstances.

The concept of the Learning Society is very inclusive. For example, it is about concepts like learning banks, modular credits, open and distance learning, adult education and participation by older adults.<sup>21</sup> Phrases used to describe the learning society include 'common source of inspiration', 'education as a dimension of society', 'completeness', 'collective competence', 'self-education', 'the right to learn' (van der Zee, 1996). It is a society in which learning is the whole of life and the whole of life is learning (ibid.).

It is also about many types of activities which currently fall into the category of 'leisure'. Many activities which are now simply seen as leisure, especially liberal adult education, are in fact important aspects of lifelong learning. If they are brought back into the realms of the learning society, then we could also make some interesting links between the growth of such a society and the re-emergence of an equitable civic culture (Worpole, 1996).

In its widest sense, the Learning Society evokes a scenario where the boundaries between the university and the community are extremely permeable. As the OECD commented: "If the university is to be effectively integrated into the community it must no longer concern itself only with those who attend the university, namely the teachers and the students. It should be possible to pass on one's skills without being a teacher, and to receive training without being a student" (OECD, 1982, 13).

However, one caveat to the promotion of the concept of a Learning Society, is who is doing the promoting and why. The world of business might suggest that the Learning Society could help to match the demands of industry with the supply of graduates. Educationalists may suggest the equity associated with lifelong and adult learning.

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<sup>20</sup> A similar point is made by Scott (1995) where higher education has also become a consumption experience for a particular way of life rather than just a preparation for a production experience.

<sup>21</sup> Schuller and Bostyn (1996) highlight the social economy and aspirations of what the Carnegie Inquiry (1993) has called the 'third age' - those over 50 years old.

Others would simply suggest the beneficial effects of a society with higher levels of educational achievements and aspirations. Mass higher education provision within a Learning Society, then, is not unproblematic: "My worry is that we are in grave danger, at the moment, of building an underclass of very disillusioned graduates, very articulate, but with a massive chip on their shoulder".<sup>22</sup>

However, the point is that within a Learning Society, learning does not stop with the attainment of a bachelor degree and hence the only problem is not graduate employment. The conception of what an higher education experience consists of in a Learning Society changes from either a rite of passage or vocational training, to a life-long experience. In this sense, considered together, the Learning Society and a mass higher education system expands the temporal and spatial boundaries of the university to include a larger group of people over a longer and often recurrent period of time.

What role does higher education play in the Learning Society? Many universities have incorporated the discourse of the Learning Society into their mission, as the following quote from one Vice-Chancellor demonstrates:

The move to a high-volume higher education system marks what will be a cultural change. By the middle of the next century, between a third and a half of the entire population of working age will be graduates of initial higher education... [it]... will be a normal expectation: life long learners and life-long nation wide learning (Wright, 1994, 90).

Duke (1992) discusses the role of higher education within the learning society in his book *The Learning University: Towards a New Paradigm?* Duke (1992) is concerned as to whether the university is indeed changing in terms of its ability to become a learning organisation which can adapt to new circumstances such as providing lifelong learning. He suggests that the concept of a learning university - an organisation that both learns and fosters learning - constitutes a paradigm shift. Duke's argument is that developments in the areas of Continuing Education (CE) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) can be seen as leading the way for a new paradigm for higher education which places universities at the centre of the learning society as providers of lifelong learning. This new paradigm is about new mission statements and even a new language for the ways in

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<sup>22</sup> This is a sentiment expressed by an industrialist who is concerned as to whether continued expansion of universities is beneficial. Quoted in *National Commission on Education*, 1994, 105.

which universities operate. One aspect of this new language is dismantling old notions such as the ivory tower and its internal organisations of academic tribalism and individualism (Duke, 1992).

Importantly, in this respect the Learning University has as much to learn from the community as the community does from the university. The work of Bender (1996, 24) could be read to suggest that universities would make excellent learning organisations: "no other institution has such rich connections at once to a local intellectual, political and social milieu and to a global network of ideas, structures, and powers." The simultaneous connectivity of universities to various spatial scales and their separateness from, yet propinquity within, the community allows them to play a key role within the Learning Society. This key role would also include integration not only with other producers of knowledge but also with providers of secondary, further and adult education. "The language of the learning society, therefore, is significant because it suggests a growing affinity between hitherto incommensurable worlds" (Scott, 1995, 32).

The discourse on the Learning Society, then, seems to have permeated the idea of the university. In particular, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) research programme entitled 'The Learning Society' is a multi-disciplinary project which encompasses academic researchers in education, psychology, sociology and social policy throughout the UK and further afield. Individual projects include research areas such as learning systems, training provision, continuing education and skills acquisition. However, what this ESRC funded project demonstrates is the rather narrow conceptualisation of what a learning society is, based around in this case the needs of the economy, training and skills.

The concept of the Learning Society and the role which universities play within it, has been discussed at a local and regional scale. For example, many universities have become interested in the concept of 'Cities of Learning'. This was used as a theme at the CVCP conference in 1995 entitled *Cities of Learning? The Contribution of Higher Education to Local Economic Regeneration*. The idea that universities contribute to the learning city stems from the fact that "universities grow from their local communities. Many began as institutes to local working men and women...Universities are not ivory towers, despite this popular misconception in some quarters. They are living organisations which draw their vitality

from the world around them.”<sup>23</sup> Liverpool has established itself as a ‘City of Learning’. Such initiatives (to date the first one in Britain) stress how educational activity and spending contributes to local economic regeneration. However, the lack of popularity for such projects points to the fact that most large cities in Britain currently operate in such a way without the need for such a formal initiative to be established.

At the regional level, the concept of the ‘Learning Region’ has been used to explore the role of universities in economic development. Within the Learning Region, the role of the university is to enhance the stock of knowledge-networks and human capital in the region (Goddard, 1997b). Such debates are particularly prevalent in Britain’s lagging economic regions such as the North where universities are considered as important contributors to economic and social development.

The concept of the Learning University and the Learning Society challenges traditional ideas of the university and its role in society. The Learning Society, perhaps along the lines of the USA, is more comfortable with the role of the university by embracing the notion of a wider ‘college culture’. However, some British universities regard themselves as finishing schools in which learning is a rite of passage. The bachelor degree, with its connotations of residentiality and social exclusion, may be inappropriate to a Learning Society. The concept of the Learning Society and Learning University, then, is in conflict with many traditions of the university:

Can the ‘traditional’ idea of a university education coexist with an emergent paradigm of HEI’s as centres for lifelong learning? Or can non-traditional students be tolerated only as long as they are too small a minority to risk altering campus culture? (Duke, 1992, 62).

This answer to this question obviously depends on the university to which one is referring. Despite unification in 1992, there are still two types of institutional culture within British universities differentiating ‘finishing schools’ from ‘service stations’ (ibid.).

It is likely, then, that the discourse of the Learning Society will only be partially adopted within the British higher education sector. However, the whole tenor of the Learning Society debate is a useful starting point to help us reconceptualise and broaden the ways

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<sup>23</sup> This quote is from Kenneth Edwards, Chairman of the CVCP, in his opening address at the Cities of Learning Conference, Lancaster University, 1995.



we think about the impacts which universities have on their communities. By way of an introduction to the discussion in Chapter 3, the final part of this chapter briefly explores the concept of the cultural role of universities to broaden our understanding of the impacts of universities in the community.

### **(Re)Conceptualising the Impact of the University: The place of culture**

...a degree is given for attendance and participation in a certain sort of cultural and social life. What is now spoken and often thought of as 'extra-curricular' must come to be seen and attended to as the real heart of university life and the main justification of the university's existence (Kumar, 1997, 29).

A recurring problem in conceptualising the university-community interface is an emphasis on certain types of university roles and impacts at the expense of others. "The maintenance of the university as an 'academic community', predominates in current policy debates to the exclusion of other conceptions of the university-community interface" (Hake, 1996, 60). This thesis, then, is an attempt to widen the university-community debate by exploring the cultural roles and impacts of universities and their students on the community.

Universities have always had a cultural impact on their communities through university-owned facilities such as theatres, galleries and concert halls and course-based activity which largely disseminates a sense of national culture and the canons of high culture. Yet universities increasingly play much broader cultural roles. The rest of Part One will discuss the manifold cultural roles which universities have in the community. These range from the contributions of universities to the 'popular' and 'official' cultural infrastructures of cities to the role of universities as a resource within the local cultural and artistic communities. Further, Part Two adds to this discussion by exploring the impacts of student lifestyles within the city and in particular forms of entertainment provision aimed at students and specific forms of cultural consumption by them in the city. In sum, these discussions explore the contribution of universities and their students to cultural innovation and vitality in the community.

The next chapter provides some context for these discussions by exploring the city of Bristol, its cultural strategy and infrastructure and its two higher education institutions.

# HIGHER EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN BRISTOL

## INTRODUCTION

**T**his chapter presents an overview of the cultural strategy and infrastructure which has developed in Bristol and a description of the two universities in the city. It sets the scene for the following discussion in Chapter 3 concerning the cultural impacts of the two universities in Bristol on the community.

The first section of this chapter presents some information on the city of Bristol and its cultural identity, strategy and infrastructure. In many ways, Bristol is 'culturally' distinctive in comparison to other British cities. In particular, a cultural strategy developed later in Bristol in comparison to many British cities and only gained momentum and new direction in the last few years. This was due, in part, to the relative prosperity of the city up to the 1990s. The development of this cultural strategy in Bristol has been the focus of some academic interest in recent years (Bassett, 1993, 1996; Griffiths, 1995). The city's cultural infrastructure has a number of strengths in, for example, media and animation and the performing arts which will be re-inforced by the Harbourside development. Bristol has also gained much recognition for the strength of its popular culture, especially through night-club and music activity.

The second section discusses the two higher education institutions in Bristol; the nineteenth century University of Bristol (UB) and the post-1992 University of the West of England (UWE). This section argues that these are two very different higher education institutions and recognising their specific characteristics is of vital importance in terms of understanding the cultural impacts each university and its students have upon the community.

I conclude this chapter by briefly discussing the links between the two universities and the cultural strategy and infrastructure in the city. I argue that while there is a recognition of the contribution which the two universities and their students make towards cultural

vitality in the community, there is no thorough analysis of the cultural impacts of the two universities on the community.

## **BRISTOL: PLACE AND CULTURE**

### **The City of Bristol**

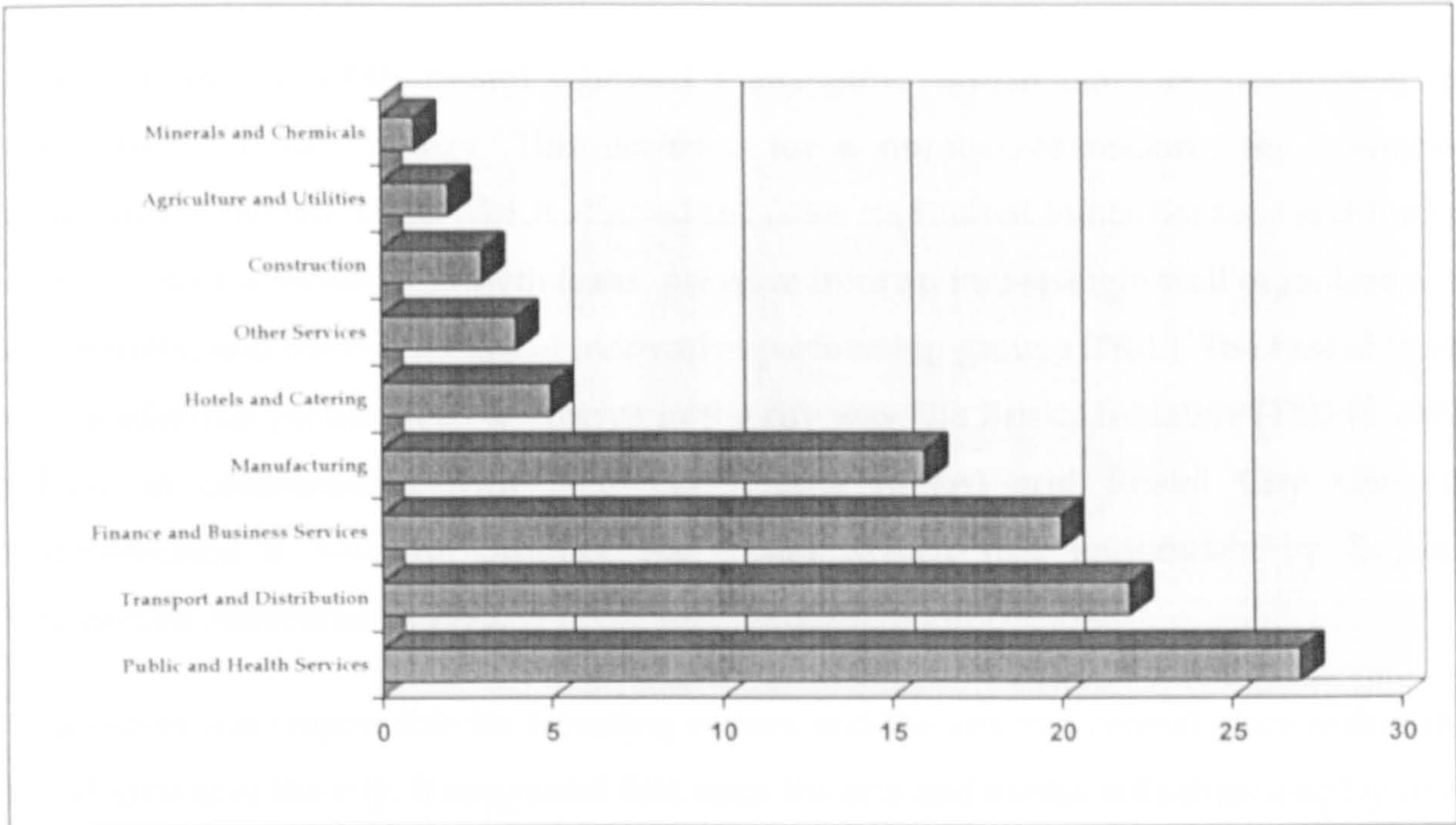
The city and county of Bristol with a population of approaching 400 000, and the former county of Avon with a population of just under 1 000 000, serves as a capital for the South-West region. Until the mid 1980s, Bristol was considered to be one of Britain's relatively prosperous 'sunbelt cities' mainly based on the presence of buoyant industrial sectors such as defence and financial services and good quality of life (Boddy et al., 1986; Griffiths, 1995). However, in the early 1990s, Bristol suffered because of the peace dividend and the slump in the office market. The city seems to have weathered the worst of this decline and has developed strengths in several sectors.

Firstly, the Aerospace industry is of historic and contemporary importance to the region and employs one in five working Bristolians in 600 companies throughout the region such as Rolls Royce, British Aerospace and Westland.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the growth in Electronics and Telecommunications has meant that Britain's own Silicon valley exists in the region through firms like Hewlett Packard, Division and Thompson CSF. Thirdly, the Bristol area has strengths in Financial Services which employs over 55 000 people. The following chart highlights the main areas of employment in the local economy:

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<sup>1</sup> England PLC: *South-West, A Comprehensive Guide to the Business Region*, (1996), Newsco.

FIGURE 2.1: EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR IN THE OLD AVON COUNTY



Source: Western Development Partnership, 1996.

### The Bristol Cultural Strategy

In common with many other British cities, the legacy of cultural provision in Bristol has its origins in arts patronage of the Victorian era. This provision was mainly driven by a belief in the civilising power of high art and acted as an emblem for the success of the local bourgeoisie (Bassett, 1993). In this period the foundations of a cultural infrastructure were established in the city through venues such as The Royal West of England Academy, The Victoria Rooms, The City Museum and Art Gallery and subsequently, the Bristol Old Vic and the Colston Hall. However, there was very little in the way of an emergence of a distinctive local cultural strategy in Bristol for most of the twentieth century (*ibid.*, 1993, 1780). In this respect: "Bristol was not among the first wave of British and European cities that began to experiment in the 1980s with innovative culture-related urban regeneration initiatives" (Griffiths, 1995, 257).

By the 1980s, then, in contrast to other British cities, Bristol had neglected the development of a cultural strategy. This absence stemmed from three distinctive features of the city; the relative strength of the Bristol economy throughout much of the post-war era and the lack of need for culture-led growth; a weakness of urban interests because of

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the absence of metropolitan status for Avon; and a local leadership based upon Protestant non-conformism rather than innovation (Griffiths, 1995, 258).

However, by the 1990s Bristol followed many other British cities by developing an innovative cultural strategy. This occurred for a number of reasons; the economic downturn of the late 1980s which affected the cities traditional industrial base and forced moves to seek alternative growth areas; pressure from an increasingly well organised arts community; and the emergence of innovative partnership groups (ibid.). The first of these new leadership partnerships to emerge in the city was The Bristol Initiative (TBI) in 1989, which, in collaboration with South West Arts (SWA) and Bristol City Council, commissioned a 'Cultural Strategy for Bristol' which was undertaken by Boyden Southwood Associates in 1992.

This report was responsible for elevating culture and the arts to a central place within the development of the city. It suggested that since the arts and media industries employ over 2500 people and generates over £35M in the city, spending on the arts should be increased. The report went on to argue that culture played a central role in the overall well-being of the city, yet there was an absence of a strategic framework for cultural activity (Boyden Southwood, 1992). As a result, it recommended that a cultural planning group should be established. This emerged in the form of the Bristol Cultural Development Partnership (BCDP) whose main objective is 'to provide leadership on cultural activity in the city'.<sup>2</sup> From the inception of the BCDP onwards, a distinct cultural strategy for the city was forcefully pursued. This strategy promotes a particular cultural vision based upon the belief in partnership, place promotion (mainly through flagship developments) and the idea of the creative city. These are discussed in turn below.

One of the main strengths of BCDP is its "striking capacity to act as a catalyst for partnership" (Griffiths, 1995, 262). Since the establishment of the BCDP a number of such partnerships have been established in the city. These include the Bristol Regeneration Partnership which co-ordinates SRB activity, the Broadmead Board which seeks to maintain Bristol as a retail centre and the Western Development Partnership, the development arm of the city council. Most notably, Bristol 2000 was established as an independent subsidiary of BCDP to act as a steering group to oversee the development of

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<sup>2</sup> BCDP, *Medium to Long Term Strategy*, 1994, 1.

the Harbourside area and the associated lottery bids. The city council has also become part of this partnership model and, as a result, has taken a much more pro-active stand towards culture and the arts. In particular, it reorganised its Leisure Services Department to prioritise the arts and, in conjunction with SWA and BCDP, commissioned The Bristol Arts Strategy (1995) to create a five year action plan for the arts within the new Bristol unitary authority.

Place promotion has also become a key theme for the cultural strategy. The City Council has aspirations 'for the City of Bristol to realise its full potential as a prosperous vibrant regional capital'<sup>3</sup> and BCDP has an objective "to use cultural activity to raise Bristol's profile regionally, nationally and internationally."<sup>4</sup> Such ambitions are being achieved through the development of flagship projects. In particular, the Bristol 2000 partnership is involved in the Harbourside development, a major urban renewal project which aims to re-develop 66 acres of the city's historic waterfront area. The Harbourside Project is based around the three worlds concept; Science World, Wildscreen World and Performance World. The first two Worlds are to build upon Bristol's strengths in natural history and recently received 50% of the £82M project cost from the Millennium Commission in 1996. Performance World is to function as a major new regional performing arts venue called the 'Harbourside Centre' which will have several performance spaces and a main auditorium with a capacity of around 3 000. Bristol 2000 secured £70M of lottery money towards the £93M project cost of the Harbourside Centre in 1997 from the Millennium Commission. The Centre is to act as a major facility for the Bristol community and is also to be a significant landmark building and cultural venue to increase the city's national and international reputation. The Harbourside development comprises most of the effort expended by the city's cultural partnerships and is indicative of the fact that "cultural development objectives are being subordinated by those of urban renewal" (Griffiths, 1995, 262).

The final distinctive aspect of Bristol's cultural vision is a new discourse which has entered its cultural strategy based upon the idea of creativity. The ultimate vision of

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<sup>3</sup> Bristol Arts Strategy, 1995, 3.

<sup>4</sup> BCDP, *Medium to Long Term Strategy*, 1994, 1.

BCDP is to develop Bristol into a 'creative city that sees arts and culture as central'.<sup>5</sup> This discourse of creativity has entered into recent debates on urban cultural strategies (Bianchini and Landry, 1994, 1995) and has been pursued through several international conferences (Creative Cities Workshop, Glasgow, 1994; The Creative City, Helsinki, 1996). As a result, certain cities such as Barcelona, Cologne, Bologna and even Huddersfield have gained the label 'creative city'. However, definitions of what characterises a creative city are frighteningly vague. It seems that any city can be creative if it pursues, as Bristol City Council put it: "new and different ways of looking at the world."<sup>6</sup>

Within the framework of this vision, Bristol has achieved a significant amount, if only to reverse the low prioritisation of culture and the arts. It has been suggested that recent partnership-based cultural strategies such as those in Bristol are illustrative of a 'new mode of urban intervention' (Griffiths, 1995) and new forms of urban governance (Bassett, 1996). In Bristol, such a model has been successful in terms of securing outside investment and lottery money to create nationally and internationally recognised cultural institutions in the city such as those planned at the Harbourside. However, the extent to which this rather formulaic partnership, flagship and promotional cultural vision has concentrated upon issues of economic development and place marketing rather than addressing wider cultural development is an issue of concern. The Bristol Strategy, then, represents a lowest-common-denominator managerialist philosophy of caution and compromise (Griffiths, 1995, 264). More worryingly: "What is most striking about the development so far of the Bristol cultural strategy is that there is, in fact, no clear strategy" (ibid.).

### **The Cultural Infrastructure in Bristol**

The message from Boyden and Southwood's Cultural Strategy for Bristol (1992) was that the city has a well developed cultural and arts infrastructure:

In most art forms, across the full range from amateur through community and grant provision to the private sector, there is a surprising high level of activity... At an amateur level the city is tremendously strong in the areas of theatre and music. Community arts

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<sup>5</sup> BCDP Medium to Long Term Strategy, 1994, 1.

<sup>6</sup> Living Bristol, Draft Document, Bristol City Council, 1996, 9.

groups continue to make a major contribution under increasingly difficult circumstances. The main flagship organisations in theatre (Bristol Old Vic), fine art (the Arnolfini) and film (the Watershed)... are poised for growth. The audio visual media industries represent a significant economic subsector in their own right (Boyden Southwood, 1992, Introductory Issue Paper, 13).

Five years later, with the creation and maturation of a more strategic framework, Bristol's cultural infrastructure has grown. However, an initial problem is that public support for the arts in Bristol is low in comparison to other medium sized cities. For example, Bradford spends nearly £9M on the arts compared to £3.5M from Bristol City Council (Boyden Southwood, 1992, Introductory Issues Paper, 17). BCC's art budget is focused upon two venues which accounts for over 80% of expenditure: the Colston Hall, the city's largest concert venue which is likely to be demolished and replaced by the Harbourside Centre and Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery, which alone receives three-quarters of Bristol City Council's expenditure on the arts and therefore is the major net claimant on the city's art expenditure (ibid.).

There is a strong performing arts sector in the city, the focus of which is the Bristol Old Vic (BOV). BOV is the largest grant-aided organisation in the city receiving £750 000 of grant aid. However, funding from Bristol City Council for BOV halved to only £120 000 from 1995 to 1996 (int., Hay, 8/3/96). Despite being one of the most acclaimed repertory companies in the country and housed Britain's oldest continuously working theatre (the Theatre Royal) if one compares such levels of grant aid for BOV to that for other regional repertory theatres such as the Yorkshire Playhouse whose grant aid is over £2M, one can see the low levels of public support for Bristol's cultural heritage (ibid.).

There are several other performing arts venues in the city such as the Hippodrome, a commercial receiving house, the University's Glynne Wickham Theatre and the Redgrave Theatre operated by Clifton College. The strength of the performing arts in the city is also derived from the wealth of small-scale producing companies such as Show of Strength, Bodies in Flight and Public Parts. However, the gaps in theatre provision in the city will only be seriously addressed by the creation of the Harbourside Centre within the Harbourside development.

In terms of Fine Art, the Arnolfini Centre for Contemporary Art is the main focus. Established in 1961, it is a mixed-use centre incorporating bookshop, cafe, cinema and



exhibition space. Further, the Royal West of England Academy, founded by wealthy benefactors in the mid-nineteenth century, sees itself as 'the grand old mother of art in Bristol' (int., Fear, 6/3/96). There is also a strong independent sector based around several commercial galleries and artist support groups, yet there is a lack of exhibition space which discourages many artists from staying in the city (int., Finemann, 5/3/96).

Bristol also has a very strong media and broadcasting sector based around the existence of regional television and radio facilities in the city and a growing number of small independent commercial production companies. The idea of Bristol as a Media City is being heavily promoted in conjunction with organisations such as Bristol Channel, an advocacy organisation for the broadcast media industry in the city, the Media Development Agency and the South West Film Commission and venues such as the Watershed Media Centre, established in 1982 as Britain's first Media Centre. Bristol has also developed an international reputation in animation through firms such as Aardman Animation, A for Animation and Bolex Brothers. Finally, the city has high levels of cinema activity through three independent cinemas and 6 commercial cinemas, two of which are multiplex.

The City also has a well developed community and independent arts sector which is supported by several advocacy bodies for the arts such as Art in Communities Action Network (ACAN), the Campaign for the Arts in Bristol and Avon (CABA), Afrikan Caribbean Arts Forum (ACAF) and the Disability Arts Agency (DAA). These groups recently established 'Arts 4 All', an organisation whose aim was to promote the arts within and across the four new unitary authorities which were established after the abolition of Avon in April 1996. The concern was that these new unitary authorities have no formal obligation to fund the arts and, therefore, an independent organisation had to lobby against funding cuts in the arts.

Community art in the city has been developed through several venues. These include the Hope Centre, The Albany Centre, Kuumba, The Forum Arts Centre, Avon Community Theatre Agency, the Malcolm X Centre, the Basement Studio through which Roni Size (a Bristol musician who has gained world fame by developing the musical genre of 'drum and bass') established his musical career, Bristol Community Dance Centre and Vizability. Further, the Watershed and the Arnolfini all have high levels of community based activity.

However, Bristol has also gained fame recently for its innovations in popular culture:

the centre of gravity for British youth culture has now shifted to the south-west, with Bristol regarded as the magnet for innovative music and vibrant clubs... the city has taken the baton from Manchester as the place to party (Younge, 1997, 3).

Further, as the music editor of *Venue* commented:

We believe Bristol, at the moment, is in something of a cultural renaissance, especially in the music and the club scene. Bristol has arrived and has come out of being a cultural provincial backwater and that's due, from a personal point of view, to two factors really. Firstly, the sort of latent creativity and the amount of people making music and the club scene in particular has finally matured now and becoming recognised as, you know, house, jungle, hip-hop. All these genres have sort of meant there is a phenomenal amount of good music in Bristol. Also there has been a relaxation by the council in terms of licensing laws to allow clubs to open much later which has contributed to the success of Bristol greatly (int., Mitchell, 2/2/96).

Bristol has experienced a musical revival spearheaded by what has been characterised as the Bristol sound, largely through the studio-based music of Portishead, Massive Attack and Tricky. The city has also been acclaimed for other musical genres such as 'drum and bass' through artists such as Roni Size. This leading role within British popular culture and music has been generated, in part, by the Bristol night-club scene. Bristol has three of the four 24-hour night-club licenses in Britain which encourages much of the musical creativity and experimentation occurring in the city (Younge, 1997, 3). Such innovation is supported by the growth of several clothing and record shops specialising in street and club wear and the latest dance music. However, there are severe shortfalls within this infrastructure such as the lack of a medium and large scale venue for popular music (int., Mitchell, 2/2/96). Again, the Harbourside Centre will play a role in ameliorating such problems.

There is also something of a night life renaissance and a growing bar and cafe culture in the city. In particular, a 200 yard stretch of Whiteladies Road, with 32 licensed premises and a further 10 awaiting planning consent, has acquired the names 'the strip' and 'the golden mile' (Mitchell and Smith, 1997). Much of this development is dependent upon the large number of students, young people and professionals who live, work and socialise in this fashionable area of the city. Further, the Centre area and neighbouring Corn Street

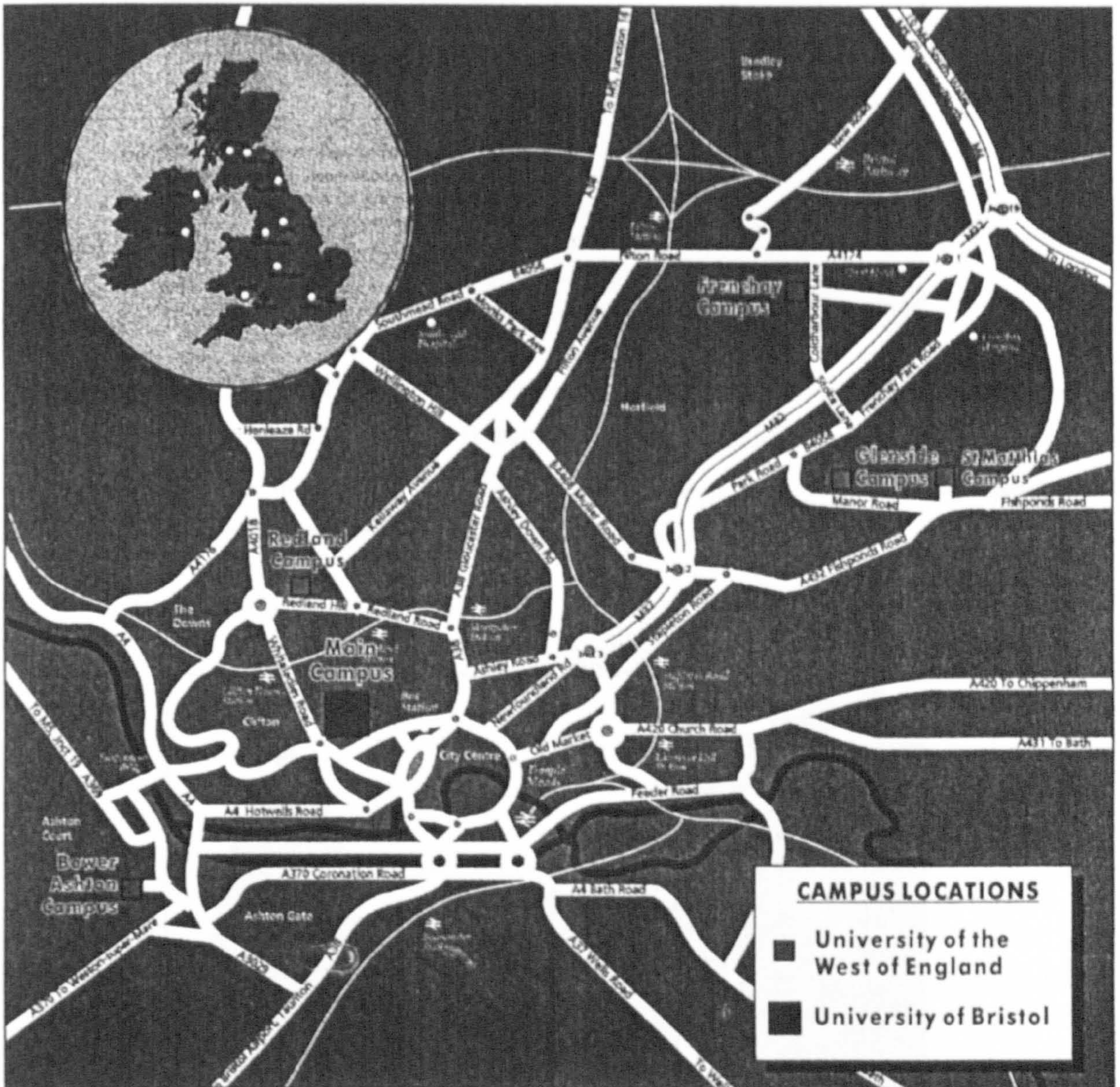
which is earmarked for redevelopment as a major public space through the 'Bristol City-Centre Strategy', has experienced a rapid increase in bars and themed pubs.

In sum, Bristol has a well developed cultural infrastructure. Certain venues play flag-ship roles in their specialist areas; BOV (theatre), The Watershed (technologically reproducible art forms) and the Arnolfini (fine art) and, because of the strengths of the audio-visual and media sector, the city has justifiable claims to be a 'media city'. There is also strength and growth in popular culture. In this sense, Bristol's 'cultural' reputation and identity have been fuelled by the Bristol 'trip-hop' sound of bands such as Portishead, Massive Attack and Tricky and nationally renowned night-clubs such as the Lakota as much as they have by more official cultural activity such as the performing and fine arts.

## HIGHER EDUCATION IN BRISTOL

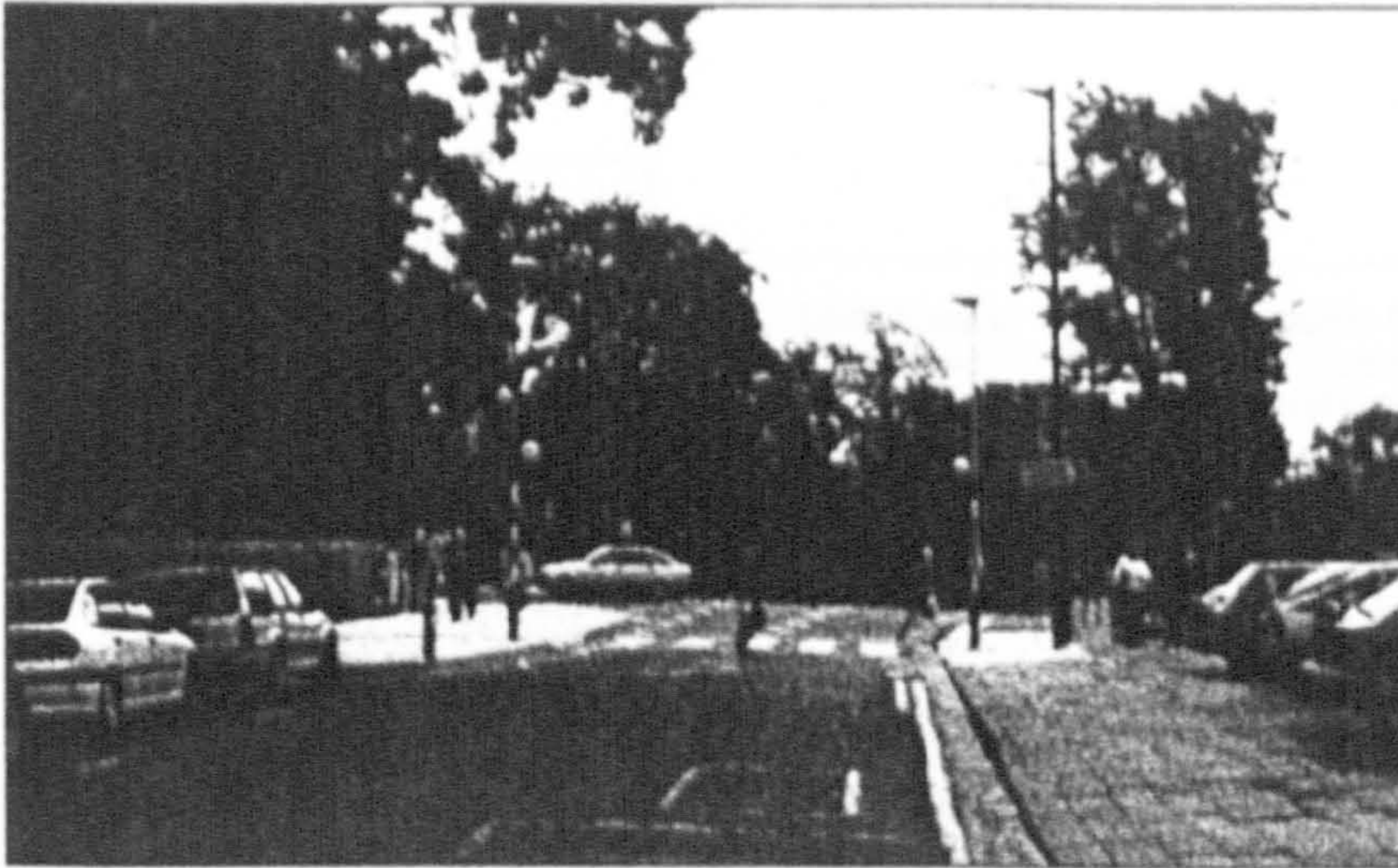
Bristol is home to two institutions of higher education; The University of Bristol and The University of the West of England, Bristol, which together are home to some 7 000 university staff and 34 000 students. The two universities in Bristol differ in terms of their positions in the present higher education system, their territorial focuses (Figure 2.2), their architectural styles and campus atmospheres (Figure 2.3), their histories (Figure 2.4) and their student populations (Figures 2.5 and 2.6). They represent two types of higher education in Britain which have developed side by side in the city; the western humanist/liberal tradition of the ancient and civic universities and the more rational pedagogy emerging from the Marxist/Chartist tradition of the former polytechnics (Ainley, 1995). This divide, and the distinctive institutional atmospheres of the two universities, has been an extremely potent influence in determining the nature of the cultural impacts of the universities and their students.

FIGURE 2.2 THE LOCATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL AND THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND.



Source: Adapted from *A Guide to the University '97*, UWE, 1997.

FIGURE 2.3: THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

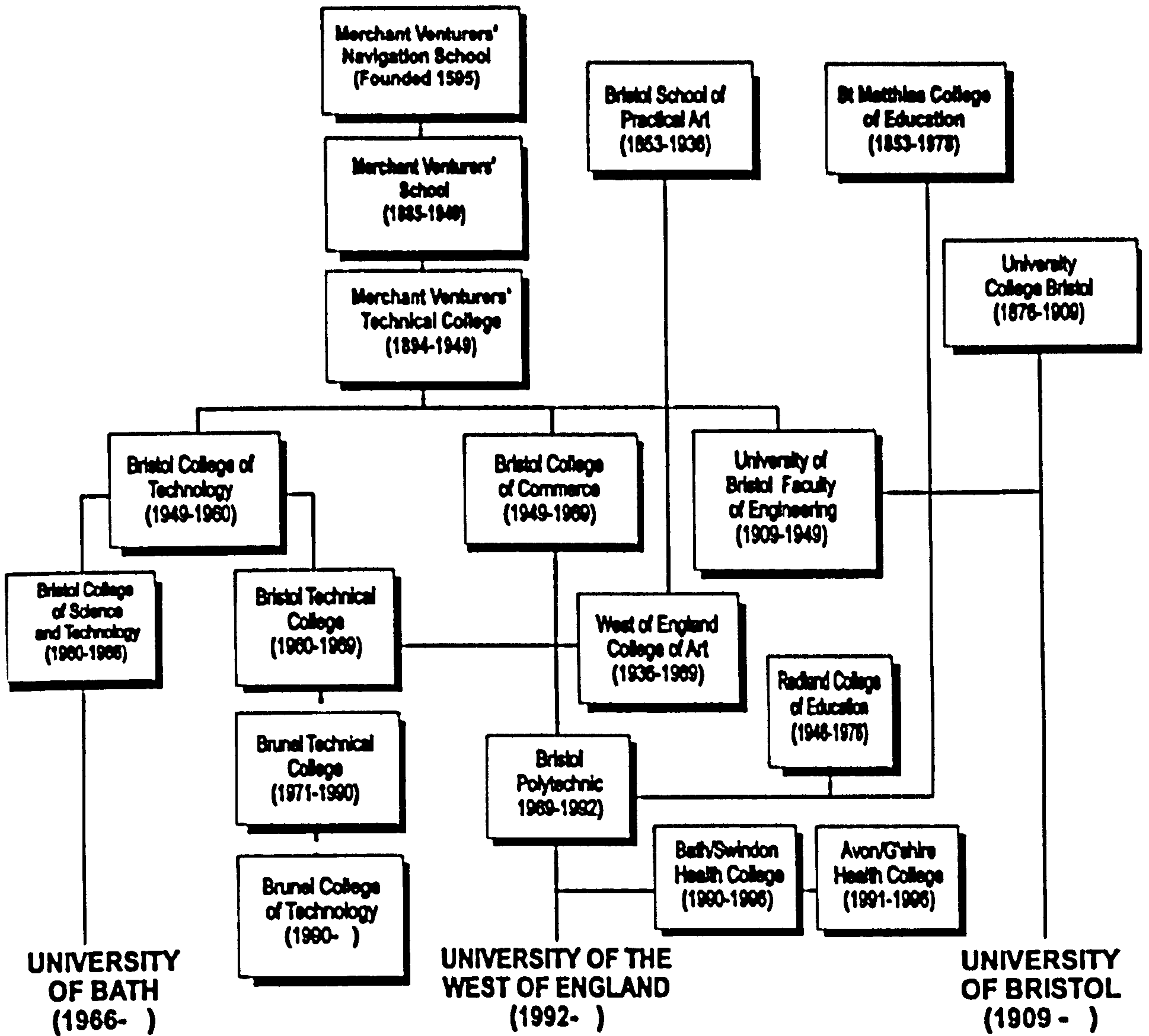


**The UB Precinct (Woodland Road):** This area has been recognised as an enlarged Precinct by the Bristol Local Plan Bristol City Council (1994) and spans five Conservation Areas designated by Bristol City Council. The precinct forms an enclave within a tranquil and picturesque part of Clifton, an area which is regarded as removed from the rest of the city.



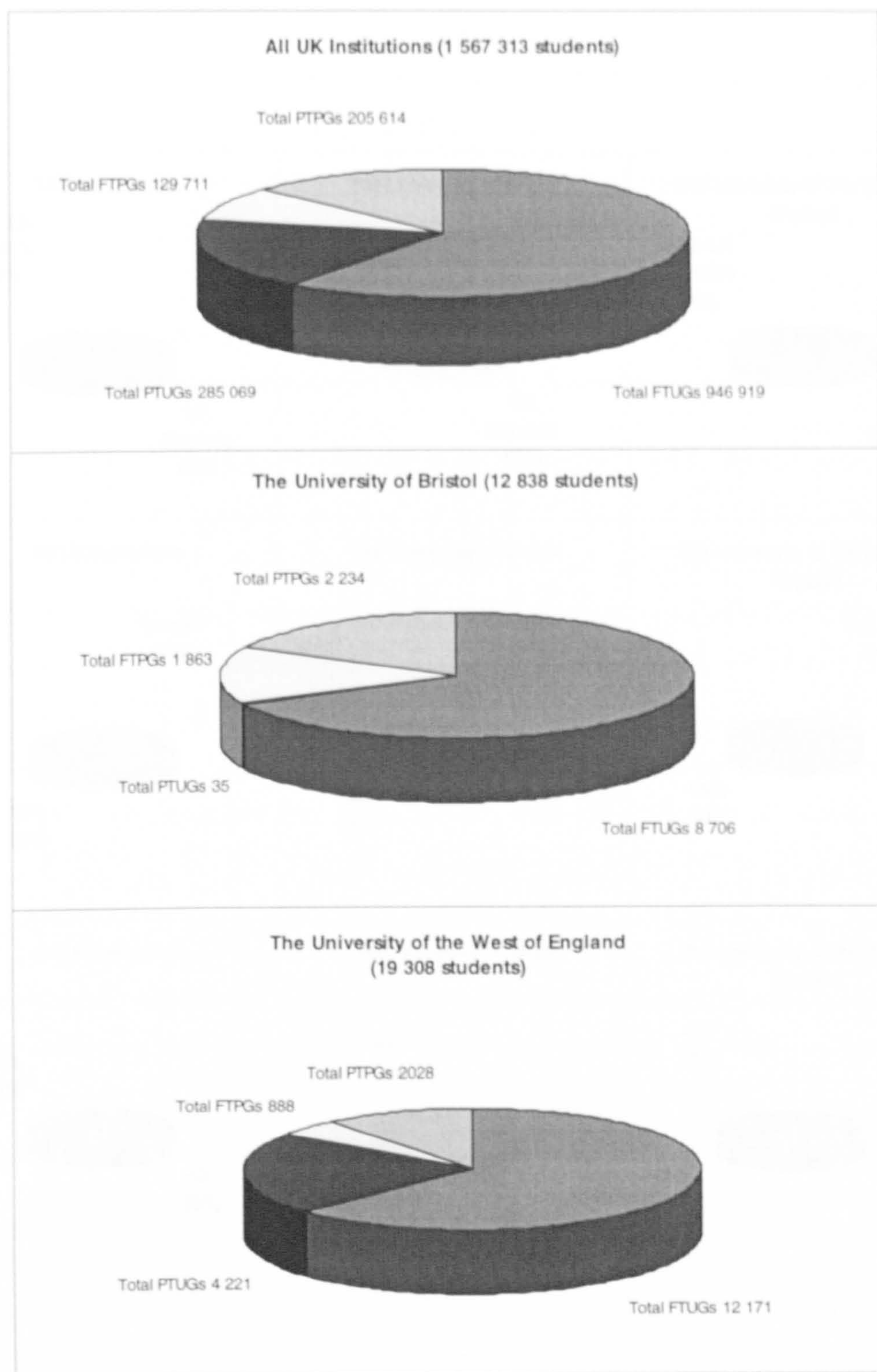
**The UWE Campus (Frenchay)** This large greenfield campus, four miles north of the city-centre, comprises a collection of 1970s academic and office buildings with several amenities such as shops, laundrette, the students' union and a residential village.

FIGURE 2.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE BRISTOL AREA.



Source: Modified from *A Guide to the University '97*, UWE, 1997.

FIGURE 2.5: STUDENTS BY MODE OF ENTRY 1994/95.

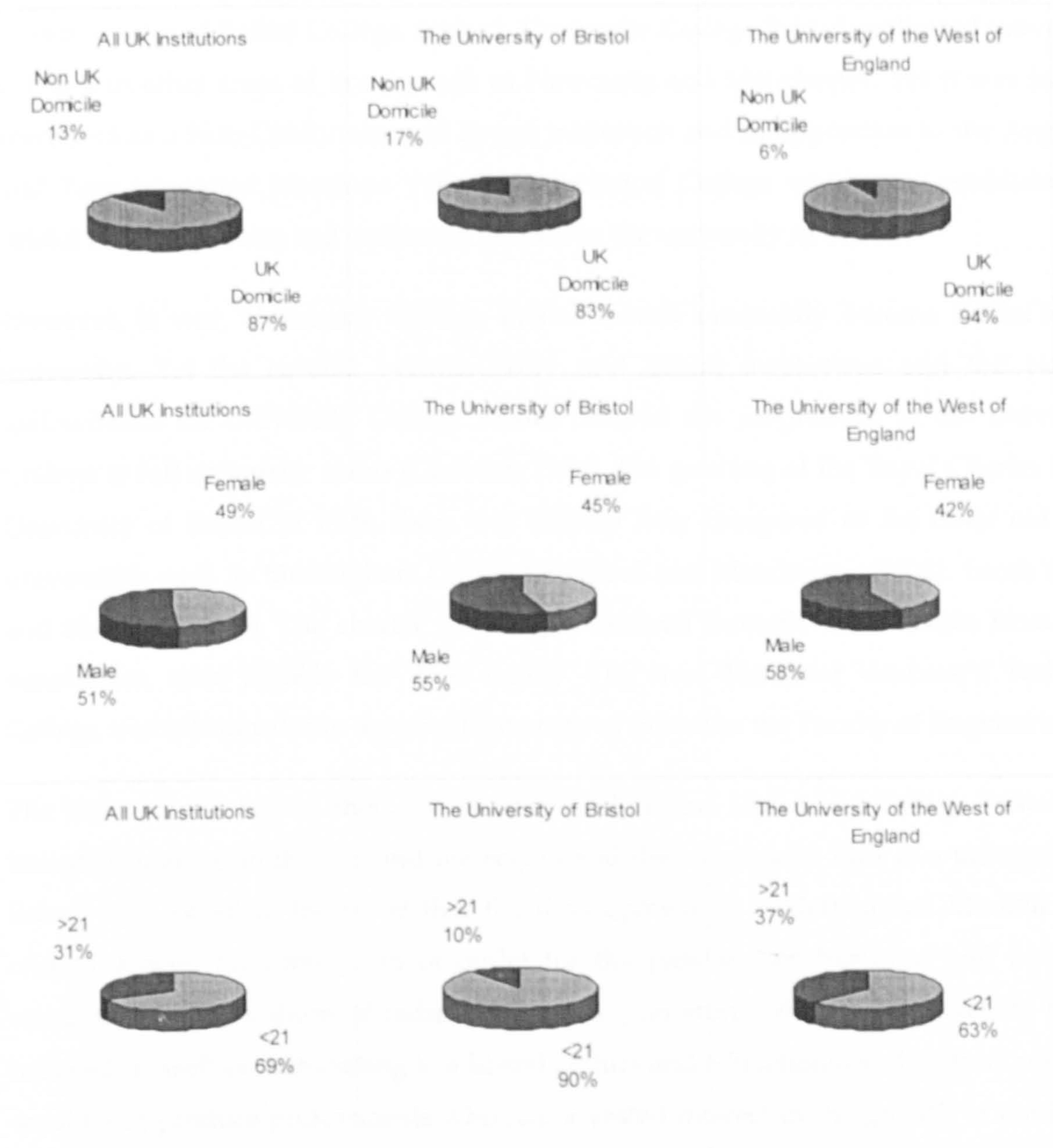


Source: HESA, 1995.

Key FTUG = Full-time undergraduates PTUG = Part-time undergraduates

FTPG = Full-time postgraduates PTPG = Part-time postgraduates

FIGURE 2.6: CHARACTERISTICS OF UK DOMICILED FIRST YEAR FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATES



Source: HESA, 1995.



### **The University of Bristol (UB)**

The University of Bristol received its royal charter in 1909. Its foundations were laid by its predecessor, University College Bristol (1876-1909) through the efforts of supporters such as the Reverend John Percival, headmaster of Clifton College School and Benjamin Jowett, master of Balliol College, Oxford. University College Bristol replicated university colleges in other areas of Britain such as Newcastle and Manchester. Yet it was largely identified as a Non-Conformist and liberal institution and in opposition to the Anglican and Tory supported Merchant Venturer's Technical College which was established in Bristol in 1894 and also had ambitions to become the university in Bristol.

However, it was 'University College Bristol' which eventually became Bristol's first university. Yet the conflict between Tory and liberal institutions and the lack of endowments for University College Bristol delayed the progression of the University College to full university status (Carleton, 1984). The granting of the Royal Charter to the University of Bristol in 1909, then, was slightly later compared to the other old civic universities such as Birmingham (1900), Liverpool and Manchester (1903), Leeds (1904) and Sheffield (1905). The charter was largely secured through endowments from local benefactors, most notably the Wills family. The rival Merchant Venturer's Technical College was subsumed into the new University of Bristol as the Faculty of Engineering.

The University of Bristol, then, has distinct local origins. University College Bristol, was linked strongly with the city and the region and the subsequent idea of a university for Bristol was rooted in the belief that the development of modern urban life and work created a need for some form of outlet for the passions, enthusiasms and creativity unrelieved by the tedium of industrial routine (Carleton, 1984, 3). A university it was believed, as well as contributing to a liberal culture and educational and cultural pursuits, would also produce professionals who had a vested interest in the growth of the Bristol economy. The civilising potential of a university was an idea strongly pursued by the founding fathers of the University College. However, UB has subsequently grown into a research institution with significant international and national links. As a result, UB encompasses a much wider and global perspective as well as its immediate locality

within its definition of community. This rather more exogenous outlook is reflected in its mission statement:<sup>7</sup>

The University of Bristol is committed to the following:

*Academic Excellence at the forefront of international research and higher education.*

*Independent enquiry which allows staff to pursue their ideas with rigour and integrity.*

*A high quality learning experience which enables students to develop intellectually and individually.*

This mission statement gives an overall impression of internationalism, independence and quality. UB's place within the current higher education sector associates it with the more ancient and prestigious universities in the UK (Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, Exeter, St. Andrews) which are traditionally known for attracting a greater proportion of students from a more affluent and private school background. As a result, UB is a highly competitive university; it attracts 37 000 applications for the 2600 places it offers to new students each year and has average entrance scores of about 25 points. UB is also an extremely successful university. For example, in *The Financial Times* (25/10/95), Bristol was cited as being in the top 5 in terms of Universities favoured by recruiters, and in *The Independent* (12/6/95) Bristol was cited as having the third lowest amount of graduates still seeking work three months after graduation. In *The Times' Good University Guide*, 1996, Bristol was placed eighth. As the table below shows, there are just over 12 000 students at the University:

TABLE 2.1: STUDENT NUMBERS BY FACULTY, UB, ALL MODES, 1996/97

| FACULTY                                 | STUDENTS | %    |
|---|----------|------|
| Arts                                    | 2345     | 19.2 |
| Science                                 | 2942     | 24.1 |
| Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science | 1623     | 13.3 |
| Engineering                             | 1434     | 11.7 |
| Law                                     | 916      | 7.5  |
| Social Sciences                         | 2118     | 17.3 |
| Education                               | 485      | 4.0  |
| Occasional/Exchange/Abroad              | 351      | 2.9  |
| Total                                   | 12214    | 100  |

Source: Office of the Registrar, UB, 1996.

<sup>7</sup> From *Annual Report*, UB, 1995/96.

The student population at UB has a number of particular characteristics. For example 9% are classed as part-time or mature, 15% are overseas and 25% are post-graduates (Chatterton, 1997). UB is a very international university with over 110 countries represented on campus (ibid.). What is evident is that UB has a very large traditional cohort within its student population. This traditional cohort (white, upper-/middle-class, post A-Level learners) is responsible for sustaining more inherited and established ways of being a student. The cultural impacts of UB, then, are heavily structured by its characteristics as one of the older and more elitist universities in Britain and the lifestyles of this traditional student cohort.

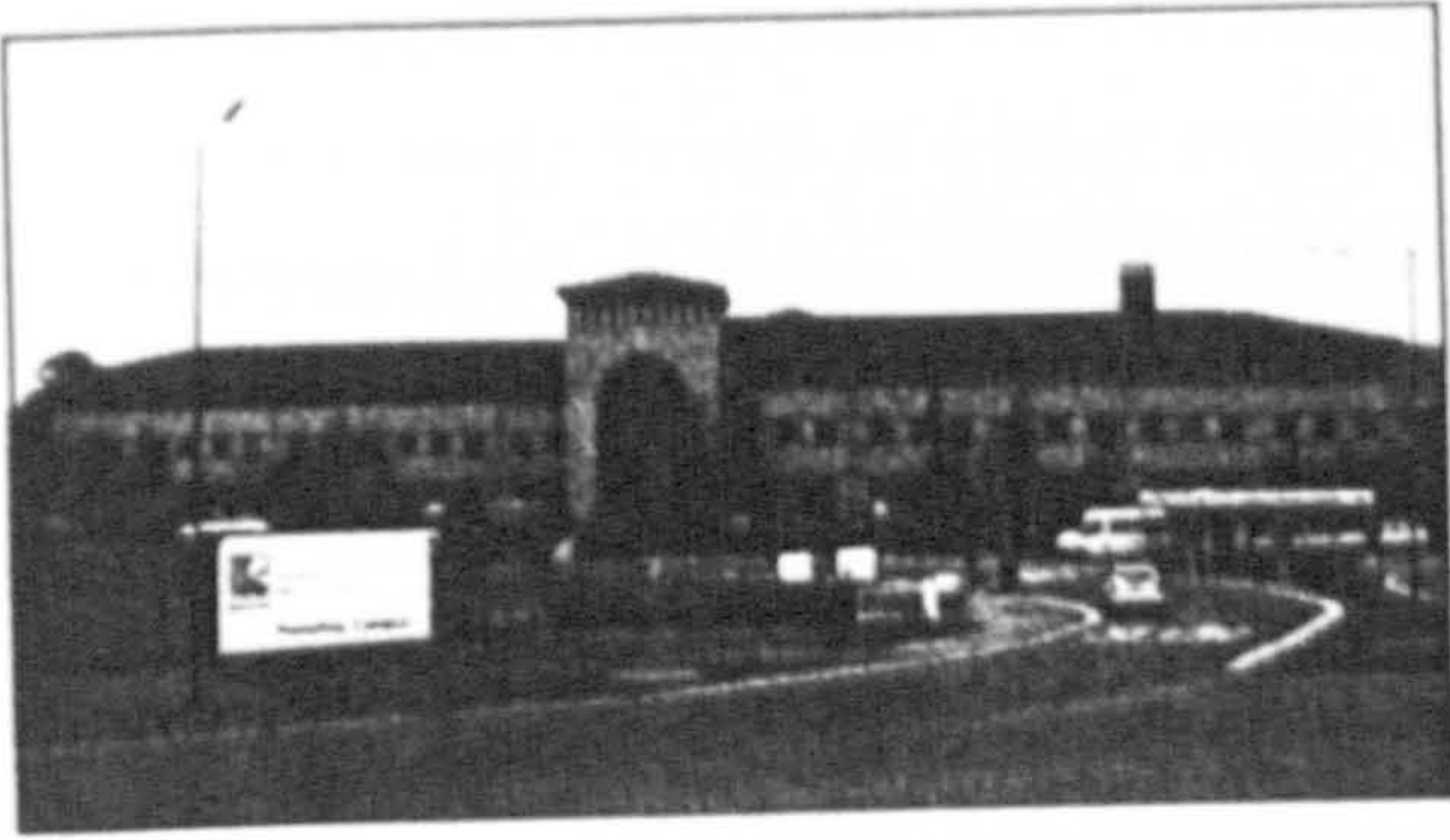
### **The University of the West of England (UWE)**

UWE stems from an educational tradition dating back to the Merchant Venturer's Navigation School established in 1595. The Merchant Venturer's Technical College (1894-1949) which grew out of this gave rise to an educational tradition in Bristol which led to the creation of the Bristol College of Commerce (1949-1969), Bristol College of Technology (1949-1960), Bristol Technical College (1960-69) and Brunel Technical College (1971-1990). These colleges, along with others such as the West of England College of Art (1936-1969) and Redland College of Education (1947-1976) and St. Matthias College (1853-1978), eventually led to the creation and growth of Bristol Polytechnic (1969-1992). The subsequent changes in higher education in Britain led to the creation of UWE in October 1992. In, 1996 two regional health colleges also became part of UWE (Figure 2.4).

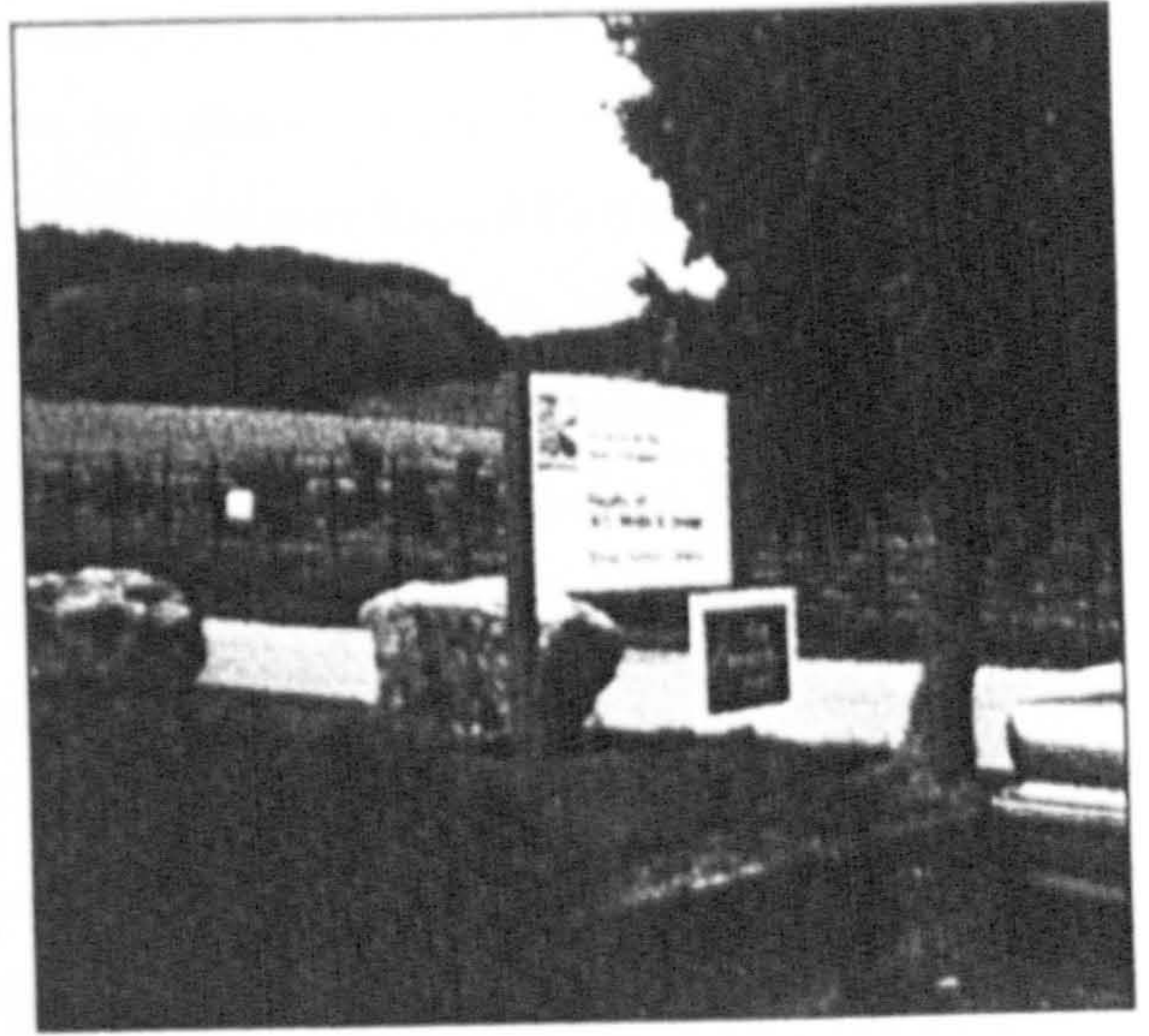
UWE has developed an excellent reputation within the unified university sector. For example, The Times' Good University Guide (1995) commented that: "The University of the West of England is the leading new university." It has a distinctive character based upon multi-territoriality, a regional remit and a commitment to widening access. In terms of its multi-territoriality, UWE is spread over a number of campuses (Figure 2.2). Each site has a distinctive atmosphere and location throughout the city as the following photographs and descriptions capture:

FIGURE 2.7: UWE'S FOUR MAIN CAMPUSES

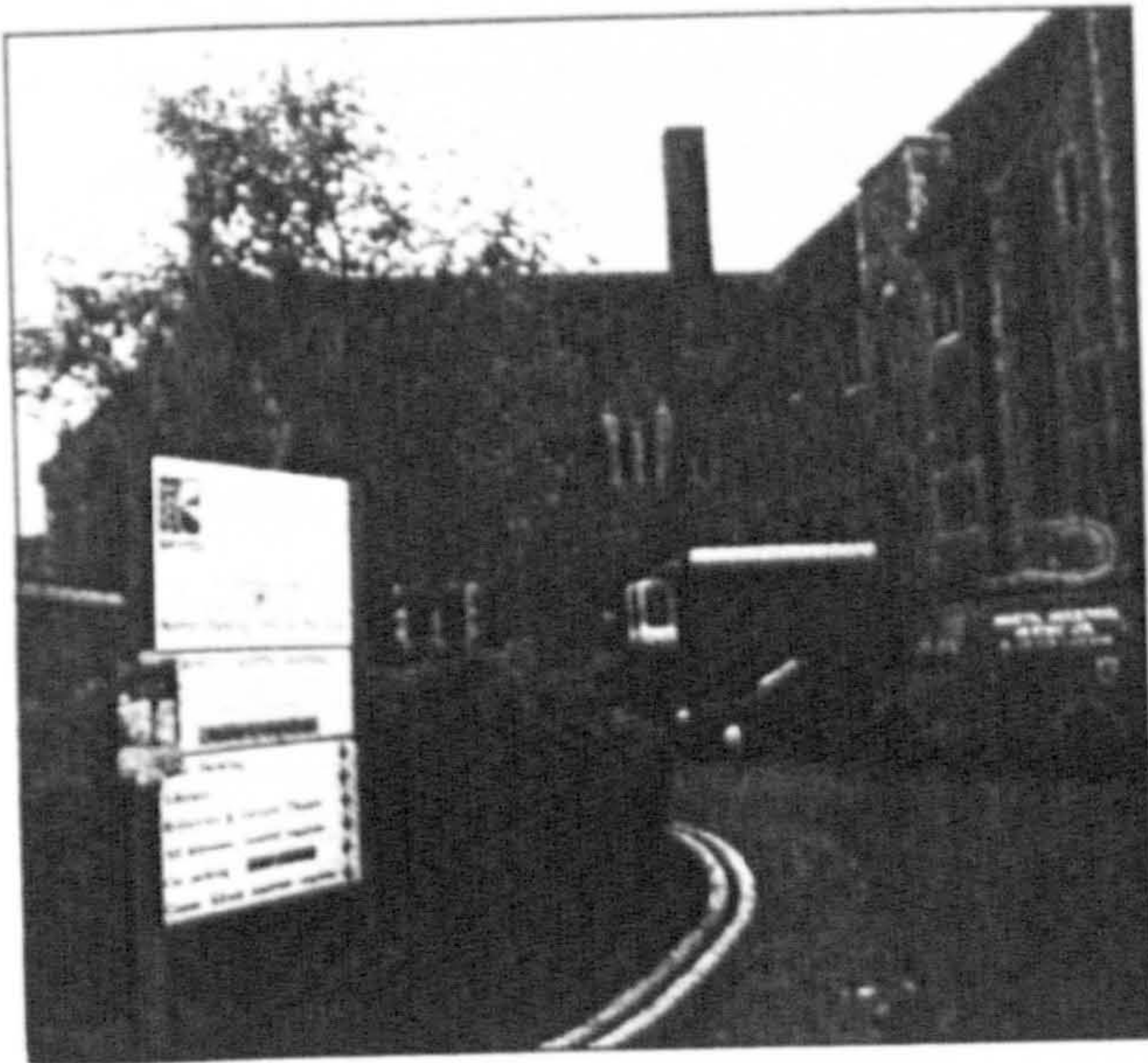
UWE-Frenchay



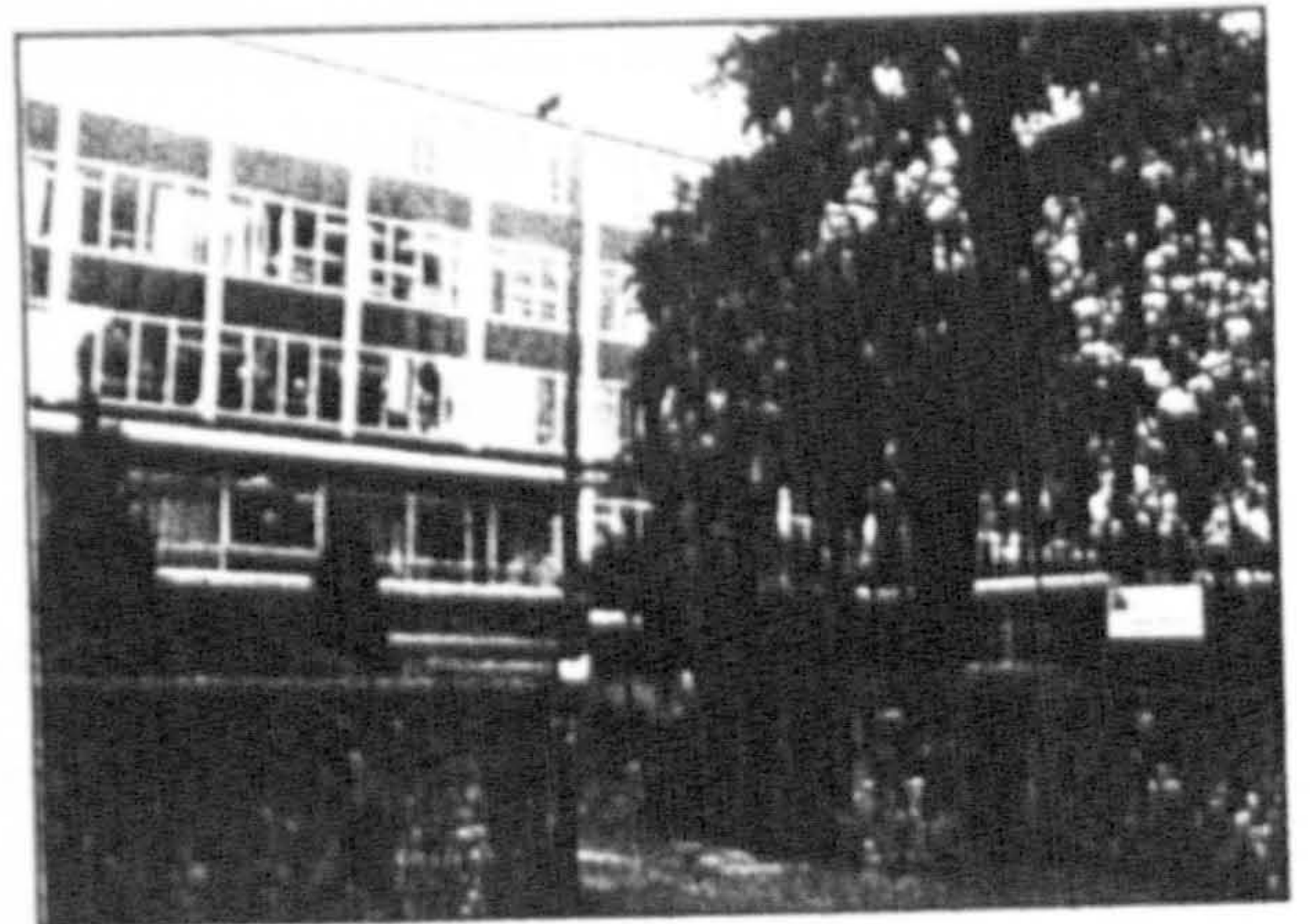
UWE-Bower Ashton



UWE-St Matthias



UWE-Redland



- **Frenchay** - the main university campus, purpose-built in 1975 and lies about four miles north of the city-centre. It houses eight of UWE's faculties and two-thirds of its students and is the location of the university's main administrative, library, sports, shopping, library and IT facilities. Two villages (Ashley Village and Carroll Court) are located at Frenchay, comprising 83 houses and accommodating 532 students. The Centre for Research, Innovation and Industry is located adjacent to the Frenchay campus in the DuPont building.
- **Bower Ashton** - this site is located adjacent to the Ashton Court estate to the south of the city-centre and, originally, was the site of the purpose-built West of England College of Arts, which was previously located at a more central location in Clifton at the Royal West of England Academy. This college was subsequently merged into the former Bristol Polytechnic in 1969 and then in 1992 with the establishment of UWE, it became the Faculty of Art, Media and Design.
- **St Matthias** - this campus lies to the north-east of the city-centre in Fishponds and grew out of St Matthias College of Education (1853-78). It now houses the Faculties of Humanities and Health and Social Care at UWE. The campus is based around a large listed building and as a result has a smaller, more collegiate, atmosphere. Two halls are located at St. Matthias housing 85 students. The site also includes a gym, football and cricket facilities.
- **Redland** - The Faculty of Education at UWE grew out of the Redland College of Education (1946-76) and is situated in purpose built buildings close to the Clifton Downs to the north-west of the city-centre. St John Reade hostel close to the campus houses 154 students. The site includes a gym and tennis court.
- **Glenside** - Located in Stapleton, this small campus houses the Faculty of Health and Social Care and has one of the best health care libraries in England. The campus includes accommodation for 310 students.

As part of its regional remit, UWE is involved in a regional network of associated institutions. In Bristol, these include Brunel College of Arts and Technology and Soundwell College and further afield include Bridgwater College, Cannington College, Chippenham College, City of Bath College, Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology, New College Swindon, Trowbridge College and Weston-super-Mare College. UWE also validates study programmes at accredited institutions which include Swansea Institute of Higher Education and Wesley College, Bristol. There were over 800 students on franchised course at these institutions in 1996/97. Further, the Faculty of Health and Social Care at UWE has regional centres at Bath, Gloucester and Swindon and

Hartpury College in Gloucester is proposed to become an associate faculty. This wider educational remit is reflected in its mission statement:<sup>8</sup>

The Mission of the University of the West of England is

*To promote educational opportunity and equality and the application of knowledge as the means whereby individuals and society may shape and secure a better future.*

As the table below shows UWE has 12 faculties and student numbers have nearly doubled since 1990/91 to just under 22 000:

TABLE 2.2: STUDENT NUMBERS BY FACULTY, UWE, 1996/97.

| FACULTY                                     | STUDENTS | %    |
|---|----------|------|
| Built Environment (Frenchay)                | 2256     | 10.5 |
| Computer Studies and Maths (F)              | 1409     | 6.5  |
| Engineering (F)                             | 1191     | 5.5  |
| Applied Science (F)                         | 2155     | 10.0 |
| Bristol Business School (F)                 | 3296     | 15.3 |
| Economics and Social Science (F)            | 1284     | 6.0  |
| Law (F)                                     | 965      | 4.5  |
| Languages and European Studies (F)          | 810      | 3.8  |
| Humanities (St. Matthias)                   | 1012     | 4.7  |
| Health and Community Studies (SM, Glenside) | 2872     | 13.3 |
| Education (Redland)                         | 1732     | 8.0  |
| Art Media and Design (Bower Ashton)         | 1240     | 5.7  |
| Franchised                                  | 871      | 4.0  |
| Combined Studies                            | 298      | 1.4  |
| Accredited Training Centre                  | 184      | 0.9  |
| TOTAL                                       | 21575    | 100  |

Source: Marketing and Communications Office, UWE, 1997.

One of UWE's commitments is to widening access and as a result has a larger and more diverse student population compared to UB, especially amongst non-traditionally qualified, part-time, local, mature and disabled students. For example, in 1994/95, more than a third of its students studied part-time and a quarter of its applicants were from

<sup>8</sup> From *Mission Statement*, UWE, 1994/95.

Avon and the surrounding counties (Times Higher Education Supplement, 25/8/95, 36). Further, in 1995/96 over 50% of students entered the university with qualifications other than A and A/S Levels and first degrees and two-thirds were 21 or over.<sup>9</sup> Clearly, then, the cultural impacts of UWE are explained by its less traditional student population compared to UB and its identity in the British higher education sector as a newer and less elitist university.

In sum, higher education in Bristol is undertaken within two very different institutions. The particularities of institutional atmospheres, histories and the characteristics of the student populations are fundamental to grasping the nature of the cultural impacts which universities have on the community.

## **THE TWO UNIVERSITIES AND BRISTOL'S CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND STRATEGY**

The two universities in Bristol are significant 'providers' within the cultural infrastructure of the city. This can be seen through the stock of art and cultural-related facilities within each university in the city. At the University of Bristol these include The Glynnie Wickham Studio Theatre, The Victoria Rooms and its sound recording studio, The Vandyck Gallery and Special Theatre Collection and the Anson Rooms at UBSU. At UWE, facilities include the Octagon at UWE-Frenchay, the Media Centre and related art facilities at UWE-Bower Ashton and, until recently, the night-club 'The Tube Club' in the city-centre. The role and impact of these facilities within the city will be discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter. The rest of this section explores the extent to which the two universities, as major art and cultural providers in the city, are recognised within the development of Bristol's cultural strategy.

The historical legacy and perception of universities as 'ivory towers' is often responsible for the lack of mutual understand and collaborative activity between the university and the community (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994). This is particularly the case for the University of Bristol which suffers from an enduring legacy of being physically and socially removed from the community. As the head of Bristol's Chamber of Commerce

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<sup>9</sup> From *Facts and Figures*, Marketing and Communications Office, UWE, 1997.

commented: "Bristol University has a culture of its own. It isolates itself on its own campus. There are clearly defined and not converging tracks between it and the city" (int., Savage, 4/4/96). However, there have been recent attempts to counteract these elitist perceptions and demonstrate the many links which do exist between the University of Bristol and the community (see Chatterton, 1997). Perceptions of detachment are less evident at UWE because of its multi-territoriality and greater number of local students.

Numerous links do exist, then, between the two universities and the cultural community. However, there is a contrast between formal (*ex officio*) community representation of staff from 'old' universities such as the University of Bristol and more creative and strategic community representation from 'new' universities such as UWE (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994). In this sense, UB has senior-level representation on various cultural bodies such as The Cathedral Trust, The Exploratory, The Folk House and the Theatre Royal Trust (Chatterton, 1997) and UWE, in particular through the Faculty of Art, Media and Design, has a range of contacts with Bristol's cultural community which often exist at an informal and unmonitored level.

To what extent have the two universities been recognised within Bristol's cultural strategy? As mentioned previously, the turning point for Bristol's cultural strategy was the 'Bristol Cultural Strategy' (1992) prepared by Boyden Southwood Associates. Despite the sheer size of higher education activity in the city, only two interviews were undertaken with the two universities during the completion of the strategy through the Department of Radio, Film and Television at UB and the Faculty of Art, Media and Design at UWE-Bower Ashton. The Bristol Cultural Strategy does make reference to the two universities in terms of training provision in the arts through the Departments of Drama and Music at UB and the Faculty of Art, Media and Design at UWE. It also gives a brief description of cultural provision at facilities owned by UB such as the Victoria Rooms, the Glynne Wickham Theatre and the Great Hall. However, what is absent from the Boyden Southwood Cultural Strategy is an acknowledgement of any strategic cultural role which the two universities may have within the city.

The Bristol Arts Strategy (1995) developed a more strategic understanding of the cultural impacts of Bristol's two universities on the community compared to the Bristol Cultural Strategy (1992). In particular, it showed an awareness of the problem of forging links between the university and the community. In this sense, the consultants who undertook



the Bristol Arts Strategy suggested that: "the City Council has not made enough links with the universities because it has suffered from an old-fashioned attitude towards them - that universities are funded from somewhere else so you don't have to worry about them" (int., Churchill, 12/3/96). The difficulty of linking universities to wider cultural activity in the city was then explicated:

Many of the cultural choices which students make are met within universities. Yet how to capitalise on universities and students is a very wide strategic question. It is also the sheer size of universities and not knowing who to talk to. Universities have to focus their resources on their core business - education - and so other services especially the cultural ones suffer. Warwick Arts Centre is a rare example of cultural activity falling into core business of universities (int., Churchill, 12/3/96).

Clearly, one of the main problems in terms of understanding the links which exist between the university and the cultural community in Bristol is that to many outsiders the university remains a 'black box', largely because of its unique institutional procedures (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994). In the light of such problems, the Bristol Arts Strategy advised Bristol City Council to:

Develop closer links with Bristol University, the University of the West of England and FE colleges to capitalise on the resources, expertise and opportunities available through further and higher education (Bristol Arts Strategy, 1995, 38).

Further, The Bristol Arts Strategy also recognises the wider cultural dynamic which the universities inject into the city:

The city's cultural life is enriched by the presence of students at the two universities and other educational institutions, which have particular strengths in the arts. Many students stay on in Bristol after qualifying which provides a fresh influx of youth and talent (Bristol Arts Strategy, 1995, 11).

There is a growing recognition, then, of the role and impacts of the two universities within the cultural infrastructure and cultural strategy in Bristol. However, what both UB and UWE and the community have not undertaken is an in-depth analysis of the cultural relationship between the two universities and the community and the role of the universities in terms of promoting cultural innovation and vitality. Such in-depth analysis is the aim of the next chapter.

# THE CULTURAL IMPACTS OF THE TWO UNIVERSITIES IN BRISTOL

## INTRODUCTION

**T**his chapter discusses the cultural roles and impacts of the two universities in Bristol on the community. The main areas for cultural activity at the two universities include the Departments of Drama and Music and UB and the Faculty of Art, Media and Design and the Centre for the Performing Arts at UWE and university cultural/entertainment facilities such as students' unions and university-owned music and performance spaces. This chapter draws upon fieldwork which was undertaken within these cultural areas and included conversations with students and staff and those involved in university- and community-based cultural facilities and activities. See Appendix A for a fuller discussion of the methodology.

The first section makes some opening remarks about the cultural role of the university. In particular, I stress how this cultural role has shifted from 'the keepers of the canon' to a much broader role within the era of the mass university. The implication of this shift is that the cultural roles and impacts of universities on the community are manifold and are strongly influenced by institutional histories and contexts. Universities are also experimenting in new areas of culture to maintain their role as institutions of authority and to compete with the emergence of new sites of cultural knowledge.

The following sections draw out three themes which emerged from the fieldwork. The first section explores the role of the two universities, mainly through their students' unions, within the popular cultural infrastructure in the city. Students' unions often play a central role in the cultural life of students and the community but this central role of the two students' unions in Bristol is reduced by their poor physical locations. However, students' union entertainment provision is being professionalised and expanded and directed towards student-only leisure spaces to guarantee student safety which reduces the community role of students' unions. There is also a recognition that much popular cultural activity occurs at an informal level through music and night-club productions and DJing by students at various pubs and clubs throughout the city.

Secondly, university-based facilities also contribute to the development of the 'official' cultural infrastructure in the city through facilities such as theatres, concert and recital spaces, galleries and university orchestras and choirs. In particular, the Department of Music at UB is housed in the Victoria Rooms with its own 700 capacity auditorium which is one of the main venues for orchestral and choral performances in the city. Further, the Department of Drama at UB houses its own theatre with a capacity of 120 and UWE established its own Centre for the Performing Arts to promote the performing arts throughout the university. However, it is important to recognise that such activity largely generates cultural demand within the university population rather than the local community.

Such 'official' cultural facilities at UB reinforce its rather paternalistic cultural role akin to its nineteenth century origins. However, both UB and UWE are contributing to innovation within the cultural infrastructure through experimentation in new cultural areas such as 16mm film making, multi-media, and digital sound production and recording. Such moves are representative of a re-orientation and broadening of the traditional cultural role within many universities in order to maintain the cultural authority of the university.

Thirdly, the two universities act as a resource within the cultural community and infrastructure in Bristol in various ways. These include their role in the development of certain cultural sectors such as media and animation, involvement in the art community and community art, integrating the creative community through personnel-based exchanges, graduate retention and patronising certain venues in the city and contributing to the cultural management of the city.

## **THE CULTURAL ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES**

### **Keepers of the Canon**

From the late nineteenth century onwards, a nationally organised cultural infrastructure emerged comprised of institutions such as museums, orchestras, theatre companies and professional associations, which maintained certain cultural hierarchies. "At the apex of this system were the universities, authorised to validate, inculcate, and - within limits - expand the high-culture artistic, musical and literary canons" (DiMaggio, 1991 141).

Culturally, then, many universities can be thought of as 'keepers of the canons', who have influence over the definition of 'official' culture by disseminating cultural hierarchies in the fields in which they provide instruction (ibid., 1991, 138). As Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1979) have argued: "in most modern industrial societies the university is the specialized institution with the greatest power of consecration".<sup>1</sup>

The university, as part of this national and institutional cultural infrastructure maintained three boundaries; between canonised and commercial culture, between people of 'taste' and the masses, and between the arts specialists and the commercial bureaucrats (DiMaggio, 1991, 141). This type of 'culture', in an Arnoldian sense 'the best that has been thought and said in the world', is evident in the university curriculum through courses such as Fine Art, Art History, Drama and Music and facilities such as university museums, concert halls and special collections. Historically, then, universities have been involved in consecrating the canons of official culture and, therefore, have a role to play in the dichotomy between two cultural orders:

Official culture, preserved in art galleries, museums and university courses, demands cultivated tastes and a formally imparted knowledge. It demands moments of attention that are separated from the run of daily life. Popular culture, meanwhile, mobilizes the tactile, the incidental, the transitory, the expendable, the visceral.<sup>2</sup>

This particular form of cultural authority largely refers to the dissemination of a high and/or national culture from the university to the community as part of the civilising mission of higher education. In this sense, the university is a significant contributor to civic pride and the enrichment of cultural life in the bourgeois public sphere:

There is... a strong cultural tradition in the use of university premises, sometimes through specialist facilities like libraries, museums and art galleries, as well as public access to theatres and arts productions (Hardy, 1996, 19).

However, this philanthropic role is also divisive:

the university has performed a dual role: one being of assurance and ceremony, a symbol of continuity and influence, with all the ritual of robes and maces on civic occasions; the

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in DiMaggio, 1991, 135.

<sup>2</sup> Worpole, quoted in Frow, 1995, 67.

other being a more active role of disseminating culture - through its museums and special collections... Yet neither the ceremonial nor the cultural aspects of local contact were designed to bridge the gap between town and gown... nor did these functions do much to assuage the prejudices of a citizenry who have continued to see it all as a case of *us* and *them* (Hardy, 1996, 12).

The official cultural role of universities, then, especially the older ones, does not often reflect the diversity of cultural activity occurring within the local community. As the OECD (1982, 31) commented:

The notion that the university should participate in the cultural development of the region is relatively recent. Up to now, education systems have mainly helped to promote a dominant national culture at the expense of local or minority sub-cultures... systems of higher education exert rather a function of national homogenisation than one of local or regional differentiation.

### **The Cultural Re-Orientation of the Mass University**

What is clear is that universities have played a particular role in defining levels of cultural demand and aesthetic interests. However, the mass university in Britain may have a very different cultural role to play compared to its nineteenth century predecessor. Although universities still retain a function of consecrating certain cultural canons, it is important to question whether the contemporary university has a role to play as a creator, disseminator or inculcator of one particular cultural order. Transformations in the staff and student population and in the content of the curriculum have weakened the institutional cultural authority of the university.<sup>3</sup> Further, the relative newness of many British universities distances them from the tradition of consecrating high culture. In this respect, universities have cultural roles outside the canons of official culture. Yet such roles have received little attention.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Bourdieu (1988) for a discussion on the university and the critical moment when many of its internal laws of reproduction have been distorted by newcomers.

<sup>4</sup> Recent Impact studies such as those by CVCP/Goddard et al. (1994) and Robson et al. (1995) have discussed the cultural impacts of universities. However, the topic has been approached through issues such as university cultural facilities, the contribution to local arts infrastructures and student-community links.

Frow (1995) notes that high culture is no longer the dominant culture, but a *pocket* within commodity culture. In this sense: "the mass education system, which, rather than being tied to the reproduction of an elite, now has the more diffuse function of the differential formation of cultural capital (ibid., 1995, 86)." Clearly, the university's ability to sanction legitimate culture and reproduce social hierarchies and class habits has diminished. DiMaggio (1991, 142) suggests that the institutional infrastructure which maintained the high-popular culture hierarchy has been eroded through three trends; firstly, the decline of a locally-based elite able to uphold the boundaries of high culture; secondly, a more varied consumer demand which is mainly linked to the increase in education attainment; and finally, the rise of a broader base of institutional support and management structures for cultural activities.

What is evident then, is that as institutional systems of symbolic classifications fragment and dilute, the cultural authority of the university becomes less clear, differentiated, less universal and less symbolically potent (ibid.). Basically, the role which the university can play in the maintenance of the high-culture system is contested (ibid., 1991, 148). However, as the university finds itself in competition with many other generators of cultural authority, often based in the market, it is also seeking niches within which to generate new forms of cultural authority. This can be seen through the emergence of inter-disciplinary areas of study such as cultural studies and activities such as multi-media, fashion, design, animation and digital and sound recording. In this sense, the authority of the university is maintained as it re-invests capital in new fields of cultural production, whilst also being bolstered by the traditional canons.<sup>5</sup>

The cultural impacts of the contemporary university, then, occur on many different levels. Universities possess a range of cultural facilities such as theatres, galleries, concert halls, musical rehearsal spaces, students' union facilities, cinemas, pubs, night-clubs, media laboratories and recording studios. Such facilities are part of both the high and the popular cultural infrastructure of cities. Some university cultural facilities, such as Warwick University Arts Centre, act as the main focal point for the cultural life of large areas. Further, both staff and students play a crucial role in a city's creative community

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<sup>5</sup> In a Bourdieuan framework discussed in Chapter 5, the university is employing reconversion strategies to maintain the value of capital operational within the academic field.

and the viability of many local cultural events and facilities. Universities are seedbeds for new talent and are one of the few remaining places where artistic experimentation and integrity is financially viable, especially in an era of local authority art budget cuts. "In short, Universities provide an additional focus for the cultural and professional life of the nation outside of the London/Oxford/Cambridge triangle" (CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994, 49).

Therefore, the cultural role of the contemporary university sum to far more than the dissemination of a national and high culture. As well as being concerned with their former role - protecting and inculcating the artistic canon - many are also becoming more locally accountable, vocationally oriented and reflect the greater diversity of interests and tastes amongst its students and staff. As Bender (1988, 1996) suggested, the role of the university is being disembedded from the idea of a unified, national culture and is being placed alongside other generators of knowledge. In fact: "the university is becoming a different kind of institution, one that is no longer linked to the destiny of the nation-state by virtue of its role as producer, protector, and inculcator of an idea of a national culture" (Readings, 1996, 3). However, changes in the role of the university go much deeper. As Readings (1996, 5) comments, the university also no longer participates in the historical project of culture that was the legacy of the Enlightenment.<sup>6</sup> The cultural mission and role of the *mass* university, then is something different. It has a commitment to reflect the diversity of the many user-groups who interact with the university and to reflect the more multicultural and global characteristics of its student and research cultures.

The next section discusses the cultural impacts and roles of the two universities in Bristol through the three themes introduced at the beginning of this chapter. This discussion represents a base-line audit of the cultural impacts which the two universities in Bristol have on the community. Overviews such as these have been neglected by researchers

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<sup>6</sup> Many have discussed the emergence of the postmodern university (Smith and Webster 1997, Readings, 1996). In this sense, Readings (1996, 9), suggests that the grand narrative of the university, centred on the production of a unified, liberal, reasoning, subject and the organising principle of an idea of culture is no longer available to us. However, he also comments that the university is *posthistorical* rather than *postmodern*, in that it has survived the death of the era in which it defined itself as a project to inculcate national culture (ibid., 6).

and, when compiled, can demonstrate the multifarious and significant ways in which universities contribute to the cultural life of their communities.

## **STUDENTS' UNIONS AND THE POPULAR CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

Students' unions are often significant community facilities which provide a range of cultural events from theatre to live music. They are also placed at the centre of student life, through student entertainment provision, welfare and education. There are various moves to consolidate this latter position, in part, to maintain a stake in the lucrative and growing student market. In this sense, many students' unions are undergoing restructuring which involves the expansion and professionalisation of student entertainment and leisure provision. This restructuring is an important element in terms of understanding the cultural impacts of universities.

UWESU has undergone such restructuring which has been focused upon understanding the importance of the student experience in all its roles. Taking effect in the academic year 1997/98, UWESU developed a strategy entitled *Enhancing the Student Experience: A strategic approach to development and change* (UWESU, 1997). This strategy document was largely a response to challenges posed by the significant, yet unplanned, growth of students numbers at UWE. The main emphasis on change is the development of a new management structure grouped around the new departments of Resources, Membership Services, Trading Services and Marketing and Communications. The mission of such a strategy is that: "Directed by students, the union seeks to enhance the student experience at The University of the West of England" (ibid., 4).

UBSU is experiencing similar re-organisations, yet on a smaller scale. In particular, UBSU appointed a new marketing manager to co-ordinate the expanding retail facilities which recently opened at UBSU and to enhance the marketing of the union. Such changes are part of a wider recognition of the need for well organised student support services managed by a range of professional staff. It is also part of UBSU's attempts to maintain a stake in the lucrative student entertainment and retail market in the face of growing local competition.



The following comment from the music editor of the *Venue Magazine*, is worth quoting at length because of the way in which it summarises the development of students' unions within the popular cultural infrastructure of the community. In part, it refers to UWESU's termly dance night Sutra:

Yeah, well I think Sutra is an example of the way in which students' unions have re-organised themselves and adapted to changing market conditions and also changing aspirations, for the want of a less pretentious word; of what students actually want from a night out and they might not necessarily go for your standard 'mid-week quid-in quid-a-pint eighties music student-night'. Their tastes are becoming much more sophisticated and Sutra are real pioneers at putting on real high quality dance productions that are primarily aimed at the student market but stand up on their own merit as high quality productions. They've got the best DJs, the best sound. That in some ways is because UWE hasn't really got a gigs venue and the UB is primarily geared towards high profile live rock gigs. Both do their own different thing but the two complement each other very well. You've gotta bear in mind that there has been a shift in recent years in the way ents. officers are organised. I mean all ents. officers throughout the country are not sabbatical students having a go. They are paid professionals; they are not students and I think the level of competence has increased dramatically in recent years because of the increased professionalism within ents. officers. That's quite an important point worth bearing in mind and you know, Sutra is run by really switched on people who know their market; and the ents. officers at the uni. [UB] are professional gig promoters (int., Mitchell, 2/2/96).

The emergence, then, of a strategic approach to student services and entertainment provision signifies the growing regulation and professionalisation of the lives of students in the mass university on American lines. In this context, the rest of this section discusses some of the contributions UBSU and UWESU make towards the popular cultural infrastructure.

### UB Students' Union (UBSU)



Despite being one of the largest Students' Unions in the country, the off-precinct location, appearance and maintenance and structural problems of the UBSU building detract from its ability to function as the focus for student life at UB. This marginal role has recently been exacerbated by the growing number of off-precinct venues in the more exclusive and fashionable end of the entertainment, food and drink markets in the neighbouring areas of Whiteladies Road

and Park Street. From impressions gathered whilst undertaking research on UB students, it is evident that the average Bristol student prefers such off-precinct venues rather than the more price-sensitive and less fashionable surroundings of UBSU. Nevertheless, the Union offers many facilities and events which are used by students and non-students.

The main licensed bar at UBSU is *The Epi*, which is only open to members of the National Union of Students (NUS) offers a location for drinking, eating, watching TV and playing pool and video games. It is widely regarded as rather ugly and, unlike many other main student bars, is under-used and is only busy on certain nights such as Wednesday and Friday when the atmosphere is largely dictated by the rambunctious and often bellicose activities of the sports teams. It has been described in various ways: UBSU stated that it “suffers from a lack of subtlety” but “overall, the Epi is a great place to meet people and, of course, a very pleasant venue for getting completely wasted”.<sup>7</sup> The Venue Magazine Student Supplement (1997) described it as a “[l]arge airport lounge of a bar with loads of bang bang games machines, cheap booze and Alanis Morrissette t-shirts (loser). We don’t recommend it, it’s full of students.” The other main bar at UBSU, *The Mandela Bar*, survived a recent plan to rename it ‘The Noel Edmonds Imbibing Suite’. It has a capacity of 150 and is a smaller wine-bar style venue which also provides its own jazz-funk nights and acts as the main bar for events at The Anson Rooms. The Anson Rooms, the main facility for live music at UB, is also one of the main music venues in Bristol which is open to students and non-students:



#### Universities in the City (1): The Anson Rooms, UBSU, Clifton

The Anson Rooms has placed UBSU as one of the main venues for live music in the whole region. In fact, UBSU was ranked as the fifth best university venue in the country for live music (Footman, 1996).<sup>8</sup> The importance of The Anson Rooms as a live music venue can be seen through two further examples. The first one is the inclusion of The Anson Rooms in the *NME Brat Bus Tour* along with nine other national venues.

Further, in Venue’s ‘Review of the Year’ (January 1997), The Anson Rooms was claimed to have held two of the best eleven national live music events of the year, namely Goldie and Leftfield. Other recent internationally renowned artists who have played to sold-out crowds on their national tours have included Ash, The Cardigans, Neneh Cherry and Billy Bragg.

<sup>7</sup> UBSU Student Guide, 1996/97.

<sup>8</sup> The others were, in descending order, Manchester, UEA, Cardiff and De Montfort.

Secondly, UBSU's facilities were used as the main venue for the fourth *Sound City* event in 1995 which is considered to be Britain's annual laboratory for live music. Bands which played at the Anson Rooms during *Sound City* included EMF, Elastica, Radio-Head, Suede and Pulp. £17 000 was generated from bar sales alone at the Union during *Sound City* (int. Spillane, 10/1/97).

Analysis of ticket sales for concerts held at The Anson Rooms over the last year revealed that *Our Price Record Store* in the city-centre is consistently the main outlet. This is perhaps indicative of the fact that students from UB are not the main purchasers of tickets as they would presumably purchase their tickets from closer venues such as UBSU's own ticket outlet and *Replay Records* on Park Street. Large ticket sales in the city-centre would suggest that UWE students and the general public are also large purchasers of tickets (int. Spillane, 10/1/97).

However, there are major problems with UBSU as an entertainments venue. Despite being the largest venue for live music in the city, The Anson Rooms is far too small and is fortunate to attract the bands which play there. As the music editor of *Venue* commented about the Anson Rooms: "It's an excellent venue. It does have a number of, erm I better be careful what I'm saying. No it's good, it's a bit of a barn but it does have good sitelines. But the big money live circuit is in venues of 1500+. That's where the big name tours are being planned. Many bands are leap frogging the Anson Rooms size towards the Newport Centre level" (int. Mitchell, 2/2/96).

**UBU ents Anson Rooms**  
 Glastonbury Road, Ashton, Bristol.  
 Tel: (0117) 973 0074

Saturday 4th October £9.50 Adv  
**TEENAGE FANCLUB**

Thursday 9th October £9.50 Adv  
**SPIRITUALIZED**

Wednesday 13th October £10.50 Adv  
**ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN**

Saturday 16th October £3.50 Adv  
**VIRGIN MEGASTORE TOUR**  
 Kings of Infinite Space, Addict & Stoney Sleep

Saturday 25th October £7.50 Adv  
**SUPER FURRY ANIMALS**

Tuesday 28th October £8 Adv  
**FINLAY QUAYE**

Friday 31st October £8 Adv  
**REPREZENT / RONI SIZE**

Wednesday 12th November £9 Adv  
**THE WILDHEARTS**

Wednesday 20th November £8 Adv  
**DUBSTAR**

Saturday 6th December £7.50 Adv  
**EMBRACE**

Tickets available from:  
 BRISTOL: Our Price • Replay  
 Student Union Shop  
 BATH: Ticketcall

The Anson Rooms can only accommodate crowds of less than 1 000 people when on the rest of the tour crowds would be nearer 2 500 (int. Spillane, 10/1/97). The fact that well-known bands do still play is indicative of the fact that they recognise that Bristol is a place where there is a large demand for live music; a fact which is only reinforced by the presence of 34 000 higher education students in the city. The proposed Harbourside Centre may seriously undermine *The Anson Room's* position as a live music venue and reduce UBSU's income associated with this lucrative activity.

UBSU has a number of other cultural facilities. These include The Winston Theatre (300 capacity) and The Lady Windsor Theatre (a smaller experimental space). These theatre spaces are used by UBSU societies such as PantoSoc, DanceSoc, DramSoc and OpSoc who perform plays, operas and musicals to largely student audiences. Further UBSU has a number of art related facilities such as an Art Studio, Dance Studio, Dark Rooms, Music Practice Rooms and Pottery Workshop.

Finally, Fry Haldane Services at UBSU, originally established by two families to help students living out of Halls, now receives a grant to run various services in the Union including the CD library, the Health Food Shop, the Bookshop, toolhire, the laundrette, the sewing room and the World University Service (WUS) Second Hand Bookshop which is run by volunteers and all profits go to UBSU's Hodgkin Scholarship which funds students from developing nations. The Fry Haldane Service is also involved in sponsoring student activities which have included a Housing Roadshow and a music and arts festival.

UBSU's Public Entertainments Licence means that in addition to staff, students and other NUS members, the building is occasionally used by members of the general public. However, there have recently been a number of problems surrounding the renewal of the licence which have mainly stemmed from complaints from local residents. In the last term of the 1996/97 academic year, there were 14 complaints from local residents and groups from the surrounding area which were mainly in response to noise generated from students using the building. One local resident, after a late-night encounter with some students near UBSU, commented:

I cannot recall ever seeing the arrogant, self-centred behaviour I now witness. Would it be politically incorrect to mention that most of the offenders seem to be from a somewhat privileged background?

Complaints from the neighbouring residential area have prevented UBSU from obtaining a late night licence from the local authority. This has severely restricted the role of the building as an entertainments venue. For example, UBSU has recently been banned from holding music events above the first floor level of the Anson Rooms because of the lack of sound proofing. As a result, UBSU had to stop its popular Friday club night *Swirl*, which was held in the Avon Gorge on the fifth floor until 1am. As UBSU Entertainments manager commented: "such problems are particularly bad, not only do they reduce the income we can generate, but they also mean that we cannot put on a student only weekend night-club which offers a safe environment and value for money" (int., Spillane, 10/1/97).

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\* Bristol Evening Post, 10/10/96, 15.

Despite these problems, which mainly stem from the location of the building, UBSU is taking steps to reinvigorate its role within Bristol student life. For example, UBSU is expanding its retail facilities to compete with local competition and there are plans to open The Mandela Bar six nights per week in an attempt to regain UBSU's share of the student pub market and compete with other local licensed outlets. UBSU is also involved in collaborative ventures with night-clubs in the city-centre to maintain its stake in the student night-club market. Such ventures involve exclusive advertising rights in the Union building, a pre-club event at UBSU and free buses to the night-club from UBSU and the Halls of Residences at Stoke Bishop. Collaborative ventures have been undertaken with Club IQ and Odyssey, the two largest night-clubs in the city. However, Club IQ has faced problems in sustaining its student night and as a result UBSU is running a collaborative venture with the more popular Tuesday student night at Odyssey in 1997/98.

### UWE Students' Union (UWESU)



The main site for entertainments provision by UWESU is at UWESU-Frenchay. This facility, plays a more significant role as the focal point for the social life of students at the Frenchay campus where two-thirds of UWE's students are located. However, it is more popular during the day-time and early evening as night-time usage is restricted by its remoteness from the main student residential areas.

Entertainment provision at UWESU-Frenchay, then, is hampered by its significant distance from the main residential areas. There is an excellent bus service to the site in the early evening but the only option home is by taxi. Late night transport, then, is a major problem. However, taxi fares do not seem to put people off as most tend to want to get cabs home anyway so they don't have to walk (int., McArdle, 7/7/97). Further, as UWESU Entertainments Manager commented:

we offer something different here. We offer cheap beer and a safe environment and students run the risk of trouble if they go elsewhere. But they also weigh up the important factor of getting home so that keeps them away from here [Frenchay] (int. McArdle, 9/7/97).

Frenchay has run a very successful DJ-based entertainments programme in recent years. The popularity of this type of entertainment was confirmed by a recent piece of market research undertaken by UWESU on DJ-based entertainment in The Escape Bar, the main bar at UWESU. This showed that students preferred a pre-club atmosphere, especially if it included DJ's, yet it did not matter what music was being played as long as it was a mixture.<sup>10</sup> UWESU's style of DJ-based entertainments has a complementary, rather than competitive, role with UBSU entertainments who concentrate more on live bands. This complementary role has been enhanced by the close working relationship which has developed between the two Entertainment Managers at UB and UWE. In sum, the two students' unions in the city offer a very attractive entertainments package by specialising in different areas; UWE for DJ-based events and UB for live bands (Footman, 1996).

The nature of entertainments is set to change at UWESU. Previously, UWESU allowed public access to some of its more popular events such as Sutra. However, "with regard to entertainments, we're actually stepping back by making all our nights students and guests only. We have a public ents. licence but we have decided not to use it" (int., McArdle, 7/7/97). Clearly, this could be considered as regressive to university-community relations, yet the main priority of the entertainments team is safety in the very broadest sense (ibid.) and this clearly involves creating student-only environments.

Entertainments at UWESU-Frenchay, then, mainly focuses around a number of specific themed nights, aimed predominantly, or exclusively at students. The most prominent of these are the balls, The Freshers Ball, The Snowball and The Graduation Ball, which are the largest attended events in UWESU's entertainment calendar. All three have a sell-out capacity of 2 500 and are held in a marquee on the grounds at Frenchay and include entertainment such as a fifty foot high big wheel, casino, laserquest, live bands, DJ's and guests such as Dannii Minogue!

The main student-only night is Sin. This event, and its predecessor Club Colditz, has been held at Frenchay on a Friday night for 20 years and is the longest running student night in the region and possibly the UK (int. McArdle, 10/9/97). Its theme is 'the seven deadly sins' and the night includes drink promotions and a variety of music with increasing

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<sup>10</sup> Research undertaken by UWESU, 1996/97.

dance influences. It is an extremely popular night which is over-subscribed in the first term. However, with a capacity of 690, Sin is a relatively small event for a student population of over 20 000. The entertainments team promote the night on its two strengths of value-



for-money (entry is £2.50 or less) and safety in an all student context: "One of the reasons for its popularity is that students know they will meet their mates there and not get into trouble; its safe but in a very wide context" (int. McArdle, 9/7/97).

UWESU-Frenchay also stages Sutra, a major dance event which has built up an excellent reputation within the night-club and dance music calendar in the city and attracts students and non-students from the whole region:

#### Universities in the City (2): Sutra, Frenchay, UWESU

Sutra was UWESU's quarterly dance extravaganza which ran from March 1993 until June 1997 at the Frenchay site and allowed access to students and non-students. With the addition of an outside marquee Sutra had a capacity of 1 500 and over the four years gained an excellent reputation nationally. McArdle (int., 9/7/97), commented:

we were one of the first universities to put on dance nights and we were one of the first, if not the first, to get DJs to recognise that university gigs are cool to go to and they're not in holes in the ground. We did an awful lot for reputations of students' unions and there's loads of university dance events now. We were one of the first and our ents. department has a reputation of knowing what is going on. We brought in big name DJs by word of mouth and we could get anyone we wanted.

As a result, some of the biggest names on the UK DJ circuit played at Sutra including Paul Oakenfold, Carl Cox, Laurent Garnier, Danny Rampling, Jeremy Healy, CJ Bolland, Frankie Knuckles, Graham Park, Dave Clarke, and Gayle San. Considering the most well known of these can charge around £1 000 per hour, it is credit to the production team of Sutra to be able to offset such financial risks and stage such an event.



Sutra ended largely because the market has run out for large-scale dance events (int., McArdle, 9/7/97). For a £15 entrance fee, Sutra was based around a number of rooms offering different types of music. However, those who promote clubs have suggested that the dance market is diversifying into a number of small groups who are seeking specific musical sub-genres. The club market, then, has become very fragmented and specialised (ibid.). Sutra lost popularity because people were not prepared to move between rooms and experiment with different types of music. As a result, the entrance fee did not offer value for money if the consumer did not experience all the different performers. As an alternative, UWESU is planning to stage a smaller-scale, student-only, Saturday night dance-event, *Massif*, with an admission fee of £5. This event will focus upon medium sized, local DJs from the growing Bristol dance scene and student DJs.

Other campuses at UWE have their own smaller entertainments programmes. Bower Ashton stages entertainments in two rooms with a capacity of 300. Recent events have included a regular Thursday evening dance-event licensed until 1am playing Hardhouse, Techno, House and Garage which has also hosted *Ministry of Sound* tours. St. Matthias campus has a 200 capacity venue and stages weekly events on a Wednesday evening which have been described as more typically studentish compared to the dance events at Frenchay and Bower Ashton. These have included a 'Lack of Talent Party' and karaoke nights. Redland and Glenside have small bars which have much lower levels of usage.

In a similar way to UBSU, UWESU has established relationships with other entertainment providers in the city. In particular, it has embarked upon collaborative ventures with Odyssey night-club. Two free buses are run from the Frenchay campus to Odyssey for their Tuesday student night. This is indicative of the efforts which a large club such as



Odyssey undertake to secure access to the lucrative student night-club market at both universities. Further, during term-time on a Wednesday evening between 1995-97, Odyssey was home to *House of Sutra*, an off-

shoot of Sutra. This event became the largest student night in Bristol for students from both universities which attracted nationally renowned dance DJ's such as Jeremy Healy, Danny Rampling and Frankie Knuckles who played to capacity audiences of 1 800. However, this event also suffered from the continued fragmentation and specialisation of night-club consumption. A large venue such as Odyssey can no longer rely on attracting capacity-audiences by staging large events: "Small audiences and small venues; this is the new logic of dance/club market" (int., McArdle, 7/7/97).



UWESU also jointly stages comedy nights on a Wednesday and Thursday at *Jester's Comedy Club* located in the heavily UWE student-populated Gloucester Road area of Bristol which offers cheap entry and drinks promotions to students. Further, the night-club Kickers in Clifton has established strong links with UWE's student population. In an effort to acknowledge such links, Kickers sponsors sports teams at UWE and UWESU, in return, is currently helping Kickers with a licence extension because of the experience of UWESU's entertainments team. UWESU has also used other venues for assorted events which have included King St. Warehouse (now The Steam Rock), The Blue Mountain and The Trinity Centre.

However, the main way in which UWESU maintains a stake in off-campus, student-based entertainment is through the ownership of its own city-centre night-club, The Tube Club:

Universities in the City (3): The Tube Club, Park Street, The Centre



The Tube Club, described as a 'miniature psychedelic playground' (Venue Student Supplement, 1997-98), is rather small, cavernous and low-key night-club. It was purchased by UWE about 6 years ago to replace the students' union which closed when UWE's Unity Street site moved to Frenchay.<sup>11</sup> This site, just off Park Street in the city-centre was UWE's only city-centre location and was very popular - it closed at the height of its success and it was also very popular with Bristol University students (int., McArdle 9/7/97).

*The Tube Club* is adjacent to the closed Unity Street site, yet with a capacity of 120 it has a very different atmosphere and there are plans to get rid of it (ibid.). It is run by an independent management and promotions team and it is an extremely popular club. Although the club is owned by UWE it does not just function as a meeting place for UWE students, but attracts students from UB and UWE and also non-students. It has four student friendly nights which are usually full to capacity, Wednesdays (WHAM, 80s), Thursdays (Absolutely Fabulous, 70s), Fridays (The Trip, Soul), Saturdays (Big Sexyland, Acid Jazz, Funk).

<sup>11</sup> There are many examples of universities investing in off-site entertainment facilities. For example, Coventry University Students' Union purchased a club for £2.5M called *The Planet* and is now one of the best in the whole city attracting both students and non-students.

UWESU's programme of entertainments has gained a strong reputation in the city. Bristol night-clubs such as the nationally famous *Lakota* regarded Sutra as "a massive threat. When Sutra was on, Lakota was empty as there wasn't a big enough dance audience to go round" (int., McArdle, 7/7/97). However, more recently there has been a greater level of competition in the Bristol city-centre night scene, especially in terms of student-oriented nights, and as a result an edge site such as Frenchay cannot compete.

One growing source of such competition is from the activities of many students from both universities who are involved in the small-scale and underground DJing party and club scene in the city. Such activity makes a significant contribution to sections of the popular culture infrastructure which, as discussed in Chapter 2, are under-valourised as cultural forms. Student parties, in particular, are a source of much creativity and are often used as an experimental space for students involved in producing or organising musical events. Many student DJ's also perform at local pubs and night-clubs and produce music:

you'd be amazed at what the student DJ's do. I know quite a lot of them and they spend all their money on records and they make records too. Some of them are excellent (int., McArdle, 9/7/97).

Further, the Music Editor of Venue reinforced this cultural producer role:

There are some very good student promoters knocking about going to venues. There are so many students doing marketing degrees now that there's a lot of students doing warm up nights or they will go to a wine bar and say, 'I'll charge a quid and put some DJ's on and promote it as hard as I can'. It's done in a much more professional manner now (int., Mitchell, 2/2/96).

In sum, the two students' unions in Bristol are significant institutions within the popular cultural infrastructure in the city. Whilst they increasingly are focusing upon the entertainment needs of the growing student population, UBSU and UWESU do offer certain levels of community access, especially in terms of live music events at the Anson Rooms and dance events at Sutra and the Tube Club. Through such activities, the two students' unions contribute significantly to live music and dance/club cultures in the city. Further, these official contributions to the popular cultural infrastructure are reinforced by the informal activities of individual students through band performances, DJing and promoting and managing entertainment events at student parties, pubs and clubs.

## **UNIVERSITY-BASED FACILITIES AND THE 'OFFICIAL' CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

Universities also maintain their historic role as inculcators and providers of official, or high, culture through various university-owned facilities and course-related activity. However, it is important to note some of the differences between many 'old' universities and their paternalistic and more traditional cultural role and many of the 'new' universities which lack such established cultural conventions. As cultural hierarchies such as those between popular and high culture are eroded (Featherstone, 1991, 1995), there is a dynamic which is encouraging many universities to invest in new, more experimental areas of culture, such as multi-media and digital media, in an effort to maintain their leading cultural role in the community. Further, the university, as a source of cultural authority and as a cultural resource and provider in the community, increasingly has to compete with other cultural institutions (Bender, 1996). There are several focuses for this type of official cultural provision at UB and UWE which are discussed below.

### **The Department of Music and The Victoria Rooms, UB**

The Department of Music is one of the two directly 'cultural' areas of academic activity at UB. In 1996, The Department of Music moved to The Victoria Rooms to provide the department with joint teaching and performance facilities. It took over about two-thirds of this building with the remainder retained as a considerably reduced commercial operation. However, the building is now unique, functioning jointly as a commercial entity and an academic department. The Department of Music uses the building during the academic term and sole commercial use is restricted to certain weekends and vacations. The Victoria Rooms functions as a major concert venue in the city:

## Universities in the City (2): The Victoria Rooms, Clifton



The Victoria Rooms is over 150 years old and is one of the finest buildings belonging to UB. It was designed by Charles Dyer in the style of the Greek Revival. In 1922, UB became the owner of the Rooms through a purchase by George Wills. The building functioned as the Students' Union from 1925-64. Since that time, it has had a variety of uses including a successful conference and exhibition centre since 1989.

There are two main venues facilities in the Victoria Rooms. *The Auditorium* has a capacity of 748 and is used for banquets, meetings, musical rehearsals, recitals and concerts. It is the venue for UB's free Wednesday lunchtime music performances and an evening and weekend concert series which feature UB's orchestra and choir. *The Recital Room* has a smaller capacity of 150 and is host to a number of smaller chamber orchestras. There are three smaller rooms used exclusively for commercial purposes; *The Victoria Suite* (100), *The Harley Room* (30), and *Alber's Bar* (40).

One of the reasons why the Department of Music moved to the Victoria Rooms was to raise public awareness towards musical work undertaken at UB. The Rooms has a covenant allowing public access which ensures that a wider audience will experience the department's work. As a result the concerts are experienced by the people of Bristol as well as members of UB. The music programme includes over 50 concerts per year many of which involve professional musicians as well as staff and students. Up to 400 people come to the free Wednesday lunchtime concerts about one-third of whom are from the general public. Public attendance at evening concerts will be even higher (int., Thomas, 10/12/96).

There are many excellent student musical groups housed at the Victoria Rooms. There are two major choirs; *The University Singers* and the larger *University Chamber Choir* who often tour together and have held recitals in Bristol Cathedral, throughout the region, at St. Paul's in London and in Europe. There are also several major orchestras; *The University Chamber Orchestra* and the larger *University Symphony Orchestra* who play throughout the city and in the Victoria Rooms, and *The University Wind Orchestra* which recently came second in the National Wind Orchestra Championship.

1996 was a special year for The Department of Music; it marked the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation, a celebration which was marked by a royal visit by Prince Charles. As part of the celebrations, the department's yearly charity event was held for UNICEF which was also 50 years old during 1996.

The Department has a clear aim for the Victoria Rooms to function as a major venue for concerts and opera in Bristol. It is committed to the idea of a *Music Federation* for the city linking other venues like St. George's, the cathedral and the proposed Harbourside Centre (int., Thomas 10/12/96). The Department is also particularly keen on promoting music education with the Harbourside Centre by offering community-based classes to increase music appreciation.

The Department offers the use of its facilities to professional and local musical organisations at reduced rates. This is an effort to expose Music students, and indeed the public, to a range of talented musicians and to nurture local talent. Organisations who have received reduced rates include Bristol Opera Company (conducted by staff and graduates for many years), Bristol Amateur Operatic Society and the Brunel Ensemble which is conducted by a former student. This last example is a resident orchestra at the Victoria Rooms and provides the most obvious example of the Department's commitment to supporting the Bristol music community.

The Department of Music has many links with the local community through its curriculum. In conjunction with The Department of Continuing Education, part-time certificates are offered in History and Composition and History and Practical Music. These attract mature students from all over the region many of whom go on to study part-time degrees in Music. In terms of musical creativity it is very rewarding for mature part-timers and full-time undergraduates to mingle (int., Thomas, 10/12/96). The Department is also establishing part-time courses in 'Electronic Music' and 'Composing for the Media', which will be the first of their kind in the country. An MA is also run in 'Composition for Film, TV and Theatre' which draws on expertise from BBC-Bristol and the Bristol Theatre Royal.

These courses will utilise the Department's new *Composition and Recording Studio* which is unique in the city. This studio is run commercially but it is also a facility for the community, which was demonstrated by an open day which was used to advertise the facility to potential users in the city. The studio includes full Audio equipment such as

Digidesign Session software for multimedia audio-production and videoing facilities. Because of the facilities diversity, it competes well with other recording studios in the city. It is one of the best facilities in the region for recording music for film and TV and as a consequence has produced music for both the BBC and HTV. It is hoped it can also be complementary in terms of contributing to the facilities offered at the proposed Harbourside Centre. Previous users of the studio have included members of Portishead and Funk-U-Like, a local band consisting of ex-students.

The Department has strong links with churches in Bristol through their *Organ and Choral Scholarship* schemes. There are five music students at Bristol Cathedral undertaking Organ and Choral Scholarships. Further, organ scholarships are undertaken at St Mary Redcliffe, St Paul's University Church, Tyndale Baptist Church and Clifton Cathedral.

From the above, it is evident that the Department of Music, especially in its new home The Victoria Rooms, is keen to be at the centre of the city's musical community. Reflecting other 'old' civic universities, this reinforces UB's rather paternalistic cultural role. However, the Department of Music and The Victoria Rooms is also keen to present itself in a much wider musical role. This is evident through the adoption of new musical technologies such as its sound recording studios and, recently, its role as the host of the 1997 Dance Music Awards.

#### **The Department of Drama: Theatre, Film and Television and The Glynne Wickham Studio Theatre, UB**

The second area of direct cultural activity at UB is the Department of Drama: Film, Theatre and Television, which was the first of its kind to be founded Britain in 1947. Through the department's theatre space, the Wickham Theatre, students are involved in public performances as part of their extra curricular activities and as part of their course. Work put on by Drama students may often be innovative and unconventional and has included a number of devised pieces and neglected classics such as *The Birds* by Aristophanes and *The Roman Actor* by Philip Massinger:

Universities in the City (3): The Glynne Wickham Studio Theatre, Park Row, Clifton



The Department of Drama: Theatre, Film and Television at UB houses and administers one of the university's main cultural interfaces with the public - The Wickham Theatre. With a capacity of about 120, the theatre stages plays not just by Drama students, but also by professional theatre companies. The venue has a unique role in the city compared to others of a similar size such as The Hope Centre, QEH, Quakers Friars and The New Vic, offering experimental productions and presenting performance work within an educational environment. Recent visiting theatre companies to the Wickham Theatre have included Volcano Theatre, Red Shift, Wild Iris and DV 8 (int., White, 17/12/96).

There is a significant non-university audience at many of the productions, especially those performed by visiting companies. The theatre acts as a resource for anyone in the city who wants to experience work by visiting professionals and Drama students.

**WICKHAM**  
theatre

Productions are advertised heavily throughout the campus and to the wider city through such outlets as Venue Magazine. The theatre is also let on a commercial basis for rehearsals for theatre groups, youth drama groups and film companies.

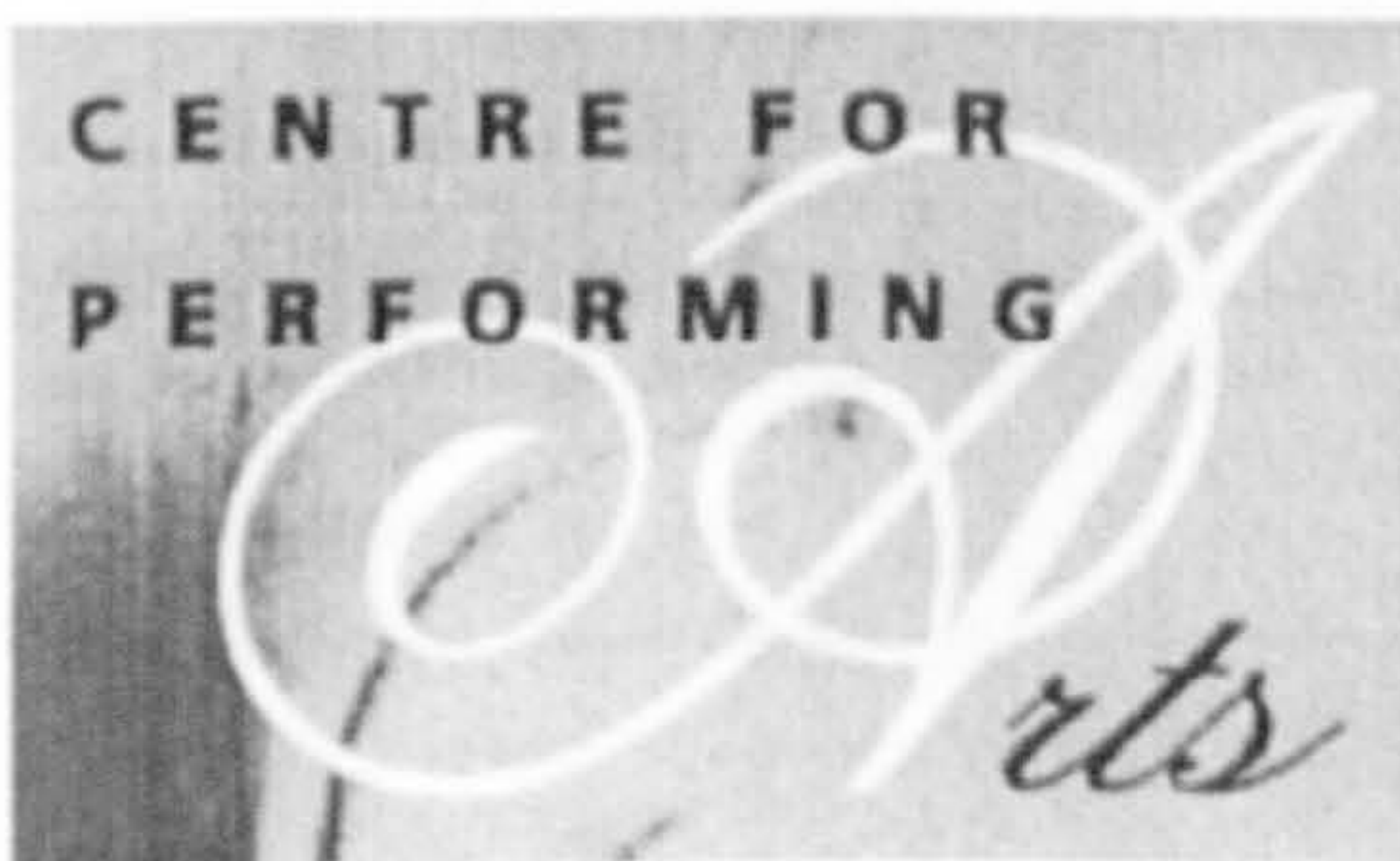
Students from the department are involved in professional placements with Bristol-based theatre groups as part of their course. A major aspect of the course for the students then, is to engage with the public and the artistic community (int., White, 17/12/96). However, the Department's influence extends far beyond Bristol as many graduates have achieved national and international success in the fields of Theatre, Film and Television.

The Department of Drama also runs a one year MA/Diploma in Film and Television which has specialisms in 16mm film making and multimedia. This course benefits from the Department's close relations with broadcasters in the region including the BBC, HTV and independent production companies. Graduates of the course have followed extremely successful and influential careers in this country and worldwide (int., Mitchell, 20/1/97). The MA/Diploma course holds an annual screening of work produced by the students at The Watershed Media Centre. Supporters of this event last year included the BBC, HTV, Fuji Ltd, Technicolor Ltd, TK Films and Samuelson Film Service and numerous individuals including Sir David Puttnam. Work from the postgraduate course is also regularly exhibited at International Film Festivals.

The Department also houses and administers *The University of Bristol Theatre Collection*, an internationally recognised research centre established in 1951 which is based in UB's *Vandyck* Gallery. The gallery is open three weeks per year in June during which free public admission is offered. The Vandyck building provides a library, visitors room, model room and storage space for the collection. The collection includes the archive of The London Old Vic and the Beerbohm Tree Collection and is a resource of international significance as well as acting as a national resource used by scholars, students, historians and schools. The Theatre Collection holds some material of immense local interest which include records of the Bristol Old Vic, the collection of the local theatre historian Kathleen Barker and rare pictures of Bristol's now demolished Empire Theatre by Bristol born artist Francis Hewlett. The Collection also includes *The Women's Theatre Collection*, the only archive in the world dedicated to preserving women's contribution to theatre. An exhibition is held every summer in the adjacent Vandyck gallery to display pieces from the collection.

### **The Centre for Performing Arts, The Octagon, UWE-Frenchay**

The Centre for Performing Arts (CPA) at UWE-Frenchay was established simultaneously



with the university chaplaincy in 1979 to foster participation in the performing arts due to the absence of such course-based activity at UWE. The Centre is not a place, but rather it is the people, both staff and students, who are its members. CPA was formed by staff who were made redundant from



UWE's St. Matthias and Redland campuses yet, by the mid 1980s many of these people had left the Centre and its future was in doubt. At the beginning of the 1990s, CPA was taken over by Shaun Darley, the University Chaplain, who aimed to revitalise it and tailor it to student demand for performance art such as dance, orchestra and choral activity.

Students at UWE now have the option to pay a fee to join CPA and use its facilities. Since Darley took over as director, activity areas have grown and the Centre has rationalised its staff into a small core of dedicated, specialist staff. For example, the Centre hired a conductor in 1992 to build up the symphony orchestra. From this point, CPA acted corporately to formulate a strategy and seek extra resources. CPA is mainly funded by UWE, but increasingly receives corporate sponsorship. For example, with the aid of corporate sponsorship CPA recently performed *Verdi's Requiem* with three other Bristol-based choirs at the Colston Hall in front of 1800 people. However, none of these are profit making events.

Student membership at CPA costs £7.50 for students. The Centre also offers dance, music and instrument tuition at an extra cost. The Centre runs a theatre club and the membership fee of £3.50 also offers special reductions at city centre events. CPA also acts as an information point for people who want to get involved in the performing arts more generally such as finding tutors and clubs. Activities at the Centre include:

- **University Symphony Orchestra** - established 3 years ago and has about 70 members. The orchestra gives three public concerts per year usually at Bristol Cathedral, which include collaborative work with other orchestras. The orchestra also takes a leading role in the advent carol service in Bristol cathedral.
- **University Singers** - Mixed choir of staff and students with about 100 members which performs jointly with the University Orchestra and other local choirs.
- **Musicals** - The Centre puts on a major musical every spring at the Redland campus in the main hall which has a capacity of around 250. These have included Oklahoma and Guys and Dolls. A number of operas have also been staged.
- There are also a number of smaller quartets, quintets and ensembles and a chamber orchestra.

- **Free Concerts** - A series of free lunchtime concerts during term-time at the Octagon at Frenchay called 'forty minutes' which offers a variety of music from jazz to classical and also drama and poetry.
- **Classes and Workshops** - Drama and dance and creative writing workshops - yet there are problems such as providing practice space.
- **The Theatre Club** at the Centre offers members discounts for ballet, opera and theatre performances in Bristol.
- **Bursaries and Scholarships** - Bristol cathedral, in collaboration with UWE, offers a number of choral scholarships for countertenor, tenor and bass singers to sing in Bristol Cathedral choir. CPA is also hoping to offer a number of music bursaries.

There are about 400 active members in all at CPA, many of whom participate on an infrequent basis. The Centre faces a number of problems, the main one being inadequate rehearsal space. *The Octagon*, at Frenchay is the main rehearsal space, yet with a capacity of around 160 is small and has access problems.

To accommodate the multi-territoriality of UWE, CPA groups rehearse at Frenchay, Redland and St. Matthias and runs buses between them to carry instruments. In terms of students membership, many are from the Faculties of Science and Engineering; in fact UWE is considering introducing a joint degree in Engineering and Music (int., Darley, 12/3/96). Darley believes that the existence of CPA has influenced students to choose UWE as a university choice. Membership details for the CPA are given out at freshers week and in 1995/96 there were 600 enquiries. However, in a similar way to other extra-curricular activities, participation in the Centre is jeopardised by increasing work pressures.

*LINKS WITH BRISTOL CATHEDRAL AS A RESEARCH IN THE COMMUNITY*

The CPA undertakes many performances in the Bristol community. In particular, it has very strong links with Bristol Cathedral, mainly because the current vice-chancellor of UWE, Alfred Morris is the vice-chairman of *The Friends of Bristol Cathedral*. As a result of such links, UWE's degree ceremony is held at the cathedral. Holding events at the cathedral is one of the most effective ways the CPA raises its events profile. The Centre also conducts performances in other locations in the region which have recently included a Spring Concert at Cirencester Parish Church and a performance by UWE Sinfonia at Bath Festival Concert held in the Assembly Rooms. The CPA is also planning links with

UB which include a collaborative overseas venture with orchestras from the Department of Music.

The audience of CPA performances can be considered as a small elite supporters club who attend most events (int., Darley, 12/3/96). These are comprised largely of UWE staff and students, yet there are some levels of attendance from outside the university community, especially at larger events such as Verdi's Requiem staged at the Colston Hall (int., Darley, 12/3/96). The CPA, then, allows UWE to have some input into the theatrical and musical community of Bristol, yet on a much smaller scale compared to the Departments of Drama and Music at UB.

This brief survey of university-based cultural facilities has revealed some of the ways in which the two universities in Bristol contribute to the 'official' cultural infrastructure of the city. Events at The Victoria Rooms, The Wickham Theatre and The Octagon form part of the city's official cultural calendar. However, it should be stressed that such activity generates artistic and cultural demand within the university population and those associated with it rather than the wider local community.

It is also interesting to note that departments such as Music and Drama at UB are contributing to innovation within the cultural infrastructure through experimentation in new cultural areas such as 16mm film making, multi-media, and digital sound production and recording. Investing in new areas is an attempt to reaffirm the leading role of the university within the cultural infrastructure of the city in the light of competition from other cultural producers and knowledge creators.

## **UNIVERSITIES AS A RESOURCE IN THE CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

Universities also impact upon the cultural infrastructure of the city by acting as a resource in various ways; by contributing to the development of certain cultural sectors such as media and animation, involvement in the art community and community art, integrating the creative community through personnel-based exchanges, graduate retention and patronising certain venues in Bristol and contributing to cultural management in the city.

## **Universities and the Development of the Cultural Industries**

Chapter One explained that universities are often growth engines for certain sectors within the local and regional economy. In terms of the cultural industries in Bristol, this is particularly evident through The Faculty of Art, Media and Design at UWE-Bower Ashton which makes a significant contribution to the development of the local media and animation sectors:

### **(1) The Media Sector**

The location of HTV and BBC West in the city has established Bristol as a regional media capital with many spin-off firms specialising in pre- and post-production, cable, multi-media and design. It also has strengths in radio production and broadcasting through the commercial sector (GWR FM and Galaxy 101), public service broadcasting and a number of small independent radio programme producers. Media activity in the city is supported by the Watershed Media Centre, the first of its kind in Britain.

This activity forms a media community in the city which absorbs a significant amount of graduates from UWE-Bower Ashton. The strength of these sectors coupled with the quality of life in Bristol encourages high levels of graduate retention, which in turn expands consumer demand for goods and services from these sectors and creates a virtuous circle of growth. Graduate employment in the local media sector is also reinforced through networking, in the sense that graduates established in the labour market return to the university to employ new graduates (int., Hughes, 15/7/97).

However, as one course leader stressed, it is important to strike a balance at UWE-Bower Ashton between intellectual and more personal creative work and the vocational training needs of local industry. By inclining more towards the former, the university can be a generator of ideas rather than skills and this can inject dynamism, growth and long termism into sectors such animation and design which are practically still cottage industries in the city (int., Hughes, 15/7/97). "We have to engage with society, but also sit apart from it. Commerce should come to us and see us as creative, independent researchers" (ibid.).

The Media Centre at UWE-Bower Ashton is the main mechanism which links the university with the city's media sector. The Centre is a resource used by media and design courses at UWE-Bower Ashton, but up to 80% of all students on site use the centre at some point in their studies. As well as its teaching function, The Media Centre also operates on a commercial basis. In fact, through *MEDIAworks*, the training unit of the Media Centre, the centre is the largest media training resource in the region (int., Brammar, 25/7/97). In 1996/97, *MEDIAworks* had 211 people registered on training courses. About 90% of this activity was in the form of Continuing Professional Development and the remainder were community based projects. There are several focuses for training activity at The Media Centre:



- **Broadcast Industry Training Programmes-** these courses are aimed at training for the local media sector and are run by a mixture of UWE staff and practitioners from Bristol's media sector. The courses include topics such as the web, digital sound and writing for radio and television. Recent collaborations have included BBC radio and News, Aardman, Hewlett-Packard and CSV-Media, Channel West and The Watershed.
- **The West of England Business Media Centre-** this is aimed at smaller enterprises who want to develop new media for business use. These courses are run in collaboration with NetGates Cafe in Bristol city-centre and also at Weston College, one of UWE's regional partners.
- **Training for the European Media Industry-** In 1997/98 it is embarking upon an international collaborative course entitled *Creating and Producing for Multimedia in Europe* with L'Institut International de L'Image et du Son (France), Swedish Television (Sweden) and BBC Television (London). The course is supported by the EC MEDIA II programme.
- **The Bristol Animation Course-** This course is one of the most significant training courses at the Centre which leads to a professional diploma in 2D and model animation. All the students who completed this course last year secured local employment. This course is supported by, and involves training from, the Bristol animation industry which includes *A for Animation*, *Aardman Animation*, *Bolex Brothers*, *The BBC Animation Unit*, *Honeycomb Animation* and *The EU Cartoon fund*.
- **Training for Community-Based Projects-** These have been carried out through various organisations which include the *Centre for Education and Enterprise Development (CEED)*,

based in one of Bristol's most deprived inner-city areas St. Paul's, who seek funding from government and European sources to help fund the training needs of local groups. CEED recently worked with *Black Pyramid*, a group in St Paul's working with photography.

The Media Centre has developed a very strong relationship with the media sector in Bristol, and as a result major firms in the sector such as the BBC look to it to fulfil their training needs. It also works closely with The Watershed. In particular, MEDIAworks has organised a series of lectures and training workshops at The Watershed entitled 'Digital Spaces' which was run by experts in new media. Staff from the Media Centre are also heavily involved with the local media sector. As well as day-to-day negotiations with firms such as the BBC, The Watershed and Aardman, The Media Centre also houses Channel West, an organisation founded by staff from UWE-Bower Ashton which now functions to represent the film and television community in Bristol, to disseminate information and provide lectures and training for the media sector, especially those working freelance. The Media Centre also pursues UWE's regional commitment by undertaking media-based training in more rural areas through Weston College, Western-super-mare, part of UWE's regional network of associated institutions.

An important aspect of the Media Centre's activity which links the student population with the city is student radio. There are several examples of well developed student radio stations in Britain. At Sunderland University, *Wear FM* won the Sony Station of the Year Gold Award and acts in partnership with many community groups. Other well-developed student radio stations exist at universities such as Exeter and Newcastle.

In 1994 and 1995, Bristol had its own student radio, *Fresh FM*. It was developed jointly by UWE and UB with support from the local cable franchise, United Artists, and Bristol Evening Post. The radio station was produced from UWE-Bower Ashton using The Media Centre and was broadcast to the whole Bristol community over the fresher period between September 29 and October 13 from 8am until midnight. The radio station was also promoted through nights at Odyssey and Lakota night-clubs in the city. The radio station relies on the commitment and efforts of the student body. Yet, because of lack of interest Fresh FM did not broadcast last year. However, in 1997/98, the radio station will be broadcast on the world wide web. This form of audio



**FRESH**  
FM 105.4

and visual broadcasting on the web is a novel form of communication and will allow unlimited broadcasting. Multi-media production of this sort is the way forward (int., Brammar, 25/7/97). There are plans to build the radio station into a more permanent entity covering the whole city in the next few years.

## **(2) Animation**

Bristol has developed an international reputation in animation through firms such as Aardman Animation, A for Animation and Bolex Brothers. Students from Media, Graphic Design and Illustration courses at UWE-Bower Ashton contribute to the strength of this sector in the city. Initiatives such as The Bristol Animation Course demonstrate the Faculty's commitment to developing this sector. Further, A for Animation and Bolex Brothers, two of the city's leading animation production companies, were established by Graphic Design graduates. There have been many other successful spin-off companies from this course such as Proctor Stevenson, a Bristol-based graphic design firm. Students from these courses are also involved in work placements with many animation firms in the city such as Aardman Animation. The organisation of these are not formal and are the responsibility of the student.

What is evident from the above section, is that UWE-Bower Ashton is an important resource for certain cultural sectors within Bristol's creative community. In particular, through facilities such as The Media Centre, it is heavily involved in developing Bristol's media infrastructure. In fact, "the role which the Centre has with the community, especially in terms of training provision, is increasing. There will be many new things happening this year" (int., Brammar, 25/7/97). The Media Centre creates its own healthy internal economy within the faculty; it increases the reputation and profile of the faculty in the local media sector and the students and graduates benefit from this: "doing media courses at UWE will get them a job in the industry, after all that's why they come here" (int., Brammar, 25/7/97).

However, it is important to note that although the city and UWE-Bower Ashton have strong reputations in the animation, design and media sectors, they are essentially still provincial and second-league compared to London-based media industries and educational institutions. Nevertheless, the media and design activity at UWE-Bower Ashton have developed strong links with the local media sector and one of the aims of the Faculty is to develop a strong regional film, radio and television culture. Further, the

Watershed Media Centre plays a crucial role in fulfilling demand from the staff and students at UWE-Bower Ashton for media-related activity and acting as a partner for the Faculty to undertake media-related production.

### The Art Community and Community Art

It is important to note how the student experience of university life develops through a dialogue between the student and the nature of the course. Art courses represent a much more personal experience where the student can feel exposed and vulnerable, especially when developing his/her work in an open studio environment (int., Dunhill, 15/7/97). It is also a course which is much more a 'way of life' than other more traditional lecture-based courses where students can get very involved, often too much, in their work (ibid.).

The significant levels of involvement of staff and students from art courses at UWE-Bower Ashton in art projects in the community is evidence of this 'way of life' experience. Of particular interest is *Fine Art in Context* which is a practical fine art course which addresses questions of site, context and audience. It is a critique of mainstream art in that it encourages students to find their own context for their work. As a result it is very much student-led (int., Lowe, 16/7/97). This course, then, has the most obvious cultural impacts on the Bristol community as it is structured so that the students spend 50% of the course in the community. The course has two major cultural impacts on the community:

(1) *Public Project Group Work* - Second year students, in groups, undertake a project for six weeks, all of which are based in Bristol. The projects are developed in collaboration with the client and the funds for the project are met by the client. In 1995/96, the projects included:

TABLE 3.1 PUBLIC PROJECTS ON THE FINE ART IN CONTEXT COURSE, UWE, 1996/97

| LOCATION                   | ACTIVITY  |
|----------------------------|---|
| Colston Primary School     | Development of a Teaching Pack based on history of the school                             |
| Stockwood Health Centre    | Installation of three panel paintings developed in conjunction with health centre members |
| Cotham Grammar School      | Construction of path and landscaped garden  |
| Aled Richards Trust        | Running of photographic workshop  |
| Ashton Gate Primary School | Installation of murals and landscaping  |



(2) *Residence-Based Contextualised Practice* - Third year students, individually, devise and run their own residency in Bristol or the wider region for a whole year. In 1995/96 the following residencies were undertaken:

TABLE 3.2 RESIDENCIES ON THE FINE ART IN CONTEXT COURSE, UWE, 1996/97

| LOCATION                                 | ACTIVITY   |
|--|--|
| Bath University campus                   | Installation of site specific sculptures   |
| Bloy Street, Easton                      | Development of decorations for abandoned housing in conjunction with local residents   |
| Birmingham City Football Club            | Art work for fanzine and flyers in conjunction with supporters   |
| Ashton Court Park                        | Site specific installations  |
| 13 British Road, Bedminster              | Public performance in disused house on subject of 'light'  |
| Bristol Zoo, Clifton                     | Work with Wendy the Elephant   |
| Weston College, Somerset                 | Site specific installation   |
| Hawkesbury Upton School, Gloucestershire | Installation of ceramic mural  |
| Bristol Industrial Museum, city-centre   | Prints depicting docklands landscape   |
| Redwood House homeless shelter, Easton   | Development of web site exhibiting work of residents   |
| QEH theatre, Hotwells                    | Set and costume design   |
| Netgates cafe, City-centre               | Development of multi-media and web site  |
| Devon House Probation Centre, Bristol    | Work developing theme of the identity of current and previous offenders through the mediums of poetry, writing and sculpture |
| Ashton Court Park Visitors centre        | Installation of site pieces  |
| Easton                                   | Installation of site specific pieces in Easton with two local women  |
| Convent, Wellington                      | Collecting stories   |
| Avon Youth Association and Arnolfini     | Live Art works exhibited at the Leadworks  |
| Henbury School                           | Printmaking with school children   |
| Withywood School                         | Workshops with school children   |
| Cannington Agricultural College          | Public art from wood   |
| Southville Centre, Southville            | Production of paintings in collaboration with members  |
| Shop Unit, Broadmead                     | Development and display of photographs and text on   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | the theme of 'consumerism'  |
| Asda, Bedminster                        | Placing art in supermarkets on the theme of consumption, food and the identity of women |
| Coronation Road Day Nursery, Bedminster | Work involving colour theory and emotions   |
| Convent, Clevedon                       | On site works in collaboration with nuns  |
| 13 British Road, Bedminster             | Work examining phobias displayed in disused property                                    |
| Easton Community Centre                 | Dance performance   |
| Gaywood House, Bedminster               | Work discussing the architectural surroundings with residents                           |
| Personal collaborative work             | reminiscence project with an individual   |

From the above, it is evident that students from this course have an interest in the relationship between their experience as an artist and the city. The activities of many of the students engage them with some of the city's economically poorer communities such as Easton and Bedminster. Work of this type is important as it is in such communities that the impact of the university may be perceived as elitist and its role irrelevant to that particular community.

Because of the interactive nature of Fine Art in Context, the course staff have a personal commitment to community art in the city. In particular, they work closely with Vizability, a community arts charity based in St Andrews which uses art as a powerful tool in the community at sites such as schools, day centres and youth centres. Further, staff are involved in the management structures of Vizability, The Print Project, The Watershed and work with The Arnolfini as project devisors.

Students from **Fine Art** have a relationship with the more established artistic community in the city. As a result, many students exhibit their work in galleries around Bristol such as The Praxis Gallery, The Leadworks, King Street Gallery and ArtSpace. There are also many individual requests for installations by Fine Art students by, for example, schools, residences for the elderly, firms and also from major projects such as 'The Bristol Festival of the Sea' in 1995. Students also negotiate particular installation sites from around the city such as playing fields, parks and office foyers. There are also many examples of 'rogue art' installations by students on derelict sites throughout the city.

Fine Art students have a great deal of involvement at The Arnolfini Centre for Contemporary Art where many are employed as gallery attendants and learn techniques in art communication. Students are also very active in the neighbouring Southville Centre in Bedminster where a small group of them run after-school art classes. As a result of such local art activity, many students are able to enter into occupations related to art administration and education and community art in Bristol (int., Dunhill, 15/7/97).

The creative and artistic work which is undertaken at UWE-Bower Ashton is also channelled into the community through specific art projects in the city. For example, staff and students from UWE-Bower Ashton have been involved in the following collaborative projects which have recently run in the city:

- **The Open City Project** - Open City is an on-going collaborative artists initiative formed in 1993 by Bristol-based artists with the intention of making art more accessible to the public. Open City takes the form of a number of temporary art installations around the city, many of which involve staff and students from UWE-Bower Ashton. In July 1997 installations included Queen Square, the Floating Harbour, Broadmead, College Green, The Homeless Shelter - Welsh Back, Bristol Youth Hostel and a mobile Mr Whippy van. Collaborators included UWE, BBC, The Arnolfini, ArtSpace, SonyCentre, Arts Council, The Big Issue and Avon Steel Ltd.
- **Changing Places Group** - This group undertakes a number of community based art projects in the Bristol area which involves the staff and students from Bower Ashton.

### **Integrating the Creative Community**

Members and ex-members of the two universities contribute to the creative community in the city through, for example, graduate retention, extra-curricular activities and adding to the level of art practitioners. Below are a few examples of the ways in which the Department of Music at UB, through its staff, students and graduates, contributes to the musical community in the city:

- **The Clifton Singers** is conducted by a Music Graduate who until recently was Director of Music at a local school.
- **The Bristol Bach Choir** grew out of the Department and is now conducted by a member of staff.
- **The Bristol Chamber Choir** is conducted by a music graduate.

- The Directors of Music at Badminton School and Clifton Cathedral are graduates from the department and the music for the consecration of the Cathedral in 1973 was largely produced by the department.
- MusicSpace, the centre for music therapy, is directed by a former graduate who is now internationally renowned in this field.
- The City of Bristol Boys Choir was founded and is presently conducted by a graduate and the Bristol's Schools Orchestra is conducted by department staff.
- Many staff and graduates contribute to the field of musical journalism and broadcasting in the city especially through the composition of music for film and television.
- Departmental staff serve in honorary capacities on organisations like The Bristol Music Club, The Bristol Society of Record Players and The Bristol Opera Company.
- The Department contributes to many local radio features and raises significant amounts of money for children's charities and the Musicians Benevolent Fund.
- The Department contributes to national musical performances. For example at the end of 1997, The Victoria Rooms will host the BBC Young Musician of the Year Finals.

The Department of Drama at UB also contributes to the cultural life of the city through other activities by staff and students. For example:

- In terms of local representation, staff from the department represent UB on the Board of the Old Vic Theatre Trust and are involved in the Centre for Performing Arts, Bristol Dance School and Avon Community Theatre Association (ACTA).
- Members of staff are involved in theatre companies like Show of Strength and Bodies in Flight.
- Staff and visiting staff to the department contribute to the cultural life of the city through free public lectures held in the department, the Old Vic and The Watershed.
- The department holds free exhibitions covering a range of topics which have recently included Fernand Léger's Circus and a collection of prints from the Bristol Printmakers Workshop.
- The Public Parts Theatre Company was founded by graduates several years ago.
- The current Live Art Officer at The Arnolfini is a graduate of the department.
- A previous general manager of The Hope Centre was a graduate.

Many students take their creative skills into the community on an informal and individual basis. For example, due to a lack of a large textile and fashion industry in the city, students from Fashion/Textile Design at UWE-Bower Ashton have developed their

own relationships with the creative community. In particular, many undertake fashion and design work which is concerned more with street and club wear and as a result become involved, either formally through part-time employment or informally through socialising, in the more fashionable segments of the Bristol's leisure industries. In this respect, many are integrated into the pub, club and retail sector in areas such as Park Street and Whiteladies Road to earn extra money and use their course-based skills to contribute to the cultural infrastructure of the city.

Further, many graduates from Fashion and Textile Design stay in Bristol and have had a significant impact upon the cultural life of the city through activities such as establishing small production workshops and retail outlets or working freelance. Examples of these include:

- **Box**, a local firm specialising in fitness clothing was established by a fashion graduate.
- **Religion**, a small retail outlet which was established by a fashion graduate a number of years ago in Bristol, has achieved cult status for fetish clothing and the fetish club night 'Spank'.
- Graduates are also involved in the production and retailing of small-batch street and club wear which are sold in the city's most fashionable clothing outlets on Park Street such as *B58* and *Westworld*.
- Because of the lack of actual production and design firms in the city, graduates contribute more to the retail sector, acting as buyers for large retail chains or outlet managers. In particular, graduates from UWE-Bower Ashton have been involved with the French Connection, Adams and Alexandra retail chains.

Further, from interviews with staff and students at UWE-Bower Ashton, it is evident that one important way in which the universities impact upon the cultural life of the city is through patronising certain venues as part of their social life and course activity. For example, for staff and students from media, graphic design and illustration at UWE-Bower Ashton, The Watershed Media Centre is an important site for socialising and course-related discussion and for those from art course at UWE-Bower Ashton, The Arnolfini Centre for Contemporary Art plays a similar role. They are venues which provide facilities such as an arts-based and cultural studies bookshop, gallery spaces, cafes, cinemas, media facilities and a number of lecture series by academics and arts practitioners, and act as a social focus for the whole [Bower Ashton] Faculty (int., Sandford, 16/7/97). Conversations with staff, students and the managers of the Arnolfini

and the Watershed and participant observation at these venues has reinforced the view that the university population, especially those from Bower Ashton and Drama, has a significant impact in terms of sustaining and generating activity at these venues. The use of these venues by the staff and students of UWE-Bower Ashton is enhanced by its relative proximity to the Bower Ashton site.

The Arnolfini and The Watershed, then, are venues which play a prominent role in integrating the creative community in Bristol. Unlike other major city-centre cultural facilities such as The City Museum and Art Gallery and The Old Vic, facilities such as The Arnolfini and The Watershed have not emerged from some notion of civic pride, but the demands of a burgeoning cultural consuming class. Both staff and students involved in art, media, design, music and drama courses at UB and UWE are a significant component within this class of cultural consumers. As one member of staff from UWE-Bower Ashton explained:

staff and students from the faculty are engaged with the community on two levels; they are involved in production with design firms and other groups in the city and on a more social level they also actively create the cultural life of the city by demanding culture to consume. If Bower Ashton did not exist, there would not be the same demand, especially at places like The Watershed (int., Hughes, 15/7/97).

What has emerged from the fieldwork are the links which have developed between activity at UWE-Bower Ashton and Drama and Music at UB and local art practitioners. Such links help to integrate the creative community. This integration is mediated by certain privileged sites within the cultural infrastructure such as The Arnolfini and The Watershed Media Centre.

### **Universities and Cultural Management**

Universities are also a major resource in the cultural community by contributing to local debates on cultural policy and development. UWE houses the Local Economic Research Unit (LERU) which has undertaken research examining issues related to tourism management in the region. Many academics also have an input into steering groups and development consortia in the region such as The Western Development Partnership (WDP) and The West of England Development Agency (WEDA) and there is also a significant amount of high level representation on cultural bodies such as Bristol 2000 and

The Harbourside Project. There are also a number of historic relationships between the universities and certain cultural venues in the city such as the Cathedral and the Theatre Royal. Work has also been undertaken at the two universities which offers analysis and criticism of the cultural strategy in the city (Bassett, 1993, 1996; Griffiths, 1995). However, such work has remained at a theoretical level and has had little real impact in terms of cultural management in the city.

A significant number of staff at UWE-Bower Ashton are involved in the cultural management of Bristol, in their role as academics and art practitioners. Considering the wealth of creative work being undertaken at UWE-Bower Ashton, many of the course leaders at the Faculty have voiced a concern at the marginal role which it plays in the cultural life of the city. In particular, many have been concerned with the lack of co-ordination amongst art groups in the city. Staff from Bower Ashton, then, are concerned at the lack of leadership in the local art community and would like to take a more leading and co-ordinating role in the cultural life of Bristol (int., Dunhill, 15/7/97). As one award leader commented:

Bower Ashton needs to take more of a lead in creating a sense of community in the arts in the city. At the moment we're isolated from the social and cultural life of the community and so our impact is reduced. One possibility is to move to the docks to create a critical mass of interaction between the city and the arts (int., Hughes, 15/7/97).

In this respect, the faculty could build a more constructive role in the cultural life of the city if it was as an artistic and cultural centre with extended access and more public interaction rather than as a traditional university faculty. "We need to be more radical in the way we see our role in the community" (int., Hughes, 15/7/97).

The paucity of links between UWE-Bower Ashton and the cultural managers of the community has resulted in a more pro-active attitude from subsequent course leaders. As a result, there are a growing number of examples of staff contributing to the cultural 'management' of the city:

- Staff are involved in **The Harbourside Forum** which acts to represent interest groups involved in the harbourside development. It also draws upon the expertise of UWE-Bower Ashton to advise upon artistic issues in the development.

- The arts co-ordinating and lobby groups Arts in Community Action Network (ACAN) and Public Arts Network (PAN) in Bristol are both represented by staff and students from Fine Art and other courses at UWE-Bower Ashton.
- Staff consult Sustrans on art installations on cycle paths.
- Much local consultancy work is undertaken by staff which has recently included work such as an audit of public art in Castle Park.
- Staff are involved on committee structures of galleries and studios such as ArtsSpace and Kings Street Gallery.
- Fine Art staff have also contributed to debates on local television.

In summary, then, students and staff from UWE-Bower Ashton and Drama and Music at UB function as a resource for Bristol's cultural community. In particular, UWE-Bower Ashton contributes to cultural sectors such as multi-media, media and animation especially through mechanisms such as The Media Centre, Media Works and the Bristol Animation Course at UWE. Further, at UB the Department of Music is heavily involved in promoting the musical infrastructure in the city and the Department of Drama contributes to the theatrical community. There are also many constructive links between staff, students and graduates and the creative community. Many of these are at an informal and individual level and include small-scale design and art work. Further, the staff and students from the Departments of Drama and Music at UB and UWE-Bower Ashton also sharpen and define the idea of an integrated cultural community. There are several venues, such as The Watershed and The Arnolfini, which act as meeting points between the staff and students of the university and cultural practitioners in the community. The university population, then, generates an added demand for specific art related goods and services and performances and contributes to an expanding cultural audience in the city.

## CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has discussed three areas which help us to understand the cultural impacts which the two universities in Bristol have on the community:

- **Students' Union Facilities and the Popular Cultural Infrastructure.** Facilities and events at, or organised by, the two students' unions in Bristol such as The Anson Rooms, The Tube Club and Sutra represent a significant contribution to the popular



cultural infrastructure in the city. The two Students' Unions are also expanding and professionalising their cultural provision as a recognition of the growth of the student entertainment market and as an attempt to ensure student safety and gain a larger stake in this lucrative market, especially in the face of competition from non-university entertainment providers in the Whiteladies Road area. However, use of the two students' unions is hampered by the remoteness and appearance of the buildings. In particular, the UBSU building suffers from its poor physical appearance and its location within an residential area and UWESU entertainment provision suffers due to its remoteness at the Frenchay campus. This re-inforces the popularity of non-university entertainment venues in the Whiteladies Road and Gloucester Road areas.

Students' Union provision of popular culture activity for the community is simultaneously being reduced in order to exclusively cater for the entertainment and welfare needs of the growing student population. In this sense, there is a trend towards the provision of distinctive student-only/-oriented leisure environments by students' unions, in order to create a safe environment, reduce violence towards participants and damage to the venue and equipment (see also Chapter 6).

- **University-Based Facilities and the 'Official' Cultural Infrastructure.** The two universities contribute to the official cultural calendar in the city through several facilities. The Victoria Rooms at UB is home to the university symphony orchestra and choir and various professional musical bodies such as The Brunel Ensemble which stage several concerts each term and student and professional theatre companies perform at the Glynne Wyckham Theatre. Further, the Centre for Performing Arts at UWE, because of the absence of course-based activity, provides opportunities for those interested in producing and consuming the performing arts. However, much of this activity generates audiences within the university community rather than the wider community.

It is evident that the universities are also moving away from this traditional cultural role and experimenting with areas such as digital and sound recording, animation and multi-media. This can be considered as a move to maintain their cultural authority and the relevance of the academic field in the face of other competing sites of cultural knowledge in the community.

- **Universities as a Resource in the Cultural Infrastructure.** The two universities also act as a resource for various cultural sectors in the community, through knowledge generation, training, personnel transfers, creative work and informal networking and socialising. In particular, UWE-Bower Ashton is extremely proactive in terms of developing the media and animation sectors. Staff and students are also active in the community in their role as art practitioners. Further, there are certain privileged cultural sites, such as The Watershed and The Arnolfini, which act as focal points and integration sites for the creative and cultural communities within the university and the wider city. Universities also have an input into the creative community through cultural management which takes the form of network building, consultancy work and the role of staff and students as cultural practitioners in the city.

From the above discussion, how can we understand the role of the two universities in local cultural innovation and vitality. Both UB and UWE are significant cultural providers in the popular and official cultural infrastructures in Bristol. However, the largest and most frequent audiences generated by university-related cultural activities in the community are in the area of popular culture, for instance at live-gigs at the Anson Rooms, dance-events at Sutra or night-clubbing at the Tube Club. In this sense, the two universities and their students sustain significant levels of music and club-based activity in the city and contribute to the city's growing reputation as a pioneer of music and club cultures (Chapter 2).

The two universities also generate significant amounts of activity in the smaller-scale areas of official cultural activity. However, it should be noted that most official cultural activity from the two universities caters for audiences comprised mainly of staff and students. Such activity, then, equates to generating artistic and cultural demand within the university population rather than the local community. However, the point is that this cultural demand within the official cultural infrastructure does have the potential to generate wider audiences in the cultural sphere by creating a critical mass of activity. There is an important relative cultural effect, then, from cultural activity at the two universities. That is to say that even a small amount of cultural demand from staff and students at the two universities is able to sustain certain areas of cultural activity in the city, especially in more experimental or less well attended cultural forms such as opera, devised theatre and art-house film.

What this chapter has also suggested is that as the university's institutional capacity to valorise certain symbolic goods reduces and is placed more equally amongst other, often non-institutional forms of cultural authority, the cultural impacts of universities becomes a more complex issue. The exploration of the cultural impacts of UB and UWE suggest that certain groups within the two universities retain strong roles in terms of supporting official canons of culture and disseminating traditional cultural hierarchies in the fields in which they provide instruction such as Theatre, Music and Fine Art. Yet, this chapter has also highlighted the broad range of cultural impacts which the two universities have on the city which encompass the university's more traditional role as 'keeper of the canons', areas of popular culture such as live bands and dance music and newer areas such as digital and sound recording, animation and multi-media.

What is evident, then is that as institutional systems of symbolic classifications fragment and dilute, the cultural authority of the university is being contested and the cultural 'idea' of the university is altered. Cultural authority is disseminated from many sources within the community and, in reaction, some universities are moving in new cultural directions to preserve and re-valorise their cultural authority and maintain the relevance and value of the academic field. This process of change is enhanced by the input of more diverse staff and student populations which generates new patterns of cultural demand.

## PART TWO

### STUDENT LIFESTYLES



# SITUATING STUDENTS

## INTRODUCTION

**T**his chapter discusses a number of preliminary issues to help situate this analysis of the impacts of student lifestyles on the community and the role which they play in local cultural innovation and creativity.

The first section of this chapter reviews previous research into students and argues that such research has focused upon the educational-formal rather than cultural-informal lives of students. The second section briefly discusses some methodological issues in relation to analysing student life and in particular, the issue of reflexivity and the problem of field roles and 'analytical distance'. Further, students represent a population in transition which generates lifestyle differences between 'traditional' middle-/upper-class, adolescent students and 'non-traditional', or 'new' students (Silver and Silver, 1997) such as those previously under-represented in higher education and those studying on alternative modes of attendance.

The third section explores ways in which images of students are generated and circulated drawing upon specific examples which range from images of privilege in inter-war Britain to more recent ones associated with students as consumers. The fourth section discusses the associations between students and youth. In particular, this section argues that studies of youth have paid little attention to less deviant groups such as university students despite their significant place within contemporary society and youth culture. Further, there is a tension between the concepts of adolescent and adult within the construction of the student identities.

Finally, the role of students in city life and the construction of student images in Bristol is discussed. Images of student life are constructed through the tension between 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' student lifestyles. It is the traditional cohort of students associated with images of youth, wealth and fashion who are often the main reference point for identifying students within the community. As a result, many other types of student, especially those previously under-represented in universities or studying on different modes of attendance, are not recognised as students. Bristol is a context which has a large

traditional student population whose characteristics of youth, wealth and fashion are particularly evident in the certain parts of the city.

## THE TRADITION OF RESEARCHING STUDENTS

The story of research about students in recent years says at least as much about researchers as it does about students... A great deal of research that sounds as though it is about students is not about students at all (Silver and Silver, 1997, 1).

The purpose of this section is to highlight the various ways in which the 'student experience' of university life has been previously researched. *The Society for Research into Higher Education* (SRHE) is perhaps the most important body currently conducting research on students. However, most work to emerge from SRHE, excluding the volumes by Haselgrove (1994) and Silver and Silver (1997) which are discussed below, interpret the student experience through narrow, educational roles.<sup>1</sup>

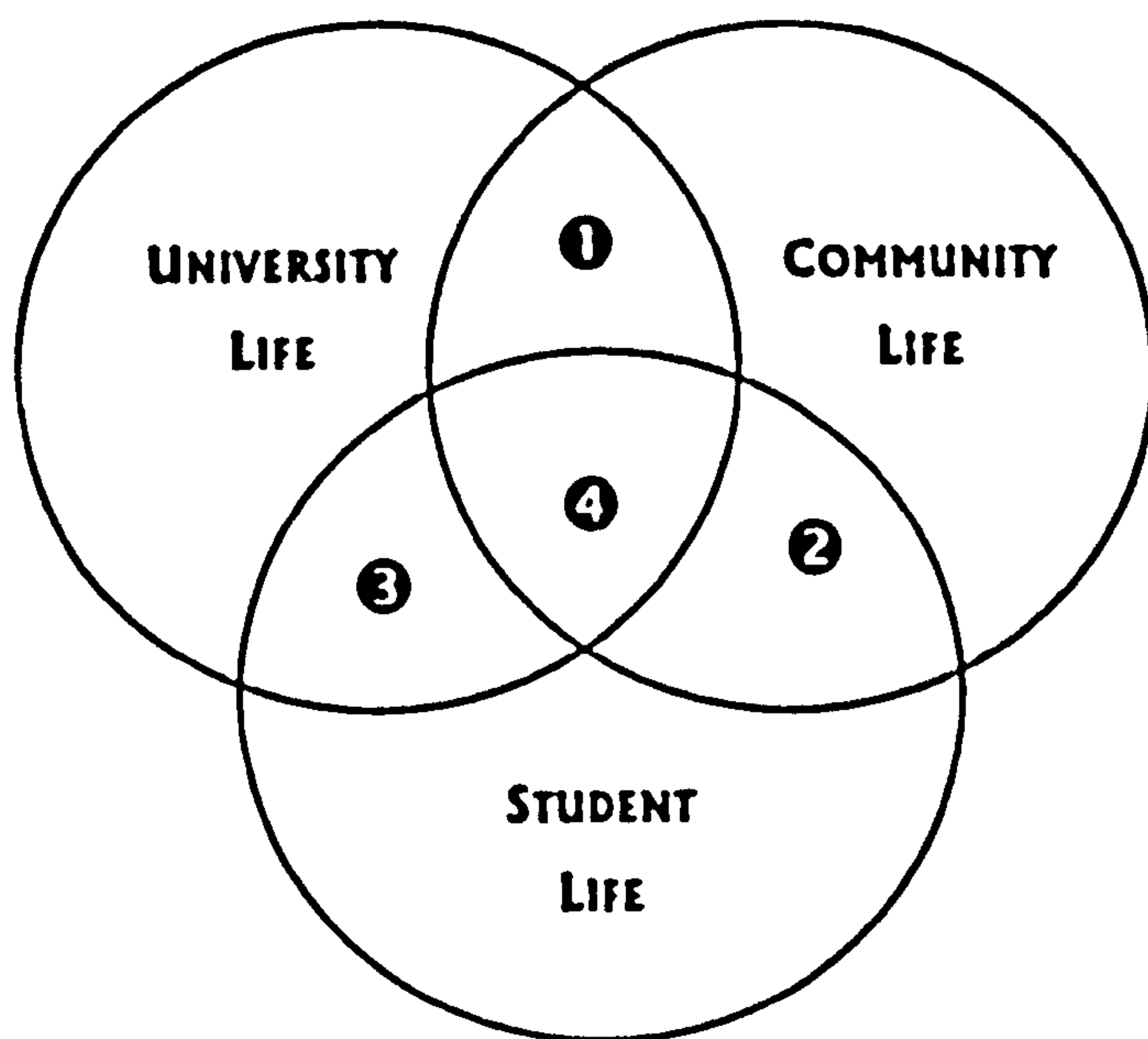
A fuller exploration of the student experience is achieved by understanding it as an assemblage of many different roles which are enacted through the interfaces between three different communities - the university community, the student community and the local community. In this sense, we can construct a simplified schema (Figure 4.1) which displays the interfaces between these three communities:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Such books include *Helping and Supporting Students* (Earwaker, 1992), *Beyond the First Degree* (Burgess, 1997), *Helping Students to Learn* (Raaheim, Wankowski and Radford, 1991), *The Learning Experiences of Overseas Students* (Kinnell, 1990), *First Degree: The Undergraduate Curriculum* (Squires, 1990), *Helping Students with Study Problems* (Peelo, 1994), *Part-time Students and their Experience of Higher Education* (Bourner et al., 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Clearly, the interfaces will be far more complex and multifaceted than can be represented by the diagram; in particular, there is a recognition that each community is not a single, monolithic entity, but is made up of a number of discrete, overlapping communities of interest and power.

FIGURE 4.1 UNIVERSITIES, STUDENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

**(1) University-Community Interface**

Contribution to local economic development, the built environment, social and community development (after CVCP/Goddard et al., 1994).

**(2) Student-Community Interface**

Part-time employment, local spending, non-curricular activities, student attendance in cinemas, clubs, theatre, pubs etc., effects of student housing.

**(3) Student-University Interface**

University curriculum, tutorial system, student services, students' union.

**(4) University-Student-Community Interface**

Student Community Action, locally relevant dissertations/fieldwork, student placements.

Each interface can be characterised through *educational-formal* and *cultural-informal* attributes. However, previous research on student life has tended to concentrate upon the educational-formal attributes. Whilst it is crucial to discuss aspects of the educational-formal life of students such as the transformations within the higher education sector, the role of students within vocational training and personnel transfer and the experience of non-traditional students, it is also equally important to acknowledge that a great deal of the student's time at university is spent away from both the educational and formal structures of the university and the researcher's gaze.

In this sense, the analysis within Part Two is located mainly within the informal aspects of the student-community interface. The interface between these two communities can be understood as the roles which students may adopt in the community which is not directly

linked to their educational or formal university career. The focus, then, is upon the cultural impacts of student lifestyles within the university city.<sup>3</sup>

This educational-formal/cultural-informal dichotomy, although artificially constructed, will help us to situate previous research work upon students. Two recent books will largely be used to structure this discussion; *The Student Experience* (Haselgrove, 1994) which largely offers work of the former type and *Students: Changing Lives, Changing Roles* (Silver and Silver, 1997) which makes progress into work of the latter type.

### **The Student Experience: (1) The Educational-Formal Lives of Students**

Despite the extensive research tradition concerning the student experience of university life, "the treatment of 'students', historically and in the present, has for the most part been conceived in narrow and often misleading terms in Britain and the United States" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 9).<sup>4</sup> In Britain, until the 1980s, such research concentrated on issues of 'wastage' and its causes covering matters such as success and failure, study methods and personality problems. The context of the 1960s brought other concerns to the fore such as student participation in campus politics, the issue of 'students as adolescents' and the generation gap. The 1980s and 1990s created research interests in the changing nature of the higher education sector, such as modularisation, semesterisation, access for non-traditional students and changes in student funding.<sup>5</sup>

This educational-formal tradition of student research was initially involved with analysing and correlating a range of student attributes such as academic performance, socio-economic background and graduate occupation. More recent work in this tradition

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<sup>3</sup> Clearly, a study of the economic impacts of students on the community could have been undertaken through a number of modelling exercises, or an assessment of their role as part-time employees. However, the reasons for not undertaking such an analysis of students were presented in Chapter One in relation to university economic impact modelling. Economic impact models are rather static affairs, and would be an inadequate method to begin to understand the whole range of 'impacts' students have on the community.

<sup>4</sup> This is particularly true in relation to British research into students. In the USA in contrast, there is much more literature relating to the student experience of university life, a result of, in part, the larger and more visible student population and more generalised campus culture.

<sup>5</sup> See Silver and Silver (1997, 1-13) for a fuller discussion.



has focused upon how particular types of student experience university life. For example, *The Student Experience of Higher Education* (Lewis, 1984) contains chapters such as 'Being a Mature Student' or 'Being a Woman Physics Student'. Although such a study is a welcome departure from understanding students as a series of numbers to improve university management structures and cost effectiveness, the conclusions it reaches are still related more to educational issues. For example, the book states its major concern as the gulf between the student experience and the staff perception (Lewis, 1984, 140) and hence the student experience is interpreted through issues such as staff-student relations, time-management and work loads. However, the book is of interest, if only in that it suggests that a critical area of research is "the lack of appreciation of how the personal/social world of the student influences the way in which the formal/academic world is perceived" (Lewis, 1984, 142).

A more recent book, *The Student Experience* (ed. Haselgrove, 1994), is different to studies such as that of Lewis (1984) as it aims to "explore why hitherto both UK educational research and HEI have taken little interest in the 'other' segments of students' experience which occupy a significant proportion of their lives" (ibid., 4). However, the book to some extent simply mirrors and up-dates Lewis's type of study as it treats the student experience as a longitudinal process in terms of 'getting in', 'being there' and 'moving on'.<sup>6</sup> As a result, the way this 'other' life is presented is still largely structured around the concerns of the formal life of the university and, therefore, discusses the *student-university interface*, rather than the *student-community interface*.

Such books are a welcome contribution to the debate on students, especially in terms of recognising the importance of non-traditional students and new pressures on students' lives. Without denying the importance of this type of research, I want to take the debate in a direction where very little previous research exists, by exploring in much greater detail the ways in which student lifestyles impact upon the city.

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<sup>6</sup> The issues covered in the book are application procedures, entry discrimination, FE-HE links, accelerated degree programmes, student finance, accommodation, students' rights, satisfaction and ethics, continuing education, skills applications and the experience of being a researcher and a graduate.

Research upon students, then, rarely occurs outside a small cluster of themes which relate their experience of university life to their role as a learner within the time and space structures of the academic-formal university calendar.<sup>7</sup> Such a focus often stems from the links such research has with the agendas of public policy and individual institutions which are increasingly concerned with funding and assessment issues.

### **The Student Experience: (2) The Cultural-Informal Lives of Students**

A broader understanding of the student experience, then, also recognises that which occurs outside the campus or precinct, the lecture theatre, the library and the laboratory. This cultural-informal life occurs in the halls, shared private rented accommodation, parental or owner-occupied homes, pubs, clubs and cafe bars within, and around, the university city. An approach which is keen to recognise the cultural-informal lives of students is intimately connected to a new understanding of the cultural, rather than economic, impacts universities and their students have on their surrounding areas.<sup>8</sup>

However, the whole conception of the cultural time and space of students is not a taken-for-granted category for the researcher to explore. The non-academic and cultural life of students will be structured in various ways and many students would see themselves as having a mainly academic rather than social or cultural role as a student (especially mature, returning and married students).<sup>9</sup> Others would see their time at university as a social and cultural apprenticeship rather than solely an academic one (often the case amongst post A-Level, adolescent learners).

There are previous studies which recognise the cultural or non-academic life of students, yet in the past these have mainly focused upon issues of student protests, drinking and town-gown rivalry. A number of more recent studies provide more concrete assertions

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<sup>7</sup> This is a conclusion arrived at by both Haselgrove (1994) and Silver and Silver (1997) through reviewing the Society for Research into Higher Education's *Research into Higher Education Abstracts*. I came to a similar conclusion reviewing these abstracts; volume 28-29.

<sup>8</sup> The CVCP/Goddard Report *Universities and Communities* (1994) made an early recognition of the contribution students make to the cultural vitality of cities, especially considering the growth of student populations and their spending patterns.

<sup>9</sup> One mature Fine Art student was extremely angry at my questioning of her cultural life claiming she would love one if she were not too busy studying and bringing up a family.

about the non-educational roles of students. These include Gayle (1995) who looked at students participation in part-time work, Kenyon (1995) who looked at student accommodation patterns as seasonal sub-communities and Hollands (1995) who looked at the role of students in city-centre based consumption and the tension between student and non-student use of the city-centre.

The book I would like to draw upon which opens up this debate is *Students: Changing Lives, Changing Roles* (Silver and Silver, 1997). It claims to be concerned with "the aspirations and experiences of students outside the formal academic process" (ibid., 13) and that being a student has always meant 'something more' than studying (ibid., 147).<sup>10</sup> The starting point for the perspective offered by Silver and Silver (1997, 13) on student life is that:

In some ways for all students and in fundamental ways for most, their educational and wider worlds have changed. What it means to be a student is itself not what it was a quarter of a century, or a decade ago.

In this changing context, "[t]he strange aspect of the story, therefore, is how little research exists on students as 'real people'" (ibid., 2). Building upon their concern that: "British conferences and publications apparently concerned with the 'student experience' have focused only on corners of what the 'experience' has been or is" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 9), they attempt to introduce some new themes to widen the perspective.

The main under-theorised areas which they introduce concern the idea of a student 'community' and images of students. Issues raised include participation in sports clubs, societies, politics and religion, student volunteerism, the provision of entertainment, the centrality of drinking, and increasingly drugs, to student life, debt, accommodation, part-time employment and graduate employment prospects. In particular, they discuss how

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<sup>10</sup> Silver and Silver's (1997) book was a useful complement to my research as I share their aim. As they comment: "our book suggests that previous research on 'students' has in fact focused principally on their learning and attainment, and on statistics. It was against this background that this book was planned in order to encourage what we hope will be a more systematic interest in the wider experience of the greater number and diversity of students, in their changing economic, social and cultural contexts, as well as in sources emanating from students themselves" (Silver and Silver, 1997, vii).

the student's experience of university life is governed by the 'interaction of personal and institutional histories' (ibid., 1997, 103). The discussion takes an historical approach in that it charts the changes in student culture since the 1960s in an attempt to gauge whether it displays continuity or decline. For them, the most important aspect of student culture is how the legacy from the 1960s has created students as a full "participant in creating the process of higher education" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 168).

The work in the rest of Part Two is an attempt to explore further this informal-cultural life of students. I acknowledge Haselgrove's approach which is to "stimulate the thought and debate which is needed to explore the realities of student experience in *all* their roles in a higher education context" (1994, 7). In this sense, the analysis in Part Two, rather than being related to academic issues, is related to the impact of student lifestyles within the city of Bristol and their role as cultural consumers. As far as I am aware, very little academic research exists in Britain in such research areas.<sup>11</sup>

## ANALYSING STUDENT LIFE

A comment by Silver and Silver (1997, 2) is useful in situating this analysis of student lifestyles: "Given the diversity of students and their life experiences, why does anyone undertake the research and for what purposes?" The qualitative and quantitative transformations within the British higher education sector over the last decade have created a lifestyle contrast between 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' students. Large numbers of traditional students still exist at many British universities and Bristol is a context which has a particularly large number of traditional students. The research undertaken in Part two of this thesis, then, aims to analyse in some detail the lifestyle of this traditional group of students and their cultural impacts on the Bristol community.

The fieldwork involved several overlapping methods which are described and evaluated fully in appendix A and are briefly introduced here. The fieldwork centred around three main methods; a questionnaire survey examining the consumption habits of 500 students which gathered data on over 4300 student leisure visits in the areas of the performing

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<sup>11</sup> Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1979) examined French students and their relation to culture in the 1960s and 1970's. This work will be discussed in the next chapter.

arts, cinema, galleries and exhibitions, night-clubs and pubs; follow-up diary work with 24 students which represented over 4000 hours of student time; and, focus-groups with four self-selected groups of students. These methods were supplemented by participant observation in the city and semi-structured interviews with university representatives, venue owners and cultural managers in the city. The fieldwork was undertaken at four different courses at the two universities in Bristol; Drama and Geography at UB and Fine Art and Tourism Management at UWE. The choice of courses was significant. Drama and Fine Art were selected to examine those who had a potentially stronger interest in culture because of their course-based interest and Tourism Management and Geography were chosen to represent more culturally 'average' social-science students.

However, I am aware that my examination of student lifestyles has many shortcomings. Firstly, much of the discussion shows a bias towards students at my host institution, UB, and within this the 'traditional cohort' of students who live around Clifton and the Whiteladies Road area. Yet this is because of their predominance in terms of shaping the perception of who students are in Bristol and their greater presence within the city's night life. The students who participated in the fieldwork did so through self-selection and hence were representative of those who were either informally co-opted into participating, had time to participate or showed an interest in the research project. Many student 'voices', then, have been omitted, for example post-graduates were excluded to reduce the already large amount of fieldwork involved. Further, only a small percentage of fieldwork participants could be described as non-traditional students, in part because of my lack of contact with such students and their other time and lifestyle demands which often excludes them from participating. Finally, field observations were largely concerned with groups of adolescent students whose youth identity is more visible within the city, especially at night. In this sense, I am aware that:

It is impossible to encompass the immense variety that has constituted the student experience over recent decades... Experience differs by race, gender, social class, disability, and the infinite combination of personal characteristics. In addition, there are the diverse variables of place of residence, course, prior relationships or established tastes. We can only hint at some expressions of these complexities (Silver and Silver, 1997, 93).

### A Reflexive Approach

An investigation of student life by a student-researcher demands an acknowledgement of issues of reflexivity and positionality. I want to briefly introduce the methodological approach of Pierre Bourdieu and his commitment to reflexivity and positionality: "If there is a single feature that makes Bourdieu stand out on the landscape of contemporary social theory, it is his signature obsession with reflexivity" (Wacquant and Bourdieu, 1992, 36). Bourdieu's use of reflexivity is not just targeted towards the individual, but the *social and intellectual unconscious* embedded in his/her tools (Wacquant and Bourdieu, 1992, 36-7). However, in opposition to much post-structuralist theory, rather than acting as a weapon to attack the scope and solidity of sociological knowledge, it seeks to buttress it (ibid.). Further, rather than entailing reflection of the subject on the subject, reflexivity for Bourdieu entails an exploration of the unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought (ibid., 1992, 40). Therefore, Bourdieu (in Wacquant and Bourdieu, 1992) disassociates his reflexivity from that which allows the researcher to talk about themselves and from that which objectivises the researcher rather than the position of the researcher within the academic field. In this sense:

[s]ocial science may expect to derive its most decisive progress from a constant effort to undertake a sociological critique of sociological reasoning - that is, to establish the social derivation not only of the categories of thought which it consciously or unconsciously deploys... but also of the concepts which it uses (Bourdieu, 1988, xii).

The process of conducting research on higher education institutions whilst simultaneously being part of the research community of such an institution presents us with a particular case for reflexivity. As Bourdieu commented in the preface to *Homo Academicus* (1988, xi), a work where he maps the intellectual field of the French academy: "Thus my sociological analysis of the academic world aims to trap *Homo Academicus*, supreme classifier amongst classifiers, in the net of his own classifications." Such work can be useful in terms of Bourdieu's war against the scientific practice of the sociologist:

When research comes to study the very realm within which it operates, the results which it obtains can be immediately reinvested in scientific work as instruments of reflexive knowledge of the conditions and the social limits of this work, which is one of the principal weapons of epistemological vigilance (Bourdieu, 1988, 15).

When conducting research on the type of territory contained within this thesis, then, it is important to be both critically reflexive and aware of the position one holds in relation to the object of analysis - in this case the 'student'. In this context, such work can offer what Bourdieu (1988, xiv) calls the 'sociological analysis of the social conditions of sociological analysis', in order to recognise that "[a]ny position adopted towards the social world orders and organises itself from a certain position in the world, that is to say from the viewpoint of the preservation and augmentation of the power associated with this position" (Bourdieu, 1998, 13). Further:

[a] description which contains no critical reflection on the position from which it is articulated can have no other principle than the interests associated with the unanalysed relation that the researcher has with his object (Bourdieu, 1988, 16).

Bourdieu summarises his notion of reflexivity on the sociologist and his or her universe of production by stating that: "I believe that *the sociology of sociology is a fundamental dimension of sociological epistemology*" (Wacquant and Bourdieu, 1992, 68). Such a sociology of sociology includes overcoming three problems associated with the sociological gaze; the *social origins* of the researcher; the place of the researcher within the *academic field*; and lastly, and most originally, the *intellectualist bias* which entices us to construe the world as a spectacle rather than concrete problems to be solved practically (Wacquant and Bourdieu, 1992, 39). By recognising the problems inherent in our sociological reasoning we can create an adequate science of society through "theories which contain within themselves a theory of the gap between theory and practice" (Wacquant and Bourdieu, 1992, 70). Clearly, there are important issues to be considered associated with the sociological gaze within this thesis.

### Researching the Familiar

Paul                    *Which are the main pubs you have visited in the last month?*

Drama Student *"Princess Bar." erm... ah...*

*ALL RIGHT I HAVE NO SOCIAL LIFE YOU BASTARD*

*But you can't talk you snivelling cretin, spending your time pouring over questionnaires instead of going out & experiencing life, exploring your larval sexuality instead of furiously masturbating over crumpled Pamela Anderson posters in dark recesses of mankind*

*YOU GODDAMN HYPOCRITE SQUARE!!!!!!<sup>12</sup>*

There are several problems associated with a student researching student lifestyles. The main problem concerns the similarities which are shared by the researcher (postgraduate student) and the object of research (undergraduate students). These similarities, such as dress, style and tastes, result in a lack of critical and analytical distance. A particular relationship is forged, then, which can result in resentment and lack of understanding and trust between the researcher and the student as the above quote clearly demonstrates.

What of the sociological gaze within this thesis? I am aware that my social origins differ compared to many of the students I encountered within Bristol. I am also aware of my place within the academic field as a postgraduate student. These both distanced me from many traditional post A-Level students. However, during my time as a postgraduate researcher, the majority of my friends were students or ex-students and many of my experiences at both work and home involved contact with students.<sup>13</sup> As a result, achieving intellectual distance was a problem. As Bourdieu (1988, xi) commented:

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<sup>12</sup> This comment was written at the top of one of the questionnaires which were distributed to students.

<sup>13</sup> One-third of my time whilst completing my Ph.D. was spent living with undergraduates; a situation where my research was often the topic of conversation and prompted my flatmates and their wider circle of friends and colleagues to comment upon my work. Covert research was never an option in such an intimate and trusting setting. Further, my postgraduate colleagues were often healthily sceptical towards my motives for socialising amongst other students; one even threatened to file an official complaint against me if he suspected me of conducting covert research on him!



The sociologist who chooses to study his own world in its nearest and most familiar aspects should not, as the ethnologist would, domesticate the exotic, but, if I may venture the expression, exoticize the domestic, through the break with his initial relation of intimacy with modes of life and thought which remain opaque to him because they are too familiar. In fact the movement towards the originary, and the ordinary world, should be the culmination of a movement towards alien and extraordinary worlds.

Bourdieu clearly advocates a distancing from the object of analysis in order to illuminate the group under analysis. While I achieved some of this intellectual distance from the student world, my own relationship to students, flavoured by kinship and familiarity with other students, impeded my ability, to paraphrase Bourdieu, 'to break with my initial relation of intimacy with student modes of life and thought'. This was not an impossible barrier to overcome as my own ageing in relation to many in-coming students meant I "acquired increments of analytical distance with each passing year".<sup>14</sup>

Another important consideration was that of anonymity and honesty. I explained my fieldwork to those students who directly helped me build up a picture of student lifestyles in the city. In this sense, the students who participated in focus groups, diary work and interviews remain entirely anonymous and all the names have been changed. However, I did not reveal my identity as a researcher to those who indirectly helped me to understand student lifestyles as this would have involved nearly every student I encountered in some small way.

### **Analysing a Population in Transition**

The concept of 'student lifestyle' is gaining widespread currency as more and more people acquire the label student or graduate. In this sense, it has been suggested that students are contributing to a cultural realignment in society:

*There has developed in the past decade or two a mass audience for previously specialised cultural forms. Part of this results from the explosion of the student population, which is now a 'morphological' factor in the social field (Lash, 1989, 252, my italics).*

There is also evidence to suggest that those who have experienced higher education will have a distinctive social attitude and a new morality (Walker, 1996). The 13th British

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<sup>14</sup> Thornton, 1996, 3.

Social Attitudes Survey suggested that "graduates are one of the most liberal, tolerant and permissive groups in the community" and that "the expansion of higher education may be serving to 'liberalise' Britain". Further, the survey suggested that being a graduate was a strong predictor of support for the legalisation of cannabis, being less censorious towards homosexuality, euthanasia and the portrayal of sex on television and in the cinema.<sup>15</sup>

However, one must be aware of the type of student which is being used as the referent in such descriptions. The student population of the UK represents a group in transition. In particular, quantitative and qualitative changes have occurred within this population which has altered the balance between 'old' and 'new' students. In this sense, traditional adolescent, white, middle-class students are juxtaposed with non-traditional, 'new' students.

The emergence of what has been described as 'new' students<sup>16</sup> refers to those who are attending higher education from dis-advantaged social and educational backgrounds, those from previously under-represented groups within higher education such as women and mature students and also overseas students, ethnic minorities and students with disabilities and those gaining entrance on a different mode of attendance. It was the former polytechnics that provoked the most fundamental changes amongst the growth of these new students. With the designation of polytechnics as universities in 1992, the definition of 'university student' as a post A-Level, white, male, middle-class adolescent has been eroded by the incorporation of these new identities.

In particular, those studying on different modes of attendance such as access entrants, recurrent and returning learners and part-timers now account for large sections of the university population. It is important to note the radical changes which have occurred regarding degree delivery:

from the students perspective, higher education becomes a 'kind of education', rather than a physical location or institution. It will be a life long experience, and 'will be offered in many forms and locations, by a variety of agencies' (Elliott et al., 1996, xiv).

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<sup>15</sup> The survey was reviewed by Walker (1996).

<sup>16</sup> Silver and Silver, 1997, 25.

Innovations such as distance learning, Open University courses and what has been hypothesised as the 'Virtual University' are relevant here, but are outside the realms of this discussion. To summarise these changes, some statistics which were extracted from the Higher Education Statistical Agency's (HESA) document 'Students in Higher Education Institutions' are shown below. All figures refer to the year 1994/95:

- On 1 December 1994 there were over one and a half million students at UK HEIs of whom 60.4% were full-time, 8.3% were on sandwich courses and 29.2% were part-time. Nearly 80% of students were undergraduates and four-fifths of these students were studying for a first degree with the remainder on other undergraduate level courses.
- Male students were slightly in the majority, making up 50.3% of the student population. The subject area with the highest proportion of females was Subjects Allied to Medicine (78.6% female). The subject area with the highest proportion of male students was Engineering and Technology (85.9% male).
- Among first year UK domiciled students, 71.2% of full-time first degree students were under 21.
- Overall, 10.4% of students were domiciled overseas immediately before entry (20.8% among postgraduates). Among overseas postgraduates, there were more students from Asia (32.9% of overseas students) than from the European Union (EU) (29.0%). EU students made up 44.9% of overseas students on first degree courses and were in the majority (58.9%) on other undergraduate courses.
- 10.6% of first year UK domiciled postgraduate students, whose ethnicity was known, were from ethnic minorities. Among non-white students, over a third (34.8%) were Black and 19.9% were of Indian origin. 12.5% of first year UK domiciled undergraduate students, whose ethnicity was known, were from ethnic minorities. Among non-white students, 31.3% were Black and 25.8% were of Indian origin.
- Overall, and excluding students for whom the information is not available, the possession of a disability is reported for 3.7% of first year UK domiciled students.

The significant feature of such growth is the way in which these students introduce new lifestyles and experiences onto campus life.<sup>17</sup> It is a reality that the student population in Britain in the 1990s is more diverse compared to the 1960s and 1970s. In fact, from this period onwards: "[t]he increased significance of a greater number of graduates and the

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<sup>17</sup> Silver and Silver (1997, 70) comment that universities have great difficulty understanding the needs of these extraordinarily disparate communities such as married, mature and disabled students.

related investments in student facilities and student grants provide the basis for a definition of the status of students which contrasted radically with the traditional student culture" (Hagendijk, 1984, 72). However the continuing problem is that:

[a]lthough students from diverse backgrounds were entering increasingly diverse institutions, and the number of 18 year olds entering higher education had begun to decline, the image of students remained rooted in their share in the youth culture, their identification with adolescents (Silver and Silver, 1997, 28).

In this sense, there are important institutional variations within the unified British Higher Education sector in terms of the characteristics of the student population. The composition of student populations within certain, older universities have changed less. In these universities, there is a large upper-/middle-class, white, adolescent cohort of traditional students who share many common characteristics such as wealth, fashion and youth and similar educational and social backgrounds. In contrast, many newer universities have much more heterogeneous student populations. The next section will discuss the generation and circulation of these conflicting images of student life.

## UNDERSTANDING IMAGES OF STUDENT LIFE

This is one of the reasons why I didn't want to come away to university, 'cos I had that impression that everyone was grungy and dirty (1st year, male, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

An important task, then, is to problematise the concept of 'student'. How are images of students generated? The general perception of students is that they are in some way different from the rest of the population and exist in a space and time which is somehow separate from the 'real' world. This difference is exemplified by the residential, campus and collegiate environment in certain British universities but has little to say of the experience of university life at some universities.

Our perception of students is often formulated through personal encounters. Yet these encounters generally involve students in their leisure time rather than in their role as learners in the formal sphere of study (Silver and Silver, (1997, 147). Only certain students are 'visible' in such encounters. In this sense, traditional post A-Level learners often eclipse other types of student, because of their distinctive youth identity, and, on many

campuses, their greater numbers. If we discuss students, then, without recognising that such a discussion may refer to fragments of the student population, we are in fact only discussing a certain temporal and/or spatial experience. As Bourdieu (1988, 26) commented:

To give a name... to an individual or group of individuals... is to adopt one of the possible viewpoints towards them and claim to impose it as the single, legitimate viewpoint. What is at stake in the symbolic struggle is the monopoly of legitimate nomination, the dominant viewpoint which, in gaining recognition as the legitimate viewpoint, causes its truth as a specific, situated, dated viewpoint to be misconstrued.

We should be aware, then, that there is a struggle to impose a single legitimate viewpoint of the student which is generated from various sources which includes work such as this present analysis and also university staff, other students, non-students, parents, commercial creditors, advertisers, employers etc.

The image of the student which holds common currency in British society is often associated with the most traditional segments of the student population. This traditional identity can be considered as a 'cultural archetype' which encompasses many different identities such as the sloanes, the lads, the rugby team, the lefties, the bohemians etc. What binds these different identities together within this cultural archetype is certain commonalities such as being a white, middle-class, post A-Level adolescent who has a relatively high level of free time and disposable income and is inclined towards arrogance, aloofness and hedonism. Other identities which do not display these characteristics are not identified with that of a student. The next part of this section will briefly examine some contemporary images of student life to highlight this tension between dominant and subordinate images of student life.

#### **Some comments on the contemporary images of student life**

Historically the images (of students) have had less to do with the classroom than with students in the street and the inn, whoring and rowing, enjoying the privileges of the interval between school and 'life'. Images are almost always obsolete. That more than half of students no longer come straight from school is the kind of reality that takes a long time to affect the images. That students are almost by definition politically and in every other way radical, are promiscuous, riotous, alcoholic layabouts, has for more than seven centuries been the essence of the truth as seen by image makers and disseminators. The

images, including the students' own images, have always reflected some reality, but rarely accurately reflected the dominant experience and roles of students in their learning and other environments (Silver and Silver, 1997, 14).

There are many enduring images and characteristics associated with student life. As Hagendijk (1984, 60) commented: "Ever since the creation of universities in the Middle Ages, dissoluteness, group solidarity, consciousness of status and aloofness from the social life of the citizenry have been seen as characteristic of students." One particular enduring image surrounds the nostalgia and romanticism of student life set in inter-war England. This is epitomised by Evelyn Waugh's book *Brideshead Revisited* which chronicles the life of two Oxford students Charles Ryder and Sebastian Flyte. Other similar images are seen in the film *Chariots of Fire*, which follows the Olympic career of Cambridge student Harold Abrahams. One commentator has described the importance of such images:

the decadent picture of Oxford student life between the wars that was portrayed in Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*, and popularised in a television series, has bequeathed images that remain hard to erase... Although Sebastian, clutching his teddy bear, Aloysius, in one hand, and a bottle of champagne in the other, has long gone, certain images refuse to die (Hardy, 1996, 12).

Despite transformation within the higher education sector, such images still remain and inform many people's views on student life. How can this be so?

If it is the case that the major determinant of attitudes is social origin, and if it is also the case that students from the bourgeoisie are still in the majority and that the values they owe to their milieu continue to influence them, and through them, students from other classes, then it is legitimate to consider that the student milieu owes a number of its characteristics to the group which continues to predominate in number and status...

It follows that with an increase in the proportion of working-class students, bringing in new values and a necessarily more realistic situation of the student situation, there will be a move away from the ideal-typical description in which the traits of the dominant group are applied to students as a whole; less rapidly, however, because even when students of bourgeois origin cease to be numerically preponderant, the norms and values they have bequeathed to the student milieu will not cease to be regarded as inseparable from that

milieu, even by social categories making their first entry into higher education (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 51).

Because of the historical dominance of the middle-classes in universities, then, the student experience functions as either a consolidation of middle-class life by the middle-classes, a temporary denunciation of this by middle-class bohemians, radicals etc., or a period of socialisation for those from lower social origins into a middle-class way of life.

Despite the durability of the middle-class imagery of studenthood, other images do circulate. One recent popular example was *Educating Rita* (1984), which depicted the relationship between Rita, a north country hairdresser, and her literature tutor at the Open University, Dr Frank Bryant which developed when Rita entered what was, for her, the rather alien world of higher education. This film moved away from the romanticism of the Oxbridge and bourgeois experience, by depicting a non-traditional student life through the university career of a mature student undertaking distance learning; an experience which despite its growing numerical importance, does not greatly inform people's perception of what it means to be a university student. However, the film still stressed the boundary between traditional students and 'outsiders', such as Rita.

Another different set of images of student life are those associated with what are seen to be the alternative, radical and hedonistic elements of student culture. Such images largely grew out of American college life epitomised by the film *Animal House* (1979), a rather extreme depiction of the fraternity culture. Such images of American student life are reinforced by Richard Linklater's films such as *Dazed and Confused* (1994) and *Slacker* (1992). In this latter film, a slacker is described as:

- (Slak'er) n.      1. a person who evades duties and responsibilities.  
                     2. a new generation of young people primarily centred around college campuses, that rejects the values of the generation before them.

These films are associated with what has been called 'Generation X' (Coupland, 1991). The Generation Xers are characterised with a pre-occupation with lifestyle and disaffiliation and have been described as neo-bohemians: 'beatniks minus the beat' (Coupland, 1992). It is a category which:

identified a breakdown in meaning among college-educated twentysomething white middle class kids - bored, listless and apolitical in a world without purpose, aspirations or hope. A careerless, directionless and couldn't care less subculture (Gillespie, 1994).

Similarly, in a British context, the comedy *The Young Ones*, mimicked a group of student no-hopers, each stereotyped by a particular characteristic; Rick (middle-class 'lefty'), Vivian (nihilistic punk), Neil (hippie) and Mike (wheeler-dealing mature student). Further, the character of 'Student Grant' in the comic *Viz* stereotyped the hopelessly middle-class, politically-correct world of Tarquin.

FIGURE 4.2 IMAGES OF STUDENT LIFE IN BRITAIN.



What many of these images have in common is that student life is seen as separate to the adult world of work; as a suspension of the mundane at a distance from necessity. In his discussion on youth culture, Brake (1985, 26) described student life as:

a moratorium, a temporal and geographical space, which can be used to test out questions about their world and their relationship to it. Identities and ideas can be experimented with and the possibilities for social change considered... Their cultural capital is considerably higher and their opportunity to experiment with ideas and life styles, their moratorium from wage labour all place them in a unique and privileged position.



In a similar way, the OECD (1982, 31) commented that:

[s]tudents see the university as a haven of relaxation and emancipation in which they can take refuge at an age when they are increasingly beset by parent/children conflicts, uncertainty about the future, and a desire to postpone their inevitable involvement.

It seems that the activities of students gain respectability, or at least tolerance, from the position the university commands within society:

Popular reactions to what are regarded as student excesses are often expressed with benevolence, understanding and interest, even when there is an obvious feeling of irritation. The student occupies a specific place in the community's scale of values; students are not a social class, but a valuable elite (OECD, 1982, 31).

However, the recent changes within universities do seem to have altered images of student life:

Mr and Mrs Undergraduate 1996 more closely resemble Saffy, the censorious and infuriatingly sensible daughter in *Absolutely Fabulous*, than Neil, the spaced-out hippy of the *Young Ones* (Kingston, 1996).

Different images are emerging, then, to describe the contemporary student. For example, there have been several real-life television exposés of student life in Britain which have chronicled the contemporary experience of student life. These included 'The Living Soap' in 1994 which documented the lives of a group of students in Manchester and the inter-group tensions which existed and 'Vet School' in 1996 which followed the development of a group of veterinary students at the University of Bristol.

Images of student life, then, have broadened and there has been a shift from depicting students as radical elites in the riots of the 1960s and 1970s to one based upon students as hard working consumers of education. In this sense, student politics have shifted from wider political causes (such as Vietnam, government corruption and global poverty) to more specific campus- and student-oriented issues. Seale (1972) described student radicalism of 1968 as a 'quasi-religious movement' because of its efforts to create an identity outside that of the university and wider society. Such radicalism largely stemmed from a crisis of authority and generational conflict within the university, a reaction to

university growth and the reaction towards certain sacred issues such as Vietnam, military drafting and racial violence (ibid.).

In the 1990s campus life has increasingly become apolitical and apathetic. Student activism now largely relates to issues that concern the life of the students directly. The recent student demonstrations concerning the introduction of tuition fees demonstrate this. One could discuss such apathy and self-interestedness through what has become popularised in Britain as 'Thatcher's Children' and in the USA as the 'me-generation'. In this sense, students seem highly employment- and self-oriented, a situation which is a reaction to the growing insecurities about the place of graduates in the labour market. Graduates in the 1990s are the first generation who won't do better than their parents (Silver and Silver, 1997, 124). There is also a strong move towards social rather than political activism. In this context, the rise of student volunteering and service-learning, especially in the USA, is discussed in Chapter 7.

In sum, images of student life have been influenced by the various roles which students have adopted. We can see a progression of roles from that of hard-working privileged elite after the second world war, unruly adolescents during the student unrest in the 1960s, to more recent notions of consumer or client in a pay-as-you-learn university. However, the image of students as unruly, middle-class adolescents still holds much currency in British society and reflects many of the realities of the student population at certain British universities. The next section will explore the notion of 'students as youth' which is one of the most prevalent images associated with student life.

## **STUDENTS AND YOUTH**

Students have always had, and still do have, close associations with a youthful identity. Yet, how have studies of youth treated students? The first part of this section explores the tradition of youth studies and then examines in more detail the interplay between students and studies of youth and in particular, how the image of studenthood shows a tension between that of adolescent and adulthood.

### **The study of Youth: from delinquency to difference**

Throughout the twentieth century, the category of youth has been understood in various ways. Valentine et al. (1998, 4) point to "the multiple and fluid ways that youth... has

gradually been identified and constructed". One of main problems of studying youth is that it sits uncomfortably between childhood and adulthood. Academic studies which identified 'youth' as a distinctive social category were established during the 1950s and 1960s in the United States and Britain (ibid., 1998, 10). These early works emerged from criminology, sociology and deviancy studies and interpreted 'youth as problem'. This was epitomised by the Chicago School who concentrated upon the delinquent behaviour of male urban gangs.

The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in Birmingham established one of the most important theoretical legacies in terms of studying youth through sub-cultural analysis which focused upon specific, distinct and rather expressive working-class youth cultural forms such as punks, hippies, teddy boys and skin heads.<sup>18</sup> Such work drew upon two main theoretical frameworks. Firstly, Gramsci's concepts of class and hegemony were used to explore the link between youth and class. In this sense, youthful sub-cultures were seen as a reaction against the contradictions found within the working class culture of their parents. Being a member of a sub-culture, then, was a 'magical solution' to the contradictions and alienations associated with being young and lower class; in other words, an attempt to "'solve', but in an imaginary way, problems which at the concrete material level remain unresolved" (Clarke et al., 1976, 9-75). Middle-class counter-cultures - beatniks, hippies, bohemians etc. - were viewed in a similar way, as an attempt to resolve problems associated with being young and middle-class.

Secondly, textual analysis was used which was based upon Levi-Strauss's concept of bricolage and Barthes's notion of myths. Such analysis examined the adoption of cultural artefacts by certain sub-cultures. One problem with this latter type of subcultural reading is that: "one might question whether the subculture was (actively) 'moulding' the commodities or functioned rather (passively) as a vehicle for commodity circulation (Frow, 1995, 67).

There have been several challenges to such studies of youth. Feminist studies of youth criticised the pre-occupation with deviance and the more spectacular and male youth cultural forms (Valentine et al., 1998, 16). There have been several reactions to the under-

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<sup>18</sup> Classic texts include Clarke (1976), Hall and Jefferson (1976), Hebdige (1979), Cohen, P (1972), Cohen, S (1980), Willis (1977) and McRobbie (1991).

theorisation of female youth culture within sub-cultural analysis (McRobbie, 1993, 1994; Nava, 1992). Such critiques have emphasised the existence of autonomous female, especially teenage, youth cultures and the articulation of a separate femininity. Further, ethnic youth cultures have been under-theorised despite their centrality to many cultural styles in the west and there has also been a pre-occupation with heterosexual identities and youth cultures at the expense of other forms of sexuality.

There is a need, then, to re-work previous studies which regard youth cultures as class-based, collective pursuits by introducing ideas of ethnicity and sexuality and the individual quests for identity and pleasure within the study of youth (McRobbie, 1994). Further, youth centred definitions of their lives also remains largely absent (Valentine et al., 1998, 21). In this sense, what has become central to the study of youth is the use of youth research to enfranchise youth.

There is also a growing literature which instead of focusing upon youth and deviancy, explores the links between youth and fun. Youth cultural forms are driven by hedonistic sociability and the desire for pleasure rather than sub- or counter-cultural rebellion. In this sense, youth and especially those with higher levels of education, are seen to exemplify those who transgress the boundaries between high and popular culture. Increasingly, youth are also depicted as an apathetic and disaffiliated group through concepts such as Generation X (Coupland, 1991) and are associated with risk cultures and the growing dance and drug cultures as depicted by the 'Chemical Generation' of Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting*.

### **Students and the Study of Youth**

How have such studies of youth contributed to an understanding of student lifestyles? Despite the fact that student life has strong youthful connotations and that the majority of upper-/middle-class youth are at some point university students, most studies of youth have generally over-looked student cultures. Upper- and middle-class youth, then, have been under-theorised because they are regarded as largely homogeneous and non-delinquent. As Valentine et al. (1998, 24) commented:

Another area which research on youth has neglected is that of privileged youth cultures. While working class youth sub-cultures have been extensively documented, privileged youth from elite social classes have not been the focus of academic research.... The

emphasis on resistance and spectacular forms of youth cultures has led to a neglect of the young people who conform in many ways to social expectations.

In particular, analysis such as that carried out by the Birmingham School rendered less visible the lifestyles, tastes and pastimes of the majority of youth by focusing more on deviant and sub-cultural forms (Roberts, 1983). This is worrying if we consider that:

most young people do not belong to specific and conspicuous subcultures... most previous and contemporary youth culture research has dealt with basically deviant or conspicuous youth groups and has not been much concerned about what could be called 'mainstream' youth (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 51).

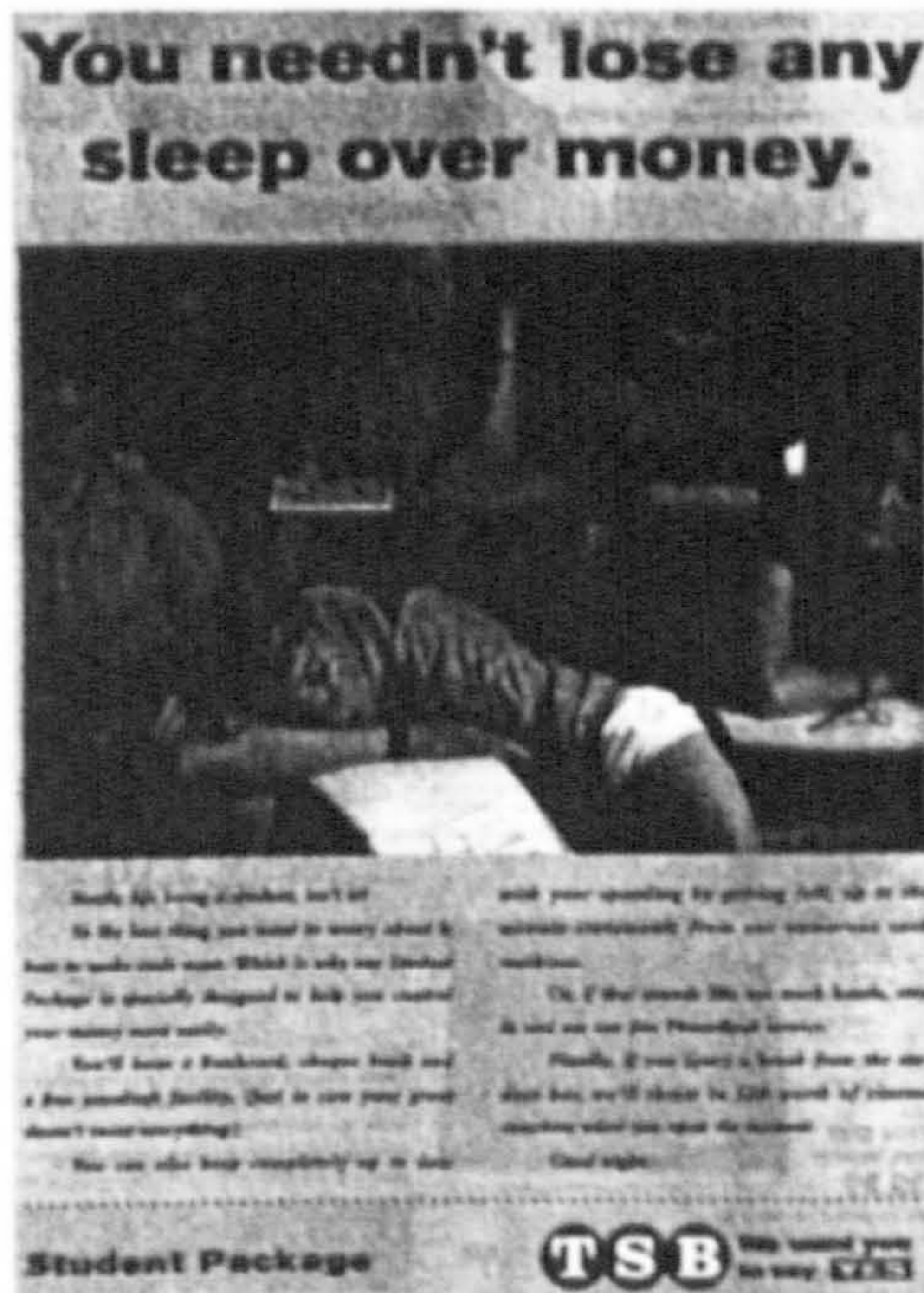
Contemporary student lifestyles provides us with an interesting analytical framework for overcoming many of the inadequacies of previous youth studies. Studying students (a group who is roughly 50% women) grants an opportunity to eradicate the overwhelming male connotations of youth sub-cultures in previous studies of youth (McRobbie, 1991). In particular, McRobbie's work challenges the gender biases in previous studies of youth especially in terms of regarding 'style', as Hebdige did, as an unambiguously masculine prerogative (1991, 24). Chapter 6 discusses the gender dimension in relation to student lifestyles.

Studies of youth, then, have only briefly contributed to an understanding of contemporary student lifestyles. There is a tradition of examining students through the framework of counter-cultures (Wilson, 1970; Seale, 1972; Roberts, 1984; Brake, 1985). Commentators in this tradition have concentrated upon campus sub-cultures and 'deviant' students such as the militants, radicals, hippies and bohemians rather than the 'more anonymous majority' (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 51). However, it is this moral majority of middle-class youth who now largely define student culture. The main way to define middle-class youth is through their participation in education, especially to higher levels compared to other social groups. In this sense, it is striking that so little attention has been devoted to students (in particular the middle-class school leavers aged between 18 and 21) especially when one considers their large numbers in many cities, their propensity to spend large amounts of their income on entertainment, their migration away from home and their associations with popular cultural forms such as indie music, drinking and night-clubbing.

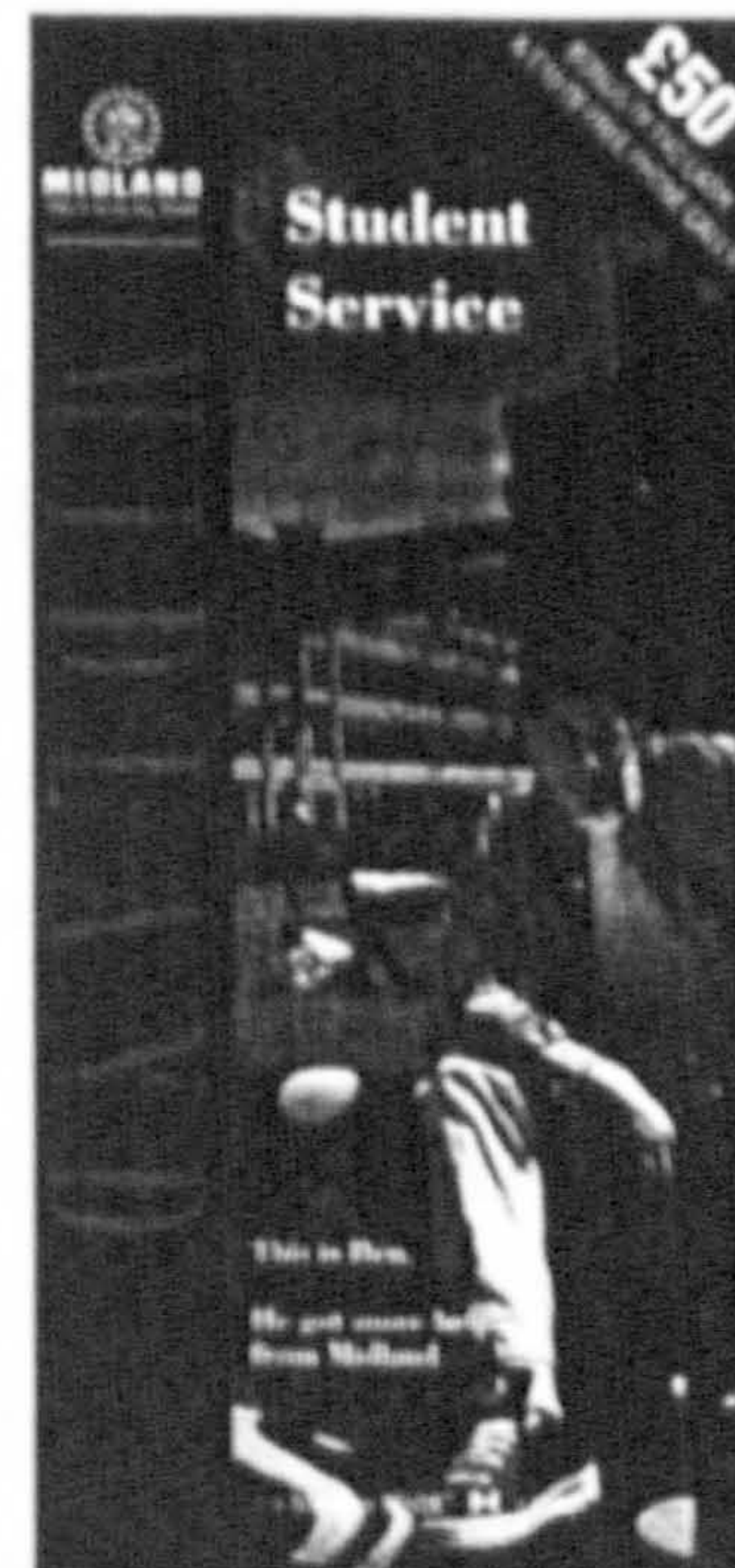
**Students: from adolescent to adulthood**

Clearly, then, the starting point in terms of perceiving student lifestyles is often that of youth. Figure 4.3 displays some recent images of student life which were collected from the banking sector. The images of student life which they present depict 'traditional' student lifestyles and their characteristics of youth, fashion and wealth:

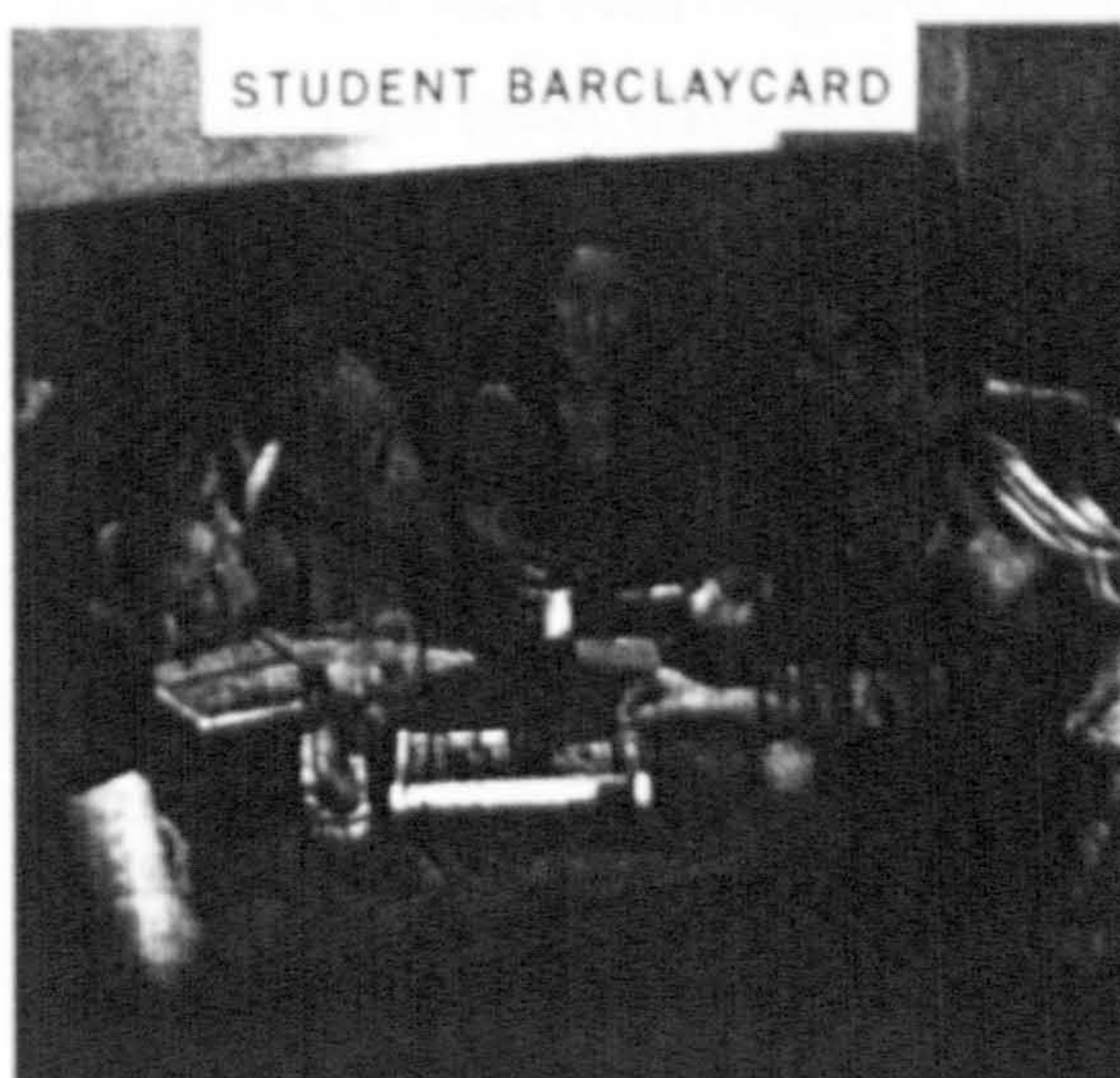
FIGURE 4.3 IMAGES OF STUDENT LIFE FROM THE BANKING SECTOR.



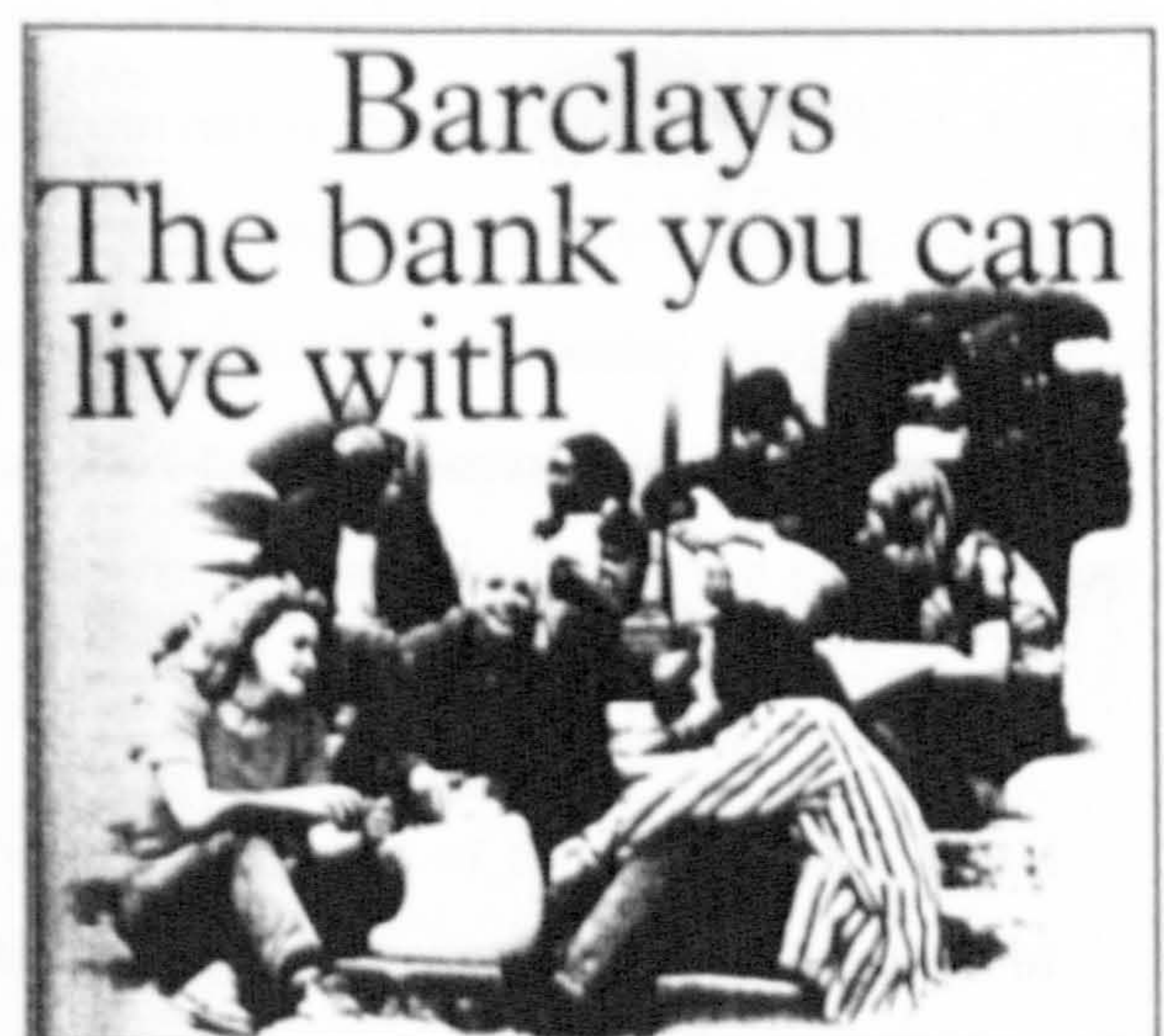
Insouciance



Independence



Sociability



Conscientiousness

It is important to note that the definition of 'adolescent' has its origins within the expansion of education to the middle-classes:

Through the spread of formal education to the middle-classes, the distinction between childhood and adolescence became more salient.. the invention of adolescence as a specific developmental phase thus belonged to the middle classes. However, through the democratization and the expansion of the school system, the notion of adolescence, and the modern distinction between childhood and adolescence, were gradually extended to large parts of the labouring population (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 85).

The image of students, then, has strong links with adolescent and unruly youth culture. There is a body of literature which has treated student culture in a negative way. A book by Bryan Wilson entitled *The Youth Culture and the Universities* (1970), is one of the finest examples of the generational panic instigated against what was seen as dissident youth and student culture. Wilson draws upon images of students from the 1960s and 1970s who defer from the responsibilities of the adult world in order to confront the values of their elders. Such a pejorative attitude towards student culture stemmed from a belief that the student's deferral from the adult world enabled them to cultivate deviant modes of expression. Further, echoing the fears of the Frankfurt School, Wilson (1970) suggests that the mass entertainment industry was destroying cultural tradition and creating a generation of dissident youth. More recent commentary from America echoes this. Bloom (1987) develops critical and negative imagery of the 'mass' student who are of an inferior quality and are eroding the traditions of the 'elite' academy.

This adolescent, and often negative, image of studenthood has been challenged in many ways. One of the main ways in which this has occurred is through the numerical decline of post A-Level students on many campuses in relation to other non-traditional students. The post-1992 growth of 'new students' injected a diversity of social and educational backgrounds and modes of attendance into the University system, one significant aspect of which was the increase of mature and adult learners. The model of the student, then, has shifted:

Traditionally the 'student as adolescent' has been at the heart of the model, challenged increasingly by the accelerating changes in the once almost exclusive constituency of 'qualified school leavers'" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 25).

Another significant development has been how the status of students has been defined. The phrase *in loco parentis* relates to a situation where the university's role was not just to educate students but to protect and look after them. This was the case in Britain before 1969, when the age of majority was reduced from 21 to 18 through the recommendation of the Latey Committee. Before this time the majority of students at university were legally still children (Silver and Silver, 1995, 5). The end of *in loco parentis* was extremely influential in shaping the student experience:

The abandonment in Britain and the United States at roughly the same time of the doctrine of higher education institutions being *in loco parentis* was in the long run at least as influential as the student protest movements at the same period (*ibid.*, 29).

The 1960s, then, was a defining period in the history of what it meant to be a student. "What students inherited most from the events of the 1960s was a sharpened attempt to redefine the nature of the university or college community, and their position as adolescents and adults" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 82). It was not only a period where students were redefined as adults, but where their role in society was scrutinised and the relationship between the student and the university was questioned.

However, many feel that the end of *in loco parentis* was not entirely preferable:

Together with the institutions' motives of providing caring services and frameworks for student development there have been those of improving retention rates and responding to criticism that the absence of firm *in loco parentis* structures has reduced institutions' capacity to regulate significant aspects of student behaviour, including drug abuse, sexual promiscuity and under-age drinking (Silver and Silver, 1997, 63).<sup>19</sup>

Further, in the absence of the cloistered environment of *in loco parentis*, many students are suffering alienation, loneliness and lack of personal contact and representation within the mass university. Post-*in loco parentis* structures have become vital, then, in helping students define themselves. For example, student support services have burgeoned since the 1980s to maintain some notion of order and moral relationship between the university and its students. The increasing organisation of the needs and demands of the student population can be seen through what has been termed *The Rise of the Student Estate*

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<sup>19</sup> Such a view echoes that of Wilson (1970) and Bloom (1987).



(Ashby and Anderson, 1970). Since the 1960's, then, there has been a "professionalisation of 'student life', a form of 'articulation' which substituted for *in loco parentis*" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 54).

In the late 1980s and 1990s in Britain, the increase in student services ranging from law clinics to counselling and the rise of student services personnel has been replicated following the earlier American tradition which, from a much earlier time, has treated students as consumers (Silver and Silver, 1997, 59). However, the extent to which such services are able to create some notion of personal scale within a system of mass higher education is unclear. What is clear, is that attitudes have changed towards students, from that of irresponsible and (at least legally) dependent adolescents in the 1960s to responsible adults supported by a range of services and participatory rights within university management in the 1990s.

Increasingly, then, because of changing attitudes and definitions towards youth and changing age profiles on campus, it is often more accurate to discuss students as adults rather than adolescents. However, most images of student life still reflect this tension between a deferment and retreat from the real world and their position as responsible adults. This ambivalence can be seen through the university as a context for a rite of passage and the student role as learner:

The concept of the 'adolescent child' was rapidly disappearing. The political pressures to recognise the changes (the age of majority) favoured treating 18-year olds as adults, although there were some misgivings about their ability - notably that of students - to accept or significantly contribute to the responsibilities implied. In the role of students it was a widely held view that their role as 'learners' in fact debarred them from such a contribution" (ibid., 29).

Universities then, are recipients of people from many different contexts, all of whom have varying abilities and resources and different perceptions about what is expected of them and what role they have to play such as apprentice, learner, client and consumer. The category of 'student' is increasingly becoming a 'melting pot' for individuals from many different backgrounds and lifestages. In sum, the expansion of higher education means that it is more problematic to discuss studenthood as an adolescent lifestage. Yet, it needs to be noted that many universities are still dominated by a largely adolescent student population.

However, despite this identity tension, what we may be witnessing within student life is: "the emergence of a previously unrecognised stage in life, a stage that intervenes between adolescence and adulthood, namely, the stage of postadolescence or youth... This transitional period is characterized by a prolonged experimentation with life's possibilities" (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 85-86). This is strengthened by the growing trend towards 'gap years' before and after university, which often include a mixture of working and travelling. The point is that the period of socially and culturally defined, as opposed to biologically and psychologically defined, *youth* may be extended to include any period in life when one becomes a student. This would mean that the post-adolescent consumption-oriented experience we associate with students is generalised to other age groups on (and off) campus not just the post A-Level cohort. This resonates with Featherstone's (1991, 100-101) comment that:

youthful styles and lifestyles are migrating up the age scale and that as the 1960s generation ages they are taking some of their youth-oriented dispositions with them, and that adults are being granted greater licence for childlike behaviour and vice-versa.

Some have commented that youth cultural styles are becoming a more generalised condition for those who exhibit 'postmodern', eclectic lifestyles within the consumption oriented city. For example, Featherstone (1991, 100) comments: "[i]t should be apparent that this group of people who seek to cross, re-cross and transgress the boundaries between art and everyday life are predominantly the young and are the inheritors of the tradition of youth subcultures." One issue to explore in the next chapter, then, is the extent to which students are generators, and even innovators, of this 'youthful' and 'postmodern' (i.e. eclectic) city-centre based cultural activity.

## THE ROLE OF STUDENTS IN CITY LIFE

In the 1990s the impact of expansion in student numbers is seen in growing student cities - we could call them UniverCities - where a city of three or four-hundred thousand people may have thirty thousand university students at its centre, and perhaps twice that with further education added. Swathes of inner city may be given over to university buildings and student residences (Wright, 1994, 91).

This quote from an address by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sunderland reminds us of the physical presence of students in nearly every large city in Britain; hence

the notion of *UniverCities* as well as *UniverSities*. With the unification of the university sector many cities have more than one university and large student populations. For example, in 1994/95 in Bristol there were over 34 000 students which represented 9% of the total population, in Manchester and Salford over 73 000 (12%), in Newcastle nearly 32 000 (12%), in Sheffield over 40 000 (8%), in Leeds nearly 40 000 (6%) in Birmingham over 40 000 (4%) and in London over 219 000 (3.3%). London has by far the highest number of students, with over 14% of all higher education students in the UK located there (HESA, 1996).<sup>20</sup>

Despite these increasing student populations: "[i]n terms of sociological analysis, students have hitherto navigated through the city without much attention" (Gayle, 1995, 1). In this sense, there is a need to recognise "the student as an accomplished and knowledgeable agent [within] the economic and social ensemble of the city's structure" (ibid.). In particular, the cultural activities of students is an under-examined area. This is an unfortunate omission if we consider that "having a social life for students has always been part of their extended cultural transition" (Hollands, 1995, 3) and that as student populations swell in many British cities, provision to meet the entertainment requirements of students are becoming a more important element in the cultural infrastructure of cities.

An analysis of students allows us to explore the notion that cities, and in particular city-centres, are arenas which are divided in space and time by a process of identity-making by specific groups. In the context of this study, it is interesting to note that "the use and appropriation of evening city space, is becoming a more central element in the production of youth identities" yet, "the relationship between city space, culture and youth identity has remained relatively unexplored" (Hollands, 1995, 3). Further, it has been suggested that geographers have neglected 'geographies of youth' and in particular, the way in which youth produce and subvert space (Valentine et al., 1998, 7).

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<sup>20</sup> However, this is still small on the scale of the USA. The larger state-wide federations such as Wisconsin and California are on a far larger scale than Britain. For example, Chapter 7 presents a case study from the University of Wisconsin-Madison; where there are in excess of 40 000 students in a city of only 200 000.

It can be suggested that student lifestyles inject a distinctive element into cities. In particular, students have often been at the forefront of political and cultural movements in many locations. This was evident in many cities throughout the world such as Paris, London and Berkeley during the events of 1968. More recently, students have played a prominent role in opposing oppressive regimes in places such as China and Korea and there have been large-scale student protests across Europe during late 1997 which were concerned with student funding.

Further, Lash (1993) discusses the role which students played in the construction of West Berlin as a cultural Mecca for west German political and aesthetic avant-gardes in the post-war period: "This was first of all visible in the enormous physical presence of *students in the city*" (ibid., 1993, 241). These students differ from those in Anglo-American societies in that "they are adults, only half-rooted in a chaotic university system and on a very pervasive margin of society" (ibid.). Berlin is a particular place for students: "[t]hose rejecting the bourgeois virtues and Yuppiedom came to Berlin" (ibid.). Berlin is an example, then, of a city with a particular urban atmosphere, in part, through the continued presence of '68ers' and students.

What about students in British cities? It seems they are seen as good and bad:

They are good because the advent of a university boosts the local economy... expands the leisure industry, and provides a youthful heart to the community. They are bad because large numbers of young people... bring with them... the traditional student problems of parties, drugs and noisy, badly-kept student houses (Forbat, 1995, 25).

Students, then, represent a large temporary group within the life of many cities in Britain. Hollands (1995) is one of the few recent authors to discuss the cultural role of students in British cities. He suggests that "students make up a significant proportion of users with regard to the night-time economy", and "also make a significant impact on the local dance/music scene and on the maintenance of youth cultures generally" (Hollands, 1995, 58). In terms of the adoption of specific style cultures there "is an increased differentiation amongst students themselves [and a] local reaction towards the expression of these various student lifestyles" (Hollands, 1995, 14).

Finally, it is briefly worth discussing the economic role of students in the city. A recent examination of student finances concluded that in Britain average student expenditure

was just over £5000 in 1995/96 (Callender and Kempson, 1996). If we take a closer look at the breakdown of this expenditure it is evident that a fifth, or £1187, was spent on 'entertainment'. The two main categories within this were expenditure on alcohol/tobacco with each student spending £511 per year and meals out/takeaways with students spending £258 per year. The report sums up this type of spending in the following way: "That students should be spending a tenth of their incomes on alcohol and tobacco might well raise questions about their priorities" (ibid., 59). I would suggest that an expenditure of around £500 per year (£10 per week) on alcohol and tobacco by students is a conservative estimate which probably reflects the reluctance of students to reveal their level of entertainment expenditure. However, the point is that expenditure by students, especially in multiple-university cities, has a considerable impact upon the local economy.

### **Perceptions of Students in the Bristol Community**

In many ways, Bristol is unique amongst the many two-university cities in Britain. It is a relatively wealthy city with a good quality of life and its universities, the University of Bristol and UWE, are very competitive and have excellent reputations within the 'old' and 'new' university sector respectively. This economic, cultural and educational vitality in the city is reflected in the students which it attracts. As a result, Bristol is a particular context for student life as it has a large cohort of traditional students who are from privileged social and educational backgrounds. Such students are found in greater numbers at the University of Bristol compared to UWE. There is something distinctive, then, about 'Bristol students'; they are seen as wealthier than students in many other British cities.

These wealthy, young and fashionable students dominate the overall image of students in Bristol. This image is illustrated in the following comment from a local magazine, *Venue*:

Bloody students. Crowding out our pubs, taking all the traffic cones and clogging up the streets with their parents' Renault Espaces. Who needs 'em? Er, the local economy does, actually (Tanska, 1997).

Clearly, there is an ambivalence towards such students. Their lifestyle offends but it is also a source of economic and cultural vitality:

The joke about students is that everyone moans about students when they're here but when they go home, everyone moans that they're not there 'cos their nights are all empty. I went to Goldie last night at Leos. It wasn't student oriented, I mean it was £6 to get in for a start. But it was packed with students and the student market is very important because the students that do come have a large level of disposable income. Bristol is attracting students in the same way that Manchester did in the early 90s and 89. I find that Bristol's reputation kind of makes people think that Bristol is a happening place to study and live for three years and Massive Attack, Tricky and Portishead have been very good ambassadors for the city (int., Mitchell, 2/2/96).

Bristol's cultural reputation, then, is responsible for attracting students, especially those interested in music and dance cultures and fashion. During term-time they inject money into the city and patronise many venues. There are those who financially gain from the student population as students have an annual expenditure of £170m in the city.<sup>21</sup> Further, entertainment expenditure by students in Bristol exceeds £40m which includes £17m on alcohol and tobacco alone.<sup>22</sup> Those who cater for the student market have a more generous interpretation of their role in the community which is discussed in Chapter 6.

However, some regard students as an irresponsible by-product of the valuable work of the university. As one of the leading members of the Bristol business community commented:

The university is important as a large employer - but the problem is that its immediate customers (students) are a complete pain. What we have is a group of people with large disposable incomes but none of the constraints of the adult world because they don't give a shit. When they have done their three years they move on, which is an interesting cultural change, because students used to buy into Bristol as a place which is worth nurturing. Now I think that's changing mostly because of the rise in student numbers. But it means that at best, students are long term casual visitors who are not particularly integrated into our cities... there is a marketing job to be done on the university population. There needs to be

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<sup>21</sup> This is calculated by multiplying an average yearly income of £5091 (Callender and Kempson, 1996) by the 34 000 students at UB and UWE.

<sup>22</sup> This was estimated by multiplying the average expenditure of £1187 on entertainment and £511 on alcohol/tobacco (Callender and Kempson, 1996) by the 34 000 students at UB and UWE. Entertainment was defined as spending on alcohol, tobacco, meals out, sports, cinema, theatre, concerts, hobbies and clothes.

some basic rules to be laid down to students to make them more responsible in the community... the students can be looked upon as a necessary evil - what interests the community are the quality of the jobs and the research capacity; but the students, lets face it, are a bloody pain - middle-class gits (int., 4/4/96).

Much of this comment was focused by the rambunctious activities of two students who, the night before this interview, had damaged the interviewee's car. Yet, mirroring the sentiment in the above quote, a leading figure involved in community arts in the city commented that: "students don't contribute to the culture of Bristol in a positive way" (int., Gwillam, 18/4/96). She went on to explain that culturally there are problems, mainly perceptual, between the university and the community: "[t]he esoteric world of the university offends the community and students only follow the example of the university by not involving themselves in the community" (ibid.). It seems, then, that many sections of the community view these 'long term casual visitors' to the city in a rather negative way. However, the extent to which such perceptions of students in Bristol acknowledges the differences between the student populations at the city's two universities is unclear.

Depending upon one's relationship to the student population, then, there are a number of different interpretations of the impacts of students upon the community. Most of these interpretations use as their template the traditional cohort of white, middle-class, adolescent students. The lifestyles of this more visible cohort of students characterised by youth, fashion and wealth is the main focus for the empirical discussion in Chapter 6 because of the way in which they dominate the perception of students in the Bristol community. Before this, the next chapter of Part Two will present a number of theoretical frameworks which help to explain the concept lifestyle.

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# THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF LIFESTYLE

## INTRODUCTION

**B**y way of an introduction to discussing student lifestyles in Bristol, this chapter presents two contrasting theoretical frameworks that explore the concept of lifestyle and forms of sociality. The two frameworks are not as clearly demarcated as presented here, but it is a useful theoretical divide in terms of approaching the issue of lifestyle formation.

The first framework draws upon Pierre Bourdieu's sociology of culture which is regarded as one of the main reference points for the study of lifestyle (Featherstone, 1991; Reimer, 1995). I begin by outlining Bourdieu's method of enquiry and his conceptual triad of habitus, field and capital. I then discuss his work in relation to lifestyle and through this, themes such as strategies of distinction, the mediation of lifestyles by new groups in society and the construction of popular culture. Bourdieu's work in relation to higher education and students is then presented which associates student lifestyles with the institutional reproduction of cultural authority within the university. The aim of Bourdieu's work is to suggest that lifestyle is located within strategies of capital accumulation and distinction which are played out within the structures of the habitus and the field. Such an approach involves turning away from the temptation to 'surface read' more and more from the products and objects which constitute lifestyle without also examining those processes and strategies which accompany the production of meaning within lifestyle and culture.

The second framework can be loosely grouped under the broad heading of postmodernism. A small number of themes are drawn out of this wide ranging theoretical framework. Firstly, a number of specific critiques of Bourdieu are presented which explore the multiple determinants of lifestyle. Further, those who regard lifestyle as more temporary and affectual forms of social relations (Hetherington, 1992, 1996; Maffesoli, 1996) and as a more eclectic patterning of consumption choices (Savage et al., 1992) are discussed. Next, the idea that lifestyle is a resource through which a stylisation



of life and an experimentation with life's possibilities is enacted is explored. Finally, drawing upon work which falls under the heading of 'cultural populism' (Willis, 1990; Fiske, 1989), this last section suggests that it is important to acknowledge the central role of popular culture within the formation of lifestyle and identity, especially amongst younger age cohorts. This postmodern framework, then, largely situates lifestyle within the pursuit of pleasure and the fulfilment of individual or group desires which fall outside ascriptive definitions of lifestyles, based on, for example, class.

Each of these frameworks has relevance in terms of illuminating the process of lifestyle formation and as a result it is difficult to give theoretical precedence to either framework. However, the hypothesis which is to be explored is that a Bourdieuan framework retains a higher degree of relevance in relation to understanding traditional student lifestyles for a number of reasons. Firstly, such lifestyles are highly mediated by previous social and educational experiences and, secondly, they are structured and regulated around the time and space of the university and its associated spaces which creates an environment in which common dispositions akin to habitus are developed.

Postmodern interpretations of lifestyle are also of some relevance in terms of understanding traditional student lifestyles as they allow us to appreciate the important role of popular culture and pleasure-seeking for this largely adolescent population. Further, the construction of traditional student lifestyles could be understood as a lifestyle enactment, a stylisation of life and an exploration of life's possibilities. However, the point is that such an enactment and stylisation of a temporary and hedonistic 'student' lifestyle is an experience which is only afforded by a certain group in society. Further, it is only afforded by the regulated field of the university and its associated spaces.

## **THE STUDY OF LIFESTYLE**

### **The Concept of Lifestyle**

The first question we need to pose is what do we mean by lifestyle? The concept of lifestyle has a long history and "has grown into a (once again) pivotal concept within social analysis" (Reimer, 1995, 121). In its current manifestation, lifestyle distances itself from such traditions such as British cultural studies in the 1970s, which, exemplified by

the Birmingham School, focused upon *resistance* and sub-cultural analysis rather than *distinction* and the study of lifestyles.

The tradition of lifestyle studies can be traced through the work of Weber on 'status groups', Gans on 'taste cultures' and Mitchell's psychologically oriented theory of lifestyle (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 8-15). It can be situated in what has been seen as the 'cultural turn' in many disciplines such as geography and sociology, focusing upon consumption rather than production and the unregulated activities of everyday life (Chaney, 1994). The concept has also been used widely by the growing market research industry to map and segment different lifestyles in the pursuit of profit rather than sociological clarity. As a result, it has moved from a virtually 'non-discursive' concept and has become a multidisciplinary 'vogue' (Reimer, 1995, 122).

It is important to distinguish lifestyle from other apparently similar concepts. Fornas (1995, 95) comments that:

[L]ifeforms or forms of life [are] structurally determined ways of living, related to social categories of class/gender/ethnic/age positions. Lifestyles then are considered to be more self-chosen individual constructions, with 'ways of life' often situated between the two... A lifestyle is a particular way one chooses to inhabit one's life form.<sup>1</sup>

A study from Sweden by Johansson and Miegel (1992) suggests that lifestyle is a product of three levels of determination; the *structure* of the society one is placed within, one's own *position* within that society, and the expression of one's own *individuality*. As a result, "lifestyles are structurally, positionally and individually determined...[but]... the core of lifestyle is to be found in the identity of the individual" (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 25, 27). For them, the two central concepts in the discussion of lifestyle are identity and value.

*Identity* is an interplay of a personal element (a process of individuation allowing the expression of one as an autonomous being), a social element (role learning allowing the expression of one as a social being) and a cultural element (akin to Bourdieu's habitus, learning styles and tastes). The learnt, embodied dispositions of the habitus are the crucial determinant of one's lifestyle. In this sense, the core of lifestyle is located in the embodied

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<sup>1</sup> Much of Bourdieu's work, then, is preoccupied with structurally determined *forms of life* and *ways of life* rather than personally determined *lifestyles*.

cultural identity, which mediates between the individualised personal identity and the non-individual social identity. Lifestyle, then, is an expression of the relationship between the individual and society. In this way, research should avoid exclusivity towards individual analysis (such as in the work of Willis, 1977, 1990; Fiske, 1989)<sup>2</sup> and non-individual analysis (such as sub-cultural analysis of the 1970s).

*Value* is the other key concept which mediates between these levels of determination; basically the lifestyle of an individual is an expression of their values (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 70). Johansson and Miegel (1992) discuss four types of *value*; material, aesthetic, ethical and the metaphysical. The former two represent outer-directed values and the latter two inner-directed values.<sup>3</sup> In this context, Johansson and Miegel (1992, 231) believe that inner-directed values are more fundamental to the individual's lifestyle than outer-directed ones; that is to say values arising from the individual rather than those gained from the external influence of popular cultural forms.

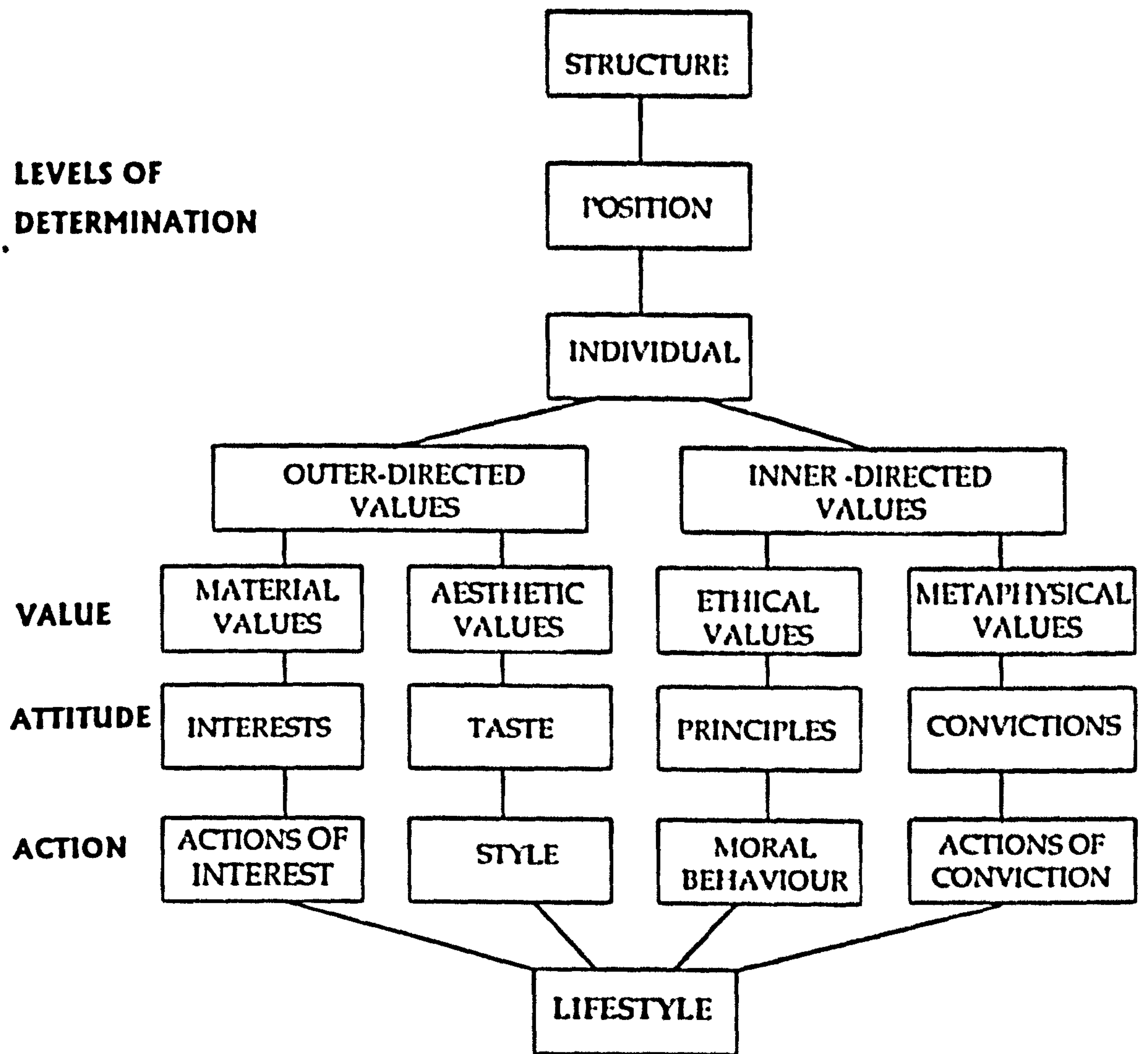
These values are made concrete by the individual through corresponding *attitudes*, which the individual then expresses in the form of certain *actions*. This construction of lifestyle is shown in Figure 5.1. The worth of this diagram is that it expresses the lifestyle of an individual as a meaningful pattern of his or her values, attitudes and actions, which are determined by structural, positional and individual factors (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 73). This is obviously a elementary schema, which is useful as a theoretical tool but has limitations in terms of simplifying the complex concept of lifestyle:

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<sup>2</sup> In *Learning to Labour*, (1977) Willis discusses the strategies of working-class 'lads' to challenge the system. Further, in *Common Culture* (1990), Willis uses the term 'Grounded Aesthetic' to denote the germane moments of creative common cultural life. Such an approach proposes an aesthetic built on the everyday, rather than the institutionalised aesthetic of 'high art'; the focus here becomes people rather than objects. However, as mentioned previously, such analysis misunderstands the logic of Bourdieu's fields and habitus and the classificatory strategies employed by the various fractions of the dominant group within social space.

<sup>3</sup> These terms are taken from Mitchell (1983), quoted in Johansson and Meigel (1992).

FIGURE 5.1: VALUES, ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS



Source: Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 73.

Recognising the danger of transcending into abstraction, lifestyle studies needs to be situated more rigorously. In this sense, Chaney (1996, 158), in his book entitled *Lifestyle*, comments that:

the social phenomenon of lifestyles has been an integral feature of the development of modernity, not least in the idea that lifestyles are a particularly significant representation of the quest for individual identity that is also such a defining characteristic of modernity.

For Chaney, then, lifestyles are an expression of the social order of modernity. What is distinctive about this new social order is that for the first time individuals were able to make cultural choices which grouped their lifestyle with that of other individuals into what Chaney (1996, 11) has called 'elective affinities'. Lifestyle, then, becomes *a recognisable mode of living which is shared with a reasonable number of people within the period of modernity (ibid.)*.

Lifestyles have a particular function; they are artificial adoptions, which act as interpretative resources, practical vocabularies and as a form of ordered control on the emerging social uncertainties of mass society (Chaney, 1996, 11-12). Chaney (1996) also discusses how the notion of lifestyle has been developed in, and is dependent on, the social organisation of consumption, in particular through phenomenon such as the entertainment oriented city-centre, the department store and the growth of the leisure industries of mass entertainment.

Chaney (1996) comments that the concept of lifestyle undermines three characteristics of modernity; their instability rejects modernism's grand narratives, the production and distribution organisations servicing lifestyles point more towards transnational rather than national cultures and finally they blur the established distinctions between the private and the public spheres. In this sense, whilst being the child of modernity, lifestyles also "point necessarily towards the need for a recognition of the emergent structural forms of what is literally a post modern era" (Chaney, 1996, 159).

Chaney's (1996, 45) discussion is ordered through the notion of lifestyles as *symbolic competencies*; that is to say it is about conveying the various social meanings of material goods. However, the symbolism of lifestyle has been approached in different ways. Firstly, lifestyle can be seen as symbolic exchange in which lifestyle becomes a mode of mediation, thereby allowing us to view cultural consumption also as *modes of cultural*

*production*, akin to cultural populist theorising (Chaney, 1996, 48). Secondly, lifestyle can be seen as the accumulation of *symbolic capital* (after Bourdieu) and the concomitant expertise in using different forms of symbolism to accumulate other forms of capital. Finally lifestyle is a *symbolic process* where meaning is generated by the symbol and the referent has become less stable, contested and only inscribed through our uses (after Baudrillard etc.) (Chaney, 1996, 74). The following sections present two theoretical frameworks to explore the concept of lifestyle; firstly, the work of Pierre Bourdieu, and secondly, what can be generally labelled 'postmodern' interpretations of lifestyle which critique the work of Bourdieu.

## THE WORK OF PIERRE BOURDIEU

The worth of using the work of Pierre Bourdieu to aid my discussion is that, as many would agree, "the most influential sociologist of culture is, without parallel, Pierre Bourdieu (Lash, 1989, 237). In particular, his microtheoretical approach is extremely useful in the analysis of culture as it "makes sociology out of everything" (Moi, 1991, 1019). For example, his analysis has been used to study events and activities which range from eating habits to the occurrences of May 1968. His theoretical and methodological tools, therefore, equip us with a wide vocabulary for discussing lifestyle. The following section is a rather lengthy overview of his work, but this is justified on the grounds that he, in collaboration with Passeron (1979), is one of the only commentators to theorise students, their community and their relation to culture in recent decades.

### Bourdieu's Method of Enquiry

The usefulness of Bourdieu's method, today, stems from:

its persistent attempt to straddle some of the deep-seated antinomies that rend social science asunder, including the seemingly irresolvable antagonisms between subjectivist and objectivist modes of knowledge, the separation of the analysis of the symbolic from that of materiality, and the continued divorce of theory from research (Wacquant, 1992, 3).

Such strengths have been recognised by others:

Bourdieu, from *Les Héritiers* (The Inheritors) (1964) onwards, has insisted, like Giddens, on a duality of structure. Thus people (agents), collectively or individually, transform or reproduce their social structures, but they do so within specific social conditions, including

those that are internalised as part of their habitus even at the very moment of revolution (Fowler, 1997, 23).

This represents a pincer-like attack on sterile debates such as that between objectivism and subjectivism; breaking with the former by advocating a practice based on both collective and individual strategic activity, and the latter by recognising that there can be causes of social action which the individual subject is not fully aware.<sup>4</sup> This position supersedes various problems which have perennially plagued sociology and at present is the most original and cogent model of the social world that we have (Fowler, 1997, 13). Bourdieu (1988, 149-150) states his case as follows:

We need to escape the mechanistic vision which would reduce the agents to simple particles swept up in a magnet field, by reintroducing not rational subjects working to fulfil their preferences as far as circumstances permit, but socialized agents who, although biologically individuated, are endowed with transindividual dispositions, and therefore tend to generate practices which are objectively orchestrated and more or less adapted to objective requirements, that is irreducible either to the structural forces of the field or to individual dispositions.

This method can be postulated as an attempt to "overcome the debilitating reduction of sociology to either an objectivist physics of material structures or a constructivist phenomenology of cognitive forms by means of a *generative structuralism* capable of subsuming both" (Wacquant, 1992, 5, my italics). However: "although the two moments of analysis are equally necessary they are not equal: epistemological priority is granted to objectivist rupture over subjectivist understanding" (Wacquant, 1992, 11).

Wacquant suggests that Bourdieu's work can be regarded as a social praxeology forming a 'total social science'; it is bidimensional and hence effects a double reading; the first order constituted by the *distribution of material resources* and the second order in the form of *systems of classifications* and symbolic templates. Bourdieu's work, then, advocates a unified political economy of practice which seeks to expose the strategies behind the arbitrary structures of the world.

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<sup>4</sup> Fowler, 1997, 23.

His work should be taken more as a sociological method rather than as a theory per se. However, Bourdieu strongly "decries the two opposed, yet complementary, forms of involution that currently plague social science: 'methodologism' and 'theoreticism'" (Wacquant, 1992, 28) and, hence, maintains the necessity for these two approaches to interpenetrate each other entirely... [as] every act of research is simultaneously empirical... and theoretical (ibid., 1992, 35).

Pierre Bourdieu's work, then, demands a particular method of enquiry:

Bourdieu's is a theoretical model that derives its dynamic through a dialectical relationship with data gathered in specific research enterprises... it is inappropriate to try to evaluate his work without *putting it to work*. Armchair non-empirical critiques spectacularly miss the point. As Bourdieu says of such critics: 'they cross the borders with empty suitcases - they have nothing to declare'... other researchers must empty the contents and repack them with their own experience and work" (Harker, Mahar, Wilkes, 1990, ix-x).

In this context, Part Two of this thesis is an attempt to put Bourdieu's theory to work in the particular context of student lifestyles in Britain in the 1990's; an experience which is situated in its own social space and particular struggles, especially in the light of recent transformations in the British higher education sector. I have used Bourdieu's work, then, as "a *method* of enquiry rather than a completed *theoretical* edifice" (Harker, 1990, 99).

Whilst not proposing to grasp the whole breadth of Bourdieu's oeuvre,<sup>5</sup> I would like to explore a number of his concepts such as practice, field, habitus and capital which are useful in situating this discussion on lifestyle.

### Field

A field is "a *space of conflict and competition*... in which participants vie to establish monopoly over the species of capital effective in it" (Wacquant, 1992, 17). In Bourdieu's words, it is "a space in which a game takes place (*espace de jeu*), a field of objective social

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<sup>5</sup> His ideas were developed in a series of books the most well known of which include *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977), *The Logic of Practice* (1990), *Distinction* (1984), and were applied to the analysis of particular groups in books such as *The Inheritors* (1979), *Homo Academicus* (1988), *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993) and *The Rules of Art* (1996).



relations between individuals or institutions who are competing for the same stake".<sup>6</sup> "Each field calls forth and gives life to a specific form of interest... as tacit recognition of the value of the stakes of the game and as practical mastery of its rules" (Bourdieu, 1992, 117).

What is at stake in the field is the power to confer or withdraw legitimacy from others in that field without this power being recognised. This power to dominate a field is part of what Bourdieu calls the enactment of symbolic or 'soft' violence - soft, because it is an enactment which is unrecognisable and accepted (Moi, 1991, 1023).

For Bourdieu, autonomous fields only emerged in the modern era: "[i]n modernity, power is exercised via the mediations of Bourdieu's fields, which are in effect structures. Cultural valuations... and classifications are then structurally determined by the fields" (Lash, 1989, 261). However, the boundaries of a field are not set; they are "always at stake in the field itself" (Bourdieu, 1992, 100). As shall be discussed later in this chapter, various commentators have discussed the de-autonomisation of Bourdieu's fields.

As a theoretical tool, "the field enables us to grasp particularity within generality and generality within particularity" (Bourdieu, 1992, 75). Therefore, what we find out about a particular field will allow us to undertake research on a comparable field in a different context. So, the concept of the field attunes us to a series of struggles which are occurring over specific stakes. Different fields, then, such as the academic, literary or scientific fields, have their own stakes, sets of interest and rules to master. However, struggles and strategies within fields change according to the changing interests of groups who occupy positions of domination within each field.

### **Habitus**

Habitus is a system of dispositions adjusted to the game of the field: "for a field to work there must be stakes and people ready to play the game (Moi, 1991, 1023). Habitus, then, is the collection of dispositions which allow people to know and recognise the laws of the field through practical experience within it.

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<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Moi, 1991, 1021.

In Bourdieu's words, it is "a system of durably acquired schemes of perception, thought, and action, engendered by objective conditions but tending to persist even after an alteration of those conditions".<sup>7</sup> It is a system of durable, transposable dispositions - a structuring structure (Bourdieu, 1977, 72). "The habitus is the source of these series of moves which are objectively organized as strategies without being the product of a genuine strategic intention" (ibid., 1977, 73).

In terms of these schemes of perception, Bourdieu also uses the term *bodily hexis* which is a principal prop of class judgement which fails to recognise itself as such. It takes into account physical appearance but more importantly the 'socially processed body' (Bourdieu, 1988, 201). As Featherstone (1991, 90) comments, "the body is the materialization of class taste: class is embodied". Clearly, devices such as the habitus are so effective because they function through negation and misrecognition - they do what they do in forms tending to show that it is not doing them (Bourdieu, 1988, 201).

The habitus, then, can be thought of as the mediating mechanism between the objectivity of social reality and the subjectivity of personal experience. "To speak of habitus is to assert that the individual... is social, collective. Habitus is socialised subjectivity" (Bourdieu, 1992, 126).

Wacquant (1992, 127) refers to what Bourdieu calls an 'ontological correspondence' between field and habitus, where the field structures the habitus and the habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world. Both habitus and field, then, share the commonality that they both can be understood as bundles of relations. (Wacquant, 1992, 16). Further, habitus and field are relational in the sense that they function fully *only in relation to one another*" (ibid., 1992, 19). The habitus has a self-evident relationship with the field; so much so that it "takes the world around it for granted" (Bourdieu, 1992, 127). Those who criticise the habitus for being over deterministic do so because it collides head on with the illusion of the mastery of oneself" (Bourdieu, 1992, 132). Further, such critics misunderstand that the habitus is durable but not eternal (ibid., 1992, 133).

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<sup>7</sup> Taken from *An Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) and quoted in *The Inheritors*, (1979, 156).

## Practice

Bourdieu's theory of practice exemplifies his efforts to overcome the structure-agency debate, in that it is rigorously determinist yet also conceives agents as active, transformative figures.<sup>8</sup> From the workings of habitus we receive our logic of practical sense. Wacquant (1992, 19) described Bourdieu's view on practice as revealing 'the fuzzy logic of practical sense' in that it:

seeks to capture the intentionality without intention, the knowledge without cognitive intent, the pre-reflective, infraconscious mastery that agents acquire of their social world by way of durable immersion within it (Wacquant, 1992, 19).

Bourdieu discusses how practical sense functions through the socialized body which is "the repository of a generative, creative capacity to understand" (Wacquant, 1992, 20). "[H]abitus endows practice with a systematicity and an internal connectedness" (Wacquant, 1992, 27). The habitus "as a generative spontaneity which asserts itself in the improvised confrontation with endlessly renewed situations, it follows a *practical logic*" (Wacquant, 1992, 22). Yet it is fuzzy because it reflects a relationship to the ordinary world. What is evident, then, is that agents are roughly guided by a form of practical sense which is derived from the habitus and the field.

## Capital

Bourdieu also draws upon an economic mode of reasoning in situating his work as an economy of practices through such terms as capital and profit. Bourdieu's social spaces (fields) are mediated by the concept of capital. "A capital does not exist and function except in relation to a field" (Bourdieu, 1992, 101).

There are three variables to capital - volume, trajectory and species. The three species of capital are; *economic* - access to various monetary resources, *social* - resources which one accrues through durable networks of acquaintance or recognition and *cultural*<sup>9</sup> -

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<sup>8</sup> Fowler, 1997, 174.

<sup>9</sup> Bourdieu (1992, 119) also calls this informational capital which can be embodied, objectified or institutionalised.

competence and ability to appreciate legitimate culture related, in particular, to level of education.

People actively invest social and cultural capital to realise economic capital and vice-versa (Savage et al., 1992, 100). The interplay between different types of capital leads to the emergence of different social groups such as industrialists, new petite bourgeoisie and artistic producers. Bourdieu, then, constructs a social space of tastes on the basis of the possession of different types of capital, not just income. Cultural tastes, in the high and popular sense and in the anthropological sense are inscribed on this space. Therefore, groups can be distinguished according to cultural practices, tastes and consumption preferences in areas such as modernist art, food, clothing and sport.

A distinction made by DiMaggio (1991) places the concept of capital accumulation alongside other non-consecrated accumulation strategies. DiMaggio (1991, 134), drawing upon Collins (1979) suggests that there is a difference between *cultural capital* - proficiency in the consumption of, and discourse about, prestigious and institutional cultural goods - and *cultural resources* - symbolic mastery which refers to a specific relational context. In this sense, then, activities such as fashion and music which account for much youth cultural activity are cultural resources. However, activities such as dance and club cultures, based upon studio- and DJ-based music, could be regarded as legitimate forms of cultural capital because of the growing institutional framework and discursive community which help to maintain and consecrate them.

Taken together these concept are very useful tools in placing what seem to be an idiosyncratic variety of cultural choices and activities within a larger framework of strategies, struggles and status games. Our practical sense, choices and conduct in the ordinary world, then, are put into action through Bourdieu's conceptual triad of habitus, capital and field.

### **Symbolic Violence and The Game of Distinction**

Culture is only achieved by denying itself as such, namely as artificial and artificially acquired (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1991, 109).

Bourdieu's method, then, highlights that there is a misrecognition of the way in which our social world has become arbitrarily structured. In terms of culture, this is done largely

through taste. As Moi (1991, 1026) commented: "*[T]aste or judgement are the heavy artillery of symbolic violence.*" Bourdieu's book *Distinction* (1984), "reveals that supposedly natural or individual tastes are in fact founded on social constructions which have been elaborated over generations, through the habitus" (Fowler, 1997, 174). One of the main points emerging from *Distinction* (1984, 6) is that 'taste classifies and it classifies the classifier'. *Distinction*, then, is not just a matter of self-definition but also of struggle for social legitimation (Frow, 1995, 85).

"Symbolic violence, to put it as tersely and simply as possible, is the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity" (Bourdieu, 1992, 167). Because perception through the habitus is distorted, a misrecognition of one's place within the field of social power is enacted. Symbolic violence, then, is undertaken to preserve the rules of the field, habitus and thus the game of distinction, without a recognition of such action. Further, Bourdieu (1992, 170-1) states that gender domination is "the paradigmatic form of symbolic violence" because the "male order is so deeply ground as to need no justification".<sup>10</sup>

The game aspect of Bourdieu's work is important to the enactment of symbolic violence; the main point here is that not everyone has equal access to the rules of the game. A process of distinction is enacted by those who have the required cultural capital to decipher the codes of art. Those who do not possess such codes cannot acquire them through learning, for it is the unlearned naturalness of the bourgeoisie not the scholarly pedant which consecrates art forms.

The habitus generates what Bourdieu calls "that naturalisation of its own arbitrariness... [through] the dialectic of the objective chances and the agents' aspirations out of which arises the sense of limits, commonly called the *sense of reality*".<sup>11</sup> In this sense, Bourdieu proposes that social domination can be enacted because social and mental structures are homologous; in other words, there is a correspondence between the objective divisions of

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<sup>10</sup> Fowler (1997, 135) discusses Bourdieu's contribution to feminist theory by stating that "male power... creates a social unconsciousness, capable even of denying the fact of repression". Fowler also discusses ways in which Bourdieu's theory could be more enlightened; for example by discussing the gendered differences in the 'production of belief'.

<sup>11</sup> Bourdieu (1977, 164) quoted in Chaney (1996, 60).

the social world and the principles of vision and division that agents apply to it (Wacquant, 1992, 13). However, there is optimism within such enactment of symbolic violence; if the symbolic systems which represent the world to us actually constitute social relations, then one can, within limits, transform the world by transforming these representations.

Bourdieu's work, therefore, avoids an over-structural argument because it relies upon the notion of struggles and strategies employed between and within social classes. Boundaries separating classes and class fractions are subject to creative redefinitions where new strategies are deployed by existing classes in an attempt to maintain their position. Groups are involved in permanent evolutionary reconversion strategies to conserve what they see as their social trajectories.

We can now proceed to understand Bourdieu's work on culture. In *Distinction* (1984) and *The Love of Art* (1966) he portrays sociology as a war machine against culture (Wacquant, 1992, 85). In describing the cultural field, Bourdieu (1992, 86) comments:

I describe the space of positions which constitute it as a field of production of this modern fetish that the work of art is, that is, as a universe objectively oriented towards the *production of belief* in the work of art.

Bourdieu's work, then, exposes the *arbitrariness of culture*. There are no intrinsic reasons for linking certain cultural forms with certain social groups but in our society there exists an almost perfect homology between the structures of culture and those of social organisation (Lipuma, 1993, 16). Through such analysis, Bourdieu sets himself the task of attacking the Kantian opposition between the pure or innate *aesthetic gaze* of the bourgeoisie and the popular, learnt and *grotesque gaze* of the masses.

The aesthetic gaze characteristic of the bourgeois experience presupposes a distance from economic necessity. It is a disposition based upon disinterestedness and detachment. In opposition, the grotesque, popular aesthetic (or non-aesthetic) is based upon social need and an involvement with ordinary life. This perception of the popular gaze clearly works to ignore the specific 'social needs' which the bourgeois aesthetic is bounded by (i.e. supportive social structure, subsidies etc.). Bourgeois culture, then, became the aesthetic of 'art for arts sake'; a classification so immensely powerful, that anything which defined itself against it became the minority culture. Thus:

The privileged class of the bourgeois society replace the difference between two cultures, products of history reproduced by education, with the basic difference between two natures, one nature naturally cultivated, and the other nature naturally natural... thus the sanctification of culture and art... fulfils a vital function by contributing to the consecration of the social order (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1991, 111).

The pervasiveness of this logic means that "[s]ystems of domination find expression in virtually all areas of cultural practice and symbolic exchange (Bourdieu, 1993, 2). So, we can conclude this section by following Bourdieu's comments in that:

art and cultural consumption are predisposed, consciously and deliberately or not, to fulfil a social function of legitimating social differences and thus contribute to the process of social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1984, 7).<sup>12</sup>

Frow (1992, 33) echoes this by commenting:

the primary business of culture is distinction, the stratification of tastes in such a way as to construct and reinforce differentiations of social status which correspond in historically variable and often highly mediated ways, to achieved or aspired to-class positions.

How can we use the work of Bourdieu to interpret lifestyle?

### **Bourdieu and Lifestyle**

Bourdieu's work on distinction, symbolic violence and the struggles and strategies which unfold in the field and habitus is a useful framework for understanding contemporary lifestyles. As Featherstone (1991, 87) comments, we still need to consider:

the production of lifestyle tastes within a structured social space in which various groups, classes and class fractions struggle and compete to impose their own particular tastes as the legitimate tastes, and thereby, where necessary, name and rename, classify and reclassify, order and reorder the field. This points us towards an examination of the economy of cultural goods and lifestyles by adopting an approach which draws on the work of Pierre Bourdieu.

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<sup>12</sup> The idea of innate culture will be perpetuated until its conditions of appropriation are exposed and universally allocated (Bourdieu, 1992, 87).

Bourdieu's work *Distinction*, "is without doubt the most influential reference and source for researchers on lifestyle" (Reimer, 1995, 123). However, it is important to remember that Bourdieu is not simply seeking to describe different class lifestyles, but how the cultural preferences of different classes become socially functional (Frow, 1995, 29). Further, Bourdieu's search for truth is one of his strengths, in that he is able to use it to deconstruct cultural classifications by placing them within structures of symbolic power. As mentioned earlier, it is not to ask whether high or popular culture is better, but how they are both historically and socially constituted enactments of symbolic violence.

It is important not to move uncritically towards an analysis of the 'cultural', without understanding the mediating effects of the social usages of cultural goods (Featherstone, 1991, 63). Such an approach may be used to render the Bourdieuan concept of capital more dynamic; after all he spends much time discussing the notion of trajectories, transformations and reconversion strategies. As Reimer (1995, 130) comments: "it is the amount of capital accessible today that is relevant rather than the amount once allotted to the individual."

One is still able to convey an idea of habitus from one's cultural activities and tastes (since habitus not only includes material choices, but also embodied practices such as demeanour, speech and bodily proportions) albeit less so. However, this sort of suggestion is often felt to be scandalous because it offends the individuals' beliefs that their choices are uniquely bounded in their personality (Chaney, 1996, 63). It may be more apposite to talk of a less directed approach to capital accumulation by the individual and the concomitant display of more complex, yet still mediated, paths through high and popular cultures.

Yet the ability to transgress divisions such as those between popular and high culture, and to perceive one's choices as an act of transgression, is not a universal experience. In particular, our ability to decipher the codes of both high and low culture is a class privilege; it does not mean that the socially operative distinction between the two spheres has ceased to exist.<sup>13</sup> It may be limiting to understand lifestyle in terms of the struggle for 'positional goods'; choices may be based more upon experimentation, openness and sociability, rather than in terms of competence. Yet, the ability to lead a lifestyle described

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<sup>13</sup> Gripsrud (1989), quoted in Frow (1995, 65).



in such terms is premised on the fact that one is already part of a certain social group with pre-inscribed competencies. No matter how much one wants to believe in the liberating qualities of postmodern lifestyles, one must recognise the connotations associated with such a lifestyle, and the ability to define such a lifestyle, with already-acquired social competencies; hence the deference of the petite-bourgeoisie and the self-confidence of the bourgeoisie.

Bourdieu's work suggests that cultural distinctions and divisions are highly arbitrary and mediated by certain groups. In the next part of this section, I explore the role of such groups in the construction and mediation of certain lifestyles.

### **Lifestyle and the New Cultural Intermediaries**

Just as the legitimation of dominant cultural forms is a role undertaken by only certain groups in society (Bourdieu's priests), the production and consumption of new forms of cultural tastes and lifestyles which challenge traditional hierarchies is a role undertaken by certain groups (Bourdieu's prophets). In Bourdieuan terms these are the new petite bourgeoisie who occupy homologous places within various fields and would include artists, intellectuals, journalists, lifestyle therapists etc.

Bourdieu's work, then, has been used to understand the emergence of new identities within the dominant class who play a leading role in relation to culture. New group identities have been articulated through labels such as the new service class (Lash and Urry, 1987) and the new cultural intermediaries (Featherstone, 1991).<sup>14</sup> One could also talk of a knowledge class, through, for example, Gouldner's so-called New-Class of intellectuals and Frow's 'cultural intellectuals' whose existence is grounded on the ability to convert knowledge into cultural capital (Frow, 1995, 91). Zukin (1991) also discusses what she calls the 'critical infrastructure' - those workers whose job it is to implement the 'idea' of culture.

Rather than accumulating material goods and economic capital, then, such groups accumulate symbolic capital - the knowledge of how to discriminate within the world of

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<sup>14</sup> The importance of the convertibility of knowledge into a productive resource is derived from work such as that by Machlup (1962) who discusses the growth in knowledge-producing occupations and the increase in the value of output from knowledge industries.

material goods - in an effort to generate new and more substantial economic rewards. Chaney (1996, 64) places groups such as the cultural intermediaries within the context of the rise of new modes of expertise which have opened up in the new industries of cultural production, and also the deracination of cultural signifiers. It is worth analysing such groups in more detail as they now seem to occupy a central and mediating, yet ambiguous and inconsistent, role within the overall class structure.

To what extent are they an homogenous class? <sup>15</sup> Featherstone (1991, 44) comments that their habitus is characterised by a learning-mode towards life, an endless quest for new experiences and a refusal to be classified. Frow (1995, 167) describes them as *dominated dominators*; a dual position within the field of power which enables them to show a kind of class generosity; solidarity with the dominated and complicity with the dominant. Frow (1995) also claims that this new class does have a unity based on its relation to knowledge (as a way of accumulating cultural capital) rather than its relation to the means of production (as a way of accumulating economic capital). One of the unifying features of a knowledge class is not necessarily its possession of knowledge, but its *claim* to knowledge re-inforced by certain credentials, new work practices and institutions. (Frow, 1995, 117). The legitimating principle of this new class, then, becomes its ability to transform "social understanding of what *counts* as knowledge" (Frow, 1995, 119).

It is important not to over-estimate the role of groups such as the 'new cultural intermediaries' in promoting cultural change. Groups with more cultural than economic capital have always existed and so have groups who are prepared to experiment with apparently incommensurable cultural forms. Further, definitions of the new petty bourgeoisie may suffer from imprecision and abstraction if they are not clarified in relation to other groups such as the old or executant bourgeoisie (Fowler, 1997, 80).

However, commentators such as Lash (1993) are referring to processes of de-differentiated consumption which are so novel and influential that these processes justify demarcating new social groups such as cultural intermediaries. In this sense, it is worth

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<sup>15</sup> Frow (1995, 129) also discusses the problem of linking this new class to Gramsci's notion of organic intellectual, a class organically linked to the possibility of new class formations. However, the historicity which the cultural intelligentsia constructs for itself is "the endless deferral of its self-recognition" (Frow, 1995, 130).

understanding how their role in society has been understood. Featherstone situates such a group within a *sociological account of postmodernism*, rather than a *postmodern sociology* (1991, 48) and so we can "focus upon the actual cultural practices and changing power balances of those groups engaged in the production, classification, circulation and consumption of postmodern cultural goods" (Featherstone, 1991, 5).

The strategies employed by such groups in their struggles with established hierarchies have the ability to create new canons, often from the resources of popular culture. For example, "the young of the dominated fraction of the bourgeoisie can transform even flea-market goods into art by embracing them with a bohemian nonchalance that transforms poverty into creditable originality" (Fowler, 1997, 161). Following an argument by Mitchell, we can see that culture:

derives from the workings of culture-making classes and it is always highly mediated. It is not something that directly or organically derives from the tastes, distinctions and desires of unitary or universal social groups or societies (Mitchell, 1995, 112).

This new class, then, performs the ideological work of promoting certain tastes and practices as 'culture'. Such groups are responsible for legitimating new forms of cultural activities and tastes and new more eclectic lifestyles. They are engaged in providing symbolic goods and services and transmit new lifestyles and legitimate new fields to larger audiences (Featherstone, 1992, 44). This group, then not only creates culture, but constitutes an audience who might be more attuned to those goods and experiences labelled postmodern (*ibid.*, 1991, 35).

However, such strategies of cultural intermediation, can have emancipatory or regressive consequences. Their strategies, rather than being regarded as a *declassifications* of hierarchies, for example, can be more realistically portrayed as *reclassifications*. Featherstone (1991, 111) represents this as a cultural intermezzo of intensified competition before a re-monopolisation by a new establishment.

It is important to qualify the actual strategies employed by groups such as cultural intermediaries. What type of capital do they possess and are their strategies directed by status-oriented or personal goals? A survey by O'Connor and Wynne in Manchester (1995a), suggested that it was increasingly the latter and that they displayed middlebrow cultural preferences rather than high cultural or avant-garde tastes. Further, such groups

have also helped legitimate more popular cultural forms especially those associated with new music genres and night-clubbing and as a result have broadened the definition of a 'cultured' person (O'Connor and Wynne, 1995a, part 4, 2).

Such groups have an important role to play in the construction of divisions such as that between high and popular culture. In particular, they have an important role to play in the historical struggle to define the popular.

### The Construction of the Popular

Bourdieu suggests that:

To throw some light on discussions about the 'people' and the 'popular' one need only bear in mind that the 'people' or the 'popular'... is first of all one of the things at stake in the struggle between intellectuals (Bourdieu, 1990, 150).<sup>16</sup>

Frow (1995, 84) echoes this by commenting:

'the people' is not a given entity which precedes cultural forms, but is rather entirely the product of cultural forms... contemporary culture industries work hard to construct their audience as 'the people'.

Further: "[t]he point of the concept of the popular is that it is not pre-given in economic relations but that it is culturally and politically constructed (the product of a deliberate interest)" (Frow, 1992, 27). In a similar way, McGuigan (1992, 10) comments that "the whole idea of 'popular culture' is *intellectual*"; the term has its historical origins towards the end of the eighteenth century, when Gottfried Herder made the distinction between 'learned culture' and 'popular culture'. Finally, Storey (1993, 181) follows this by commenting that "popular culture is a concept of ideological contestation and variability, to be filled and emptied... popular culture is the debilitating *other* of culture". It is not, then, the lack of recognition of popular culture that is the root of the problem, but rather that the 'popular' is trapped into the logic of being defined as an *opposition* and not its own *position*.

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<sup>16</sup> This confirms what Williams (1983, 237) says: "popular culture was not identified by the people but by others. So the whole notion of what culture is, is an intellectual project".

Frow, (1995, 157) whilst discussing Ross's work on *Intellectuals and Popular Culture* (1989), comments that "the notion of 'the popular' has served as an emblem by means of which... intellectuals... have figured their relation to an imaginary Other". In terms of finding cultural values by which to live, Frow (1995, 158) discusses the double bind of espousing *high culture* and thus mobilising distinction and exclusion and of espousing *popular culture* and thus mobilising the intellectuals' fantasy of otherness and the politically dubious will to speak on behalf of this imaginary Other. Further, he does not argue that intellectuals should keep their distance from popular culture, but rather they should not idealise it as their mystical Other, precisely because they are not separate from it (Frow, 1995, 159).

In his sympathetic critique of *cultural populism*, McGuigan (1992, 5) calls for a "critical populism which can account for both ordinary people's everyday culture and its material construction by powerful forces beyond the immediate comprehension and control of ordinary people". Cultural Populism is defined as "the intellectual assumption... that the symbolic experiences and practices of ordinary people are more important analytically and politically than Culture with a capital C" (McGuigan, 1992, 4). On the basis of this definition, I am also a cultural populist rather than its antithesis, a cultural elitist. However, I would not go as far as Willis and Fiske do in suggesting that the micro-politics and resistance of everyday life are in themselves an achievement of emancipation.

Questions of interpretation of popular cultural forms, then, should be situated within the context of material relations of power to avoid the uncritical populism of the consumptionist perspective which overstates the power of the consumer. In defining how to move away from cultural populism, Storey (1993, 183) comments that there may be far more interesting questions to be asked than whether high or popular cultural forms are of more value. For example, where are these cultural forms situated within material and institutional practices and how have they been legitimated as culture?

What are the consequences of this enduring antithetical construction of 'popular' versus 'high' culture? The dichotomy between two cultures, and hence two natures,<sup>17</sup> between the pure and the grotesque gaze, is extrapolated into an epistemological opposition between authoritative, formal, learnt culture and informal, immediate, unlearnt culture (Frow, 1995, 68). Such a dichotomy is too strict as it denies the unlearnt sensuousness

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<sup>17</sup> Bourdieu and Darbel's (1991) comments in this respect have already been highlighted.

through which many people experience high cultural forms and the learnt codes and knowledge which structure the appreciation of popular forms.

Rather than regarding popular and high culture as a normative structural opposition differentiating real differences of taste and practice, we should focus upon their function in organizing perceptions of how cultural space is structured (Frow, 1995, 81). Further, the appearance of popular culture as a unitary form is reinforced by privileging key examples such as subcultures. This misrecognises the sheer diversity of the field drawn together by the term 'popular' (Frow, 1995, 82). Both high and popular culture, then, can include a number of heterogeneous aesthetic tastes and practices, rather than certain privileged and mythical examples such as ballet and opera versus punks and dance culture.

Frow (1992, 32) argues that: "the untenable core of the concept of the popular... is its structural opposition to high culture" and that the popular "is a fact of representation, rather than an external cause of representation." (ibid., 1992, 33). Frow (1995, 23) posits that such a categorical distinction between high and low culture is untenable for the following reasons. To begin with, high culture, like low culture, is fully absorbed into commodity production. Secondly, the hierarchical structure of high culture is no longer the organising principle of the cultural system - it 'does not have one centre or no centre but multiple, simultaneous centres'.<sup>18</sup> Further, the formation of mass audiences have weakened the correlation between culture and class.

Bourdieu (1992) responds to the allegation that he undervalues 'resistance' and 'popular culture', by suggesting that he has also been accused of glorifying popular lifestyles as much as celebrating dominant culture. However, his point is that, "the dominated, in any given social universe, can always exert a certain social force, inasmuch as belonging to a field means by definition that one is capable of producing effects within it" (Bourdieu, 1992, 80). "In each field, hierarchy is continually contested, and the very principles that undergird the structure of the field can be challenged and revoked [and] Bourdieu does not hold that the social world obeys laws that are immutable" (Wacquant, 1992, 52).

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<sup>18</sup> Collins (1989) quoted in Frow (1995, 24).

Clearly, then, there is a "potential in Bourdieu's logic of practice as his theory of social agents has a concept of the skilled nature of all human agents, which in turn can refer to cultural production" (Fowler, 1997, 178). In this sense Bourdieu's sociology of culture is concerned with the suspension and production of belief, yet reflexivity towards these determining structures equips the reflexive agent with the ability to produce alternative beliefs and consecrate new aesthetic forms. This is especially so in areas of intense social juxtaposition which are furthest removed from the mechanisms of reproduction of consecrated art.<sup>19</sup>

Yet for Bourdieu, there is a futility in certain types of unplanned resistance. To oppose antagonistically the structures one comes up against is to lock oneself into one's condition of domination. The ethics within Bourdieu's approach, then, uses conservatism to provoke; to "twist the stick in the other direction" (Wacquant, 1992, 80).

In terms of his apparent objection to popular culture, Bourdieu (1992, 84) states that his work is about *enunciation* rather than *ratification* or *denunciation*. In this sense:

to denounce hierarchy does not get us anywhere. What must be changed are the conditions that make this hierarchy exist, both in reality and in minds. We must... work to universalise in reality the conditions of access (ibid.).

Bourdieu's approach may seem to have its weaknesses, therefore, in its inability to account for what might be a micro-politics of resistance within consumption and the intricacies and nuances of audience appropriation and use. Although, [i]t is crude and simplistic to assume that the effects of consumption must mirror the intentions of production" (Storey, 1993, 196), it is still important to retain Bourdieu's notion of struggle and the strategies of distinction within the hierarchy of fields. As Frow (1995, 72) comments:

authors such as Willis and Fiske, represent a recent uncritical populist strand, what McGuigan (1992) has called a 'new revisionism'. Rather than separating consumption from production, and therefore everyday life from capitalism, one needs to situate 'culture'

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<sup>19</sup> Fowler (1997) mentions writers from the rural periphery in this respect, but there are many others such as music from black inner-city areas and the growth of alternative and DIY cultures.

within a context of the cultural economy of various fields and the strategies employed within them.

I would like to follow a path advocated by McRobbie (1994) who examines popular culture by holding the "middle-ground position between the extremities of economic reductionism and insouciant hedonism" (McGuigan, 1992, 42):

to demonstrate the dangers in using existing neo-Marxist analyses of postmodern culture as a means of returning eventually to a crude and mechanical base-superstructure model, and also the dangers of pursuing a kind of cultural populism to a point at which anything which is consumed and is popular is also seen as oppositional. What is missing in these models is analytical work which is 'structural, historical and ethnographic' (McRobbie, 1994, 39).

Therefore:

we need a mode of analysis which is connective and integrative and which tracks the social and ideological relations which prevail at every level between cultural production and consumption... It would also mean turning away from the temptation to read more and more from the cultural products and objects of consumption... rather it means examining all of those processes which accompany the production of meaning in culture (McRobbie, 1994, 41).

## **BOURDIEU AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

Bourdieu has also been an extremely prominent commentator on higher education. This section discusses his work in relation to universities and the reproduction of power and his interpretation of the student community. Bourdieu, especially in his work with Passeron (1979), is one of the few commentators to discuss students, their community and their relation to culture. Bourdieu and Passeron's (1979) work allows us to explore traditional student lifestyles within a context of cultural inheritance and reproduction.



## The Reproduction of Power

Young men who were eager to enter the powerful Mide society would go into the wilderness, fast, return and tell their visions to the old men, only to be informed - if they were not members of the elite families - that their vision was not authentic.<sup>20</sup>

This quote, referring to initiation rites amongst North American Indians, establishes the tone for Bourdieu and Passeron's discussion of French higher education students in the book *The Inheritors; French Students and their Relation to Culture* (1979). Although Bourdieu and Passeron are one of the few commentators to discuss students and their relation to culture, we must be acutely aware that this work relates to France in the 1960s and 1970s which is very different to Britain in the 1990s. As Harker (1990, 98) comments, the French educational system is one of the most bureaucratic and centralised in the world, and we should be extremely careful about generalising Bourdieu's work to a British context.

Further, Bourdieu and Passeron's (1979) discussion is largely focused around the role of universities as reproducers of consecrated forms of culture and perpetuators of inherited tastes and dispositions from the family. They present a narrow view of cultural activity amongst students, exploring limited themes such as preference of plays and classical composers and how these are related to social origin. Clearly, a much broader analysis of cultural activity is needed which accounts activities outside the realm of the dominant sphere of cultural production and consumption.

However, Bourdieu and Passeron's (1979) general argument introduces a useful tone. It is one which emphasises the almost magical nature of the French educational system in that students are sorcerers' apprentices<sup>21</sup> who are subject to the logic of institutions which function to legitimate social differences and consecrate certain social practices, yet at the same time work to conceal this logic. Bourdieu's theory of education can be understood through terms introduced in the last chapter, such as distinction and symbolic violence. As Harker (1990, 86) comments, "Bourdieu's work is one of the few coherent accounts of the central role that schools have in both changing and in reproducing social and cultural inequalities from one generation to the next". Further, "[f]or Bourdieu, the educational

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<sup>20</sup> Margaret Mead, *Continuities in Cultural Evolution*, quoted in *The Inheritors* (1979, 1).

<sup>21</sup> This term is the title of the third chapter of *The Inheritors*.

system is one of the principal agents of symbolic violence in modern democracies" (Moi, 1991, 1023).

It is here where this 'soft' form of violence is enacted: "[o]ur educational system institutions are structured to favour those who already possess cultural capital, in the form of the habitus of the dominant cultural fraction" (Harker, 1990, 87). Thus, educational capital is reinforced by social capital. This social power enables those from the privileged class to succeed even in the absence of educational capital.

*The Inheritors* (1979) marks a break with the prevailing tradition in the sociology of education by outlining a program for a sociology of cultural reproduction.<sup>22</sup> The first line of the book establishes the concern of the authors: "[o]thers have observed and deplored the fact that the various social classes are very unequally represented in higher education" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 1). In this opening line we can see a reflection and reinforcement of the title of the book. Education, and in particular the university, is a place where an inheritance of consecrated culture is held in value and displayed as a natural gift rather than a product of a family environment for those from privileged social origins.

Under a discussion entitled *Selecting the Elect*, Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) suggest that the chance of gaining entrance to higher education ranges from outright elimination amongst the lowest social classes to natural acceptance amongst the highest - the former having an added effect of gender inequality. Once there, inequality occurs in more hidden forms such as the relegation of certain social groups to certain disciplines; in this sense, those who face the most restricted choice are females of low social origin (ibid., 6). The chances of entering into higher education, then, has different connotations for different groups such as 'impossible', 'possible' or 'natural'.<sup>23</sup> The perception of higher education is an important point; for those from the lowest social classes the subjective expectations of going to university - those passed on by family and friends - are even lower than the objective chances.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron, *The Inheritors*, Preface to the American Edition (1979, vii).

<sup>23</sup> ibid., 1979, 3.

<sup>24</sup> ibid., 1979, 5.

Bourdieu and Passeron are very explicit about the influence of social class upon the educational experience:

Of all the differentiating factors, social origin is doubtless the one whose influence bears most strongly on the student world, more strongly, at any rate, than sex or age, and certainly more than any clearly perceived factor, such as religious affiliation (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 8).

Further:

Social origin - which defines totally different opportunities, living and working conditions - is, of the determinants, the only one whose influence extends to all areas and all levels of students' experience, and first and foremost to their conditions of existence (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 12).

Bourdieu and Passeron comment that a feeling that one is 'at home' in an environment such as the university is determined by early 'options' which are the work of family background (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 14). It is the private sphere, or more specifically the home, "which is the main site for the growth of the classificatory mesh through which all subsequent educational ideas must be passed" (Fowler, 1997, 24). Therefore, "[i]n a student population we are dealing with the final outcome of a whole set of influences that stem from social origin and have been exerted over a long period" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 14). In effect, the university system consecrates social inequalities whilst apparently ignoring them:

The homology between the structures of the educational system... and the mental structures of the agents... is the source of the functioning of the *consecration of the social order* which the education system performs behind its mask of neutrality (Bourdieu, 1988, 204, italics in original).

The university, then, has a particular role to play in society:

The ideological role of the education system, then, is to make it appear as if positions of leadership and power are distributed according to merit.. the existence in every educational institution of a tiny percentage of highly successful members of disadvantaged groups is precisely what allows us to believe that the system is egalitarian and meritocratic after all (Moi, 1991, 1026).

In this sense, Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 67) highlight the functioning of the *charisma ideology* within education: “[b]lindness to social inequalities both obliges and allows one to explain all inequalities, particularly those in educational achievement, as natural inequalities, unequal giftedness”. The logic of universities is that everyone is equal, and any inequalities that do arise are associated with the unequal distribution of natural gifts rather than socio-economic circumstances. They go as far to say that the essentialism associated with the charisma ideology is basically the flaunting of ‘class racism’ (1979, 70) while such an ideology prevents it from being detected as such. The privileged classes are able to use the educational system to confirm their ‘natural’ gifts; the exam becomes the means to transform privilege into academic merit. The less privileged are complicit in such an ideology, as accepting the notion of the natural gift and the possibility of gaining such status is much more attractive than facing up to the reality of their own exclusion from it. So, the university transforms social truth into academic truth and, therefore, ‘you are a petty bourgeois’ becomes ‘you work hard but lack brilliance’ (Bourdieu, 1988, 207).

To summarise then: “[m]isrecognition of the social determinants of the educational career... gives the educational certificate the value of a natural right and makes the educational system one of the fundamental agencies of the maintenance of the social order” (Harker, 1990, 88).

Clearly, many prescriptions can be made from here relating to the formulation of a rational pedagogy which would neutralise the effects of social factors. These are beyond the scope of this thesis, yet we can posit some tentative conclusions that it would involve the greatest number of individuals to appropriate the greatest number of abilities in the shortest time possible. As Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 21) comment, education “would be the royal road to the democratisation of culture if it did not consecrate the initial cultural inequalities by ignoring them”. This would also include a sociology of cultural inequalities which would point us towards areas such as familial culture and the democratic recruitment of teachers.<sup>25</sup> What is evident from the discussion, then, is an ability to perceive more visibly the *socially conditioned cultural inequalities* of the student experience.<sup>26</sup> It follows from this that students, because they have already been socially,

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<sup>25</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 76.

<sup>26</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 74.

and financially, 'selected', will display certain lifestyle dispositions. Yet, to what extent does a group such as 'students' constitute a unified disposition?

### **A Student Habitus?**

Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) comment upon the forms of sociality within the student community. As a starting point they suggest that because of their transitional, temporary and changing nature, it is problematic to discuss the lifestyle of students through the concept habitus: "How can one speak, even by way of a simplification, of a common 'student situation'" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 12). Bourdieu and Passeron do make the point that students all share the common role of learner and are exposed to the same institutional environment, yet it does not follow that they experience them identically, still less collectively (ibid., 1979, 13).

Is the fact of attendance within a university sufficient to define students as an integrated group? Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 29) comment that students are likely to require definition in terms of the meaning and symbolic function they almost unanimously confer on their practice, rather than in terms of the unity of their practice. In other words, students are defined by what it means to them to be a student rather than what they have to do to be a student. But what it means to the individual to be a student has many more interpretations than, say even ten years ago, especially when we consider that students differ in terms of their social *past*, their occupational *future* and their academic *present*- i.e. where they have come from, where they are going and how they treat the role of 'student' whilst at university.

However, there is something different about the student experience:

students certainly live and mean to live in a special time and space. Their studenthood momentarily frees them from family life and working life. Encapsulated in the autonomy of university time, they escape... from the schedules of society at large, knowing no other deadline than the *diem irae* of the examination and no other deadline than the undemanding pattern of weekly lectures (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 29)

Further:

Aside from the constraints imposed by this calendar, there are neither dates nor schedules. The student situation enables the temporal frameworks of social life to be broken, or their

priorities reversed. Realising one is a student means first, and perhaps foremost, feeling free to go to the movies at any time and therefore never on a Sunday when other people do; contriving to weaken or reverse the major oppositions which imperiously organise adults' work and leisure; flouting the distinction between weekends and weekdays, day and night, work and playtime (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 29).

Just as it is important for the university to maintain some distance from the demands of the outside world, the student should also have a certain amount of freedom from the normal time constraints of the wider economy and society to explore their area of study and their experience of university life - what Bourdieu and Passeron call a libertarian use of free time.<sup>27</sup> In this sense, Seale (1972) discussed the university as a student 'homeland' where students can retreat from the rigours of work without having to conform to the university's rules. The student experience has also been discussed as a rite of passage. Leemon (1972) drew upon Arnold van Gennep's classic study, *Les Rites de Passage* (1909), where student life can be described through three phases - separation, transition and incorporation. However, the sites, rituals and ceremonies of the rites of passage have, to some extent, been eroded within the contemporary university.

What can be said, though, is that 'culturally' the student habitus is still demarcated in particular places:

Doubtless, wherever university life has developed, it has marked out the landscape with its dwelling places, its customary haunts and necessary routes between them. Its residential and leisure zones, even when scattered throughout the city, have a specific character to which ordinary language bears witness" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 32).

Yet, is the fact that students go to the same lecture room or pub enough to define them as an homogeneous group?

[I]t is impossible to credit the mere fact of coexistence or coresidence with the power to make a coherent group out of the individuals which they juxtapose. It is not space as such, but a regulated, temporally structured use of space that gives a group a framework for integration (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 32).

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<sup>27</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 31.

The student group, it appears then, is only integrated through the regulations imposed upon them through the traditions of the university. In the contemporary student world many of these traditions are crumbling and a spirit of competition rather than co-operation may prevail. "Deprived of institutional supports and social frameworks, increasingly distant from the obsolete traditions of student life, the student milieu is perhaps less integrated today than ever before" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 34). "Thus, everything leads one to doubt whether students really constitute a homogeneous, independent, and integrated social group" (ibid., 1979, 35). With the increase of vocational and practical elements into university life, many students are becoming more instrumental and functional about their student experience. A definition of students as 'inputs' or 'customers' has consequences for the notion of a 'student community', in the similar way that many academics are worried about the consequences of the changes in higher education on the 'academic community'. With the establishment of the Student Charter (1992), distance learning, credit-transfer, CPD courses and vocationalism, it might be more realistic to discuss a community of consumers, rather than a community of students. However, the student as consumer-purchaser-client model presents us with the crudest possible interpretation of the student experience (Silver and Silver, 1997, 168). As mentioned previously, a student is always much more than someone who studies.

Yet, there are real problems in discussing the notion of a unified student lifestyle:

More akin to a fluid aggregate than an occupational group, the student world would present all the symptoms of anomie if students were only students and were not integrated into other groups (ibid., 1979, 36).

Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) even talk of the lack of *esprit de corps* and an absence of reciprocal stereotypes within the student body. They comment that exchanges outside the classroom are rare and that the only networks of acquaintance they find are connected to previous schooling or external social ties. Their conclusion is that the practice of the university is itself unable to generate any form of group spirit. This may be the case when referring to larger universities which are characterised by anonymity and overcrowding (their case in point was the University of Paris in the 1960s and 1970s). However, smaller and provincial universities, especially the greenfield campuses of the 1960s may be home to more homogeneous networks of acquaintance.

My own experience of, and research into, university life has made me aware of networks of acquaintance which are generated in many contexts such as halls of residence, courses, societies and clubs. Stereotypes for groups of students find fertile ground amongst certain courses (often based around the opposition between the science and arts faculties) and also other categories such as the rugby team, the sloanes and politically active students. Clearly, institutionally imposed links also extend beyond the span of one's university career, both informally (through friendships) and formally (through alumni, course reunions and professional contacts).

Paradoxically, one of the unifying features of studenthood is the individual's desire to maintain a distance from a student image. "To distinguish oneself as a student means, in fact, to distinguish oneself from the student essence in which one encapsulates others" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 39). In fact, the "will to achieve full studenthood does not presuppose unanimous recognition of an image of the ideal student" (ibid., 1979, 38). What the student is seeking is not the image of a 'student' but the urge to actualise an 'image'. For the student, the image of studenthood is concerned with dissociation and distancing and being undetermined as an 'image'. In this sense, students occupy spaces such as certain cafes and pubs not to meet each other but to meet the archetypal student (ibid., 1979, 40). Aggleton (1987, 95) echoes such analysis by suggesting that students prefer weakly framed environments which allow a degree of personal autonomy in order to "recontextualise aspects of everyday experience in terms of exoticism."

Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) encapsulate much of the above through the concept of *the unreality of the student experience*; in other words, because being a 'student' is not a profession, its privilege has an air of anti-realism. This places the 'job' of being a student in a peculiar framework. The ideal type of rational student conduct would be to organise all one's time with a view of achieving one's occupational future as quickly as possible. The ideal, and rational, student role then, is concerned with reception rather than creativity: "[T]o study is not to create something but to create oneself... to study is not to produce, but to produce a capacity to produce... the student has and can have no other task than to work towards his own disappearance qua student" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 55). In this sense, the job of being a student has built in obsolescence. Yet as they comment, "the reality is quite different" (ibid., 1979, 57). The transitional nature of the student experience enables them to forget themselves qua student and also forget their



future. The present is given a fictitious immobility, by making it eternal or autonomous, when objectively it calls for its own abolition.<sup>28</sup>

Clearly, not all students have such an indeterminate vision of the future. Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 57) talk of the difference between the 'exam hound' (*l'élève à concours*) and the 'dilettante', the former involved in scholastic deadlines the latter in a process of intellectual adventure as an eternal apprentice with no real vision of the future. To this dichotomy we could add the experience of those on vocational courses, CPD courses, adult and recurrent learners and those involved with industry, for example through teaching company schemes, whose experience of university life is very different.

Increasing financial and work pressures, therefore, mean that student life is not the 'unreal' experience described by Bourdieu and Passeron (1979), not even for those for whom university life is a natural extension of their social privilege. Student life, for the majority, may still be undertaken in a distinctive space and time,<sup>29</sup> but for many it is no less serious or demanding than the 'real' world of work. Further, as Britain moves towards the US system, part-time employment is becoming a reality for many students.<sup>30</sup> The next part of this section discusses some of these transformations within the student condition.

### The Transformation of the Student Habitus

The strategies which one group employs to try to escape downclassing and to return to their class trajectory, and which the other group employs to rebuild the interrupted path of a hoped-for trajectory, are today one of the most important factors in the transformation of the social structure (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 90).

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<sup>28</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 57.

<sup>29</sup> Even this is unclear as the traditional structure of the academic calendar and the university precinct or campus is eroded through innovations such as semesterisation and distance-learning and the continued growth of sandwich course, student placements, CPD and Continuing Education activity.

<sup>30</sup> In fact, Pool (1996) highlights that 38% of people in full-time education are in part-time employment. Yet many are under-paid which has led to calls for more on-campus employment agencies.

Clearly, the student habitus has been transformed from that which Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) talked about. There are two particular changes. The first relates to changes in the inputs - the rise of new students which was discussed in the last chapter. The second relates to the outputs - the life of graduates and the devaluation of degree-level qualifications - which is discussed below.<sup>31</sup>

University growth has resulted in the over-production of degree level qualifications with the concomitant devaluation of the once elitist university experience and an increase in employment disillusionment for graduates. Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 81) point to "[t]he inflation of academic qualifications and the corresponding devaluation, which forces all the social classes, starting with the greatest users of education, to make ever greater use of education and so in their turn to contribute to the overproduction of qualifications". Many strategies are currently being employed, then, to maintain the value of a university experience.<sup>32</sup>

One consequence of this is what they call the *hysteresis of habitus*;<sup>33</sup> a situation where previously appropriate categories of perception are applied to new conditions where these categories no longer apply. Those worst affected are the newcomers to the academic system who expect the most from their experience and have the least knowledge of the consequence of the devaluation of qualifications. However, many are not affected by devaluation at all. For example, there is a time-lag at work concerning the devaluation of qualifications in certain disciplines, especially those linked to the professions such as law and medicine. Further, the social trajectory of others may be protected if they have the existing social capital to draw upon or if one finds oneself as a lucky survivor.

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<sup>31</sup> However, Hagendijk (1984) notes that to fully understand changes in student culture, it is important to acknowledge that such changes are first and foremost a reflection of long-term political and social developments rather than just recent changes in the structure of higher education.

<sup>32</sup> Strategies in Britain to perpetuate the distinction of educational capital include the use of private secondary schooling and the privatisation of universities through additional 'top-up' fees.

<sup>33</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron., 1979, 82.

Another consequence which Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) highlight is what they refer to as the *bamboozling of a generation*.<sup>34</sup> This entails a process of structural deskilling of a whole generation of graduates who experience a mismatch between actual educational aspirations and real employment possibilities. This downclassing, and the disenchantment which results from it, manifests itself in many ways such as opting out of the labour market, travelling and taking up inferior employment. Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) go as far to suggest that this results in an anti-institutional sentiment, a collective disillusionment and a denunciation and total refusal of the social order.

Other strategies used in the face of downclassing, especially by those used to having their social privilege reinforced by academic capital, is occupational 'creative redefinition'. This results in the production of new graduate-only occupations or the refurbishment of older ones in the indeterminate sectors of the social structure (advertising, cultural producers, social commentators, body specialists) where academic qualifications are only valid if they are reinforced by 'real' social qualifications - i.e. the bodily norms of the dominant class (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 88). Basically, these new unbureaucratic positions offer the holders of socially inherited capital a chance to assert the former value of their academic qualifications - or to rescue the academically unqualified inheritors from downclassing.<sup>35</sup>

Bourdieu believes that such downclassing has important consequences. He has talked of the critical moment when the meaning of the social world hangs in balance (Bourdieu, 1988, 159). While this has been used in common currency to refer to the events of May 1968, Bourdieu talks of the university crisis transforming itself into a general crisis the most striking effect of which is a "structural downclassing generating a kind of collective disposition to revolt" (ibid.). Bourdieu also discusses the crisis within the university field

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<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, 1979, 85.

<sup>35</sup> This analysis equips us with a particular way of looking at the nature of change. Rather than new classes emerging, it is more accurate to think of new strategies being employed by existing classes in the field of unfolding strategies and struggles. Groups from the dominant pole of the field of power are involved in permanent evolutionary reconversion strategies to conserve what they see as their social trajectories. Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 94) describe this as homothetic development - the dialectic of downclassing and upclassing; a process which is manifest in the present disjuncture between subjective aspirations and objective chances.

in terms of a synchrony or coincidence with crises affecting agents occupying homologous positions in other fields (Bourdieu, 1988, 173). Although the fields are autonomous, the crises develop in parallel and alliances are built between those who are subordinated in different fields. The conjunction of these crises in different fields, then, can create a historical event - a general crisis (ibid., 1988, 174):

solidarities founded on structural homologies between the holders of positions subordinate in the different fields, and often associated with the experience of a structural downclassing, that we should attribute the extension of the crisis beyond the university field (Bourdieu, 1988, 177).

Therefore, the disillusionment of those downclassed by the devaluation of university qualifications can be translated into a more general crisis and anti-institutional mood, especially into the occupations which have grown rapidly because of the structural downclassing (i.e. cinema, press, advertising, youth and social groups). Because of these solidarities and alliances across the social field, we can view 'the crisis as developer' (Bourdieu, 1988, 180). "Crisis moments, Bourdieu has observed, are essentially struggles over rival systems of classification... Such moments are for Bourdieu not simply negative; they act as developers, stimulating knowledge and sites from which to speak" (Mort, 1996, 15).

Clearly, new patterns of what it means to be a student are emerging from this latest period of transformation within higher education since 1992. In this sense, the idea of the 'student' has been developed at many critical moments. These have been, and continue to be, moments when the normal processes of reproduction have been interrupted (Bourdieu, 1988, 183). Significant amongst these in Britain include the Robbins Report of 1962, the events of 1968, the 1992 unification of higher education institutions, the effect of the 1997 change of government, the 1997 National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (the Dearing Report) and the introduction of tuition fees.

## POSTMODERN LIFESTYLES

In the following section, I want to present the second theoretical framework which largely stands in opposition to the work of Bourdieu. In general, this framework falls under the heading of postmodern sociology and within this a number of themes have been selected. Firstly, a number of critiques of Bourdieu's work are presented and in particular the

multiple determinants of lifestyle are discussed. Such critiques pursue a more complex correlation between lifestyle and its generative forces which moves away from class towards other identities based upon, for example, ethnicity, sexuality and gender. Further, there are those who understand lifestyle as a display of temporary and affectual forms of sociality associated with neo-tribalism (Hetherington, 1992, 1996; Maffesoli, 1996) and as an eclectic patterning of cultural choices which transgress cultural boundaries (Savage et al.).

Following from this, work which regards lifestyle as a reflexive project and a resource within everyday life rather than a durable set of dispositions is explored. Finally, I want to suggest that Bourdieu needs to be reworked to understand the central role of popular culture within the construction of lifestyle, especially amongst younger age cohorts. This draws upon work which is associated with 'cultural populism' (Fiske, 1989; Willis, 1990). In sum, this postmodern framework counteracts many of Bourdieu's arguments by stressing the authority of the individual, the importance of the popular and the emotive and temporary nature of sociality rather than the durability of ways of being and strategies of distinction.

### Postmodern Critiques of Bourdieu

A number of commentators have recast the work of Bourdieu, especially in the light of debates associated with postmodern or latemodern cultures.<sup>36</sup> Such debates are instructive in terms of recognising the sheer diversity of lifestyles and allowing us, theoretically of course, to take 'the everyday' and 'pleasure' seriously. In postmodern speak, we could discuss the 'hysteresis of habitus'<sup>37</sup> through the breakdown of the habitus into an incoherent set of dispositions. The oversupply of cultural goods and tastes has led to a general process of cultural declassification and the destabilising of a durable habitus (Featherstone, 1991). In this sense, lifestyle increasingly has to balance many diverse and overlapping identities based around gender, sexuality, ethnicity and age as well as social, educational and geographical background. It also has to acknowledge the influences of

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<sup>36</sup> These include the work of Lash (1989, 1993), Chaney (1996), Calhoun, LiPuma and Postone (1993), Jenkins (1992), Harker, Mahar and Wilkes (1990), Fornas (1995), Fornas and Brodin (1995), Johansson and Meigel, (1992), Fowler (1997), Featherstone (1991, 1995), Savage et al., (1992).

<sup>37</sup> See Bourdieu and Passeron, *The Inheritors*, (1979).

individualism, pleasure-seeking, self-interestedness and spontaneity. In this context, taste is associated with spontaneity and playfulness as well as status building.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, for a field to work there must be stakes (specific forms of capital) and people ready to play the rules of the field. Can we still suggest that the habitus can imbue agents with a system of dispositions which will adjust them to these rules? Do agents still gain practical experience of individual fields to equip them with particular dispositions? Further, if lifestyle is a reflexive project, what are the consequences of this for the habitus and field which rely upon the misrecognition of objectively organized strategies? Following postmodern theory, therefore, it would be difficult to identify distinctive stakes, rules or sets of interests within Bourdieu's fields which would reproduce the logic of the habitus.

Further, Bourdieu's social space, divided by various types of capital, may not account for all the generative factors of lifestyle. Just as there should be a conceptualisation of the habitus as an intersecting and interchangeable entity, and of the field as a de-autonomized entity, "social space will need to be constructed as a many-dimensional space" (Reimer, 1995, 141).

However, Lash (1989) states that there is a theory of postmodernism implicit in Bourdieu's work:

If modernization is characterised by the differentiation of Bourdieu's fields, then postmodernization, we shall see, would be characterised by their de-differentiation. And the pervasion of such a principle of de-differentiation presumes a new set of social actors, the new, post-industrial middle classes whose interests are furthered by such a process (Lash, 1989, 239).

Under the twin mechanisms of economic change (post-Fordism) and cultural change (postmodernism) a new post-industrial urban middle class emerges who are 'new entrants' into the field and habitus of the dominant class and who complicate the classificatory struggles over aesthetic taste.

Postmodernist theory, then, would suggest a de-autonomisation of the cultural field, an exhaustion of the modernist avant-gardes and an end to bohemia as a site for dissident art (Fowler, 1997, 79). "This is not so much in the sense that everybody now is part of the masses, but that all (social) movement members are themselves part and parcel of

reflexive avant-gardes" (Lash, 1993, 209). The de-autonomisation and massification of the cultural sphere means that "symbolic violence is now immanent in the social field. As elites become masses, symbolic violence is now increasingly exercised from below" (Lash, 1993, 210).<sup>36</sup>

The cultural field, then, has exploded. Frow (1995, 85) comments that our cultural system, because it is mediated by a heterogeneous global audience rather than a class-specific audience and a mass rather than elite education system, "is no longer *in the same manner* tense with the play of power... these cultural institutions have thoroughly transformed the system of 'postmodern' relations of cultural value". Further, Chaney (1996, 66) comments that [t]he very prescriptive determinism of his [Bourdieu's] concept of habitus does not allow him to fully appreciate the ways in which actors may and will play with these [lifestyle] choices as ironic commentaries on their own styles of life".

Moi (1991, 1034), therefore, is justified in commenting that, "Bourdieu's most central concepts - field and habitus - would seem to be in jeopardy". This seems increasingly true considering the "contradictory relations between social structure and lifestyle which may become more and more common" (Reimer, 1995, 131). Frow (1987, 1995) explores a number of problems with Bourdieu's sociology of culture. Firstly, for Bourdieu "culture is seen not only as a process of negotiation of class position but as an expression of it" (ibid., 1995, 5). This linear relationship between culture and class is not generally applicable especially with the existence of mass media and mass education. The problem Frow has with Bourdieu is, then, that "cultural forms are understood as non-contradictory expressive unities rather than as sites of tension" (Frow, 1995, 39). Secondly, Bourdieu's implicit assumption is that "the sole or *primary* function of aesthetic texts is that of status-distinction" (ibid.). This presupposes that legitimate culture expresses or legitimates domination thereby emptying it of the possibility of any other type of function. Clearly, legitimate culture fulfils other roles such as personal pleasure.

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<sup>36</sup> However, I would follow Fowler (1997) in arguing that Bourdieu's implication that culture is still deeply stratified rather than subject to processes of declassification is still relevant today. Clearly, Bourdieu is not a postmodernist because he retains an objectivist understanding of the world and believes in the unfinished project of modernity.

Other problems arise in connection with Bourdieu's concept of values, in terms of, for example, where one stands on the high-popular culture debate. "Bourdieu believes in the possibility and desirability of scientific truth and, in that, he is passionately modernist" (Wacquant, 1992, 47). Bourdieu's standpoint, clearly, is one which sits uncomfortably with postmodern prescriptions of consumer sovereignty and the possibility of popular empowerment.

Further, problems arise in connection to Bourdieu's concept of capital. He presupposes an underlying class unity between the intelligentsia (rich in cultural capital) and the bourgeoisie (rich in economic capital) who represent opposing poles of the field of the dominant class. As a result, "Bourdieu is unable to theorize relations of domination as relations of contested hegemony" (Frow, 1995, 45). Therefore, he does not see the possibility of legitimate popular culture, but instead a situation wherein "[t]he totalizing grip of the 'dominant norms', understood as a unitary set of values, allows for no possibility of critique and social transformation" (ibid., 1995, 46). Another common problem also cited against Bourdieu's work is that the analysis is dated and case specific.<sup>39</sup>

There have also been several feminist critiques of Bourdieu which have questioned his conception of the social order (Moi, 1992; McCall, 1992). Such critiques suggest a more nuanced understanding of different variables such as ethnicity, gender, age and social origin and how they are mobilised in different amounts in different contexts: "we might be able to seize the complex variability of these social factors as well as the way in which they influence and modify each other in different social contexts" (Moi, 1991, 1035). Reimer (1995, 129) echoes this:

In relation to the choice of lifestyle, one can understand why there are no simple, linear connections between social background and choice of lifestyle. If one assumes that each subject is contradictory, one can understand why and how in a specific situation a subject will be 'dominated' by a particular arrangement of that subject's different 'identities'.

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<sup>39</sup> Yet Bourdieu (1992, 78) defends his work by commenting that: "One of the purposes of the analysis is to uncover transhistorical invariants, or sets of relations between structures that persist within a clearly circumscribed but relatively long historical period."



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### The Multiple Determinants of Lifestyle

Current literature on cultural preferences and cultural value is replete with the notion that lifestyles cannot be reduced to a single generative mechanism. "The earlier emphasis on social position - that is, on age, gender, class and status - as factors determining the lifestyle of the individual has decreased in relation to the present emphasis on qualities located within the individual" (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 2).

Further, Frow (1995, 132) points towards the "vastly more complex network of differentiations which is not, or is no longer, reducible to a single scale" and Fornas (1995, 98) comments:

To a certain extent, taste and activity patterns can be related to class and life forms, as has frequently been done by Bourdieu... But there is always a remaining scope both for other generating factors (like gender, age, ethnicity) and for individual variations. The homologies between the taste and the social class field exist but are always only partial, and increasingly so. The forms and contents of tastes and lifestyles always have multiple determinations. They are never only effects of power games... It is not only status factors that determine what becomes legitimate taste for someone, but also political, social, psychological and aesthetic qualities related to other needs than the will to be recognised and to determine.

Frow (1995, 1) argues for a more complex correlation between class and culture in that:

there is no longer a stable hierarchy of value running from 'high' to 'low' culture, and that 'high' and 'low' culture can no longer, if they ever could, be neatly correlated with a hierarchy of social classes.

Johansson and Miegel (1992, 92) reinforce this point by commenting that the employment of capital is not solely about power and status struggles; it can also be about social and cultural integration and development. In this sense, *cultural capital* can be understood as the ability and competence to understand various types of cultural goods, from the most marginal to the most legitimate, and *social capital* can be understood as the ability and competence to participate in social interactions regardless of their power and status connotations.

It is unwise, then, to pursue an understanding of lifestyle from specified generative factors. But, how do we understand certain types of lifestyle which are not amenable to

old correlative notions which link social identities, such as class, to cultural practices and tastes? In relation to taste and art, Featherstone comments that a postmodern sociology suggests there has been:

the effacement of the boundary between art and everyday life; the collapse of the hierarchical distinction between high and mass/popular culture; a stylistic promiscuity favouring eclecticism and the mixing of codes; parody, pastiche, irony, playfulness and the celebration of the surface 'depthlessness' of culture; the decline of the originality/genius of the artistic producer; and the assumption that art can only be reception (Featherstone, 1991, 8).

Further, postmodern commentators such as Jameson, Baudrillard and Lyotard have espoused such tendencies as:

a 'post-society' configuration that escapes sociological classification and explanation, an endless cycle of the reduplication and overproduction of signs, images and simulations that leads to an implosion of meaning (Featherstone, 1995, 19).

This clearly simplifies the logic of the cultural economy, especially the power struggles within it. However, postmodern theorising can be a useful tool in that it offers the possibility to "develop a critical vocabulary which can take this rapid movement (of popular culture) into account" (McRobbie, 1994, 4). Such an approach allows us to include partial and hybridic identities into our account of lifestyles. These postmodern times awakens us to "forms of identity which were not constructed around work, class or community but instead around other constellations of strong cultural meaning: the body, sexuality or ethnicity, for example." (McRobbie, 1994, 6). Whilst we should not fail to recognise the structural limits of cultural practice, postmodernism does allow us to treat every aspect of lived experience with the same respectability as 'legitimate' culture. Commentators such as McRobbie (1994) inform us that even the negative aspects of postmodernism such as the invasive impact of new technologies lamented by Baudrillard, Jameson and Eco, can be re-presented in a positive way through their ability to generate new associations and forms of resistance. Through such an approach:

lifestyle practice is one of the preconditions of the cultural innovations of postmodernism... communities of new forms of sociality might be more profitably seen as looser neo-tribal forms of association (Chaney, 1996, 84).

### Temporary Lifestyles

In contrast to the work of Bourdieu, then, there are those who discuss lifestyle through what has been discussed as the emergence of new intensified, temporary and affective forms of sociality (Hetherington, 1992, 1996; Chaney, 1996; Maffesoli, 1996). Such groupings, or neo-tribes, represent intensely affectual forms of sociality and have been described through concepts of intermediate and transitional social relations such as *Bünd* or *communitas* (Hetherington, 1992, 1996). These groups are inherently unstable and are seen as the outcome of "the process of individualization and the decline of more ascriptive bases for lifestyle, notably that of class" (Hetherington, 1992, 85). Maffesoli (1996) has been one of the main theorists concerning the tribalism of popular culture. He suggests that: "neo-tribalism is characterised by fluidity, occasional gatherings and dispersal" (ibid., 1996, 76).

This approach to lifestyle renders Bourdieu's notion of habitus, field and capital less rigid by acknowledging a desire for association but on a temporary, individualised and affectual basis, rather than upon pre-determined categories such as class, gender and ethnicity. Theories of lifestyle based upon 'temporary sociality' and 'elective sociality', then, challenge a Bourdieuan framework in which sets of dispositions are durable, learnt and embodied. Basically, such neo-tribes display "solidarity for its own sake" (Osborne, 1997, 127) and "exist solely for their own ends in what amounts to a narcissism of existence" (ibid., 1997, 142). These groupings display:

an intense, if fleeting, condition of affectual solidarity and bonding that produces its own forms of sociation through which an identification and shared sense of belonging is formed (Hetherington, 1996, 39).

Temporary, neo-tribal lifestyles have an important spatial dimension in the sense that they are set apart from the normal workings of society. They are situated within sacred and 'elective places', with certain places generating a sense of 'social centredness' (Hetherington, 1996). These lifestyle spaces are associated with rituals and the process of rites of passage and involve liminal practices in the sense that the forms of sociality represent a transition and inversion of social roles and an abeyance in the normal ordering of social relationships.

However, Maffesoli is not keen on giving examples of what he is talking about (Osborne, 1997). Hetherington (1992, 1996) has discussed such temporary and affectual lifestyles in relation to new-age travellers and others (for example, Thornton, 1995) have discussed rave- and club-cultures by drawing upon theories of occasional and affectual forms of sociality. Further, O'Connor and Wynne (1995a, part 3, 5) explore the new class of city-centre based cultural intermediaries in terms of play and sociability in the consumption-oriented postmodern city rather than a Bourdieuan accretion of cultural capital:

The traditional pattern of a rising social group aspiring to the cultural capital of a higher one, whether through imitation or out-flanking is, for us, no longer a viable model. The autodidact has turned flaneur.

This leads us to consider the notion of postmodern or eclectic lifestyles which take account of the rapidity, eclecticism and ephemerality of lifestyle choices. Savage et al. (1992, 108) discuss postmodern lifestyles with reference to groups who "do not fit into any coherent single organising principle" and mix appreciation of both high and popular cultural forms and demonstrate both extravagance and asceticism. The main lifestyle trend they detect is that "intellectuals act as a vanguard for a new 'healthy' lifestyle" and that "[a] 1960s-style counter-culture has been transformed into a 1990s-style post-modern cultural conformity" (Savage et al., 1992, 113).

Their work highlighted three salient types of middle-class lifestyle - the *ascetic* of the public sector welfare professionals, the *post-modern* of the private sector professionals and specialists and the *undistinctive* of the managers and government bureaucrats (Savage et al., 1992, 127). However, the main divide is that between public and private sector workers; the latter being the key constituency for the emergence of an extravagant post-modern lifestyle (Savage et al., 1992, 129). However, they also point to the considerable variations within such a typology based around the variables of lifecycle and age, gender and household relations and regional cultures.

### **Lifestyle: A Reflexive Project?**

What is evident through this discussion is that the concept of lifestyle is an articulation of the 'self', or the 'collective group', as a resource and a 'reflexive project' and hence an aesthetic project (Featherstone, 1991; Chaney, 1996; Maffesoli, 1996). Lifestyles like tastes, both classifies and classifies the classifier, but they are also important resources in

everyday life. In this sense they are an existential project rather than an enactment of undetected symbolic violence. Where certain commentators on lifestyle deviate from the theoretical concerns of Bourdieu, then, is through a commitment to aesthetic reflexivity and the new life spaces opened up by social change which allows individuals more freedom to express themselves.<sup>40</sup>

Hence, "[e]ach instance of a lifestyle is a way of telling a story, inflected by ways of life such as gender and class, that is a form of creative work. It is a way of redesigning material culture in infinite variety" (Chaney, 1996, 147). Further, they are ways of 'enacting new forms of identity' and are also 'in a very profound sense a form of design' (Chaney, 1996, 157). This design aspect of living was emphasised by Foucault's term 'stylistics of living', "an ecstatic flight of invention - and seduction - which is no less than the ethico-political art of carving out one's life" (Golding, 1995). In this sense, lifestyles represent 'distinctive ways of being' (Chaney, 1996, 76) and they constitute their own social reality rather than referring to any overlying class distinctions. From such a perspective, lifestyle studies requires new strategies of description and interpretation (ibid.).

### Embracing the Popular

An important aspect of understanding lifestyle formation, especially amongst younger age cohorts, is to grasp the central role played by popular culture and pleasure seeking. The study of popular culture has been influenced by a range of theoretical politics, many of which have been situated in Marxist and structuralist perspectives. More recently, the study of popular culture has focused upon the New Times debate of post-fordism and -modernism and its populist excesses such as the 'new revisionism' which espouses the sovereignty of the consumer.<sup>41</sup> In some ways then, in relation to the study of popular culture, "[q]uestions of modernity and postmodernity have replaced the more familiar concepts of ideology and hegemony" (McRobbie, 1994, 25). Such theoretical shifts have signalled a shift towards embracing the popular and represent a consumptionist, rather than productionist, approach to popular culture.

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<sup>40</sup> See, for example, Featherstone (1991) and Lash and Urry (1994).

<sup>41</sup> See McGuigan (1992) for a full discussion.

The consumptionist approach characterises a cultural populist stance within the new times debates of post-Marxism. Such a view is associated with enthusiasm for new alliances and identities and 'taking pleasure seriously' (McRobbie, 1994, 26). New Times also attunes us to new points of departure for the study of popular culture such as new global and social relationships and identities, the importance of the domestic sphere and consumerism as an act of social reproduction rather than individualism. Much of this adds up to the eclipsing of class by other social identifications (McRobbie, 1994, 38).

John Fiske is seen as the epitome of the uncritical drift into cultural populism.<sup>42</sup> In *Understanding Popular Culture* (1989), Fiske suggests that at the point of sale, the commodity exhausts its role in the distribution economy, but begins its work in the cultural" (Fiske, 1989, 35). However appealing this argument is, it places a clear divide between the cultural and economic fields and underestimates the struggles which occur within these hierarchically organised fields. However, Fiske suggests that one of the problems of Bourdieu's notion of capital is its lack of sensitivity to variations within the same type of capital such as that between popular cultural capital and legitimate cultural capital:

There is a popular cultural capital in a way that there is no popular economic capital, and thus Bourdieu's validated cultural capital of the bourgeoisie is constantly being opposed, interrogated, marginalized, scandalized and evaded, in a way that economic capital never is.<sup>43</sup>

Paul Willis (1977, 1978, 1990), one of the other main advocates of cultural populism and the consumptionist perspective, attempts to overcome the socially embedded notions of a naturally cultured elite versus an uncultured mass through his term grounded aesthetic. In this aesthetic, ordinary people make cultural sense of the world for themselves; so consumption is on the basis of 'use' rather than the playing out of inequalities.

The standpoint of cultural populism, then, can be used to suggest that one problem with Bourdieu's sociology of culture is that it represents a top-down model of social domination which simplifies the domain of the popular (Frow, 1995, 60). Bourdieu's

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<sup>42</sup> Storey (1993, 184).

<sup>43</sup> Fiske (1987, 314) quoted in Johansson and Meigel (1992, 92). However, this argument ignores the fact that Bourdieu sees popular culture subjugated within the same logic as consecrated culture.

analysis has been charged with focusing upon social stasis and elitism and often offers less analysis of popular and transgressive cultural forms and activities.

As Lash comments (1993, 203), Bourdieu's economic heuristic entails key assumptions of *reproduction*... it does so in a manner that inhibits the possibility of any strong theory of *social change*.<sup>44</sup> Through this, Bourdieu perhaps underestimates the multifarious challenges to the *doxa* which exist in the realm of cultural consumption. For example, in the cultural field, Bourdieu only discusses the contrast between the large-scale field of production (for the masses) and the de-limited field of production (for the producers or artists). He also "keeps intact the Weberian conceptualization of social change via the struggle between bureaucratic priests and charismatic prophets for the allegiance of the socially stratified masses" (Lash, 1993, 195).

Through such contrasts, he simplifies the multiplicity of allegiances which coalesce around cultural choices and underestimates the intricate webs which are woven between apparently incommensurable cultural tastes and activities. What about the spaces between these allegiances and types of production? What of production by those dominated in the field of power? What of the many cultural forms, interests and tastes which have no legitimacy in the field of power, do not seek such legitimacy, but instead create their own forms of popular legitimation? What of the people who might be aware of their dominated position and are simultaneously untroubled by the exercise of symbolic violence upon them and the pressure to accumulate legitimate cultural capital?

There is a problem with Bourdieu, then, in that "what is missing from all his work is a detailed feel for the nature of popular culture within urban modernity" (Fowler, 1997, 161).<sup>45</sup> In particular, Bourdieu undervalues other popular cultural forms in the realms of, for example, fashion, music and publishing which are gaining legitimacy. Bourdieu has

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<sup>44</sup> Bourdieu makes a distinction between *doxa* - a state where the order of things is self-evident and their arbitrariness has been naturalised and so the question of what is 'legitimate' becomes irrelevant; *orthodoxy* - the effect of protecting this *doxa*; and *heterodoxy* - the effort to challenge the *doxa*.

<sup>45</sup> For example, Bourdieu concentrates mainly upon popular forms such as photography, pub songs and circuses.

also under-estimated the potential for middle-brow art to function as a critical force rather than simple 'entertainment' for the average person (Fowler, 1997, 148).

Fowler's point is that although much low and middle-brow cultural forms lack the power to cross the magical boundary into consecrated art, it is wrong to say that they do not share with them processes of autonomy and critique; thus "high and low may thus share more than is at first suspected" (ibid., 1997, 148). Rather than being subjected to the same logic of a unified cultural field, low and popular cultural goods have the potential to represent an actually existing, but different, canon. "It is necessary... to break with the kind of thinking in which everything new radiates from the centre" (ibid., 1997, 150). It is also important to comprehend the popularity of certain cultural goods which unite people from different social backgrounds, as was the case amongst certain pre-modern cultural forms.

Fowler (1997, 134) suggests that "Bourdieu is still under the spell of certain tacit assumptions maintained by the priests who monopolise cultural authority."<sup>46</sup> Bourdieu, then, in trying to understand the objective laws of the enactment of symbolic violence, is enchanted too much by his own myths. In essence, Bourdieu denies the possibility of the existence of popular arts in capitalist modernity because it is characterised by its ethical/political concerns chief of which is the aim of merging art and everyday life (Fowler, 1997, 151-2).

The outcome of representing popular culture as an ethical and political aesthetic based upon social needs (or an anti-aesthetic) outside the literary and universal aesthetic is that "in Bourdieu's sociology of art there is no possibility of canonising existing popular culture". This portrays the notion that the formal interest and critical realism of legitimate 'art' only emanates from the educated bourgeoisie within metropolitan centres.<sup>47</sup> Bourdieu, then, under-theorises the uses of legitimate culture for more popular ends, by

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<sup>46</sup> In this context Fowler is referring to modernist movements within the artistic field which have been under theorised by Bourdieu such as writers from the rural periphery and women writers who experienced their own distinctive barriers to entry into the field of consecrated culture. Such groups are not considered as the bohemian exiles of dissident modernism (ibid., 1997, 142).

<sup>47</sup> In relation to her own work, Fowler (1997) stresses that various non-canonised writer's movements have survived despite the exertion of Bourdieu's symbolic violence.



regarding the cultural field as highly autonomous. To understand some of the overlaps "we need to study those networks camped outside the gates of consecrated institutions" (Fowler, 1997, 179).

In this sense I agree with Fowler (1997, 155) in her departure from Bourdieu's work in that:

the absence of any discussion of youth culture is significant given Bourdieu's enormous span of subjects. Thus, in this respect, we should seek to explore the cultural field quite differently from Bourdieu, by challenging his category of 'entertainment' and leaving open the possibility that works of artistic value might appear outside the field of bohemia and modernism.<sup>48</sup>

It is essential to remember that innovation in cultural production emerges from many different sites and strategies. One could discuss the appropriation and commercialisation of many dance-oriented musical forms such as 'drum and bass' and 'techno' for middle-class audiences which originally emerged from the experience of inner-city youth. In this context, we can constructively re-work Bourdieu through Chaney's (1996, 98) comments:

a presumption that lifestyles are pre-eminently the hobbies of the elites and would be elites misses the extent to which innovations in symbolic goods and services, as well as the opportunities for leaders, performers and other modes of sociability, can be and frequently are generated within disadvantaged groups.

Bourdieu, then, accepts the dominance of the bourgeois aesthetic. In particular, he "never seeks to *establish* the case for the continuing legitimacy of high culture; he simply assumes it" (Frow, 1995, 37). How much legitimacy do high cultural forms have in the face of competition from other increasingly legitimised forms such as popular fiction, clothing and record labels and dance and club cultures? Thornton (1995, 118) makes the point that dance culture has a distinctive form of legitimation through sub-cultural capital which,

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<sup>48</sup> Clearly, the study of youth culture is not absent from Bourdieu's work. Much of this thesis draws upon Bourdieu and Passeron's (1979) work relating to French students and their relation to culture in French universities in the 1960s and 1970s. However, this work represents a rather limited discussion of youth and student lifestyles and mainly focuses upon the relationship of students to consecrated art forms.

by necessity, has built-in obsolescence so it can maintain its status as the prerogative of the young and hip.<sup>49</sup>

## BALANCING THE FRAMEWORKS

Clearly, it is useful to retain elements of the two frameworks to explore the concept of lifestyle; as Figure 5.1 showed, lifestyle is an expression of both individually expressed inner-directed values and structurally and positionally determined outer-directed values. In this sense, a Bourdieuan perspective allows us to situate lifestyle within the dispositions embodied through the habitus, the strategies and struggles within various fields and the status-building games of distinction. Bourdieu also discusses the role of institutions, especially educational institutions, in the reproduction of social and cultural inequalities. In contrast, a postmodern perspective attunes us to the processes of experimentation, reflexivity and individualism which contribute to lifestyle formation and the fact that lifestyles can also be an expression of temporary and affectual moments of sociality. Further, postmodern interpretations stress the eclectic and often seemingly incommensurable choices which constitute lifestyle and the importance of popular culture.

However, the hypothesis which is to be explored in the next chapter is that, despite the fact that Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) found very few grounds for the existence of a unified student condition in France, a Bourdieuan framework is still the better framework in terms of understanding traditional student lifestyles in Britain. This is mainly because of the way in which such lifestyles in Britain are highly mediated by previous social and educational experiences and are structured and regulated around the time and space of the university and other associated spaces. Common dispositions akin to habitus are developed within this environment. These dispositions represent fairly durable 'ways of being' which endure, wholly or partly, even after the student's university career. The next chapter will explore the worth of these two theoretical frameworks in more detail in relation to the fieldwork which examined student lifestyles in Bristol.

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<sup>49</sup> Sarah Thornton's book *Club Cultures* (1995) and a host of other books charting the brief history of 'acid' and 'rave' cultures is evidence of the growing legitimacy of such pursuits.

# THE CULTURAL IMPACTS OF STUDENTS ON THE COMMUNITY

## INTRODUCTION

**T**his chapter presents the results of fieldwork which explores the impacts of student lifestyles on the Bristol community. The fieldwork, undertaken in the city between October 1995 and September 1997, utilised several techniques; a survey of over 4300 student visits to cinemas, pubs, night-clubs, theatres and galleries in Bristol over a one month period; diary work drawing upon over 4000 student hours; focus groups with groups of students; interviews with owners and managers of entertainment, cultural and art venues and representatives from the university and cultural community; and, participant observation at various times and locations in Bristol (see Appendix A for a full discussion of the methodology).

The aim of this chapter is to explore the central tension which exists in Part 2 of the thesis - what type of lifestyles do students represent? To a certain extent, this question is unresolvable as the university sector in Britain is characterised by student lifestyles which juxtapose a traditional cohort of largely white, middle-class adolescents with several non-traditional cohorts such as those formerly under-represented within universities and those studying on different modes of attendance.

The opening section of this chapter presents an exploration of this lifestyle division which has emerged between traditional and non-traditional students in the light of the recent growth and unification within the British higher education sector. In particular, I want to refer back to Silver and Silver's (1997, 103) comment that the student's experience of university life is governed by an "interaction of personal and institutional histories". The purpose of this first section, then, is to explore the ways in which the cultural impacts of students are determined by various factors such as type of institution, course and campus cultures, gender and age differences and increasing work and financial pressures.

However, the rest of this chapter focuses upon the cohort of traditional students and their characteristics of wealth, youth and fashion. This focus is justified because of the large

number of traditional students which are evident at Bristol's two universities, the way in which they dominate the construction of the image of students within the Bristol community and the huge amount of effort which is aimed at fulfilling their entertainment and residential needs in certain areas of the city. A number of themes relating to traditional student lifestyles are explored in the remainder of the chapter.

Firstly, a discussion of traditional student lifestyles in relation to the two theoretical frameworks explored in Chapter 5 is presented. Theoretically, the difficult aspect to come to terms with is that both frameworks retain some relevance in relation to understanding the lifestyles of traditional students; a Bourdieuan framework highlights that such lifestyles are undertaken within the structured time and space of the university which has connotations of social exclusion, cultural reproduction and privilege, and a postmodern framework allows us to consider that an enactment and stylisation of life and an experimentation with popular cultural forms are integral parts of traditional student lifestyles. However, a Bourdieuan framework seems to have more relevance in terms of explaining many aspects of student lifestyles, especially in the case of Bristol where there are large numbers of traditional students with similar geographic, social and educational backgrounds. In particular, a Bourdieuan framework can be used to suggest that student lifestyle enactment and experimentation is an experience only available to certain people and is only afforded by the regulated time-space framework of the university. Further, highly structured, regulated and segregated residential and entertainment spaces generate common sets of dispositions akin to those of habitus amongst traditional students.

In this sense, the first theme to be explored relates to the ways in which traditional students inhabit regulated and segregated residential spaces within the city which create particular 'ways of being' a student. This 'ghettoisation' creates a certain amount of conflict and tension when in contact with other communities. However, it is unclear whether this segregation and tension is any more noteworthy than that generated by other groups within the city.

The second theme relates to the existence of a regulated entertainment infrastructure in the city around which the cultural lives of this traditional student cohort is structured. This infrastructure is constructed by the informal colonisation of venues by students and the formal provision of student-oriented/-only entertainment by certain venue owners. It

represents a regulated environment based upon a learning process and the strong desire for association which traditional students show towards other students. It is also spatially and temporally distinctive which has particular consequences for the character of certain areas of the city. Drawing upon the work of Sibley (1995), such regulated and segregated traditional student environments can be regarded as a 'geography of exclusion' or, considering the social composition of such groups, an 'exclusive geography'. The consequences of these exclusive geographies will be discussed in Chapter 8 in relation to the concept of the 'divided city'.

Finally, the last theme explores the nature of cultural consumption amongst this traditional student cohort and their role in cultural innovation and vitality in the community. Drawing upon examples from night-clubbing, pubs, cinema and theatre, it is evident that consumption patterns by this traditional cohort represents greater levels of activity throughout a greater number of venues compared to many other groups in the city. However, such consumption patterns largely unfold in student-oriented/-only environments and, hence, represent segregated use of the city. Because of the predominance of night-clubbing and visiting the pub as activities in traditional student life, cultural consumption by this cohort is illustrated more by theories which valorise popular culture rather than those that regard students as inheritors of consecrated cultural forms (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979).

## **CHANGING STUDENT LIFESTYLES?**

In terms of classifying students, there's your Clifton lot: they're quite recognisable and hang around Whiteladies Road. Then there's the Montpellier lot who don't classically look like students. Then, of course, you've got your mature students who do their own thing (3rd year, female Drama student, UB).

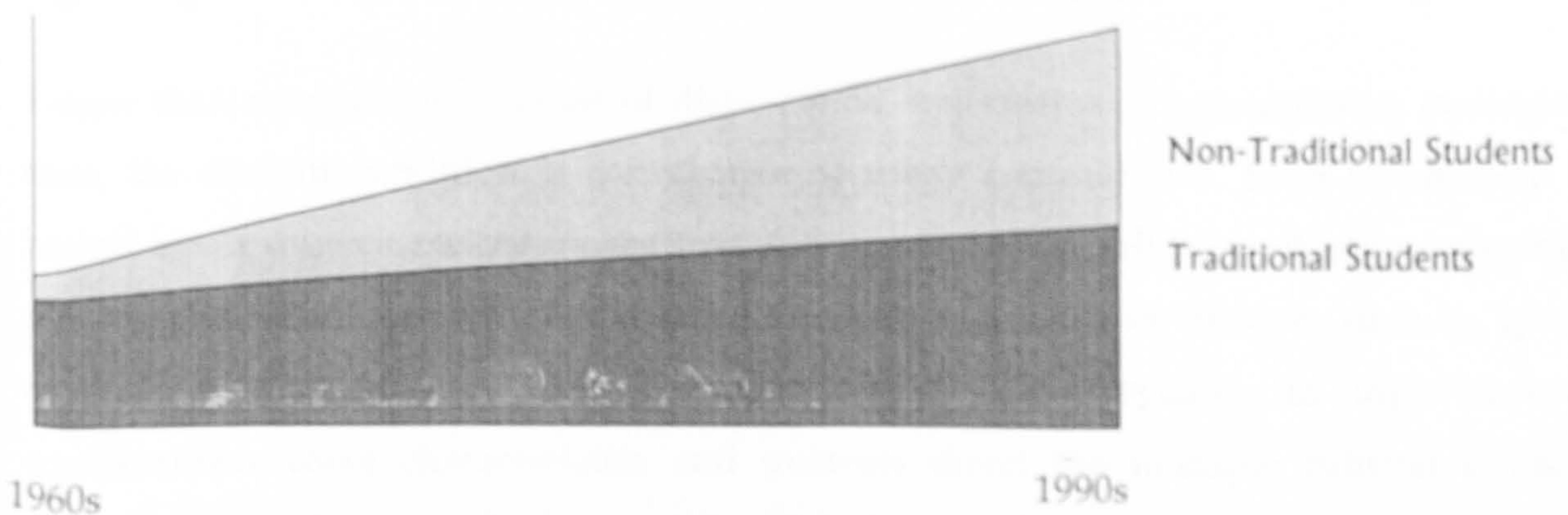
This section argues that within the student population in Britain there is a clear lifestyle divide between 'non-traditional' and 'traditional' students. The recent quantitative and qualitative growth within British universities has led to an influx of 'new', non-traditional student lifestyles which, to varying extents, are juxtaposed with the more traditional adolescent, middle/upper-class student. The differences between these two groups constitutes a lifestyle divide which creates the impression of students as a rather heterogeneous group. Some of these lines of fracture are discussed below such as

institutional divisions, campus and course cultures, age and gender divides and increasing work and financial pressures.

### Growth and Change Amongst Students

Over the last few decades the relationship between universities, students and society has changed. Until the 1960s, the university system was largely differentiated from the outside world by its elitism and autonomy and reproduced many hierarchies and inequalities which were contained within the social structure and the labour market. The rapid growth of the student population since the 1980s has led to a more generalised college and higher education culture in Britain along American lines and a de-differentiation of students from non-students. As a result, the newly unified university sector is a more democratic mediating mechanism between the social structure and the labour market.

Universities, then, have changed from being characterised largely by a cohort of 'traditional' white, male, upper- and middle-class, post A-Level students, to containing large numbers of new 'non-traditional' students. This can be represented by the simplified schema below:



There is a blending of different lifestyles, then, within the unified higher education sector in Britain. Many of these new lifestyle situations are relatively new within universities such as part-time, mature, married, disabled, parental and ethnic minority students and co-exist with the traditional adolescent, upper-/middle-class student. Because of such quantitative and qualitative transformations amongst students, the category of 'student' is based upon a much less distinctive identity. In this sense, the growth of 'new' or non-

traditional learners means that: "students are really starting to reflect the population as a whole".<sup>1</sup>

Have students, then, become de-differentiated from non-students? In one sense, it may seem logical to suggest that they have, especially if we consider that in the Learning Society everyone is potentially a student (Chapter 1). However, more realistically the recent qualitative and quantitative growth in students has resulted in a re-differentiation and, in places, a continued-differentiation of student lifestyles (Haselgrove, 1994; Silver and Silver, 1997). Such re-differentiation has occurred as students seek to maintain a manageable scale of identification within the mass university. What continues to define student life is the need to participate in some distinctive way which emphasises the felt need for some form of *smaller-scale identification* (Silver and Silver, 1997, 109). Participation in various activities represents a retreat from the overwhelming and threatening scale of campus life into groups which reproduce the student's own background and special interests. Basically, "[o]ver recent years students have... continued to find reason and time to belong" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 105). Further, many, often older, universities have resisted the change which has affected the British higher education sector over the last decade (Chapter 1). As a result, the overall characteristics of the student population is highly dependent upon the institution which is being examined.

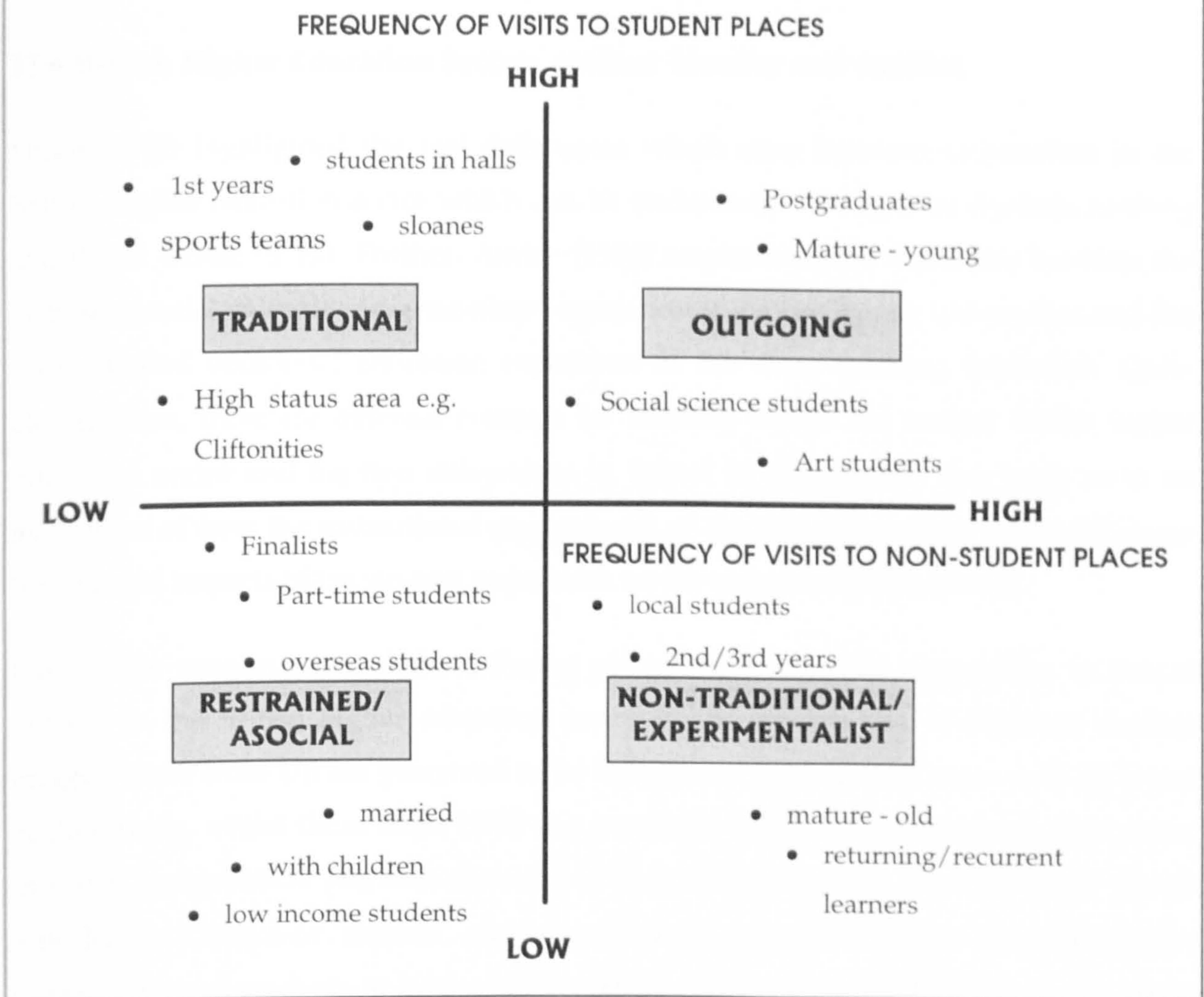
Rather than representing one set of dispositions, trajectories or accumulation strategies, then, the student condition is constitutive of many communities. Each community is bound by its own *characteristics* such as age, gender, class, religion, ethnicity, previous schooling, area or country of origin, course and institution or *interests* such as sport, clubbing, the theatre, drinking, computer games or television. In their various combinations, these characteristics and interests direct the multiple cultural impacts which students have on the community. The diagram below represents these different student communities through their different relationships with the city:

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<sup>1</sup> A survey by Reaction UK Ltd which describes itself as the country's first and largest student product sampling agency, surveyed 11 000 18-25 year old first year students in October 1995. This revealed that because more people are going into higher education, students are becoming less of a discrete cohort with its own consumer tastes. Their results showed that 70% own CD players, nearly 40% microwaves and nearly one-in-three own cars. Quoted in *Guardian Education*, 2/4/96.

FIGURE 6.1: THE SPACE OF STUDENTS

This diagram is a theoretical schema constructed on the basis of the fieldwork conducted in this thesis. It is meant to be a general guide which suggests general typologies of students ranging from 'traditional' to 'non-traditional' student according to the frequency of visits to 'student' or 'non student' environments such as pubs, night-clubs, cafes etc.



Each student community, then, develops different relationships with other student communities and the city. In this context, students are able to use the city and its particular cultural attributes as a resource to find new ways to belong and develop particular identities and styles. The adoption of styles associated with night-clubbing and music such as the 'trip-hop' sound and the new musical genre of 'drum and bass' in Bristol by many students is a case in point.

There is an important element of mobility within this social space. For example, one may move between the typologies according to work and financial pressures or a desire to



become more or less associated with traditional student life. Much of the rest of this chapter explores the traditional space of students represented in the upper left-hand corner of Figure 6.1. Before that, some of these divisions and communities which were highlighted by the fieldwork are explored, namely, institutional divisions, campus and course cultures, differences of age and gender and the influence of increasing work and financial pressures.<sup>2</sup>

### **The British Higher Education Sector: student identity and conflict**

Duke (1992) highlighted the real differences which exist between universities in the British higher education sector which can be understood through the dualism *finishing school* and *service station*. Further, Ainley (1994) emphasised the difference between the elite residential cultural apprenticeship experience of the ivy league universities and the more limited vocational education experience of the mass teaching institution. Quite clearly, then, there are different contexts for learning within the unified British higher education sector and the two universities in Bristol fit this model. This leads us to an awareness of how the institutional atmospheres of the two universities in Bristol shape the cultural impacts of the student population on the community (Chapter 2).

One of the consequences of the different places which the two universities in Bristol occupy in the British higher education sector is the construction of different student images; those from UB are perceived to be from public schools and more well-off social backgrounds, whilst those from UWE are perceived to be more vocational, from more 'normal' backgrounds. The class stereotypes of students from UB, the 'Cliftonites' (those who live in Clifton) or 'sloanes', play a particularly prominent role in determining the overall image of students in Bristol. One mature student from UB had this to say about his adolescent counterparts:

these people are up their backsides. They really think that they are really special and that their mummies and daddies are something in the city. They've been spoon-fed all this about money and so it all comes naturally; and this is the sort of things they do, they come out to freshers balls, they're debutantes. I'm just not into that rugger bugger and jolly

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<sup>2</sup> Clearly, there are many other divides which are evident in the student population such as those based upon country and area of domicile, religion, ethnicity, sexuality and marital status. However, because of time constraints all of these divides could not be analysed.

hockey sticks mentality. I'm sure they would have as much snobbery towards me as I do towards them when they socialise (2nd year, male, Drama student, UB).

Some Tourism Management students from UWE's Frenchay site were similarly negative about UB students:

**Corrina** *I think it depends on the individual. Some people have got a real 'ra ra let's look down on the poly' attitude and some people are really nice.*

**Ed** *That's the thing about here. There's such a divide amongst the classes. It's bigger than anything I've seen before. Even at our university (UWE) it's like it to a certain extent. I don't know whether they didn't get to proper universities so they come here or what.*

**Becky** *I don't know if its just us being paranoid that the uni. students look down on us because I've never experienced that but it is a bit like that.*

**Corrina** *I get mad, just the people that I've met. We went to a party last year, it was a university [UB] party and I'm not joking everyone was going, 'oh darling pass me my beer, oh how are you' and I just thought 'oh my god get me out'.*

**Becky** *I know I'm completely generalising but I think it is because Bristol Uni. is a very good uni., the third down from Oxford and Cambridge and if they are Oxbridge rejects then they have had a very good education then they are going to have money.*

**Corrina** *I mean, just a lot of public school people have got a bit of an attitude problem so I think that's why a lot of uni. people are different.*

**Becky** *We just as much make it worse by just sometimes trying to do the complete opposite.*

**Ed** *You just recognise them and think oh god...*

(All names have been changed)

However, a common theme amongst students was a reluctance to be over-critical of the image of their peers. For example, when asked about UB students, some UWE students commented:

You do see them in queues at cash points and you can get first impressions and maybe it's not necessarily so (3rd year, female, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

You think bloody students. You can tell they're students by the way they walk and mill around. But I don't know many really. They're just people aren't they? (2nd year, female, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

Some of these comments, seem to confirm the privileged place Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 8) gave to social origin in shaping student life: "Of all the differentiating factors, social origin is doubtless the one whose influence bears most strongly on the student world, more strongly, at any rate, than sex or age." In this sense, despite the growth of the student population in Britain, going to university is still largely a middle-class experience.<sup>3</sup> Many students in Bristol seemed aware of the role of higher education in this reproduction of social and cultural inequalities. One UWE student commented upon the social and cultural differences he perceived between UWE and UB:

*...when I lived in Hotwells I lived with a girl doing Sociology at the main university [UB] and she seemed to be doing totally different things - going out to restaurants and doing fashionable student things, going to see gigs and that sort of thing. The things you'd expect a city student to be doing and I don't think students here are much like that (First year, male, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).*

It was explained to me that students from the two institutions, as well as being socially different, have different relationships within the city's cultural life:

*I think it depends on the night. I mean at Wedgies night-club we [UB students] go on a Wednesday night and they [UWE students] go on a Tuesday night; and they go to the Steam Rock on a Friday night not on a Monday night (1st year, female, Geography student, UB).*

UWE students explained to me how they felt about this institutional divide in the city:

*Becky I think there should be a joint thing between the uni. and the [former] poly.*

*Corrina In town or something.*

*Becky Yeah, one of my really good friends is at the uni. and she goes to completely different places to what I do. She goes to the Epi, Freddies, the Square...*

*Ed I've never even heard of these places.*

*Corrina It's so split though.*

*Becky Yeah, but they keep you apart. Like the other day 'cos we live a minute from the uni. library we wanted to work in there but they start checking union cards. It's*

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<sup>3</sup> For example, in 1992, whilst 62% of UCCA entrants and 55% of PCAS entrants were from Social Classes I and II, only 30% of economically active people in the UK were designated in these classes (Opacic, 1994, 158).

*like the Epi. I'd quite like to go there sometimes but can't handle the hassle of being turned away.*

Corrina

*There is such a divide between the uni. and the poly.*

Ed

*Yeah, you go into a pub and you can tell straight away.*

Corrina

*There's a segregation where they go, for example Wedgies on the whole is more uni. people. Wedgies is a lot more uni. based than Kickers.*

Ed

*I went to The Square last night and I got the impression that they were all uni. people and Brasserie Pierres as well.*

Becky

*I think the only joint club is Lakota where both types of people go.*

(All names have been changed)

From this limited number of conversations with students in Bristol, there is a recognition of how the different institutional contexts between the two universities structures the cultural life of students. Considering many British cities have one 'old' and one 'new' university, the way in which such institutional divides shape the city's cultural infrastructure is an issue of growing importance.

### **Campus and Course Lifestyles**

There are many divisions within universities which illuminate lifestyle differences. As Hollands (1995, 59) comments in relation to Newcastle Upon Tyne, another two-university city: "differences exist not only between the two educational institutions, but also between student sub-groups within each of the universities." Further:

*university populations are internally divided into recognisable subgroups. While the local population often tends to view university entrants as a unified group, students themselves are keenly aware of particular sub-cultural groupings (ibid.).*

UWE, in particular, seems to display a striking diversity in terms of sub-groups, in part because of its multi-territoriality and more diverse student population. UWESU's Entertainments Manager explained the differences which she felt existed at the different campuses throughout the city:

*At Frenchay, the students are into science, law, business, engineering, and computing. The students are a bit more normal, a bit less outward going and innovative in their styles. I don't mean that rudely, but these students are less likely to catch on to new trends quickly. These lot get pissed out of their heads and are stupid in the normal sense of the word, like throwing up.*

At St. Matthias, the Humanities Faculty, they're much more into going out and having fun and knocking around. They do silly stuff like pyjama parties, a true sense of what student parties should be like such as a beach party in the middle of winter and a Christmas party in June. They love karaoke down there and they love getting dressed up and doing silly things.

At Bower Ashton, the Art Faculty, they are completely different again. They're very creative and more likely to be very into music and film and any media and very much more critical and discerning. The problem there though is that the students don't live anywhere near the site and there are big transport problems. Most of the events there are on a hip-hop funky trip. The theme stuff is impossible to do there. We did have a Valentines ball but they took a lot of persuading. I know what they're like because I was an art student and you want to do everything yourself and you don't want it if anyone is trying to give you anything. These lot aren't likely to drink themselves under the table on cheap beer and snog somebody in the corner.

Redland has its own problems. A lot of residents complain about noise as the bar is off the main block. The education students there are up for anything there but the bar is only small. It's a very friendly venue but there is massive competition from Whiteladies Road. Who's going to go back to college to go out when you've been sat there all day? (int., McArdle, 7/7/97).

The differences suggested here seem to contrast the more critical, aloof and discerning art students with more traditional and less innovative 'get pissed and snog somebody' social-science students. These divisions between UWE's sites result in a lack of coherent student identity throughout the university as a whole as the following conversation extract with Fine Art students at UWE's small Bower Ashton site illustrates:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Paul     | <i>What do you think of other UWE students?</i>  |
| Caroline | <i>I don't even know what they're like.</i>  |
| Andrew   | <i>I went to a ball at Frenchay. There were thousands of people there. I didn't like it very much. As far as we know we are the only UWE students. This is the college for us.</i> |

(All names have been changed)

Tourism Management students from UWE's larger Frenchay campus expressed more concern at the lack of unity:

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| Ed | <i>I've never actually been there [other UWE campuses].</i> |
|----|---|

- Corrina *They're tiny. At Redland campus it's like being at school, at infant school. They've got a little corridor and dinner hall. It would drive you mad.*
- Becky *It would be nice to know people from other campuses. One of the reasons I chose this course was because it was on the main campus. That was one of my main things. One of our flatmates is at Redland but we only know her because she was here last year. I'd love to know some of the art students over at Bower Ashton 'cos I used to do art and art students are a good laugh and down to earth but never ever met any of them.*
- Ed *The atmosphere is only here during the day though - at night there's nothing.*
- Becky *It's funny 'cos we say we want it to be more united but there's so many different people with so many different backgrounds and fashion tastes that actually makes it more interesting. But you actually feel there's no base to it.*

(All names have been changed)

This last quote from Becky encapsulates many of the divisions within the student population. The associations of students with youth, fashion, difference and individualism create a group who elude collective definition. Hence, Becky's feeling that although there should be something which unites students, 'there's no base to it.' Clearly, most students are aware how the geography of higher education in Bristol has affected levels of integration: "The only thing I don't like is Bristol's so split; town, Clifton, Redland etc., and then we are way out here at Frenchay" (3rd year, female, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

Students from UWE also commented upon their own distinctive course atmospheres. The smaller campuses at UWE which are detached from the city-centre and the main Frenchay campus seem to be more socially cohesive and intimate. This sense of intimacy is very potent as the following quotes illustrate:

Most of the faces look familiar because of the size of the campus. It is close knit. When we go to the pub we go with most people from our year (2nd year, female, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

Sometimes you go with people from different courses. It depends if you've lived with them, say, in your first year. But a lot of the time you find your little group of friends and stick with them (3rd year, female, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

Painters tend to stick together. Well, you're with them all day and you're talking to them about your work so you make friends with them (2nd year, female, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

Like most walks of life, intimacy and common leisure patterns amongst students seem to be carved mainly from shared work routines. As suggested in Chapter 3, because of the more personal and creative nature of art degrees, the student's work routines can be very distinctive. The following extracts, from conversations with Drama and Fine Art students respectively, demonstrate that such art courses have different structures:

- Hester *Some of the people in my halls couldn't understand why I was keen and I came in at weekends. What ties all Drama students together is that they're passionate and they want to do it. If you look at Engineers or whatever they find it a chore but we're here 'cos we're interested in our subject.*
- Alan *I think they see Drama as the easy option. But I could say to them how often do you come into your department all weekend and evenings plus do your coursework as well. They can't answer that. They seem to think you spend all of your days being trees and ice-cream cones when really it's very theory based.*
- Andrew *It's not unusual to work until 9pm till they kick you out.*
- Caroline *yeah 'cos you can't take your paintings home with you, like you can read a book at home.*
- Phil *you get wrapped up in doing something and you keep at it.*

(All names have been changed)

For students from these two art courses, days often end with working late in the department followed by visiting the local pub on the way home. For Drama students, the Princess Bar, in particular, was the focal point for post-theatre rehearsal and production socialising. However, within such courses, there is further fragmentation according to intra-disciplinary interests. As one Drama student explained, this is a major structure for the way in which people socialise:

The department each year breaks into groups according to aspects like TV, avant-garde, devised theatre, a few die hards of conventional theatre. They do tend to socialise this way by genre and they tend to put on things together and attract people interested in this thing and socialise and discuss things with these people afterwards. In the first year everyone is as sociable as possible and don't commit themselves to liking certain things. After that

people go for what they like. So it is quite split this way (2nd year, male, Drama student, UB).

Similar divisions emerge in Fine Art at UWE:

People know people from other courses although not from Time-Based Media. They're over in the corner and they get all the expensive equipment. I know a few people from illustration and a few from graphics, but I know mainly painters (3rd year, male Fine Art Student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

Rather than identifying with a single student condition, then, students seem to seek a personal and manageable scale associated with those they have most in common. These social groups can form around course interests where the students are heavily integrated. On more loosely structured, larger and more lecture-based courses, students seem to retreat into groups which reproduce their own backgrounds and special interests. In this respect, participation in sports clubs and societies is an important factor which shapes the student experience of university life. As one student on a larger course at UWE's more impersonal Frenchay campus commented:

That's where there is a divide - in the sports. We know a lot of people in sports clubs and its very sociable. They're always going out, balls, drinking and stuff, and if you can get in with knowing people there its good. I know so many people just from doing rugby last year (3rd year, female, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

Appendix B lists the sports clubs and societies which exist at the two universities. However, participation in such clubs and societies is limited by other aspects of student life. As one student commented:

I signed up for loads at freshers and then never went. Everyone does. You're too busy having fun and when you're not having fun you're too busy working. I find a lot of union stuff needs a lot of commitment (3rd year, female, Drama student, UB).

### **Students: The Problem of Youth**

As Chapter 4 explored, there is a tension between identifying students as adolescents or adults, especially with the increase of gap-year students, adult learners and mature students. The issue of age, then, throws up a particularly strong lifestyle divide within the student population. There has been a significant growth of mature students within British



universities. In 1994, just over half of all home entrants to higher education in Britain were mature students (over 21 for undergraduates and over 25 for postgraduates) (Silver and Silver, 1997, 26). However, there are variations within this growth of mature students. For example, at the University of Bristol only 10% of UK domiciled, first year full-time undergraduates were over 21, while the figure for UWE was 37% (Figure 2.6).

Increasingly, then, many students do not come straight from school, or sixth form at the age of 18 but bring with them a variety of previous experiences and interests which shape their relationship with the city, their university career and other students. The following are illustrative of such previous experiences:

I came to university I suppose because that's what you did kind of thing and I thought I might as well do something I enjoy even though I knew it wouldn't necessarily help my career prospects. I had a gap year. I've always wanted to get into Drama but it was always expected of me to go to university (3rd year, female, Drama student, UB).

I don't actually know why I'm doing a degree. I just did it after I left school. I ended up here by mistake.. erm, I went to Aberystwyth last year and did Biology. I didn't like it, dropped out last December. One of my friends was down here and he said it was good so I came down here (1st year, male, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

I got into Drama school at 18, couldn't get a grant 'cos it was discretionary in those days. I lost heart and went to the States for a few years, came back, got a mortgage and got into a rut waiting tables. I realised I wanted to do something in the theatre and also finish off my education so I applied here 'cos it had a good reputation (2nd year, male, Drama student, UB).

I started a degree in Newport. It was media based and it was the wrong degree. That was about seven years ago then I got hooked into working. I wanted to go back and do a fine art course and eventually I got so fed up I came back. I'm so glad I did. It's the best thing I've ever done. I always wanted to get back in to education but I got a part-time job in which I got promoted which sucked me in. I'd always kept up my art but it was a matter of getting round to sorting myself out. One day I just came back and said right that's it (2nd year, female, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

I took two years off doing Camp America and travelling around America and working in insurance and then I decided I really wanted to go back to college and after two years off I

was determined to work because I was so fed up and I'd always been interested in leisure and tourism anyway (2nd year, female, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

The first extract suggests 'inevitability' and the second 'drifting'. The others have elements of escapism from the 'real' economy. What these highlight, is the variety of routes which people take to university and that universities, at the point of entry, contain people from different backgrounds. Whilst many of the students to whom I spoke were 'traditional' post A-Level adolescents, Fine Art was a course with a much greater mix of ages and experiences. As one student commented:

I was straight out of A-Levels and foundation course. I thought I was normal although there are a large proportion of mature students on the course. Those out of A-Levels seem to have a different feel about their work; their work seems to be more arrogant (3rd year, male, Fine Art, Bower Ashton, UWE).

This illustrates what Duke (1992, 70) suggested: "[t]he common space shared by different kinds of students even on a traditional degree course may be quite small." Younger learners are often perceived negatively compared to their older class-mates: "youngsters may be inhibited by a student culture - an affection of indifference, of being laid back" (ibid.). Youth, then, as explained earlier in Part Two, has strong connotations in student life and can be quite alienating for mature students:

The territory of the young... tend to be off bounds to older non-residential students, full- and part-time alike, unless by personal friendship and invitation. For those at finishing school the student role is commonly an all-encompassing one. Subsidiary roles, formal... and informal... often overshadow that of student-scholar... the more extreme manifestations of studenthood... sit furthest from the mature student (Duke, 1992, 70).

These real experiential differences for the mature student at university was alluded to in the following diary extract from a mature student who lived outside of Bristol:

1ST YEAR, MALE, FINE ART STUDENT (UWE): THURSDAY-FRIDAY, TERM ONE

|          |   |                            |                         |
|----------|---|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 12 am    | Finish up decorating living room                              | alone                      | home                    |
| 1 am     | in bed  | alone                      | home                    |
| 9 am     | Breakfast   | "                          | "                       |
| 10 am    | Drive to college  | "                          | in car                  |
| 11 am    | Searching for a book  | alone                      | in library              |
| 11.30 am | Attend lecture  | all fellow students        | lecture theatre         |
| 1 pm     | lunch   | 2 fellow students          | refectory               |
| 2 pm     | attend discussion group                                       | all fellow students        | lecture theatre         |
| 4 pm     | drive home  | alone                      | in car                  |
| 5 pm     | knock up dinner + eat it. Watch TV                            | alone                      | home                    |
| 6.30 pm  | resume decorating   | Girlfriend                 | home                    |
| 10.30 pm | in bed  | "                          | "                       |
| 8.30 am  | Breakfast. watching TV  | Girlfriend                 | Home                    |
| 9 am     | Working for money!!   | 5 other co-workers         | business premises, Bath |
| 6 pm     | Dinner  | alone                      | home                    |
| 7.30 pm  | Reading (relevant to course)                                  | alone                      | home                    |
| 9 pm     | Off to the pub. Main activity drinking... general socialising | girlfriend + 7 other mates | pub in Bath             |

He explained the difference in his lifestyle compared to the experience of other first years away from home for the first time:

...there are some people who are really old with grown up kids and everything! But for me, nothing really changed at home. I live in the same place and it just happens that I come to Bristol to uni. every day. The disadvantage is that I always go home 'cos public transport is shit. So I don't tend to stay in Bristol and get drunk unless I sleep on someone's floor. So it doesn't happen that often and all my part-time work and my girlfriend are in Bath so I've got lots of reasons to stay there (1st year, male, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

Another mature student explained some of the alienation which results from the age differences:

I don't want to patronise them [first years] just because I've done it before. They were friendly and they did invite me but it used to drive me up the wall. The same things going on, the same search for partners, the same music and puking. I felt that as long as I got on with enough people in the department and mature students then that's fine. I'm sure the teenagers wouldn't want to do the things I do. As long as you get on in the department that's fine, but it can get a bit lonely (2nd year, male, Drama student, UB).

To understand the changing student population, then, one should overcome the excessive connotations of students as youth. In this sense, as Chapter 2 discussed, rather than representing a unified lifestage of 18-21 year olds as was previously the case, studenthood

now represents a post-adolescent lifestyle in which the characteristics of this adolescent lifestage have been generalised to other age cohorts.

This postadolescent lifestyle is “characterized by a prolonged experimentation with life’s possibilities” (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 85-86). Whether individuals enter university after school, travelling, work or family responsibilities, they have the chance to become part of a growing socially and culturally defined, as opposed to biologically and psychologically defined, period of youth known as studenthood. In this sense, youth is associated with ‘performativity’ (Valentine and Skelton, 1998). Being a student, then, is part of what has been seen as a more permanent ‘socialising ritual’, mainly played out in the consumption-oriented city, which embraces many age groups rather than a simple ‘rite of passage’ to adulthood (Hollands, 1995, 8). Basically, “[y]oung adults may be engaging in ‘youthful’ behaviours much longer... because the conditions for growing up are no longer there” (ibid., 1995, 32). Whilst appreciating financial and time restraints on many students, studenthood, even for part-time and older students, does represent a temporary step out of the normal routine of life and the opportunity to embrace a new, if temporary, form of sociality.

### Students and Gender

One of the most striking features of the growth of the British higher education sector in recent decades is the gender parity which has been achieved amongst the student population. For example, the proportion of women in higher education grew from 25% in 1961-62 to 49% in 1994-95 (Silver and Silver, 1997, 25). In this sense, universities represent a social space which is occupied equally by men and women which creates an opportunity to reconsider the relationship between gender and cultural roles and challenge traditional notions of the use of space such as public (male) versus private (female).<sup>4</sup> Building upon work which explores the relationship between women, youth culture and city space,<sup>5</sup> Hollands (1995, 2) suggests that:

the meaning and social context of going out have also fundamentally changed because of the drastic increase in the number of women in the city at night... women go out more

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<sup>4</sup> However, there is a slight imbalance in Bristol. UB has 55% men and UWE 58% (Figure 2.6).

<sup>5</sup> For example, McRobbie (1993) and Wilson (1991).

frequently, would feel worse if restricted, and spend a higher percentage on nights out compared to their male counterparts.

The diaries below are illustrative of the hedonistic sociability of women students which, in contrast to many previous studies of youth, suggests the prominent and equal role which women play in constructing the perception of student lifestyles in the Bristol community:

2ND YEAR, FEMALE, TOURISM, STUDENT (UWE): MONDAY-TUESDAY, TERM ONE

|          |   |                   |                    |
|----------|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| 8.30 am  | alarm went off, went back to sleep  | alone             | at home            |
| 10 am    | Drove to UWE. Went to lecture   | with 2 housemates | UWE                |
| 11 am    | Went to marketing lecture   | "                 | UWE                |
| 2 pm     | Drove home. Had lunch, watched TV   | with friends      | at home            |
| 3 pm     | Did some economics homework   | alone             | in my room         |
| 6 pm     | Went to work  | alone             | Wine shop, Clifton |
| 10.30 pm | Walked home, Drank 2 bottles of Boddys. Played cards. Drank a can of Caffreys | with housemates   | at home            |
| 11.30 pm | Went to Kickers   | "                 | Club               |
| 2 am     | Left Kickers. Went to Flipper for chips                                       | "                 |                    |
| 3 am     | Walked home   |                   |                    |
| 3.30 am  | Passed out  |                   | at home            |

1ST YEAR, FEMALE, DRAMA STUDENT (UB): SUNDAY, TERM TWO

|       |   |  |                                  |
|-------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 12 am | at a party - drinking   | lots of people   | friend's house Redland           |
| 1 am  | walking to another party  | bob (friend) (embarrassing conquest)   | Redland                          |
| 2 am  | drinking, talking, socialising?   | "  | Redland                          |
| 3 am  | walking back  | "  | Redland/Cotham/<br>Clifton. home |
| 4 am  | sleeping  | bob (friend) (embarrassing conquest) leaves via the backdoor so that housemates do not die of hysteria                   | home                             |
| 11 am | getting up - dressing   | alone  |                                  |
| 12 pm | rigging lights - feeling extremely ill. vomiting regularly (any more detail?) | 3rd year crew for production plenty of vomiting bile juices, due to last nights regrettable occurrence (lord forgive me) | drama dept - theatre             |
| 5 pm  | eating dinner   | housemates + friend and friends boyfriend  | home                             |
| 7 pm  | working and reading book  | people in pub  | pub in Clifton                   |

The following diary extract is a rather epic 36 hour journey which includes visiting two night clubs, visiting friends, watching TV, shopping, laundry, private study, library work, lectures and aerobics!

3RD YEAR, FEMALE, TOURISM, STUDENT (UWE): MONDAY-TUESDAY, TERM ONE

|          |                                   |                    |                        |
|----------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 10 am    | laundrette, Socialising           | Housemate          | Horfield               |
| 11.30 am | Travelling, Socialising           | "                  | Broadmead              |
| 12 pm    | Shopping                          | "                  | "                      |
| 2.30 pm  | Travelling                        | "                  | "                      |
| 3 pm     | Private study                     | alone              | UWE                    |
| 4.30 pm  | Travelling                        | "                  | home                   |
| 5 pm     | Watching TV                       | "                  | "                      |
| 7 pm     | Private study                     | "                  | "                      |
| 7.30 pm  | telephone                         | "                  | "                      |
| 8 pm     | Watching TV                       | housemate          | "                      |
| 10.30 pm | Travelling to Ritzzy, Socialising | friends            | Ritzzy Night-club      |
| 2 am     | Travelling to friends house       | "                  | friends house          |
| 2.30 am  | Socialising                       | "                  | "                      |
| 4 am     | Sleeping                          | alone              | home                   |
| 8 am     | Preparing for Uni.                | alone              | home                   |
| 9 am     | Travelling                        | housemate          | home                   |
| 9.30 am  | lectures                          |                    |                        |
| 10.30 am | library                           | alone              | UWE library            |
| 11.30 am | Private study                     | alone              | UWE computer room      |
| 1.30 pm  | lectures                          |                    |                        |
| 5 pm     | Travelling                        | alone              | home                   |
| 5.30 pm  | TV                                | friends            | home                   |
| 7.30 pm  | aerobics                          |                    | Horfield sports centre |
| 9 pm     | socialising - pub                 | friends/housemates | White Hart pub         |
| 10 pm    | socialising - night club          | "                  | Kickers                |

### Students: mediating work, play and money

The suggestion that student life is a 'special time and space'<sup>6</sup> involving experimentation is still valid. However, it is distorted by increasing work and money pressures. A recent report found that the average amount owed to various creditors by students was £1712, seven-tenths of which was to the Student Loan Company (Callender and Kempson, 1996). There is evidence from both students and those involved in student entertainment provision of the consequences of increased work and money pressures on student leisure time. As one student commented:

<sup>6</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 29.

...the art [course-work] swallows everything else up. I used to go caving but I don't do that anymore because it takes up too much time. It also costs money (2nd year, male, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

Financial burdens are a major influence upon students' cultural activities. For some who have greater course-related expenses, life can be very different:

Andrew *It's not like you get text books and that's it. You've constantly got to buy materials. For etching I need copper plated sheets which is £4.50 a time...*

Caroline *and you need better quality stuff after a while. The cost has put me off etching. I have to spend so much on painting that I've had to cut back on other things...*

Julie *also we've got to fund our degree show.*

Andrew *We need to produce posters and things for that which comes to about £2000.*

(All names have been changed)

The manager of the Berkeley pub in Clifton explained his company's response to the financial situation of students:

We have four or five price bands and this pub is on the lowest one although we have just gone to a higher one. We are on the lower end of the scale because of the university. There are a lot of students down here who are not well off. That's why we have cheap beer. A lot of them work in here to earn spending money (int., McDonnell, 27/5/97).

Further, the promotions manager of Odyssey night-club in Bristol city-centre was aware of the changes in student life: "It is much harder now to attract them [the students] because of the curriculum changes like modularisation and semesterisation" (int., Holmes, 27/5/97). A recent article on Bristol students suggested that there is a new breed of educationally aware students who, "might be out on the piss but they're just as likely to be heads down, getting a good nights kip before a hard days graft" (Tanska, 1997). It may also be the case that students have more time restrictions on them than other age groups: "While students and young people are said to becoming ever more sensible, bogged down by debts and career sweats, it is the solvent thirty-somethings who are enjoying a hedonistic renaissance" (Bailey, 1997).

As the extracts below suggest, life can be dominated by work, even on a weekend, especially for those in the final year of study and in the second or third term:

## 3RD YEAR, MALE, DRAMA STUDENT (UB): SUNDAY, TERM TWO

|          |                               |                |      |
|----------|-------------------------------|----------------|------|
| 12 am    | Working on dissertation       | alone          | home |
| 8 am     | went to bed                   | alone          | home |
| 11 am    | breakfast                     | alone          | home |
| 11.30 am | working on dissertation       | alone          | home |
| 4 pm     | lunch/tea, listening to radio | alone          | home |
| 5 pm     | working on dissertation       | alone          | home |
| 10 pm    | dinner                        | with flatmates | home |

## 1ST YEAR, FEMALE, GEOGRAPHY STUDENT (UB): TUESDAY, TERM ONE

|         |  |                   |                    |
|---------|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| 12 am   | Studying                               | alone             | Halls of Residence |
| 2 am    | sleeping                               | "                 | "                  |
| 6.30 am | shower, waking up!                     | "                 | "                  |
| 7 am    | tidying room                           | "                 | "                  |
| 7.30 am | breakfast, packing bag                 | "                 | "                  |
| 8 am    | walking to University                  | friend            | Whiteladies Road   |
| 9 am    | Geology lecture                        | Geology students  | Dept. Geog.        |
| 10 am   | Geography tutorial                     | tutorial group    | Dept. Geog.        |
| 11 am   | Geology computer tasks                 | friend            | Dept Geology       |
| 12 pm   | Geography lecture                      | Geog students     | Dept Geog.         |
| 1 pm    | Sainsburys shopping                    | friend            | Sainsburys         |
| 1.30 pm | Walking to halls                       | friend            | Whiteladies Road   |
| 2.30 pm | sleeping, listening to music           | alone             | Halls of res.      |
| 4.30 pm | Working - studying, listening to music | "                 | "                  |
| 5 pm    | Eating, filling this form in           | "                 | "                  |
| 6 pm    | Going to students union                | alone             | bus                |
| 7 pm    | Scuba diving lecture                   | underwater club   | Student union      |
| 8.30 pm | Coming back to hall                    | alone             | student link bus   |
| 9 pm    | listening to friend play bassoon       | friend            | halls of res.      |
| 10 pm   | telephone                              | talking to friend | halls of res.      |
| 11 pm   | studying                               | alone             | "                  |

## 3RD YEAR, MALE, FINE ART STUDENT (UWE): TUESDAY, TERM TWO

|          |   |                     |         |
|----------|---|---------------------|---------|
| 9.30 am  | Cycling to college. Singing                       | Friends etc.        | College |
| 10 am    | Etching, soaking paper                            | "                   | "       |
| 12.30 pm | Lunch   | "                   | "       |
| 1 pm     | Research in library                               | alone               | "       |
| 1.30 pm  | Sorting out print sale at St<br>Matts             | "                   | "       |
| 2 pm     | Meeting to discuss degree show<br>and London show | Everybody in FA III | "       |
| 4 pm     | Etching   | Others              | "       |
| 5 pm     | Library work                                      | alone               | "       |
| 7 pm     | Cycling home and making tea                       | Flatmate            | home    |
| 8.30 pm  | bookbinding. Listening to radio                   | flatmate            | "       |

Despite increasing work and financial restrictions on student life, there is also an ability to overcome such barriers. A recent report found that younger students, under 26, now have more money at their disposal than any time since 1988/89, but only because more of it is earned, received as gifts, drawn from savings or borrowed against future earnings



(Callender and Kempson, 1996). These sources of income comprised 37% of total student income in 1995/96 compared to 23% in 1988/89 (ibid.). In this respect, an important aspect of student life is the student's willingness to draw upon these additional income sources to have a full social life. As Hollands (1995, 59) commented: "In many cases peer group interaction and the development of a satisfactory social life is equal to, if not more important, than academic study." The following conversation with some Tourism Management students from UWE's Frenchay campus illustrates such sentiments:

- Becky            *This year I'm less money oriented 'cos I think I've had it drilled into me that I'm broke. This year I'm much more into enjoying student life.*
- Ed                *I was more worried about money when I went away last year.*
- Corrina         *Yeah, I've got 2 student loans and a £600 overdraft.*
- Becky            *yeah but we are both going skiing - this is the thing*
- Corrina         *I don't really care. I mean what's the point of being at college and having a miserable time and saving your money. You might as well just have a mad time.*
- Ed                *You see everyone else going out and you want to as well.*

(All names have been changed)

The following diary extract illustrates some of the balancing of work and play:

3RD YEAR, MALE, GEOGRAPHY STUDENT (UB): MONDAY, TERM ONE

|          |   |                                    |  |
|----------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| 8 am     | Got up, had breakfast                   | alone                              | home   |
| 9 am     | wrote essay                             | alone                              | Geography Dept.  |
| 12.30 pm | went shopping for birthday pressie      | alone                              | Broadmead  |
| 2.30 pm  | sorted out notes, had lunch             | housemates                         | home   |
| 4 pm     | Did some painting                       | alone                              | home   |
| 6 pm     | had tea                                 | housemates                         | home   |
| 7 pm     | Went round to friends house for a drink | old friend from hall in first year | Cotham   |
| 8.30 pm  | Pub crawled down to Thekla for party    | "                                  | Penny Farthing, Steam Tavern, Dog and Duck, Vittoria, Aunties, Hobgoblin, Berkeley, Mr Popes, Hole in the Wall |
| 12 am    | At Thekla                               | Birthday party friends from Wills  | Thekla   |
| 2 am     | Walked home. Ate a kebab                | with friend                        |  |

However, what is evident is that because of financial and work restraints or other commitments such as family and children, many students simply do not participate in socialising to the extent of many traditional students. These are represented in the 'space of students' (Figure 6.1) by the category of 'asocial' or 'restrained'.

## Summary

In sum, then, qualitative and quantitative growth within British universities has resulted in the incorporation of many new lifestyles within the category of 'student'. Further, there a number of important inter- and intra-university divisions and new circumstances such as increasing work and financial pressures which need to be acknowledged to understand the cultural impacts of the contemporary 'student lifestyle' on the community. However, the rest of this chapter argues that some British universities have resisted change and within such institutions there exists a traditional cohort of students who share many common dispositions. The lifestyles of this group perpetuate enduring images of studenthood and are highly structured and regulated in space and time especially in terms of residential and entertainment provision. This is particularly the case at the University of Bristol, and, to a lesser extent, UWE.

## UNDERSTANDING TRADITIONAL STUDENT LIFESTYLES

At many of the older universities in Britain, then, there exists a largely white, middle-/upper-class and adolescent traditional student group who are characterised by youth, wealth and fashion. As outlined in Figure 6.1, the lifestyle of these traditional students are largely juxtaposed to many of the 'new' student groups who have recently expanded in the university sector. The discussion below draws upon the theoretical frameworks presented in Chapter 5 to explore the forms of sociality and lifestyles which this traditional student group represent.

To what extent is Bourdieu's conceptual triad of habitus, field and capital useful in terms of understanding this traditional student lifestyle? Considering that student life in Britain, and especially in a city such as Bristol, is still a middle-class experience and only open to those who have access to certain social and educational conditions there seems some use in pursuing a Bourdieuan style analysis of traditional student life.

Bourdieu believes that sociality is derived through, and is directed by, habitus, yet in his work with Passeron (1979), he suggested that French students in the 1960s and 1970s did not represent a unified group (Chapter 5). This is a fair conclusion considering the differences between the less hierarchicalised French university system and the more socially bound British university system. As a result, they commented: "How can one

speak, even by way of a simplification, of a common 'student situation'" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 12). "Thus, everything leads one to doubt whether students really constitute a homogeneous, independent and integrated social group" (ibid., 1979, 35). It is difficult, then, to define a unified student condition when its only basis for definition seems to be a shared learning environment. Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 29) explain, that in contrast to other occupations, simply sharing the role of learner does not allow students to be defined as an integrated group and an occupational situation:

in general, analysis of the specific features of the occupational activity... is a *sine qua non* for any understanding of... an occupational body. However, a group in constant flux, whose members differ as much in terms of their social past as of their occupational future (students)... are likely to require definition in terms of the meaning and symbolic function they almost unanimously confer on their practice, rather than in terms of the unity of their practice.

They also suggest that:

signs of integration only appear in the student world when... co-operation is imposed by the scholastic imperatives of learning... [a]nd the traditions which, symbolically at least, used to integrate the student world of the past, have crumbled away... (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 33).

Following Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 31), we cannot positively define the student condition through particular characteristics. For example, in terms of their less structured use of time: "[u]nlike the social rhythms which make integrated groups by subjecting everyone's activities to the same constraints, the unstructured chronology of university life brings students together only negatively." Further, mere proximity does not indicate shared dispositions. To reiterate a point made in Chapter 5:

apart from the fact that most students have nothing in common beyond attending the same lectures, it is impossible to credit the mere fact of coexistence or coresidence with the power to make a coherent group out of the individuals which they juxtapose. It is not space as such, but a regulated, temporally structured use of space that gives a group a framework for integration (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 32).

The landscape which student life maps out, according to this logic, is an imposition upon the city for the benefit of a disparate, seasonal, immigrant community. Following this argument, the student lifestyle is based on nothing more than a shared temporary

learning experience. In essence, then, being a student is associated with a characteristically 'decentred' habitus. Hence the social positions of the university's new class that Bourdieu (1988) describes in *Homo Academicus* are 'ill defined and have their future surrounded with an aura of indeterminacy and vagueness' which allows students to perpetuate as long as possible... an indeterminacy of social identity (Lash, 1989, 253). As Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 55) commented: "the student has and can have no other task than to work towards his own disappearance qua student."

It would seem, then, that there are many reasons for regarding students as a group which lacks unity. This is evident if we consider that studenthood could be considered as a formulation of a lifestyle in an often highly individualised, reflexive, stylised and temporary manner and it is also about experimentation with life's possibilities rather than an over-determined social position. In this sense, studenthood represents a short-term lifestyle project within which a particular social role and way of being is enacted (Chaney, 1996).

Postmodern interpretations of lifestyle, then, seem to have some relevance in relation to this discussion of traditional students. Student lifestyles could be considered as a temporary and affectual form of association rather than an enduring set of dispositions. Theories of neo-tribal forms of sociality introduced in Chapter 5, or what has been discussed as 'short-lived flashes of sociality',<sup>7</sup> can be applied to traditional student lifestyles to suggest that they share codes of stylised behaviour which cross divides such as class, gender and ethnicity. Students, as a lifestyle tribe, then, operate on the basis of 'elective sociality' with their own rituals of initiation and closure against outsiders and can be understood through a continued desire for belonging and association.

Student life, then, does not equip one with a system of durable, transposable dispositions - a habitus; these are partly embodied at a much earlier stage. However, in spite of the above comments, a Bourdieuan framework still remains a more powerful analytical tool in relation to traditional student life in Britain for several reasons. Firstly, British universities have much stronger connotations of social exclusion and privilege compared to French universities. In this sense, Bourdieu and Passeron's (1979) interpretation of French university students as a group which lack unity does not hold true to the same

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<sup>7</sup> Shields, 1992, 15.

extent in Britain. Many British university students display similar characteristics such as previous schooling, geographic origin and socio-economic background and have strong middle-/upper-class connotations. This is particularly the case at a university such as the University of Bristol.

Secondly, traditional students are an identifiable and relatively cohesive group in Britain because of the remaining British university tradition of collegiality, student residentiality and travelling away from home. As a result, as the next sections explore, students inhabit regulated and segregated residential and entertainment environments whilst they reside in their host community. Such student environments are a relatively stable aspect of certain areas within British cities. Within these distinctively student spaces, common student dispositions and a 'feel for the game' develop.

Further, experimentation and stylisation within traditional student lifestyles is only available to those who qualify, socially and educationally, for studenthood and it is only afforded by the existence of the regulated field of the university and its associated spaces such as the shared student house and the pub. This brings us back to Bourdieu and the fact that the identity of the traditional student is shaped by a form of practical sense which is derived from the loose, temporary field of the university and previous social upbringing. The temporary adoption of a student disposition, then, is an experience which is only accessible to certain groups in society and is only enacted within the special time and place of the university where the traditional student is afforded the time to produce one's student 'self'. A traditional student 'cultural archetype' (Chapter 4) is developed within this structure. This cultural archetype functions because different identities such as 'the sloane', 'rugby player', or 'the lads' are all perceived as students because of certain shared characteristics such as higher levels of free time and disposal income and certain dispositions such as hedonistic socialising and arrogance.

Traditional students, then, represent a permanent and identifiable group within British society and many British cities rather than a temporary lifestyle tribe. Attending university still requires certain social and educational credentials and embodies the student with certain dispositions which are retained, partly or wholly, when the student leaves university. With the expansion of universities, there are increasing numbers of people (around half a million in Britain each year) who can be described in this way. As a result, student lifestyles and the dispositions learnt whilst at university, increasingly have

a large impact on the wider social field. In this sense, I think it would be premature to underestimate the extent to which traditional student lifestyles represent structured and regulated forms of sociality. Many groups such as local businesses, entertainment providers and the universities themselves, expend much energy courting and attracting this group. There is also a circulation of images and ideas which relate to traditional students which refer to particular characteristics of this group such as affluence, privilege, hedonism and their removal from society (Chapter 4). It would be inaccurate to say then, especially in a context such as Bristol, that in general traditional student lifestyles are temporary adoptions, that they are determined by a multiplicity of variables or that they represent temporary and eclectic forms of sociality. As the following sections illustrate, segregated and regulated student environments which create distinctive student 'ways of being' are a constant and visible part of many British cities.

## **THE SPACES OF TRADITIONAL STUDENT LIFE**

One of the main mechanisms for the perpetuation of the traditional student lifestyle is its spatial regulation and, to a certain extent, segregation. The space-time framework of the university is the initiator of this spatial regulation and segregation. In fact, students only exist as a group because of the concentrating effects of the temporal and spatial framework of the university. However, (in contrast to Bourdieu and Passeron (1979), who do not believe that the French university system creates a unified set of student dispositions because the mere fact of co-residence is not a sufficient basis for an homogenous group identity), it is evident that the British university and its associated spaces such as the hall of residence, the shared student house and the pub, creates much more than a simple co-residence of people. It creates an identifiable student way of life which is internalised and embodied after the student leaves university.

These distinctive student spaces are concentrated in certain areas of the city. In Bristol, the Whiteladies Road and Gloucester Road areas are heavily populated student spaces whose character has been altered by the existence of the two universities (see below). Following Shields's (1991) idea of 'social spatialisation', such spaces can be considered as "pre-constructed cultural discourses" (ibid., 1991, 31) in that there is a social construction of student space through collective mythologies and actual interventions in the landscape (ibid.). Further, student spaces, such as the hall of residence or the local pub, act as sites of 'social centrality' within student life in which the rituals of studenthood are undertaken

(Hetherington, 1996, 39). These spaces, as well as the structured field of the university, which are inhabited by an input of new students each year, are the basis for the development of a common set of student dispositions, or something like a student habitus. The university, then, is a special place (Kumar, 1997) which creates a specific way of being. However, such student spaces are also contested by other discourses and spatialisations from competing groups which results in conflict and tension.

The unique residential tradition of the British university, although decreasing in importance, is a framework which nurtures the development of specific student dispositions. Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 13) suggested that a non-residential student experience was less authentic:

students who live at home are only partly students. They may well take every opportunity to share the student situation, but in this choice which they can always revoke, they are identifying more with a fascinating image than with a real situation and its real constraints.

This framework, then, based around shared student housing, halls, the library, the laboratory and the lecture theatre creates a 'special time and place'<sup>8</sup> with its atmosphere of deference and inquiry which, temporarily, sets students of whatever description apart from the non-student world. This is one important point of departure from the work of Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) who explored the much looser framed French higher educational system characterised by stay-at-home students and a less tradition-bound university sector.

To understand the formation of student spaces in the city, we can draw upon the concept of the divided city, defined as:

the process whereby different sections of the population inhabit city space and construct lifestyles which both assert their own identity, and which may act to exclude or dissuade other groups from encroaching on their territory and culture (Hollands, 1995, 21).

As Hollands (1995, 34) comments, traditional students are one of the many mini-communities within the divided city whose primary *raison d'être* is "companionship and fraternisation achieved through an engagement in ritualised activity."

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<sup>8</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 29.

One of the main frameworks for this segregated student space is that of residential accommodation. According to a recent study, term-time post-secondary education students are a relatively segregated residential group.<sup>9</sup> Drawing upon dissimilarity and segregation indices, this report illustrated that term-time students were twice as segregated compared to groups such as the 'unemployed' and four times as segregated compared to groups such as 'pensioners' and 'owner-occupiers'. Term-time students demonstrated similar levels of segregation compared with ethnic groups such as 'Chinese' but were only half as segregated as groups such as 'Pakistani' or Black African'. Nevertheless, such indices illustrates that there are strong levels of residential segregation amongst term-time students. As discussed, below, such segregation is evident through the halls of residence and private rented accommodation.

### **The Hall of Residence**

The hall of residence is often the first and most powerful influence upon the creation of sociality amongst traditional students. Living in halls implies a particularly segregated life from the rest of the city:

Residence on campus has at times been seen as the academically related ideal, whereas lodgings could be seen as more embedded in mass society. Hall meant access to its sub-cultures and those of the institution itself, lodgings... greater independence within wider society. Non-resident students... could build, or continue, a dominant or parallel cultural and social life in the city (Silver and Silver, 1997, 40).

The hall of residence, it seems, provides a space to develop the traditional student community and identity which, in many ways, influences the rest of their student experience. The halls of residence at UB, in which all first-degree, first year students are guaranteed a place, are highly concentrated in two areas of the city; Stoke Bishop and Clifton (Figure 6.3). At UWE, far less students have places in the halls of residence. However, the spatial concentration of this first year cohort from UB, who in contrast to students in later years of study are inclined to go out more, is a significant influence on the nature of their cultural impacts on the community. The experience of halls affects

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<sup>9</sup> Atkins et al., *Urban Trends in England*, DoE, 1996, 160.



students in many different ways as a conversation with some Geography students from UB highlights:

- Paul**            *What was your experiences of halls?*
- Louise**        *I was in a self catering hall and I didn't like it 'cos it's in flats it's really antisocial I thought. You meet people on your block and that's it. It's not like catered halls where you all sit together and get to know each other.*
- Ed**              *It was a new found sense of freedom. You can do what you want when you want.*
- Naomi**         *I really like Halls and I'm going back there next year. I think I like it because I really get on with my flatmates and we're all going back.*
- Steve**         *I didn't like it that much. It was too much like a boarding school. Too strictly run in some ways.*

(All names have been changed)

The experience of halls can be a defining experience in terms of being introduced to the city and groups of friends:

Meeting friends had a lot to do with living in halls last year. That's the main way that you meet people first off. Me and my friend are living with people from four different courses (2nd year, male, Geography student, UB).

I had a good time. A hall is a load of teenagers who have never been away from home and so it's quite mad you know. It was silly but it is a year to be silly in and it's the place where you meet who you'll live with in the second year. Your social life's quite shaped by your hall (3rd year, female, Drama student, UB).

However, at UWE where accommodation in halls is not guaranteed for all first years the experience is different:

...here (UWE) the halls are much more difficult to get into and the people are foreign anyway. The halls are here at Frenchay but have you seen the state of them! Here, the first people you make friends with are people on your course (1st year, male, Tourism management student, Frenchay, UWE).

...sometimes you go with people from different courses. It depends if you've lived with them, say, in your first year. That's usually how you meet people from other courses 'cos generally you're in one house and you don't really know anyone anyway and from then on you go to social events and then meet people. A lot of the time you find your little group of friends and stick with them (3rd year, female, Fine Art, Bower Ashton, UWE).

## Private Rented Housing

The residential segregation of students is also evident through the distribution of students in private-rented accommodation in the Bristol postcodes. Figure 6.2 shows this distribution for full-time undergraduate students at UWE and UB and reveals that the largest concentration of students is around Whiteladies Road and BS6 and BS8 and that there is a smaller but significant cluster of students around Gloucester Road and BS7. This distribution is represented in the simplified map in Figure 6.3. The following sections discuss these two main student residential areas in more detail.

**Whiteladies Road: BS8 and BS6** The highest concentrations of students from both UWE and UB are found in BS8 and BS6. In fact, a recent study of students at the University of Bristol revealed that nearly three-quarters of students who reside in the Bristol postal area in private rented accommodation are located in these postal areas (Chatterton, 1997). This area is adjacent to the Whiteladies Road area of the city and the neighbouring residential areas of Clifton, Cotham and Redland. There are particularly high concentrations of UB students around Whiteladies Road because of its proximity to the main UB campus and its role as the main thoroughfare between this campus and the main UB halls of residences at Stoke Bishop (Figure 6.3).

There are also high levels of UWE students around Whiteladies Road, due, in part, to the location of its Education Faculty in Redland. However, UWE students from campuses in other parts of the city also chose to live near Whiteladies Road. The following conversation with some Tourism Management students from UWE's Frenchay campus revealed some of the reasons for this:

- Paul**            *Why do you live in Clifton when its so far away from Frenchay?*
- Corrina**        *It's just so much more lively. After a year I found Gloucester Road quite depressing. If you want to go for a stroll all you've got is Gloucester Road. But here [Clifton] town is so close and the downs.*
- Becky**           *I've got a car so the distance from Clifton to college isn't a problem.*
- Ed**                *It isn't a problem because there's loads of people who you can get a lift from and the bus isn't bad either.*
- Becky**           *I must say when we used to live in Horfield it used to take us ages. But now we live in Clifton once we're on the motorway its really quick.*
- Ed**                *It's better to live halfway between uni. and town.*

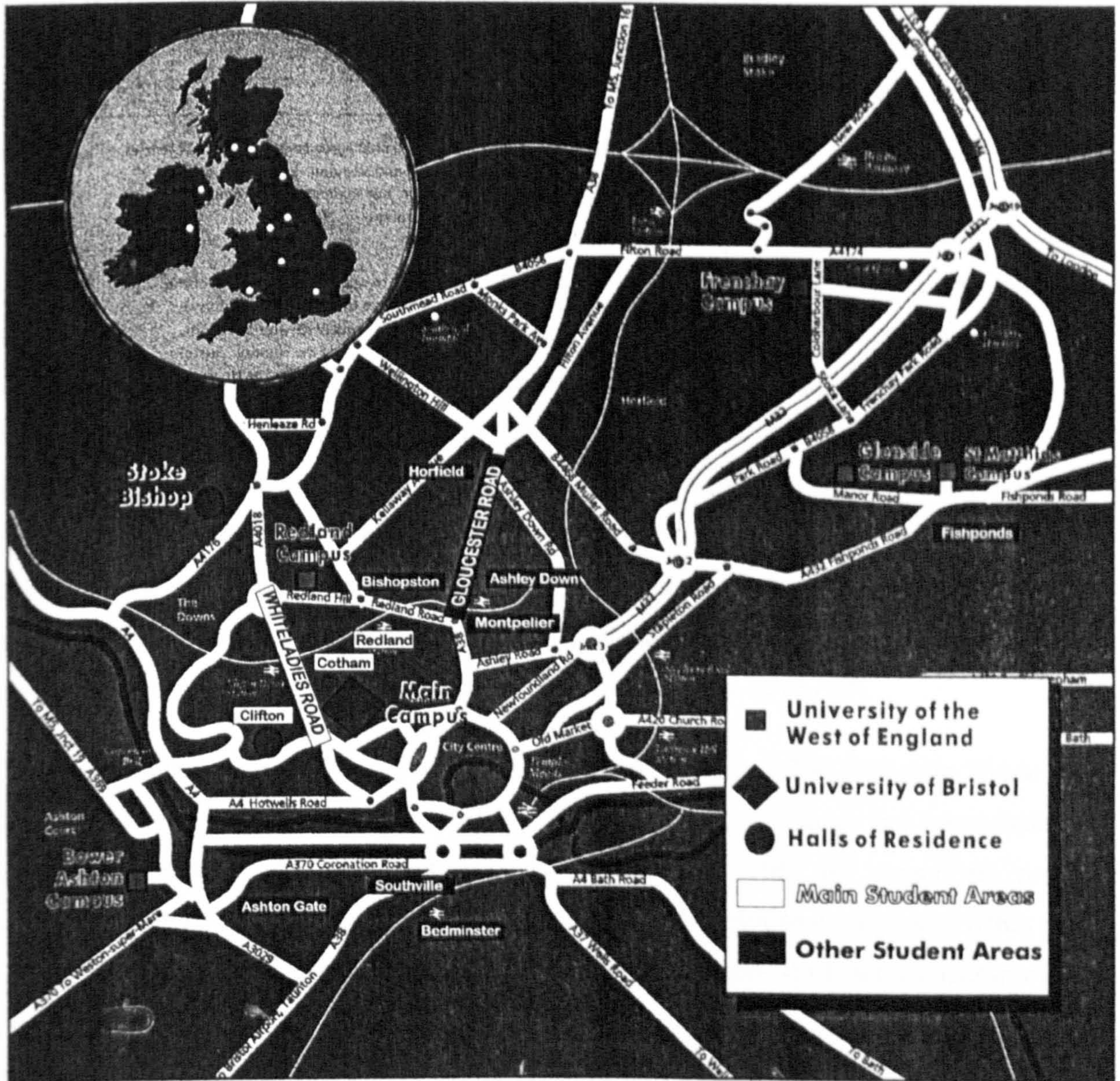
(All names have been changed)

FIGURE 6.2: THE DISTRIBUTION OF UWE AND UB STUDENTS IN PRIVATE-RENTED ACCOMMODATION IN THE BRISTOL POSTCODES.



Source: Student postcode data for UB was extracted from a recent report (Chatterton, 1997). Postcode data for UWE was not available because of information protection laws. As a result, the UWE map was created on the basis of interviews with accommodation officers who agreed with the distribution presented on the map.

FIGURE 6.3: STUDENT AREAS IN BRISTOL



Source: Map extracted from *UWE Prospectus*, 1997/98.

The Whiteladies Road area, then, has a particular identity within the city as an exclusive, expensive and fashionable residential area and a thriving entertainment district. Recently, Whiteladies Road has experienced a rapid growth of licensed outlets and the area has acquired the names 'the strip' and 'the golden mile' as a 200 yard stretch alone has 32 licensed premises with a further 10 awaiting planning consent (Mitchell and Smith, 1997).<sup>10</sup> The area, taking on the appearance of a Spanish holiday resort on summer weekends, is littered with cocktail bars, restaurants, pubs and cafes and is one of the main entertainment areas for the young and fashionable of Bristol.

Much of the entertainment provision in this area is focused upon the large surrounding student population. Because of the area's proximity to the UB precinct and the student residential areas, the streets, shops, pubs, supermarkets and restaurants around Whiteladies Road have an unmistakable student atmosphere. One only has to take a walk around the area to identify some of the enticements on offer to the student population (Figure 6.4). However, most businesses in the area benefit from their proximity to the large student population and so do not have to target students. As one bar manager on 'the strip' explained: "whatever your bar is, if there's any students within walking distance they're going to be part of your market" (int., Wells, 27/5/97).

One recent leisure-based development on 'the strip' is named *The Fraternity House* and, therefore, has obvious student associations (Figure 6.5). It is a large bar specialising in food and cocktails in the upper end of the market with an 'American preppy atmosphere'.<sup>11</sup> As the assistant manager of the Fraternity House explained: "[t]his place wouldn't have worked as well in other provincial cities where students are different. My view of students is that they<sup>3</sup> can afford to live around here [Clifton] when I can't (laughs)" (int., Wells, 27/5/97).

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<sup>10</sup> Because of serious local concerns towards the end of 1996 about the impact of the developments in this area, a study was undertaken by the City Council which recommended that further Class A3 (food and drink) uses should be restricted (Supplementary Planning Guidelines for Food and Drink Uses, Bristol City Council, Draft, 1997).

<sup>11</sup> Interview, Wells, 27/5/97.

FIGURE 6.4: WHITELADIES ROAD AND THE STUDENT LOVE AFFAIR

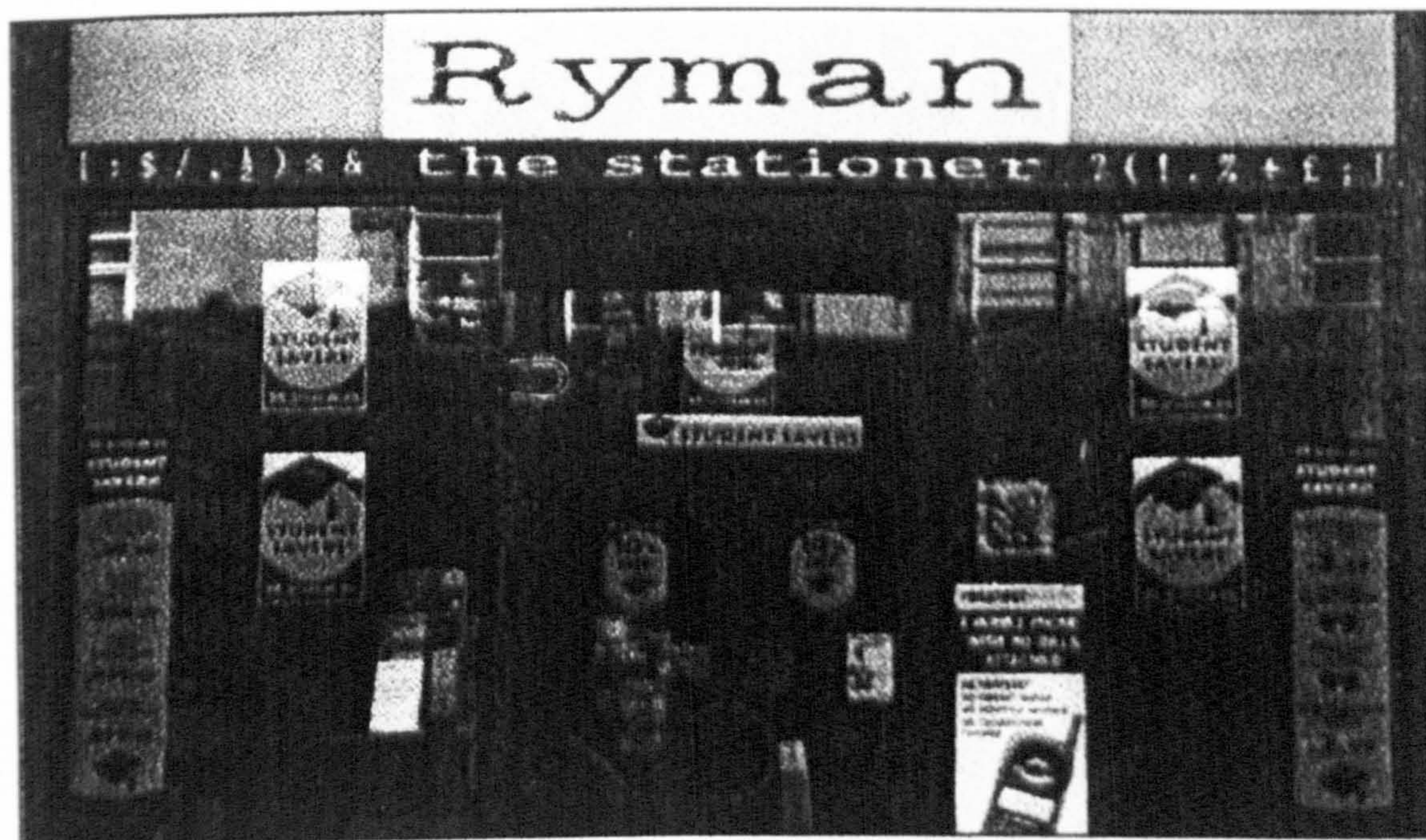
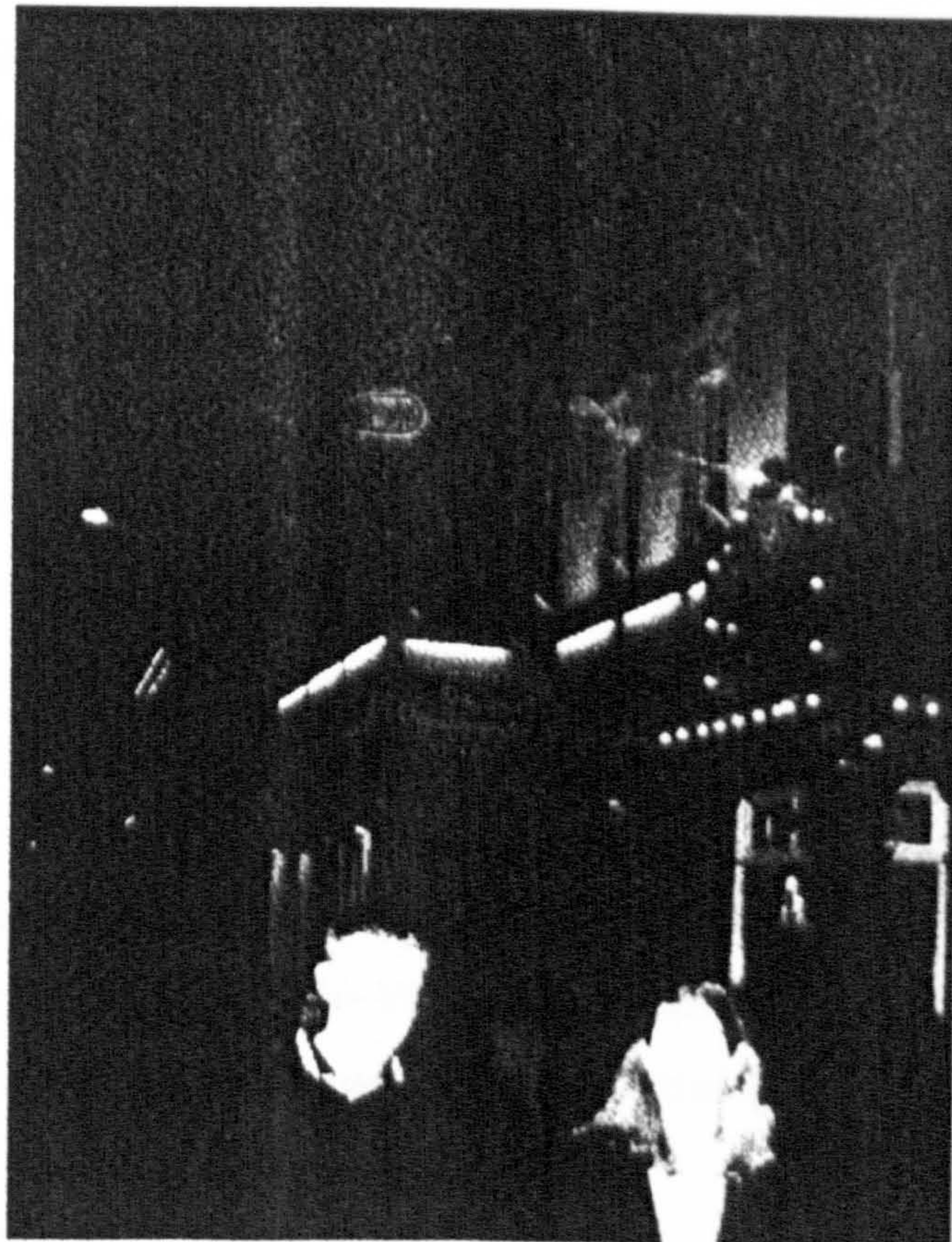
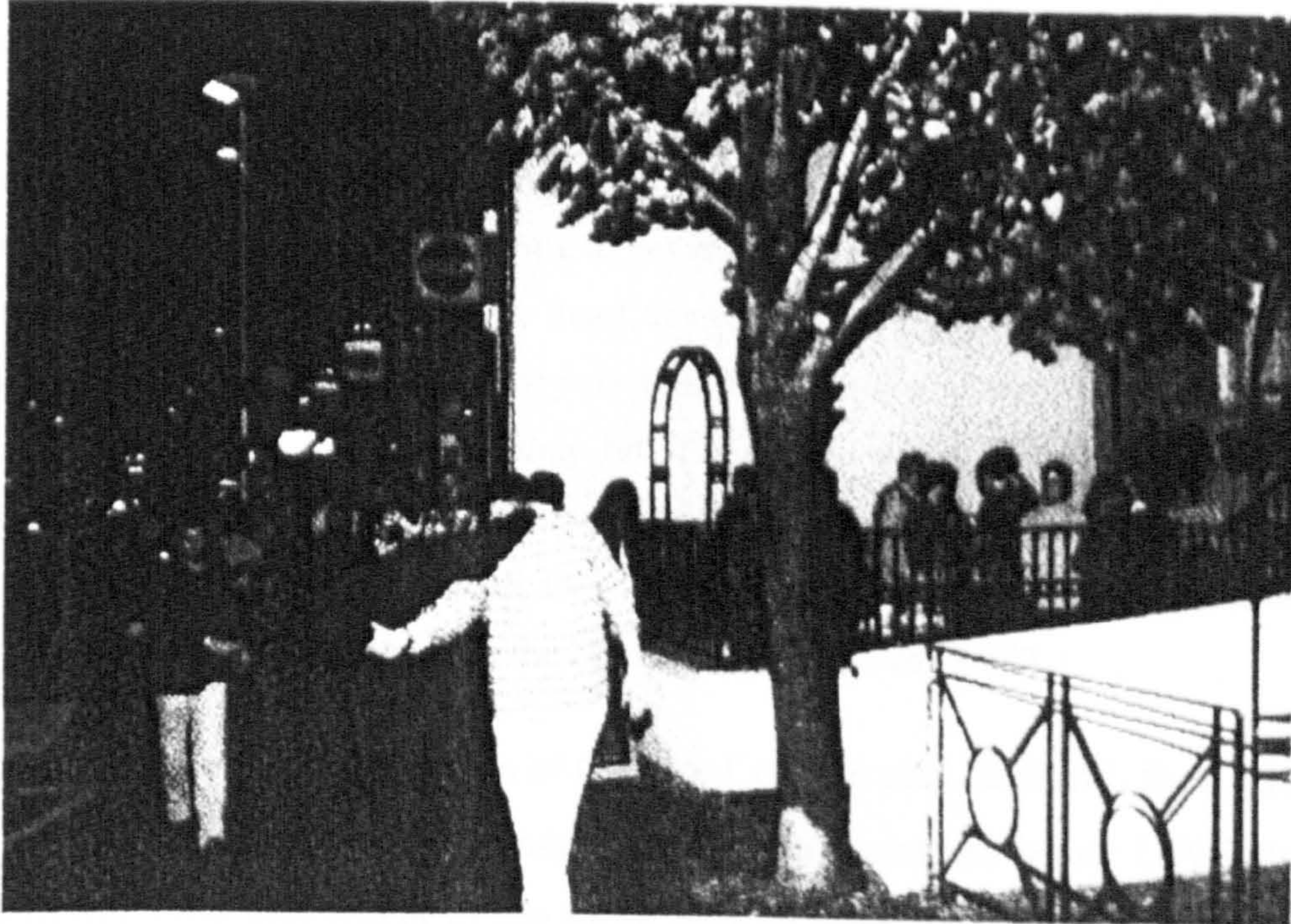


FIGURE 6.5: WHITELADIES ROAD AND THE FRATERNITY HOUSE



Clearly, the popularity of Whiteladies Road venues amongst students leads to frustration for other business owners, especially in the city-centre. One manager of a night-club based in the centre, who even ran free buses to attract students, explained his frustration:

There are millions of students in Bristol but they don't come out. You go to Whiteladies Road and it's full of students but they don't come down town and I've no idea why. The buses didn't work getting them down here. It's a complicated time at the moment. The business isn't really out there and trying to get students to come out is murder. We're all in the same situation except Whiteladies Road. It's easy for them. You've got a lot of students up there who go from pub to pub. They start off at Bohemia and they come down between pubs. The Berkeley is the last one they hit. Then on a weekend there is a huge queue outside Brasserie Pierre. Its easy to get in and its open till 2am in the morning. It's just become a trend to do that. Of course, there is also that Stoke Bishop [halls] is miles away. It's an hours walk from here back to the halls (int., Marlow, 28/5/97).

Whiteladies Road and adjacent areas of Clifton, Cotham and Redland, then, are the most popular residential choices for students from both universities. Many UWE students are prepared to live here and travel to the more remote Frenchay campus so they can enjoy the student atmosphere and amenities in the area. However, because of the more exclusive and wealthier characteristics of Whiteladies Road and Clifton, the students who live in this area represent a very 'traditional' cohort and have strong connotations of wealth, youth and fashion. As a result, these 'Cliftonities' and 'sloanes' often gain a more negative and pejorative reputation as discussed above.

**Gloucester Road and BS7** This area has a smaller, yet still significant, student population. The area focuses upon the major thoroughfare of Gloucester Road which is home to less exclusive and expensive shops, pubs and restaurants compared to Whiteladies Road and is characterised by second-hand and charity shops, fast-food take-aways and derelict and under-used buildings. The adjacent areas of Horfield, Bishopston, Ashley Down and Montpellier offer cheaper accommodation compared to Clifton, Cotham and Redland and are popular amongst less wealthy and more 'bohemian' students. In this sense, many non-traditional and older students move to this area to escape the overwhelming traditional student connotations of the Whiteladies Road area. This area also has a higher concentration of UWE students because of the better transport access to UWE's Frenchay campus in this area.



Other Areas Due to the multi-territoriality of UWE, there are large concentrations of UWE students in other areas of the city such as BS16 where the St. Matthias and Frenchay campuses are located and south of the river in BS3 in Bedminster, Ashton Gate and Southville near the Bower Ashton campus. Because of its multi-territoriality, then, students from UWE live in a wider variety of areas within Bristol compared to UB students and as a result have a more diffuse cultural impact on the city. Students from UWE explained that living in Clifton-Cotham-Redland is not always desirable. As one student who lived in Bedminster because it is nearer Bower Ashton, explained to me:

But that side of town [Whiteladies Road] is so far away, and to get to everything, I mean friends and things and to get to college, 'cos we need to get here sometimes. You're going to spend a lot of money on bus fares. If you just stay here [Bedminster] you don't have to. Clifton's not an area of town I'd like to live, I don't know anyone there. It's far away from anything I need to get to (2nd year, female, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

Another UWE student explained the different atmosphere he detected between the Whiteladies Road area and areas south of the river:

I moved in with a load of Graphic students in the first year in Clifton and it was totally different to what it was now. There's a completely different atmosphere there and the students well [laughing] they're a bit snobby and didn't really get on with them (2nd year, male, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

### **The Student House**

One of the main structures which regulates the space of traditional students is the student house. Home-based activity is central to understanding traditional student culture. As Hollands (1995, 13) commented:

Socially, household sharing is also an important element of student culture in terms of cementing friendships, developing cultural identities and contouring leisure patterns.

The student house is a site where much time is spent. Research into the time patterns of Bristol students revealed that, on average, just under one half of all study time was undertaken at home. The student house is also an important site for leisure activity. As the following conversation with some Geography students from UB illustrates, home-based leisure is popular because of reasons such as increasing work and financial pressures, lack of motivation, and a desire to socialise at home with other students:

- Paul *What about going out?*
- Ed *I don't go to a huge range of things at all.*
- Naomi *I can't remember the last time I went to a club to be honest.*
- Ed *I've hardly been to any clubs at all compared to last year.*
- Hannah *Last year was like, try everything out in Bristol. But this year it's sort of 'I can't be bothered'; just stay in cos it's too much hassle or go to the pub next door. When you're in Stoke Bishop [halls] you get used to travelling miles for entertainment but in you second year you get lazy.*
- Ed *When you're in halls everyone's there but when your living in a house you have to make the effort of ringing everyone up at different houses and often it doesn't work anyway.*
- Paul *Do you tend to stay home a lot?*
- Ed *More than we did last year.*
- Louise *We have like dinners...*
- Hannah *Everyone else is working really hard at the moment so you get that guilt feeling that you shouldn't go out - even if you do stay in you just end up sitting there*
- Ed *When you're in a house compared to a hall there are other things to distract you like TV and video. Whereas last year I didn't have a TV and there wasn't much else for me to do apart from sit around in my room. In some ways living in a house it is more difficult to motivate yourself to go out. There's added pressure as well this year 'cos things have started to count towards your degree.*

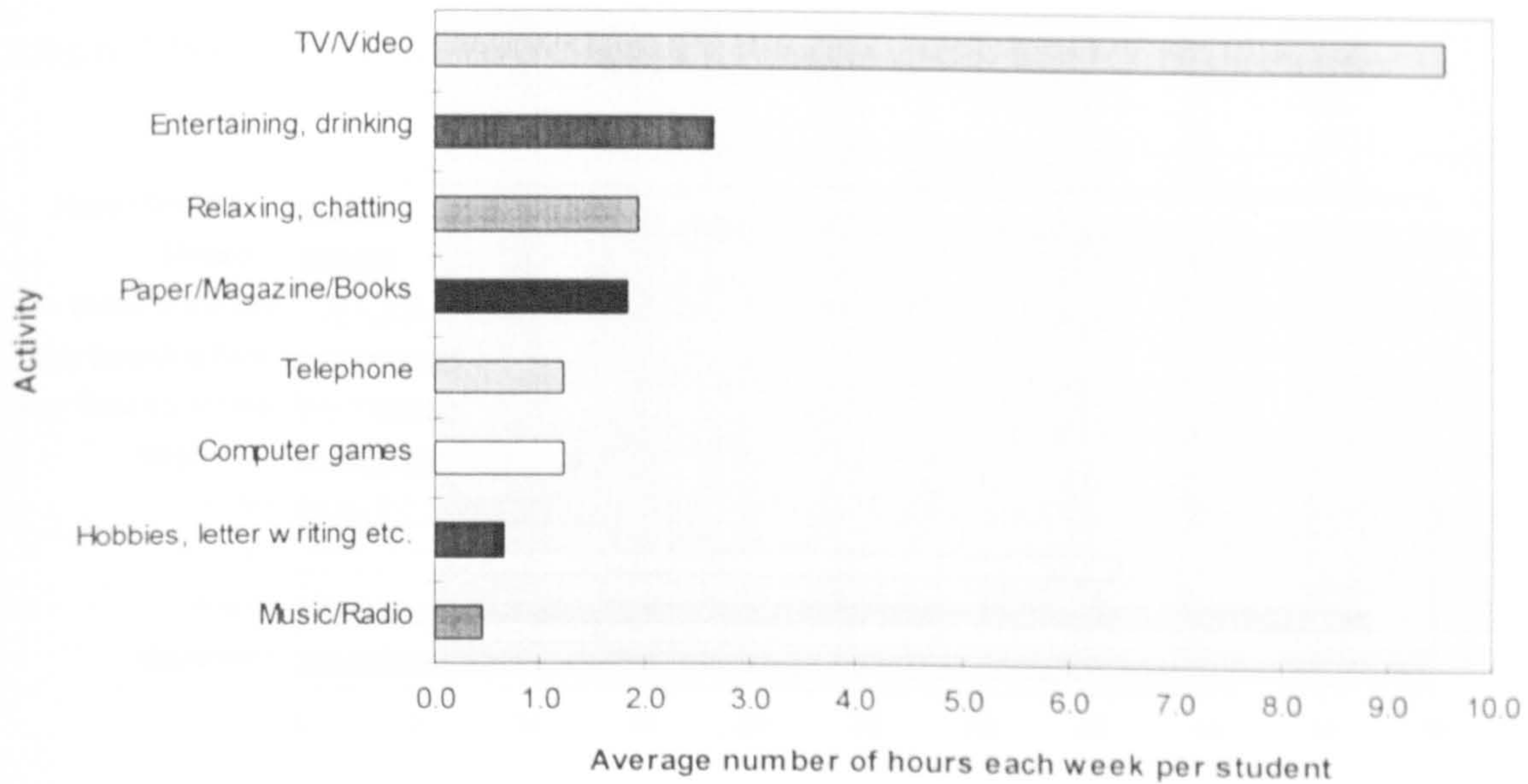
(All names have been changed)

The communal student house, then, is an important site for socialisation. As the following quote demonstrates, living with friends presents students with the option of staying at home to either, watch TV, or socialise and save money:

*We've been worse this year because in the second year we live with all our friends. There's eleven of us so we have been much more lazy to actually go out and visit people and we spend more time in the house than last year. We tend to go out a lot more for just popping out to the local pub because it's on our corner (2nd year, female, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).*

The chart below, based upon analysis of over 4000 student hours demonstrates the most popular home-based leisure activities:

FIGURE 6.6: STUDENT LEISURE ACTIVITY AT HOME



A survey from the Henley Centre can be used for comparative purposes. This survey revealed that for the 16-24 year old cohort, watching TV was the most popular home based activity (with 97% participating at least once a week) followed by listening to the radio or music (75%) and reading the newspaper (71%). Having friends round (61%), drinking alcohol at home (48%) and watching videos (54%) were also popular activities. Activities such as computer games were less popular (25%).

If we compare these figures with those from the student population in Bristol, we can see that, mirroring the Henley Centre survey, watching TV or videos was by far the most popular home-based leisure activity amongst students. Watching television is extremely central to student life at home as it was nearly five-times more popular than any other home-based leisure activity. The following figures highlight some of the most popular TV programmes amongst the student population. The first is from my own survey of Bristol students, the second is from a national survey of university students. Both refer to television programmes broadcast in early 1997.<sup>12</sup> Both surveys reveal a preference amongst students for soap-operas (Eastenders, Neighbours, Brookside), American serials (Friends, The X-Files and ER) and comedies (The Simpsons and Have I Got News for You,

<sup>12</sup> Guardian Higher Education, *Vital Statistics: Soaps, Students and Simpsons*, 1/5/97, i.

Men Behaving Badly, Shooting Stars) and sports programmes (Match of the Day, They Think it's all Over).

FIGURE 6.7: % OF STUDENTS WATCHING TV PROGRAMMES, BRISTOL STUDENTS

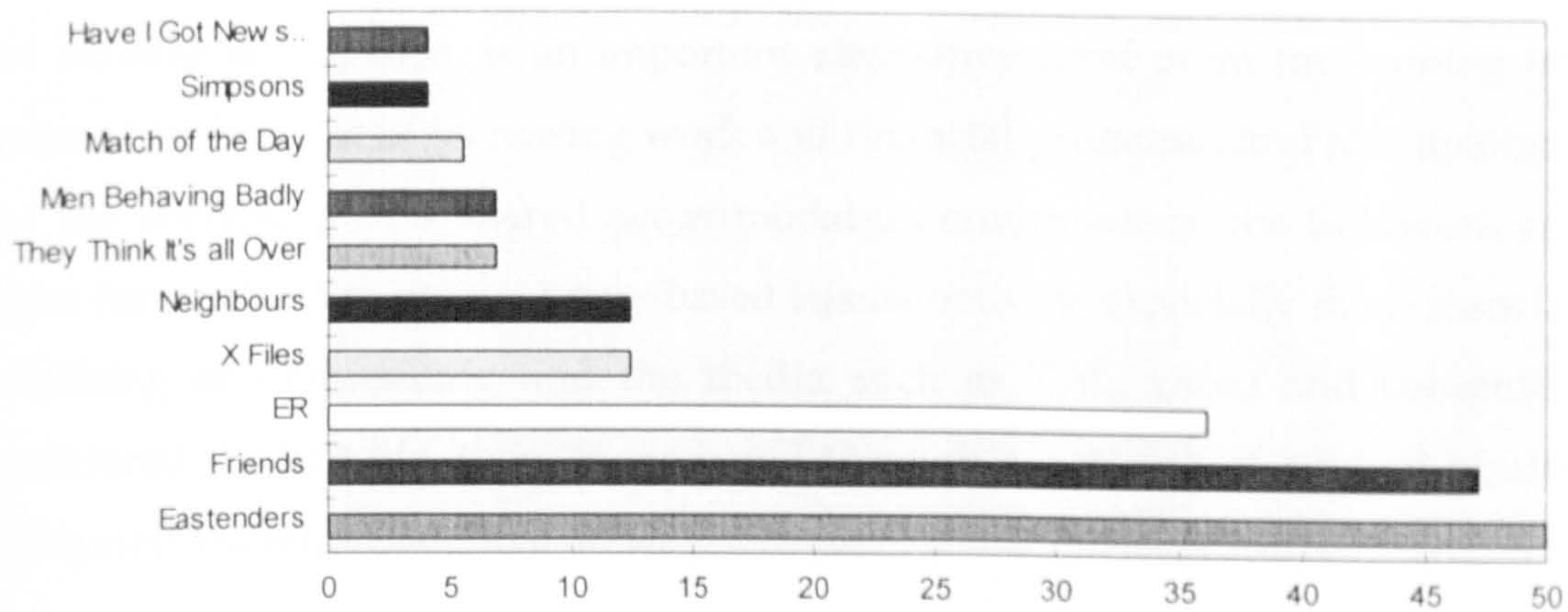
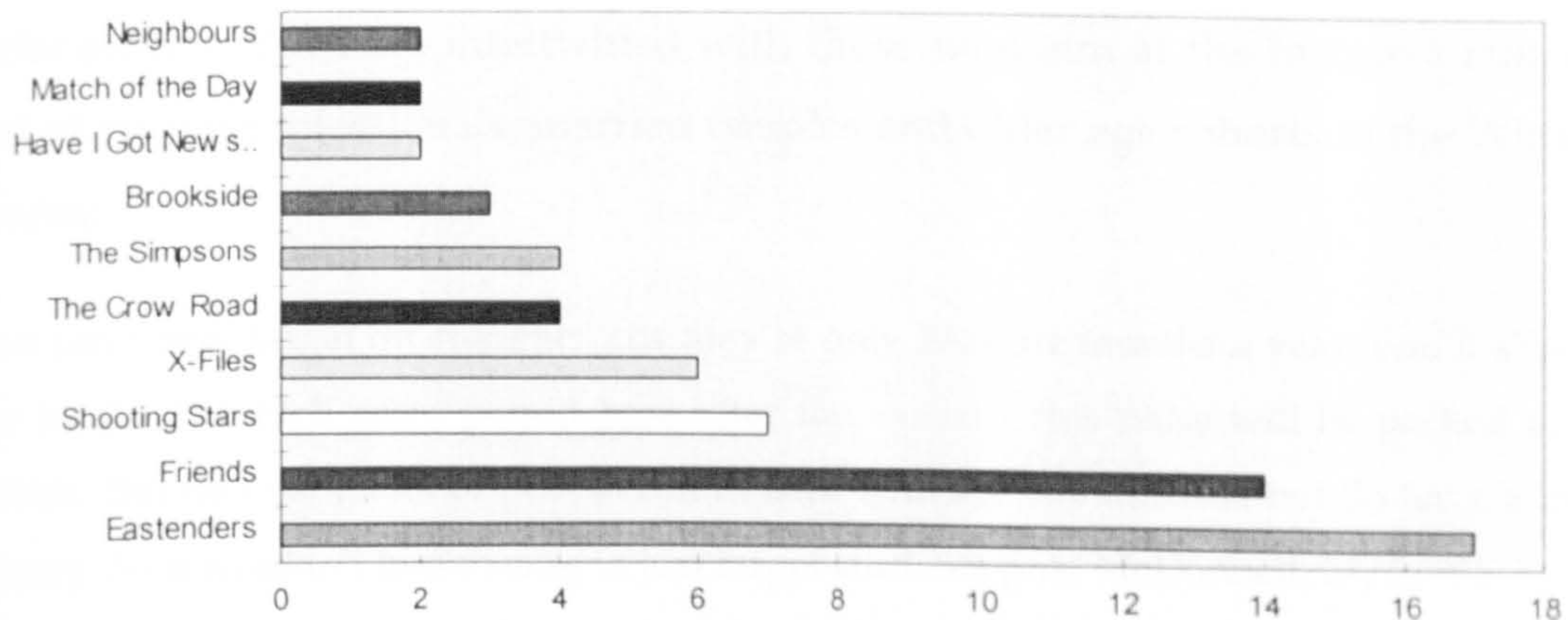


FIGURE 6.8: % OF STUDENTS WATCHING TV PROGRAMMES, NATIONAL SURVEY



The second most popular home-based activity amongst students was entertaining and socialising in the home in the form of house-parties or drinking with friends. A comparison of the Henley Centre data and the Bristol students time survey suggests that such forms of home-based socialising is higher amongst students than the general 16-24 year old cohort.

In contrast to the general 16-24 year old population, playing computer games was a very popular activity amongst certain, mainly male, students. Home-based media entertainment, then, occupies a large amount of student time and money. In particular,

students have access to an array of entertainment equipment such as computer games, cable and video recorders. As UWESU's Entertainments Manager commented: "lots of students have got video, cable and video games. Home entertainments are becoming far more important for students" (int., McArdle, 7/7/97).

The student house, then, is an important alternative focal point for framing traditional student life. Because of increasing work and financial pressures, and also apathy, laziness and the sociability of a shared accommodation environment, the fieldwork revealed a desire for students to pursue home-based leisure activity, especially those associated with socialising or entertaining and the media such as T.V., video and computer games. Traditional student life, then, is mediated through a network of student houses within segregated student residential areas.

### **Conflict and Tension**

Clearly, even the most heavily populated student areas such as Clifton are not exclusively populated by students. Despite most venues appealing to students through advertising and concessions, these are intertwined with those who aim at the lucrative non-student market of young professionals, married couples and older age cohorts in the Whiteladies Road area:

You can't over target on students 'cos they're only here six months a year; you'll alienate the locals. The high point is mid June after the exams - this place will be packed to the rafters. But there are a lot of people round here who are not students but do have a lot of money. So it wouldn't make sense to just target students (int., McDonnell, 27/5/97).

In areas such as Whiteladies Road, and to a lesser extent Gloucester Road, there is an interplay of identities which often creates tension. As one manager of a pub near 'the strip' commented:

During the summer time the locals come down when there aren't any students and they behave like idiots. In some cases they've got a chip on their shoulder 'cos they're not going to university. The locals get angry because they think students are taking over Bristol and they get angry because they can't get into any pubs. You see it on a weekend; some local kicks off with a student and suddenly the whole lecture class is crowded round and your man backs off (int., McDonnell, 27/5/97).

Further, Thursday at Club IQ night-club is a student-friendly night. Yet it is not student-only, which can lead to tension:

There is trouble on a Thursday. Exam time isn't a good time; there's a lot of stress. The students go out and get drunk and they want a good time. But there's a lot of townies around as well. Now if you're jumping around and having a good time and there's a few girls there that they (the students) know from their halls and there's some townies there with their mates and they fancy the girls and the students bump into them and then it goes off. It's not a brawl but it does lead to fights (int., Marlow, 28/5/97).

A new Irish-theme pub on 'the strip', which before conversion was regarded as a 'local' rather than 'student' pub, is often the site of student-local rivalry as graffiti from the toilet graphically demonstrates:

All students must fucking hang (pay)

students are the intelligensia of the modern world - so fuck off yourself pleb

This "student" cant spell  
intelligensia Try harder moron

*only a mongol would write such shit fucking idiot  
shit talking student scum fuckers  
signed the people who work for a living  
arseholes!*

Much of this rivalry seems unresolvable: As one student who was born in the Bristol area commented, "I come from round here [Clevedon] so it feels like home for me. They probably think I'm a student still, till I get a proper job though" (3rd year, female, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE). Even if one is a local resident, then, as soon as one becomes a student, or is even associated with students, one is given a student and non-local identity.

Students do seem aware of their limited geographical use of the city: "there are parts of Bristol where the average student wouldn't go, places like Fishponds or Eastville. So Bristol for us is Clifton to, kind of, St. Werburghs when in fact it's a massive city (3rd year, female, Drama student, UB). However, the following quote suggests that the

restricted use of city space by traditional students is no different from the way most residents from distinctive neighbourhoods in cities act:

...even people who live here all the time don't go to Fishponds or Bedminster, because I didn't when I lived here and I wasn't at university. My life revolved around the centre and Clifton. I went to different places but that was only specifically to see somebody (2nd year, female, Drama student, UB).

In this sense, traditional students reflect other communities in the city by their limited geographical dispersal and use of the city.

### **Summary**

Traditional student inhabit a regulated social space which is constructed through collective mythologies (informal and embedded knowledge of student places) and actual interventions (such as the construction of student housing and entertainment facilities) within certain parts of the city. In terms of residential environments such as the hall of residence and private-sector rented student housing, traditional students represent a segregated and identifiable group within certain parts of Bristol. Within this segregated residential framework, the student house is an extremely important space for socialising. Such regulated environments, in combination with the bounded field of the university, are the basis for the construction of unified dispositions and a strong desire for association amongst traditional students.

There is evidence of tension between this group and other non-student groups as the above graffiti demonstrated. However, tension and conflict is reduced as student and non-student groups generally display segregated geographical use of cities. In this sense, the perception of traditional students in the city is informed less by actual contact and experience and more by inherited perceptions and stereotypes of the student community.

## **STRUCTURING TRADITIONAL STUDENT CULTURE: THE STUDENT ENTERTAINMENT INFRASTRUCTURE**

In addition to the existence of regulated student residential spaces, there is a student entertainment infrastructure within the city which is part of the construction of imaginary and actual geographies of student life. This infrastructure has a distinctive identity and is

heavily marketed to the traditional student population and is spatially ordered through two inter-related processes. The first one includes the informal colonisation of venues by students which are within, or adjacent to, student residential areas. This occurs through a process of learning, and subsequent unlearning, the rules of the student game and a desire for association with other students. The second process involves the formal provision of student-oriented/-only entertainment environments by certain entertainment providers in the city which is based upon an assumption of their needs. In a Bourdieuan framework, this entertainment infrastructure represents a relatively bounded field in which the traditional student invests and accrues social and cultural capital which are of equal importance to the acquisition of educational capital within the formal university calendar.

Further, there is a spatial and temporal framework to this entertainment infrastructure which has important consequences for the city. In particular, this infrastructure is part of the spatial, and temporal, construction of youth cultures in that: "[t]he design, definition and control of spatiality is an active ingredient in the often contested social processes of [the construction of youth cultures] (Massey, 1998, 127). These shall be discussed in turn.

### **Learning the Rules of the Student Game**

In opposition to Gayle's (1995) earlier comments about students as knowledgeable actors within city life, I would contend that for some students this equates to mainly learning about student spaces within the city; its pubs, clubs and shared houses. This builds upon Bourdieu's (1977, 1992) analogy of the field as an 'espace de jeu' in which the student learns certain dispositions which allows her/him to know and recognise the laws of that field through practical experience within it. Learning the rules of this student game is mediated through certain initiation rituals such as Freshers Week and the Freshers Fair, student publications and radio and student peers. These are arenas where the rules of studenthood are first learnt and embodied.

The Freshers Fair (Figure 6.9) introduces students not only to students' union facilities and societies, but is an endeavour by many commercial entities and entertainment venues, such as banks, travel operators, book stores, rental firms, clubs, pubs, cinemas and food outlets in the city to inform students of where to go out and what to consume. This is attempted by offering a deluge of freebies to freshers ranging from mugs, pens



and newspapers to food, alcohol and condoms. Information acquired at Freshers Fair, then, is one of the most significant components of the learning process.

FIGURE 6.9: LEARNING THE RULES: THE FRESHERS FAIR



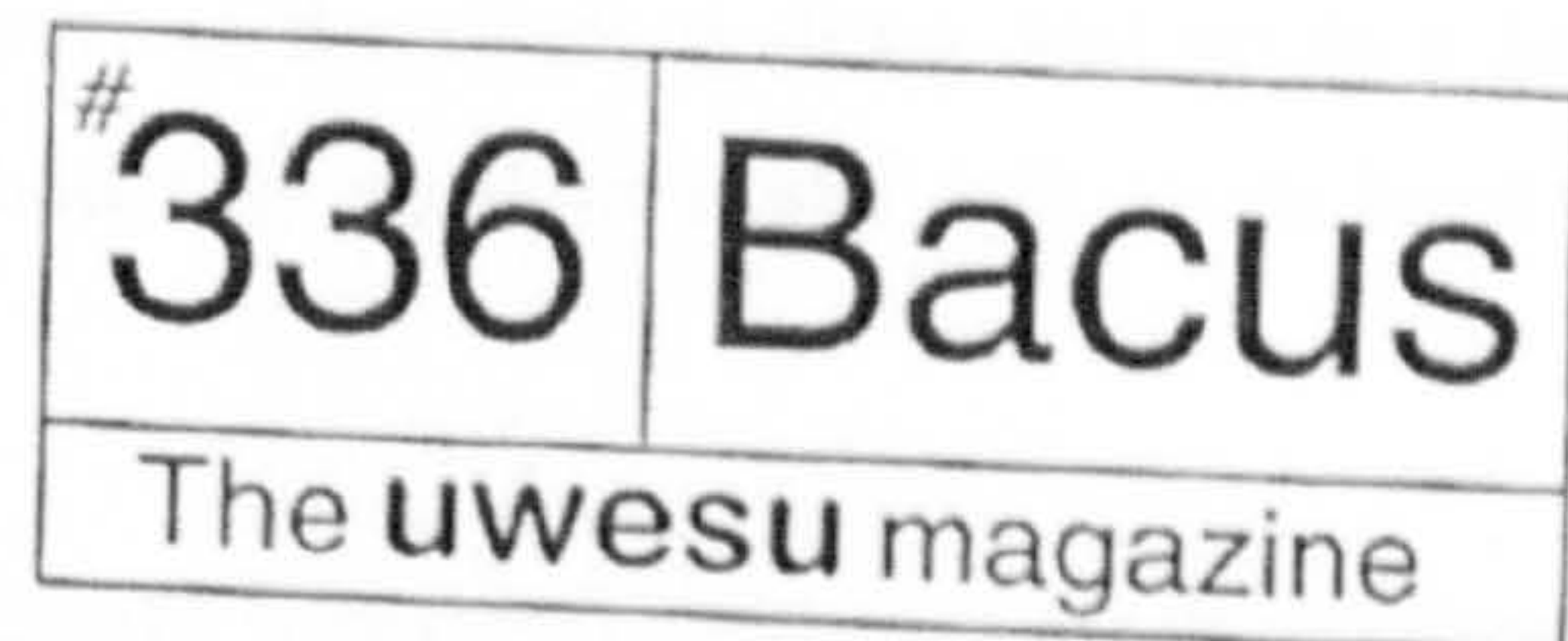
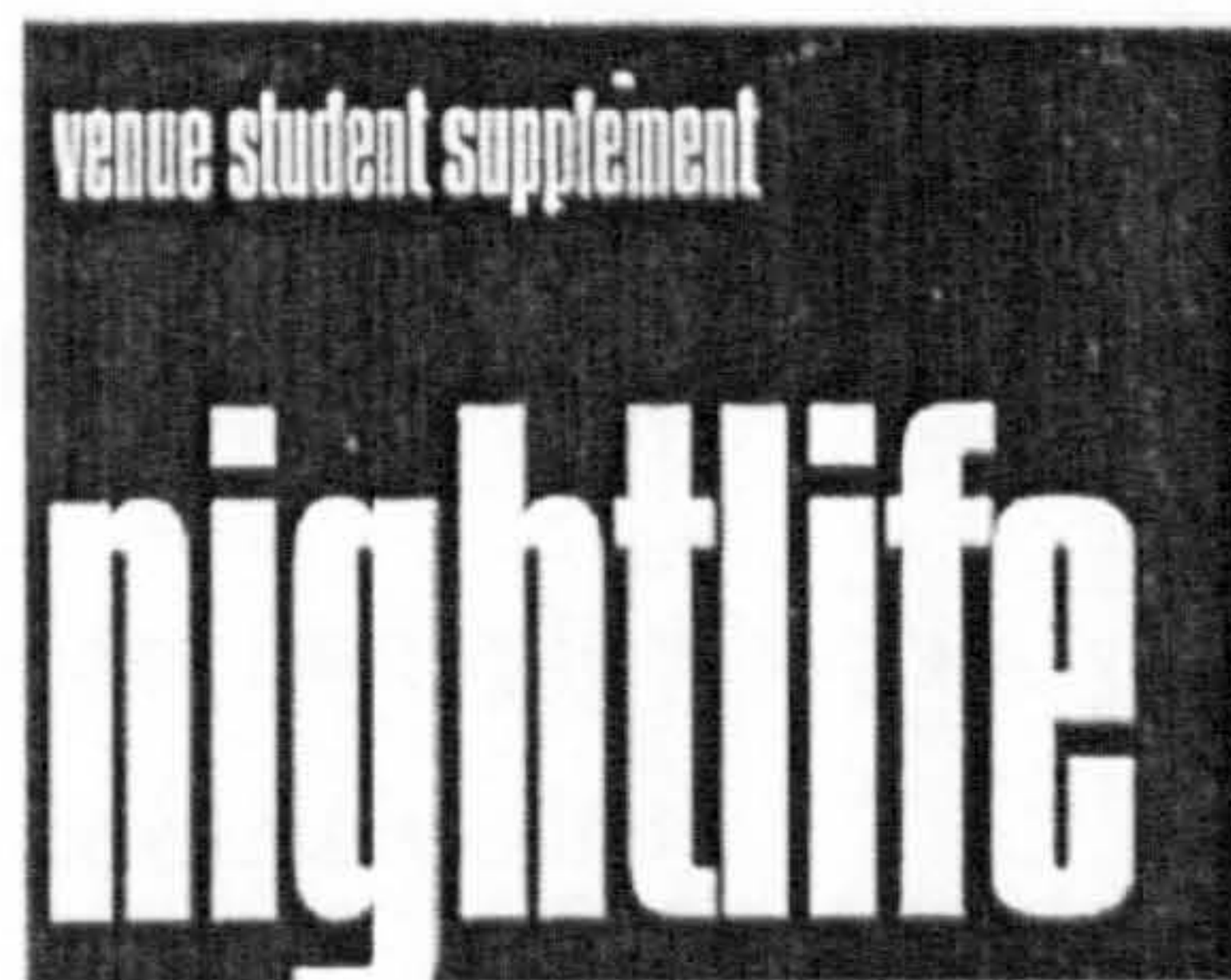
Publications, from students' unions and independent organisations also contribute to this learning process. UBSU's student newspaper *Epigram*, is a colour tabloid produced fortnightly which is presented in a formal, traditional newspaper style which was recently shortlisted for a Guardian Award. UBSU also produces *Epic*, UBSU's 'What's On' guide. UWESU's student publication is *Bacus* which is distributed free every month and has a more glossy, magazine style. UWESU also publishes a smaller guide to entertainments at called *West of England Ents Diary* (WEED). This publication is produced every two-three weeks during term-time and publicises events from all the campuses and in the city. Both UBSU and UWESU produce their own *Freshers Guide* in October which covers advice entertainments, night life and welfare throughout the city.

There are also a number of independent publications which exist to educate Bristol students. These include *The Bristol Student Guide* published by NUS Bristol and aimed at students in all colleges in Bristol, *Student Pages* which, replicated in most other student

cities at the cost of £1, is distributed to students in Bristol and offers information and discounts for a range of entertainments and services in the city<sup>13</sup> and the annual *Venue Student Supplement* published in September. The *Venue Magazine*, the main entertainment guide for Bristol and Bath, has strong associations with the student population:

Venue is read by a lot of students. I mean, by many we are seen as a sort of student publication. But that is obviously not something we like to be seen as. But it is read by a lot of students (int., Mitchell, 2/2/96).

Despite this standpoint, *Venue* is seen as a student resource and a supporter of student lifestyles. As one member of the arts community commented: “*Venue* loves students” (int., Gwillam, 18/4/96). There are also a number of independent publications aimed at students more generally. These include *The Big Issue Student Supplement* sponsored by TSB and *The NME Student Guide*. Such nationally distributed publications contribute to the construction of a wider national student identity.



These publications are complemented by certain sections of the media who expend much energy courting the student population. These include the broadsheet newspapers such as *The Guardian*, *The Independent* and *The Times* who offer substantial discounts to students and BBC Radio One FM who collaboratively run and broadcast a number of

<sup>13</sup> *Student Pages* is not being distributed to UB students this year as it seen to compete with their own expanding retail interests.

dance events at various students' unions around the country during freshers week. Further, because of the youth orientation of One FM, many of the broadcasts have distinctively student connotations. Local radio is also heavily involved with the student population. In particular, Galaxy FM, based in Bristol, is a joint promoter of student nights at the night-club, Club IQ. Further, as described in Chapter 3, Fresh FM, the student radio station in Bristol, operates during the freshers period to disseminate information to the incoming students.

Events such as Freshers Week and forms of audio and print media equip students with an abundance of information on where to consume, visit and be entertained in Bristol. They are illustrative of attempts to rapidly educate, direct and financial exploit students in their role as consumers and producers within the cultural life of the city. This learning process is also developed through communication with other students. As the promotions manager of Club IQ suggested:

When first years arrive in Bristol they don't know the area. They know there are two main clubs in Bristol; us [Club IQ] and Odyssey. So when they ask the second years where they go they say 'Tuesdays at Odyssey'. It's become part of the student thing and so as a first year you go to Odyssey. Odyssey have always had that student night and so its hard to compete with (int., Marlow, 28/5/97).

However, there are multiple ways in which students interpret and use such information. As one student commented:

...we used to go to The Showboat [Gloucester Road pub] during the week. They gave us a leaflet in our freshers pack about all the pubs and we read it in the fifth week and it said, 'The Showboat - NO', and so we went in on a Saturday to find out - never again (1st year, male, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

### **Unlearning the Rules**

An important aspect of student life is maturation and development. This often involves a distancing from what is seen as 'typically' student-like. In this sense, many students, as their university career progresses, experiment with less traditional student places and venues within the city and *unlearn* the rules of the student game. As Hollands (1995, 31) comments:

Initiation rites for students then are an important factor in establishing patterns for going out and in reinforcing the divided city. However, some begin to move away from the confines of the university fairly early on and start to explore city life more in terms of their musical tastes, peer group interests and youth cultural identity.

This comment seems to have some resonance in Bristol. The promotions manager of Odyssey night-club commented:

*We concentrate on the freshers because its mainly the first years who come here. We know from experience that the older students want to go to smaller more exclusive clubs. They don't want to be with the freshers; most of these kids have just come from home (int., Holmes, 27/5/97).*

Further, as one first year Tourism Management student from UWE's Frenchay campus commented: "I think next year we'll go to totally different places. Most first years go around Horfield and Gloucester Road and then in the second year they move into Clifton and go to totally different places." The following conversation with some Tourism Management student from UWE's Frenchay campus, reveals some of the ways in which student's attitudes change over the duration of their university career:

- Paul**            *Do you think you've changed since last year?*
- Corrina**        *We used to do silly things like going dry slope skiing in Gloucester. This year I did want to find a lot more places to go to 'cos there's loads of good pubs and cafes and things.*
- Becky**           *We have done a lot of, a bit of er... let's go out for lunch. I remember last year thinking 'lets do lunch' and I used to rip it out of people that did it and this year I do it and I don't know why.*
- Corrina**        *I think the only reason you do it is because it's the only time you get to see people. You don't see your friends for about three weeks 'cos you're both doing different things and you say right I'll meet you there and you end up having lunch and getting drunk and going to bed at eight.*
- Becky**           *I'm a night-mare for taking my student vouchers to places. It's also quite a good way of finding places and experimenting.*
- Ed**                *You try everything in the first term. You blow your money in the first term and then you've had it. That's why I'm worried about living in Clifton 'cos its more expensive.*

(All names have been changed)

Experimentation, then, can be part of student life as the student career matures and a desire to distance oneself from the neophyte freshers increases. This process represents an unlearning of student rites and a distancing from the student infrastructure as the student is acculturated into less 'typical' student activities within the city. This is represented in Figure 6.1 by the category 'non-typical' or 'experimentalist' students. However, time and money pressures also increase which impedes this experimentation process.

### **The Desire for Association**

Spaces within this infrastructure can be understood through what Shields (1992, 8) called *leisure spaces*. Student leisure spaces, while not liminal or carnivalesque in the classic sense of a complete transition and inversion of social roles, "are open to the liminal chaos which places social arrangements in abeyance and suggests their arbitrary, cultural nature" (ibid., 1992, 8). The concept of liminality is useful, then, to suggest how the student's lifecourse is held in abeyance for a number of years during which there are moments of intense desires for association, sporadic carnival and sociality.

This desire for association with other students is motivated by hedonistic pleasure seeking, drinking and sex/courtship. However, despite sex being a central motivation for going out amongst students (as with many other people), this is largely at the symbolic level; in other words, displaced into clothing, posture, interaction and conversation (Hollands, 1995, 46). This desire for association and belonging amongst students has been substantiated by conversations with students from Bristol which point to the importance of 'visiting friends', 'having friends round', 'catching up with friends', or 'going to the pub with friends'.

Student-oriented/-only, environments fulfil this desire for association, not just because of the ease of common codes and the possibility of meeting other students, but also real safety from outsiders. There are certain sites within the city which fulfil this desire. One conversation with a 2nd year, female, Geography student from UB illustrated this:

- Louise            *I quite like the Steam Rock and Wedgies and all those other typical places.*
- Paul                *Why do you like places like Steam Rock and Wedgies?*
- Louise            *Well you know, a lot of people you know are there and everyone goes on certain nights so it's quite good.*

Another conversation reinforced this:

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Becky   | <i>A place where we go quite a lot is the Porthouse down by the Thickla on a Tuesday.</i>   |
| Paul    | <i>Why there?</i>   |
| Corrina | <i>Student night on Tuesdays are packed and it's got a good atmosphere and four floors and huge leather armchairs.</i>  |
| Ed      | <i>I find that most first years start off going to Odyssey and then a few don't like it and then started going to the Porthouse. Loads of first years go there.</i> |
| Corrina | <i>I think its a lot more UWE than Bristol [university].</i>  |

(All names have been changed)

There are certain times and places, then, which act as a defining moment of association for many students:

You plan a big night when you know everyone's going to be there. For example, Steam Rock on a Monday and Wedgies on Wednesday or whatever. I go out to town for a big night but other than that I don't really venture that far (2nd Year, male Geography student, UB).

Such times and spaces seem to occupy a privileged place within the schedule of the traditional students. As one commented: "like, you either sit on your own and watch TV or go where you know all the people you know are going" (2nd year, female, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

Such venues have a distinctive atmosphere. The following quote suggests that these are associated with a relaxed, unpretentious atmosphere:

I think its quite a psychological thing. If you go into town like Lakota you really have to plan your night. For girls it's a real effort because you know they're all going to be there in their little numbers whereas Kickers you can role on there after the pub and still treat it like a pub and you can just relax and have a laugh and not take it too seriously (2nd year, female, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

However, this desire for association does not unify all traditional students. As discussed earlier, within the cultural archetype of 'traditional' or 'typical' student resides several different identities and mini-communities. Certain venues, then, create an atmosphere which satisfies the common interests and desire for association amongst each of these different traditional student groups. In this sense, Wedgies and The Square Bar appeals to the 'Clifton sloanes' and the 'sports teams', The Arnolfini and The Watershed appeals to 'arty students', The Epi Bar is a meeting place for the sports teams on Wednesday

evening, The Princes Bar has become associated with Drama students, Bower Ashton ents. are seen as 'funky' whilst St. Matthias ents. are seen as typically studentish and 'uncool' and so forth.

### **Formal Provision Within the Student Entertainment Infrastructure**

Entertainment provision aimed at traditional students is undertaken by university and non-university owned venues. Part One of the thesis illustrated the role the two universities played within the high and popular cultural infrastructures in the city. In particular, Sutra, The Anson Rooms, The Tube Club and The Epi and Escape Bars are popular sites for music, drinking and dancing amongst students and The Victoria Rooms, The Glynne Wickham Theatre and the Centre for Performing Arts are sites for more formal cultural pursuits such as theatre and concerts.

The two universities, then, as their entertainments offices are expanded and professionalised and they enter into collaborative arrangements with non-university entertainment providers, play an increasingly important role within the structuring of student entertainment (Chapter 3). There are many valid reasons for creating student-only entertainment spaces; a former president of UBSU suggested that they had entered into a collaborative venture with Club IQ and Odyssey night-clubs in order to 'promote entertainment in a safe environment' (int., Sansom, 13/3/96). Further, as the Entertainments Manager of UWESU explained, they dropped the use of their public entertainments licence (i.e. public access to UWESU) to create a venue and certain nights which could offer safety in the '*widest possible sense*' (int., McArdle, 7/7/97). This includes reducing physical and verbal attacks but also reducing damage to the venue and especially expensive equipment. Students' unions, then, are keen to promote student-only entertainment. This is based upon the desire to create an environment which is safe and generates common codes of communication which will attract students. It also reinforces their parallel commitment to student welfare and education.

However, much provision within this infrastructure is from non-university venues. I want to discuss the ways in which these non-university venues build up an 'idea' of the entertainment needs of traditional students. One successful night-club owner within this infrastructure explained that an understanding of the student market came from an organic approach:

I don't think the way to attract students is to have a strategy to attract them like Firkins brewery. I think it should happen naturally, e.g. having a mad landlord. Corporate strategies are so finely tuned they think they can capture the whole market. This is what happens with Firkin breweries. Some independents around here attract students with no strategy like Hot House, Dog and Duck. They're pleasant and they will always attract students. Some like All Bar One and The Fraternity House market students but they fail 'cos there is no atmosphere. It's too clinical. The Frat. House is a big place, the same size as the Rat and Parrot. But the Rat and Parrot is crammed with students and the Frat. is not 'cos the Frat. has tried too hard. It's too big a place. The Rat and Parrot has gone for the soft lived in look which appeals to the students (int., Horic, Wedgies, 16/6/97).

Further, knowledge of student preferences, it seems, is only established through direct experience: "[i]f you haven't been to uni. you don't understand the mentality... by being so interactive with the student community you know your audience and how to attract it" (int., Horic, Wedgies, 16/6/97).

The main providers of student-based entertainment seem to have a common perception that students have distinctive needs which need to be catered for separately. As one night-club manager commented: "[t]he only thing you can do to get students in is to offer them cheap beer and cheap entry on the door or some type of theme night. They're easily pleased" (int., Marlow, 28/5/97).

Those who financially gain from students, then, spend much time trying to understand the differences in the student market. As the promotional manager of Odyssey explained about their student night which attracts the largest number of students compared to any other club in the city: "some staff don't like working Tuesdays 'cos the students are so rude; but it's youthful - it's the youth and that's how they are" (int., Holmes, 27/5/97). Another night-club manager commented:

We don't mind students being a complete prat. Our doormen are trained. I dislike doormen who see students messing around and misinterpret it as a problem. We know that students can mess about and it's just a giggle; that's what it's all about. The student mentality doesn't leave you for the rest of your life. My student spirit hasn't gone and as a result I like a good laugh. If you haven't been to uni. you don't understand the mentality... The great thing about students is that if one pukes on another they turn round and laugh about it. If a student pukes on a townie they end up on the floor with no teeth generally (int., Horic, Wedgies night-club, 16/7/97).



In a similar way, the manager of The Berkeley, the largest pub adjacent to the main UB campus, explained his preference for students:

I'd rather have the students than the locals. In Bristol, one of the top universities in the country, their home life isn't directed towards violence. They'd use their lawyers before they'd use their fists. It works in our favour. We can deal with them if they want to argue but you can't argue with an idiot with a glass (int., McDonnell, 27/5/97).

Further, the manager of the RooBar on Whiteladies Road (formerly the Steam Tavern), the self-proclaimed 'most popular student pub in Bristol', commented that:

I've got absolutely no problem with the students whatsoever. Most of the staff are students. We love the way this place is, i.e. 80% students. They know (a) how to have a good time (b) they've always got money to spend despite the rumours they've got no money, and (c) they're never any trouble (int., Snoopy, 29/5/97).

The promotions manager of Club IQ, Bristol's second largest night-club, suggested that it was necessary to understand that students act differently:

The problem we have with students is they're intelligent. They get into trouble with the door men who aren't intelligent and the doorman grabs a student 'cos they think there's a problem and the student tries to be rational with them. But when the doorman grabs hold of you and says 'you're leaving', you say, 'certainly sir' and walk out of the door. You never, ever, try to be intelligent with these people (int., Marlow, 28/5/97).

Another manager seemed to be aware of the difference between a student and non-student pub:

I wouldn't say we're geared to specifically being a student pub. Student pubs tend to be wooden benches and look as though there's not much money in it and everyone sits in a corner and shares a pint of bitter (int., McDonnell, 27/5/97).

The above quotes seem to indicate that those who provide student-oriented entertainment understand 'studenthood' as a different type of experience which requires an understanding of their specific needs. They also illustrate that traditional students are a preferred consumer group because they 'know how to have a good time', 'they've always got money to spend', and 'they're never any trouble'.

### **The Student Entertainment Infrastructure within the City**

These informal and formal processes, then, create a student-oriented/-only entertainment infrastructure within the city. This infrastructure creates a distinctive time and space of student leisure activity within the city.

#### **(1) The Temporal Construction of the Entertainment Infrastructure**

It was noted in Chapter 5 that because of the nature of the university calendar, for many students the distinctive aspect of student life is the ability to maintain a more fluid allocation of time between work and leisure. This points towards what Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, 29) suggested: "...students certainly live and mean to live in a special time and space. Their studenthood momentarily frees them from family life and working life". One student commented on this temporal fluidity:

I think there's a lot of free time. I'm not very good at getting down to work until somebody is standing over me and making me. So you tend to go out and not think about your work till the pressure is on. But then that's university (2nd year, female, Geography student, UB).

Students, then, have more freedom to flout the distinctions between weekends and weekdays, day and night, work and playtime (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 29). In this sense, the student infrastructure is characterised by high levels of mid-week activity with the most popular 'student-only' night-clubs occurring on a Tuesday (Odyssey, Lakota) and Wednesday (Wedgies, Club IQ). One manager commented upon the different time patterns for student socialising:

We saw students as a niche because they're there and they go out and drink more and go out all week compared to other people of that age group. They don't blitz it on a weekend so its nice for us to be busy midweek. They can fill in that lull before the evening rush. We are going to try and hit that market because students do get off at 4pm or 5pm. If you're in the liquor game you have to realise that when you're a student you'll drink more than you will ever again more regularly. When you've got a job you have more money but you have more responsibilities and outgoings (int., Wells, 27/5/97).

#### **(2) The Spatial Construction of the Entertainment Infrastructure**

The student entertainment infrastructure is also spatially distinct. As suggested earlier, this infrastructure is constituted through spatial practice which involves the informal colonisation of venues and formal provision by entertainment providers. It is the

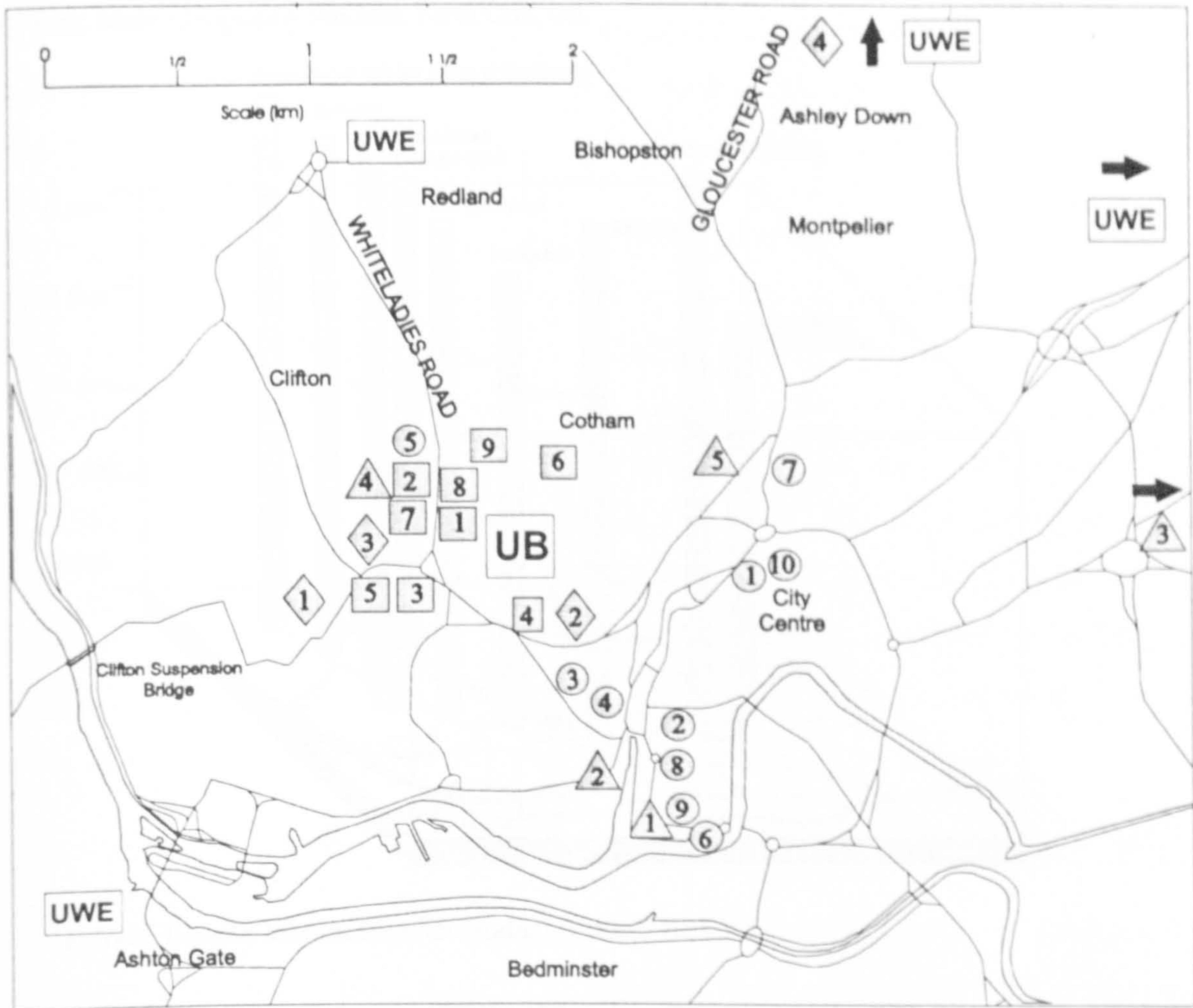
regulated movement throughout the entertainment infrastructure which allows traditional students to be identified as a distinctive group within the city. Further, the social space of traditional student culture does not represent "a closed system of social relations but a particular articulation of contacts and influences drawn from a variety of places" (Massey, 1998, 124). In this sense, the seasonally resident student, brings into the city a variety of styles and tastes from other non-local scales.

The infrastructure is spatially concentrated in Bristol. Figure 6.10 represents the main venues within this infrastructure which are heavily clustered around an area which leads from Whiteladies Road to 'The Centre'. These spaces are often linked together to form routes or pathways throughout the city around the main student areas of Whiteladies Road and Gloucester Road. Figure 6.11 visualises such student pathways throughout the city. The first diagram represents a pathway through the student entertainment infrastructure and was extracted from a diary of a first year from UB who itinarised a pub crawl from the Stoke Bishop halls of residence to the city-centre via Whiteladies Road. The second diagram represents a pathway by a mature student from UWE who lived in Bedminster and is illustrative of this student's different relationship within the city outside of the main student infrastructure.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> A similar method was applied by Hollands (1995) in relation to students in the city of Newcastle.

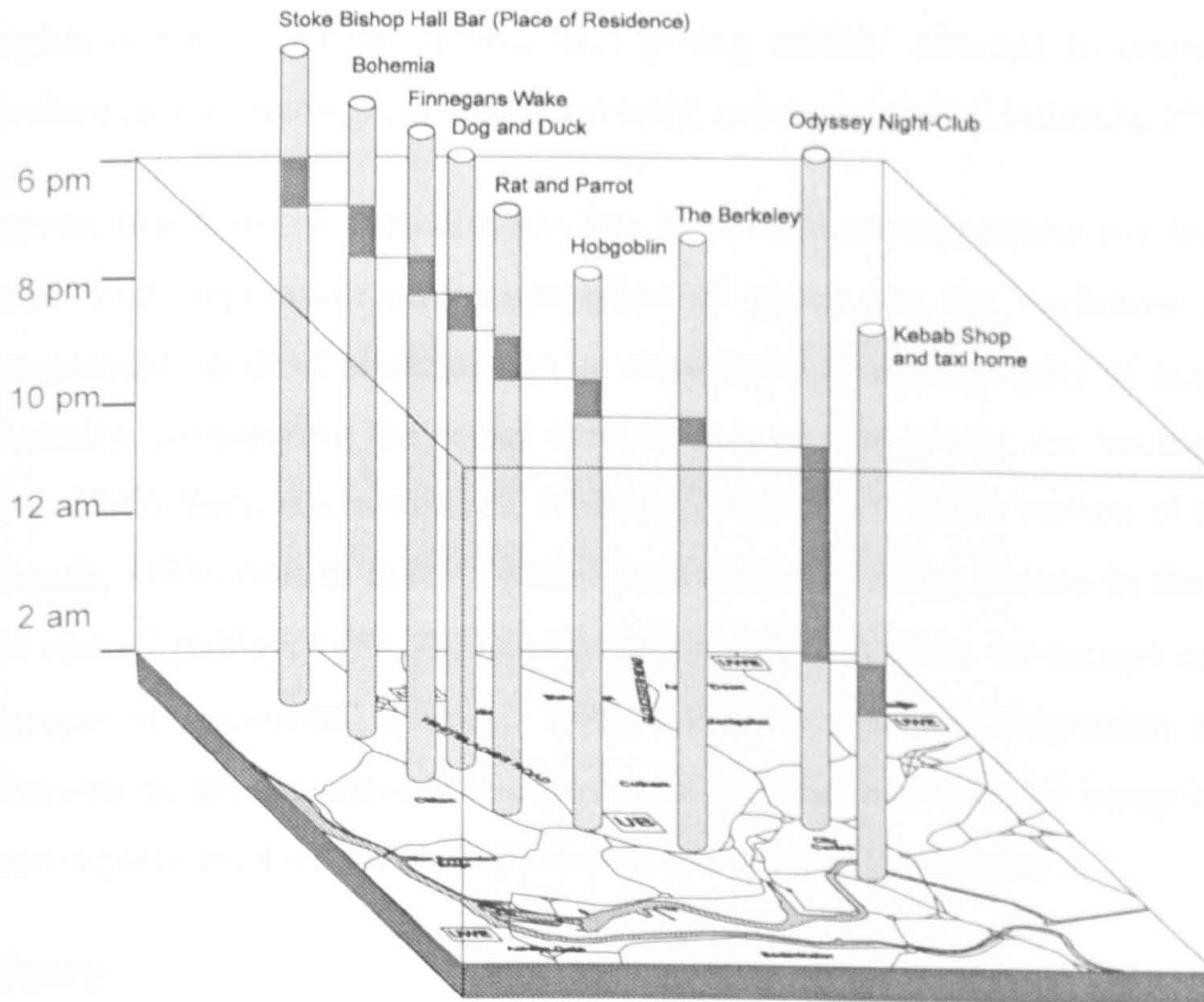
FIGURE 6.10: MAIN VENUES WITHIN THE STUDENT ENTERTAINMENT INFRASTRUCTURE



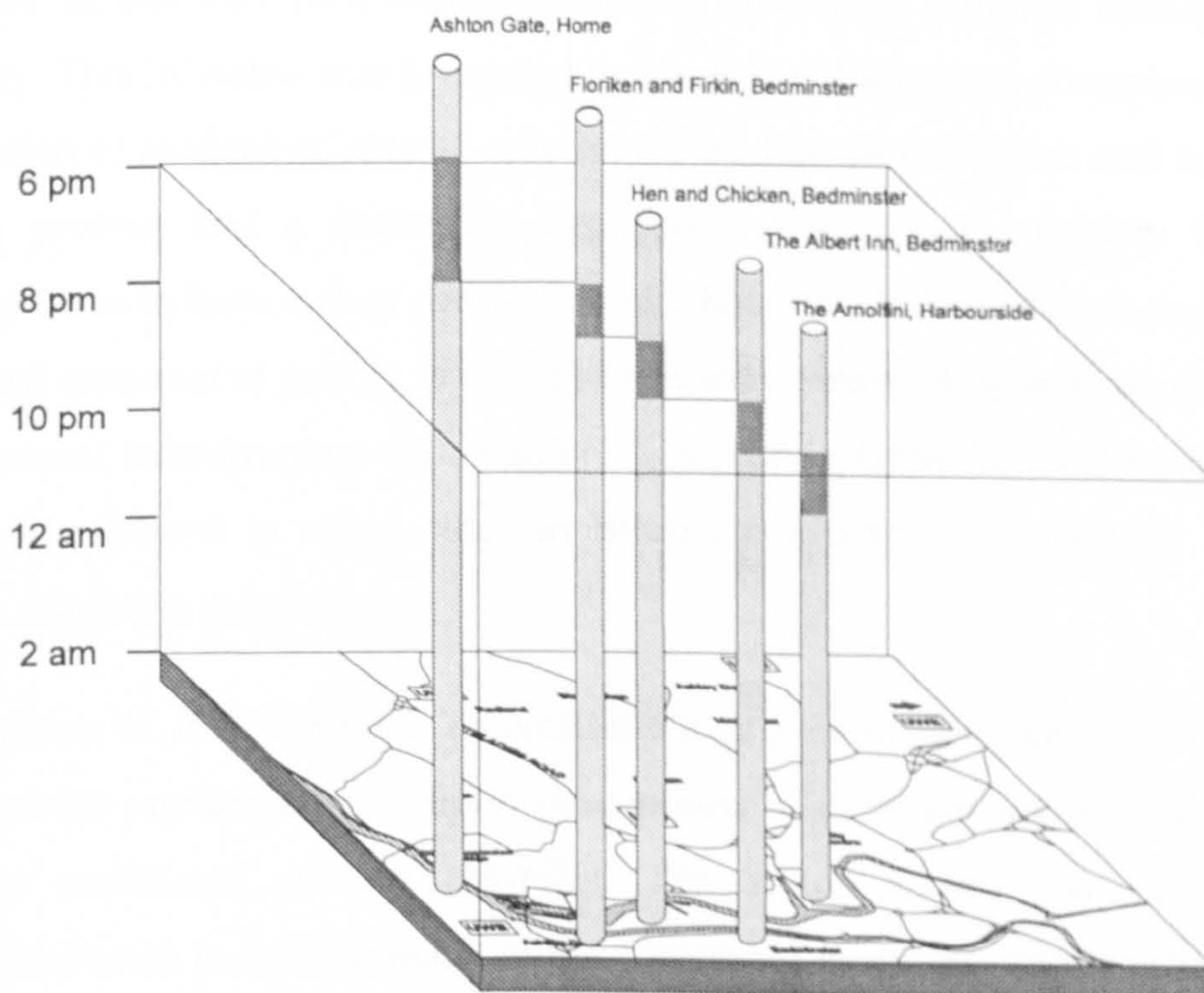
- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>○ NIGHT-CLUBS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Odyssey</li> <li>2. Club IQ</li> <li>3. Wedgies</li> <li>4. The Tube UWESU</li> <li>5. Kickers</li> <li>6. The Thekla</li> <li>7. Lakota</li> <li>8. Steam Rock</li> <li>9. Porthouse</li> <li>10. Bierkeller</li> </ol> | <p>□ PUBS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Fraternity House</li> <li>2. The Roo Bar</li> <li>3. The Berkeley</li> <li>4. Princes Bar</li> <li>5. Square Bar</li> <li>6. The White Bear</li> <li>7. Dog and Duck</li> <li>8. Rat and Parrot</li> <li>9. Finnegans Wake</li> </ol> | <p>◇ UNIVERSITY OWNED FACILITIES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. UBSU (Anson Rooms, Epi and Mandela Bar)</li> <li>2. UB Wickham Theatre</li> <li>3. UB Victoria Rooms</li> <li>4. UWESU - Frenchay (Escape Bar, Sutra, Octagon, Sin, Massif)</li> </ol> <p>△ THEATRE/GALLERY/CINEMA</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Arnolfini</li> <li>2. The Watershed</li> <li>3. The Showcase</li> <li>4. ABC - Whiteladies Road</li> <li>5. The Arts Centre</li> </ol> |
|---|---|--|

FIGURE 6.11: STUDENT PATHWAYS IN THE CITY

1st Year, Male, Geography Student, Term One, UB.



3rd Year, Female, Mature Fine Art Student, Term Two, UWE.



What is the impact of this student infrastructure within the city? Through its distinctive temporal-spatial framework, traditional students can be regarded one of several mini-communities within the divided city (Hollands, 1995). Going-out plays an important part in the construction of this traditional student community. In this sense: "[t]he ritualisation of nights out has become, if you like, young adults' attempt to construct a modern equivalent of 'community', or more correctly, communities" (Hollands, 1995, 14).

However, this form of spatialisation has important consequences for the city and city-centres. Such regulation and segregation of space for the exclusive residential and entertainment needs of students can be considered as a geography of exclusion, or more realistically, considering the social composition of this group, an 'exclusive geography' (Sibley, 1995). Such environments, which give credence to the notion of the divided city (Hollands, 1995) confirm that: "'Spatial purification' is a key feature in the organisation of social space" (Sibley, 1995, 77). In this sense, "[t]he human landscape can be read as a landscape of exclusion" (Sibley, 1995, ix). This seasonal migration of middle-class adolescents to British universities, then, is a significant aspect of many cities in Britain, the consequences of which are explored in more detail in Chapter 8.

### **Summary**

In Bristol there is a student entertainment infrastructure which is comprised of 'pathways' of venues which weave distinctive time-space patterns through certain areas of the city. This infrastructure is created by student colonisation of venues and the formal construction of student-oriented/-only nights by leisure providers and is regulated by a learning process and a desire for association with other students. Student leisure providers seem to have a clear conception of what a student lifestyle is and what students want. Vast amounts of energy is directed towards constructing and marketing a student entertainment infrastructure based upon these conceptions. In fact, with the growth of student populations in many cities in Britain, competition to capture this assumedly lucrative market is increasing.

The existence of this regulated entertainment provision illustrates the extent to which entertainment providers draw upon perceptions of common sets of dispositions which constitute traditional student lifestyles. The above section has shown that these assumptions seem to capture many of the realities of traditional student life as many local

businesses thrive from strategies which are based upon them. This entertainment infrastructure further regulates the use of time and space by traditional students and the creation of distinctive student 'ways of being'. It seems that such students are content with circulating within this entertainment infrastructure and visiting the local pub or neighbouring student houses which minimises on travel and increases the opportunity to meet other students. Such student-only/-oriented leisure spaces also exist to increase student safety and reduce violence. There are important implications of this temporal-spatial framework of student entertainment provision in terms of issues such as the 'divided city'. However, there is a process of 'unlearning the rules' of the student game and maturation which distances the student from this regulated time-space framework.

In general, though, the world of traditional students is not only removed from many other less traditional student groups but also the non-student world. In this sense, they are seasonal immigrants in the city. However, further research is needed to ascertain whether the lifestyle of traditional students represents more isolated and removed leisure activity patterns compared to other groups within the city and whether they have genuinely different entertainment needs.

## **UNDERSTANDING STUDENT CULTURAL CONSUMPTION**

This final section discusses cultural consumption by traditional students and their role in local cultural innovation and vitality. One aspect of traditional student life which is not illuminated by a Bourdieuan framework is the centrality of popular cultural activity. The first part of this section explains that Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) discussed students as the 'Inheritors' within universities which acted as institutions of cultural reproduction. However, despite the lingering connotations of class privilege and social and cultural reproduction within many aspects of traditional student life, it is more profitable to discuss cultural consumption by traditional students through motivations of pleasure-seeking rather than status-building and through popular and marginal cultural forms such as drink, drugs and night-clubbing rather than inherited forms of high or official culture. The rest of this section explores some of these popular cultural forms such as drinking and drugs, night-clubbing and cinema as well as more 'official' cultural forms such as the performing and visual arts. It also explores some of the privileged sites of association in these activity areas which are situated within the student entertainment infrastructure.

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**The Inheritors<sup>15</sup>**

In their discussion on the 'The Inheritors' (1979), Bourdieu and Passeron state that for many students social origin is still the first and foremost determinant of the condition of existence. This is an important influence upon their cultural pursuits: "[s]tudents from different backgrounds set themselves apart no less by the orientation of their aesthetic interests" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 19). Thus:

In every area of culture in which it is measured - be it the theatre, music, painting, jazz or the cinema - students have a richer and more extensive knowledge the higher the social origin (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 17).

Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) highlight that the bourgeois student - the dilettante - has less dependence on academic disciplines and syllabuses and instead indulges in intellectual exoticism - a position which the university most highly rewards. What they call *la culture 'libre'*, certain forms of know-how and familiarity in relation to extra-curricular activities, is unequally distributed among students from different backgrounds. The children of the haute bourgeoisie conceal a cultural good will; a 'conformist anti-conformism'. As Fowler (1997, 23) reiterates:

Moreover, behind the apparently random leisure choices of the students of the dominant class lie all their early family training, a training which disciplines their interest in artistic form even in the most popular genres like cinema and jazz. From these experiences and modes of thought emerges an ethos of precariousness and irony, a fascination with the exotic and a desire for distinction.

For the children of the dominated class, in contrast: "lacking the close familial contact with consecrated culture, their experience of mass culture is informed by a popular aesthetic (Fowler, 1997, 24). For example, in the case of cinema, all students may have an equal interest in this cultural pursuit, yet they may differentiate themselves according to more subtle divisions such as preference for 'art house' or mainstream films.

Therefore, cultural knowledge and competence amongst students can be highly variable because of the variety of social histories and trajectories which have shaped them before they reach university and the many different sources of knowledge acquisition. "For

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<sup>15</sup> This sub-heading is taken from the title of Bourdieu and Passeron's book, *Les Héritiers* (1979).



individuals from the most deprived backgrounds, the school remains the one and only path to culture" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 21). Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) suggest that such a purely scholastic culture is inferior because of its generality in contrast to the distinctiveness of bourgeois familial culture. Those from the most privileged classes are able to acquire an extensive culture as if by osmosis and simultaneously can deny any persuasion involved in this acquisition.<sup>16</sup> For those from the least privileged social backgrounds, the acquisition of culture at university is an *acculturation* - a denial of their class of origin and an assimilation into a middle-class way of life.

The point in stressing the importance of social advantages in terms of shaping student lifestyles is that they weigh so heavily because they are always cumulative in that they exist in many layers such as parent occupation, geographical origin, age, gender, race and so forth. The strength of these determinisms stems from the inability to recognise them as determinisms; hence, "everything takes place as if the only people excluded were those who excluded themselves" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 27). There are no obvious rules to this world and nobody within it would claim the existence of a rule book. It is almost an intractable situation of inequality: "the potency of social factors of inequality is such that even if the equalisation of economic resources could be achieved, the university system would not cease to consecrate inequalities by transforming social privilege into individual gifts or merits" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 27).

Clearly, all these hypotheses linking social origin and cultural life are largely discursive. They should be tempered against a backdrop of how they manifest themselves within each individual. For example, many students actively deny social origin such as the 'ethnic-sloanes' exiling themselves from their previous world of metropolitan bohemia.

Traditionally, then, universities have a role to play in the inculcation and transmission of certain forms of culture and ways of being to the student population. Lash (1993, 196) comments that the education system produces not cultural objects but consumers of art to match the cultural products. For Lash, the education system does generate a habitus - in this case an 'art habitus'. In this sense, the education system mediates between the spheres of production and consumption; it inculcates sets of classificatory schema for consumers to decipher works of art (Lash, 1989, 242). Universities, then, have a role to play as one of

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<sup>16</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 20.

many cultural institutions which disseminate tastes within a hierarchy between high and low culture (Fornas, 1995, 94). In this sense, it was suggested in Chapter 3 that the cultural role of the university can be regarded as a keeper of the canon, by disseminating forms of consecrated culture.

Many of the older and more traditional universities within the British higher education sector, such as the University of Bristol, can be associated with this cultural reproduction and inheritance. As Chapter 1 discussed, the qualitative and quantitative growth of students within the British higher education sector has been highly unequal and it seems likely that in the post-Dearing era, and with the introduction of tuition fees, many British universities will not continue the transition from elite to democratic institution. In this sense, "there is something like an 'admission fee' that each field imposes and which defines eligibility for participation, thereby selecting certain agents over others" (Wacquant, 1992, 107) and so gaining access to a university place has a specific logic of entry based upon the possession of particular social and economic capital. Certain British universities, then, have resisted change and contain a cohort of traditional students who exhibit social backgrounds and trajectories. Further, the institutional atmosphere of some British universities reinforces this selection process of students. Earlier in this chapter it was noted that UB, and to a lesser extent UWE, contains a large proportion of traditional students. Such traditional students are connected with an enduring image of the bourgeois world of high culture. Yet, can the contemporary cohort of traditional students still be defined as cultural inheritors?

### **Still the Inheritors?**

The ability of the university to inculcate taste hierarchies and cultural capital is weaker today because of the intrusion of new groups into the university and the proliferation and encroachment of adjacent taste producers and cultural consecrators.<sup>17</sup> The growth of universities has challenged and broken their former internal logic and reproduction strategies (Bourdieu, 1988). Universities are relegated to only one of many cultural institutions within the cultural industries and should be recast in the light of the rejection of many consecrated forms of culture and the valorisation of other 'popular' forms of

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<sup>17</sup> Echoing Bender's (1988, 1996) comments in Chapter 1, the university now sits alongside other producers of knowledge. In a similar way, it will sit alongside many other cultural institutions.

cultural activity. As Part One of the thesis discussed, the university is also employing accumulating capital in less canonised areas of cultural activity such as multi-media, popular music in an effort to maintain and update its role as a consecrator of culture.

So what are the current forms of cultural consumption pursued by the traditional student? There is a common perception that those who have attained higher levels of education are larger and more diverse consumers of culture and the arts. In this sense, DiMaggio (1991, 144) stressed the link between education and cultural demand:

The major predictor of arts consumption, of course, is educational attainment. Indeed, it seems reasonable to assume that most of the increase in cultural demand stems from the vast expansion of educational attainment of the 1960s, which resulted in the mass production of arts consumers.

This creates a particular type of consumer, what DiMaggio (1991, 144) calls *stratification without segmentation*:

Highly educated people are more likely to report going to the movies and enjoying rock, folk, and rhythm-and-blues music. John P. Robinson, et al. (1985) called this the "more-more principle": People who attend or like presentations of any kind of art are more likely to attend or like any other" (ibid.).

To what extent do traditional students represent the 'more-more' principle? Johansson and Miegel (1992, 195) make a useful dichotomy, between lifestyle values based upon *security and belonging* which are expressed through the consumption of mainstream cultural forms, and those based upon *development and transcendence* which are expressed through more distinct cultural forms and tastes:

[t]hose young people with higher education and of higher class background do tend, nevertheless, to emphasize the importance of development as opposed to security more than individuals of lower education and of lower class background. Yet the major differences are to be found along the gender dimension, where we can identify a large number of values and value orientations tied to gender differences (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 226).

However, I would suggest that through their desire for association, traditional students demonstrate lifestyle values based upon *security and belonging* which are expressed through the consumption of mainstream cultural forms and the attendance of student-

oriented/-only venues. In this sense, there are few constructive avenues of enquiry between traditional student life and postmodern theorising on lifestyle. Postmodern lifestyles, as suggested by authors such as Savage et al., 1992, do not fit into any coherent single organising principle but mix an appreciation of both high and popular cultural forms and demonstrate both extravagance and asceticism. What this chapter has suggested is that traditional students prefer leisure spaces which offer common codes of communication and safety from outsiders. Further, as the next section discusses, a rather narrow range of popular cultural activities such as drinking and night-clubbing are the most popular pastimes amongst traditional students.

### **The Importance of Popular Culture**

The main weakness of a Bourdieuan framework in terms of understanding traditional student lifestyles is its under-emphasis of the role of popular culture and its over-emphasis on status-building rather than pleasure seeking within lifestyle formation. Popular cultural pursuits, especially going to the pub and night-clubbing are extremely central to the life of traditional students. Bourdieu and Passeron's (1979) focus upon consumption preferences which create 'social distance' such as theatre, classical music and art-house film have less relevance to the cultural consumption habits of the contemporary adolescent middle-class student.

Much more importance, then, needs to be placed upon popular culture in terms of constructing traditional student lifestyles, especially if one considers that the infrastructure and resources associated with youth and popular cultural forms have increased immensely over the last few decades. This is particularly the case in relation to various dance and music cultures which have gained widespread cultural legitimacy in the last decade. Students, then, have many resources available to them in the contemporary city outside the university as sites for lifestyle formation compared to the time of Bourdieu and Passeron's (1979) analysis dating from the 1960s and 1970s.

In this sense, it is more profitable to draw upon other theories which recognise the importance of popular culture in the construction of lifestyle as discussed in Chapter 5 (for example, Fiske, 1989; Willis, 1990; Thornton, 1995; McRobbie, 1994). Further, there is a need to enhance the value of popular cultural capital and argue that artistic and cultural value exists outside of the fields of bohemia and modernism (Fowler, 1997).

A comparison of some recent figures from the Henley Centre on participation in selected activity areas with those for Bristol students is illustrative of the widespread participation in many popular cultural forms:

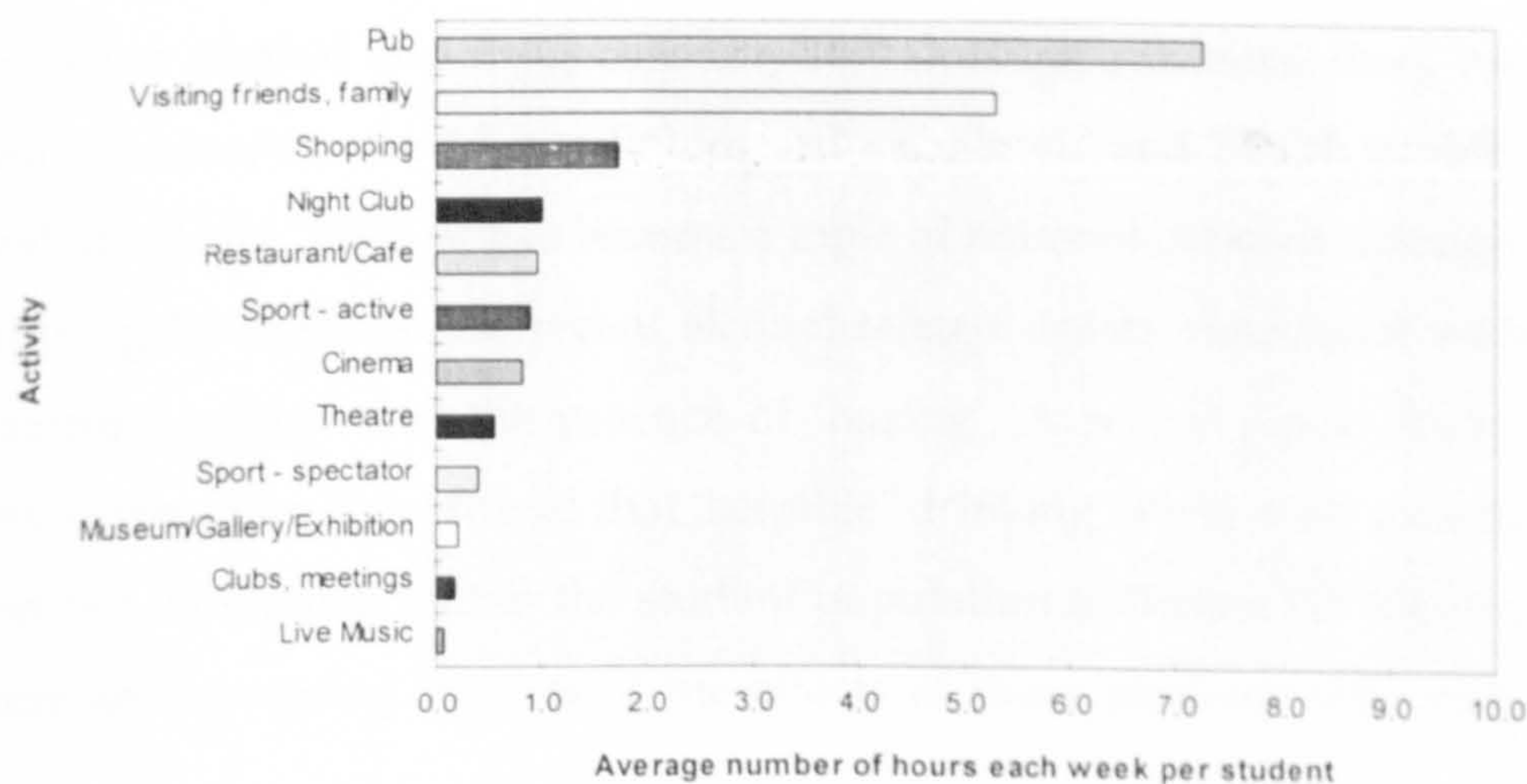
TABLE 6.1: % PARTICIPATING IN VARIOUS ACTIVITIES OVER PREVIOUS THREE MONTHS<sup>18</sup>

|  | Pub | Night Clubs | Cinema | Live Music | Museum /Gallery | Theatre |
|--|-----|-------------|--------|------------|-----------------|---------|
| HENLEY CENTRE SURVEY (16-24 YEAR OLDS) | 82  | 70          | 72     | 16         | 23              | 21      |
| BRISTOL STUDENT SURVEY                 | 90  | 81          | 65     | 46         | 31              | 28      |

The above data sets, although not directly comparable, illustrate that, in general, students mirror, yet enhance, the preference for popular rather than high cultural activities such as night-clubbing, cinema and night-clubbing amongst young people.

The following chart reinforces this preference for popular culture amongst students. It was derived from analysis of diaries totalling over 4000 student hours and indicates the main cultural activities of students outside the home. Overwhelmingly, the most popular activity was visiting the pub. The other most popular activity was visiting student friends and family which reinforces the desire for association. The following sections, which mainly draw upon a questionnaire survey of over 4300 nights-out by Bristol students, as well as diary-work, focus groups and interviews with students, explore some of these activity areas and discuss some of the privileged consumption sites within these areas.

FIGURE 6.12: STUDENT LEISURE TIME-USE IN BRISTOL: AWAY FROM HOME



<sup>18</sup> Figures for Bristol student survey are only for a one month period.

### Students and Drinking

The Henley Centre states that going to the pub is the most popular out-of-home leisure activity in Britain, with men and those from the 16-24 age group being the highest participants.<sup>19</sup> There is no doubting that going to the pub is also the most prominent leisure activity away from home for students as Figure 6.12 shows. In fact, drinking has always been a central element of student culture. Silver and Silver (1997, 111) explain student drinking in the following way:

There are peer-pressures to drink, and the bar - rather than the political party or the campaign, the concert hall or even the disco - has become for many students the balancing focus for their studies, part-time jobs and tensions. Drinking and getting drunk are for some students a personal and collective response to campus and social pressures, and to some extent an acceptance of traditions associated in the past.

Silver and Silver (1997), then, associate student drinking, in part, with escapism from the difficulties of student life: "The balance struck is repeatedly described as working hard and playing hard - 'playing' often associated with drinking" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 104). Silver and Silver (1997, 111) also raise concerns of excessive drinking:

The prominence, throughout the history of higher education, of alcohol as an element in the public image of student behaviour raises other difficulties in tracing student experience. Drinking is both a public and private activity, and the prevalence of drinking becomes confused with the question of excessive drinking.

Excessive alcohol and drug consumption amongst students, then, has become a major concern because of evidence linking it to academic and health problems (MacLeod and Graham-Rowe, 1997). It has become a topic of national concern through the issue of binge drinking by freshers and recent alcohol-related deaths associated with North American fraternity culture and the practice of 'hazing'. A recent report from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne found that 'sensible' drinking levels were exceeded by 61% of men and 48% of women within the student population in Britain (D'Alessio, 1996, 4). Further, there are increasing worries of the effects of those students who mix drink and drugs,

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<sup>19</sup> Leisure Futures, 1995, 2, 82.

especially since on most British campuses alcohol is cheaper compared to the city-centre pubs and other harder drugs are generally available (Moreton, 1995).

However, student drinking is also driven by the increase in city-centre licensed venues and corporate strategies which heavily market students. The Firkin Brewery is the best example of such student-based corporate strategies. Student drinking is also associated with new forms of music, dance and drug cultures and, to a large extent, hedonistic pleasure seeking and the desire to meet other students. It is important to acknowledge that "drink, and perhaps drug use, plays a central role in [the] process of [student] initiation" (Hollands, 1995, 30). Further, Hollands (1995, 34) comments that the consumption of alcohol and drugs for many students can be understood as a ritual within an emerging 'risk culture' of youth rather than signifying a transition to adulthood. This draws upon notions of a separate lifestage and attitude such as Generation X discussed in Chapter 4, which, because of its apathy and hedonism has many parallels with student life. The following diary extracts reveal some aspects of student drinking:

2ND YEAR, MALE, GEOGRAPHY STUDENT (UB): SATURDAY-SUNDAY, TERM ONE

|         |   |                       |                  |
|---------|---|-----------------------|------------------|
| 12 pm   | Have breakfast, watch TV                    | alone                 | my flat          |
| 1 pm    | Have a shower                               | alone                 | my flat          |
| 1.30 pm | Go to the pub, have lunch                   | flatmates             | The Clifton Pub  |
| 2.30 pm | Go home, read, listen to radio              | alone                 | my flat          |
| 5 pm    | Play computer games                         | flatmates             | my flat          |
| 6.30 pm | watch TV                                    | "                     | "                |
| 7.30 pm | Went out, Penny Farthing Pub, drank         | flatmates and friends | Whiteladies Road |
| 9 pm    | Went to the off-license                     | "                     | "                |
| 9.30 pm | Went to the Steam Tavern Pub                | "                     | "                |
| 11 pm   | Went to Kickers. Drank and danced           | "                     | "                |
| 1 am    | Left Kickers and walked home, got some food | flatmates             | "                |
| 1.30 am | Watched video of 'Match of the Day'         | flatmates             | my flat          |
| 2.30 am | Went to bed - sleep                         | "                     | "                |

1ST YEAR, MALE, GEOGRAPHY STUDENT (UB): FRIDAY-SATURDAY, TERM TWO

|         |   |                 |       |
|---------|---|-----------------|-------|
| 1pm     | Revision  | alone           | Halls |
| 5pm     | Played on computer  | alone           | "     |
| 6pm     | Dinner  | friends         | "     |
| 7pm     | Chatted to people etc.  | "               | "     |
| 9pm     | went to the bar, started drinking.<br>Talked in shared manner | "               | "     |
| 11.30pm | Got off with girl   | "               | "     |
| 12am    | vomiting  | "               | "     |
| 12.30am | sleeping  | alone           | "     |
| 8.30am  | Got up, breakfast   | friends         | "     |
| 10am    | studying  | alone           | "     |
| 1pm     | lunch   | Other residents | "     |
| 2pm     | Quick game of frisbee   | friends         | "     |
| 3pm     | Studying  | alone           | "     |
| 4pm     | computer game   | alone           | "     |
| 6.30pm  | Cooked dinner, watched<br>Superman, drank beer                | some mates      | Halls |
| 8pm     | Bar again   | "               | "     |
| 10pm    | Back to room, reading a book,<br>drank some port + chatted    | friends         | "     |

The survey of Bristol students suggested that there is a spatial concentration of pub use. In particular, students from certain courses showed a tendency to visit certain pubs. The following discusses pub-use by students from four different courses. Tourism Management students from UWE's Frenchay campus mainly visited pubs on Gloucester Road, the most popular being The Bristol Flyer. Other popular Gloucester Road pubs included The Hobgoblin, The Show Boat and The Sportsman. None of these pubs specifically target students, although the Bristol Flyer is also a live comedy venue which may increase its appeal to a student audience. Many UWE-Frenchay students also visited pubs around Whiteladies Road such as the RooBar, the Dog and Duck and The Berkeley. This supports the idea that the area is either home to, or attracts, students from both universities.

Fine Art students from UWE-Bower Ashton visibly demonstrated their different relationship with the city through their choice of pubs. The most popular were The Coopers Arms, The Albert Inn and The Florikin and Firkin which are all south of the river in Bedminster and Ashton Gate. None of these have a student atmosphere apart from the connotations of the Firkin brewery with the student market. Further, The Watershed was another frequently cited pub by the Fine Art students with its appeal resulting from a mixture of location and 'arty' atmosphere. The RooBar and the Berkeley still featured



amongst pubs visited by Fine Art students which, again, reaffirms the Whiteladies Road area as a ubiquitously popular student area.

Geography students from UB demonstrated the greatest clustering in terms of choice of pubs. Those which were cited as the most frequently visited were all in the Whiteladies Road area. Overwhelmingly, the most popular were The RooBar and The Berkeley. Others included The Dog and Duck, The Albion, The White Bear and The Epi Bar at UBSU, The Hobgoblin, The Penny Farthing and Finnegans Wake. It seems that the Geography students have a strong tendency to live, work and socialise in the Whiteladies Road area.

The notable feature of pub choices amongst Drama students at UB was the popularity of The Princess Bar, a pub adjacent to the Drama Department and The Glynne Wickham Theatre, the departmental rehearsal and performance space. Through conversations with staff and students from Drama, it has been explained that the Princess Bar acts as a site for post-rehearsal and production socialising for cast, crew and audience. Other pubs in the Whiteladies Road area were also popular which included The White Bear, The EPI Bar, the Berkeley and The RooBar.

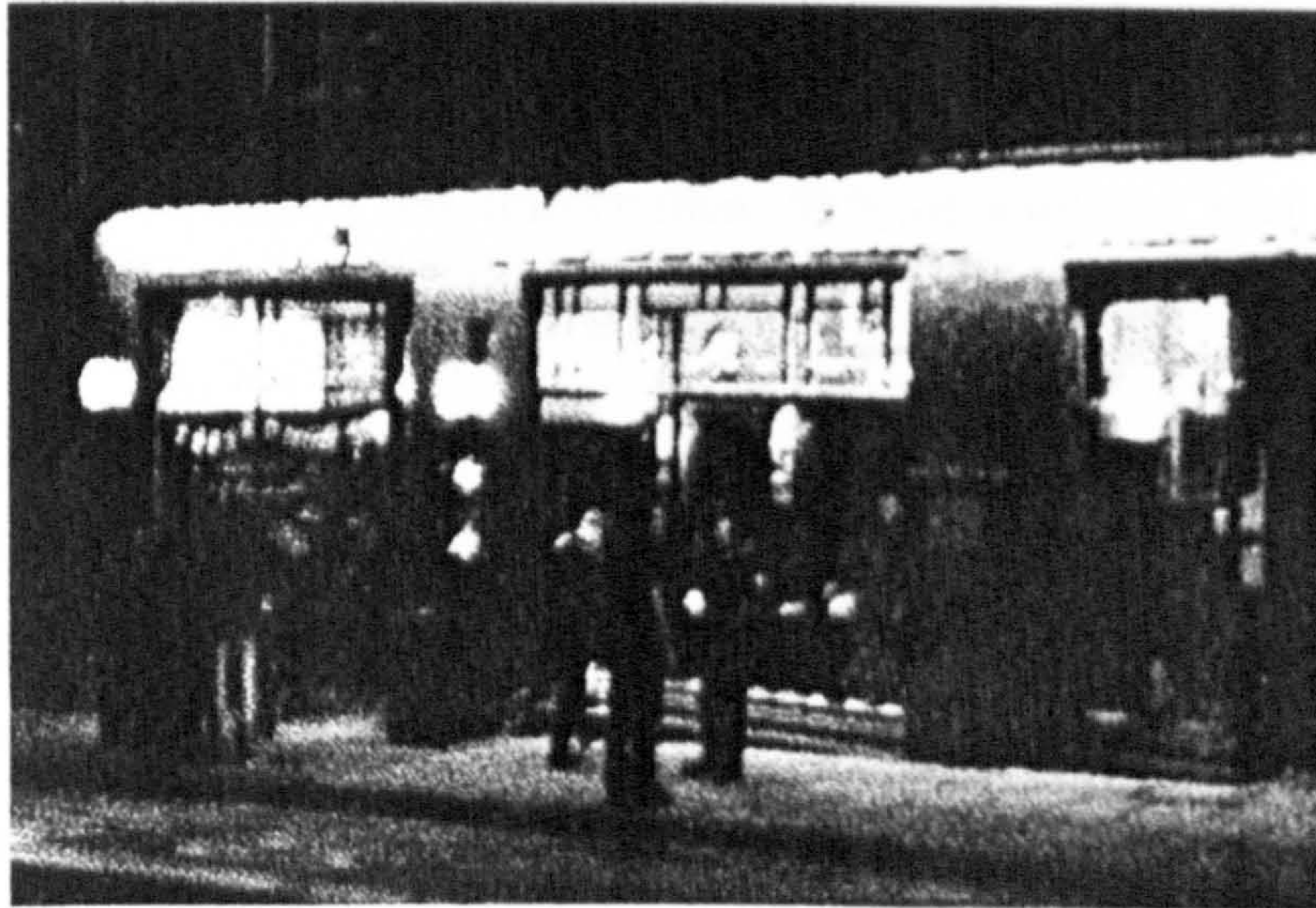
What is evident from the survey is that although choice of pub is largely dictated by propinquity to the student home and place of study, certain pubs in the Whiteladies Road area, in particular The RooBar and The Berkeley, seem popular with most students regardless of these two geographical variables. The manager of The RooBar, an 'Auzzie' theme pub, (formerly The Steam Tavern) claimed that he runs the most popular student pub in the city. With regard to the students which were surveyed, this is true. However, apart from its location just off Whiteladies Road and its large capacity, there are no clear reasons why it has become the most popular. As the manager expressed:

This is a massive student pub mainly because of the staff attitude. It's very easy going; all of the staff are students, 50% UWE 50%, Bristol (UB) apart from the management team. One of the attractions of this place is that it's so easy going. That's what attracts people. For some reason we've always been incredibly lucky. We don't do any deals for the students; we can appeal to the students without offering them any deals. We are starting pound a pint deals but it hasn't been necessary before. It might be now with the new competition (int., Snoopy, 29/5/97).

There is a similar ambivalence about the popularity of The Berkeley pub:

### Students in the City (1): The Berkeley Pub, The Triangle, Clifton

The Berkeley pub was opened by the rapidly expanding Wetherspoons chain in early 1996. Located opposite UB's Wills Memorial Tower and Law Department, it is one of the closest pubs to the main UB campus. Apart from serving cheaper beer than many of the surrounding pubs and offering student meal-deals (2 for a fiver), the pub does not directly target students. In fact, because of its light spacious atmosphere, lack of juke box, pool tables and video games it could be considered an unpopular destination amongst students. However, because of its larger than average capacity, and location as an after-exam and work meeting place and stopping-off point between the more pub-intensive areas of Whiteladies Road and the centre, it has become very popular. As the manager explained:



"Clifton is considered one of the nicer places to be in; one of the best places in England to live especially with the university opposite. Wetherspoons just came here and didn't do any research on the market. But university students form about 40% of our term-time trade. We know this figure from when the students aren't here. Half of the people in here during the day time are students.

"You can see that, on a lunch time there's always a buzz, there's always something going on. This isn't really a locals pub. Near the exams, and especially on open day, we had a lot of locals coming in here saying they wouldn't have come in if they'd had known. This pub functions as a stopping off trade between Whiteladies Road and the centre especially on a weekend."

### Drug Use

One aspect of student life which has received little or no attention is drug-use. This largely stems from the fact that: "it is impossible to estimate the extent of drug abuse among students, in Britain or elsewhere..." and as a result, "the picture with regard to drugs is too elusive to be considered here" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 113). However, the widespread use of drugs in Britain, especially by young people, is well documented. For example, the Institute for the Study of Drug Dependency, who surveyed 700 15-16 year olds in the north-west of England, found that over 50% of people in the survey had taken drugs. As a result, they commented that: "over the next few years... non-drug taking

adolescents will be a minority group" (Independent, 25/6/95, 13). Further a survey at Manchester University found that half of the teenage population had used drugs and commented that: "cannabis and ecstasy were an integral part of modern youth life" (Hunt, 1995). Such widespread reports of drug-use amongst young people in Britain and in particular the tragic death of Leah Betts - the 53rd person to die of an ecstasy-related death in 1995, has instilled a moral panic in Britain concerning youth and drug-use.

It can be assumed that students, as a generally young population with relatively high levels of disposable income and free time, will mirror and possibly enhance these drug-use trends. A report from the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne found that out of over 3000 students surveyed across ten universities, 59% of students had sampled illegal drugs, with cannabis, LSD and amphetamines being the most popular (D'Alessio, 1996, 4).

Drug use, then, plays an important role in student culture. Drugs such as cannabis, and increasingly amphetamines, acid and ecstasy, have high levels of consumption amongst certain sections of the student community. Smoking cannabis in particular, is a cultural norm for many young people and its use is particularly widespread amongst the student population. The use and supply of drugs seems highly regulated within the student community with certain student houses acting as focal points for purchasing and there seems to be a wide availability of various types of hash and grass and also amphetamines, ecstasy and LSD. Further, there is evidence of students earning up to £1000 per month selling cannabis to fellow students which is a very easy way to avoid the financial hardships of university life (Baty, 1998). However, there are growing concerns of the effects of drug use amongst students, especially in terms of its effects on academic performance.

### **The Role of the Students' Union**

As discussed in Chapter 3, Students' Unions often play a central role in the social and drinking lives of students. They demonstrate the desire to cater for student alcohol consumption through cheaper bar prices. This is also in an attempt to help subsidise other student services from alcohol sales and offer students a safe environment in which to socialise. One way in which Students' Unions are able to achieve these lower prices is through membership of NUS Services Ltd (NUSSL) which acts as a purchasing

consortium for goods sold at Students' Unions. NUSSL currently has an alcohol purchasing agreement with the Bass-Scottish-Courage brewery.

Silver and Silver (1997, 111) comment that Students' Union bars were everywhere widely recognised as the most important focus of student socialising. However, UBSU sells just over 500 000 pints of beer per year<sup>20</sup> and UWESU just under 400 000<sup>21</sup> which are relatively low consumption levels if they are compared to other Students' Unions such as The University of East Anglia who sold more than 800 000 pints (Silver and Silver, 1997, 111).

Students' Union facilities at the two universities in Bristol have specific weaknesses which restrict levels of usage; UBSU's licensed facilities suffer from their poor layout and access - The Mandela Bar is located on the 1st floor and the EPI Bar on the 3rd floor - and UWESU's main licensed facilities at Frenchay suffer from their remoteness. Further, the strength and number of venues competing to attract the student market, especially along the main Whiteladies Road and Gloucester Road thoroughfares, hinders the ability of both Students' Unions to function as the main focal point for the social life of students. Pubs in the main Whiteladies Road area, are able to demonstrate beer sales similar to the Student's Unions. For example, the Berkeley which has a similar capacity to the UBSU bars, sells around 430 000 pints per year.

### Night-Clubs

The phenomenon of night-clubbing, and in its more recent forms of clubbing and raving, has emerged as a central element in the construction of British youth cultural identity over the last decade and is now also an object of great intellectual and media interest.<sup>22</sup> In fact, "the culture of young Britain is now a night-club culture".<sup>23</sup> As Thornton (1996, 3) suggests, "[c]lub cultures are *taste cultures*." Music- and club-based cultures are cultural spheres which allow individualised lifestyles to be expressed and as a result, "[e]ven

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<sup>20</sup> Figures for 1996/97 academic year and include the Halls of Residence. This figure also includes beer sales to non-students during live music gigs at the Anson Rooms adjacent to the Mandela Bar.

<sup>21</sup> Figures for 1996/97 academic year and includes all four UWE sites. This figure includes beer sales to non-students during Sutra.

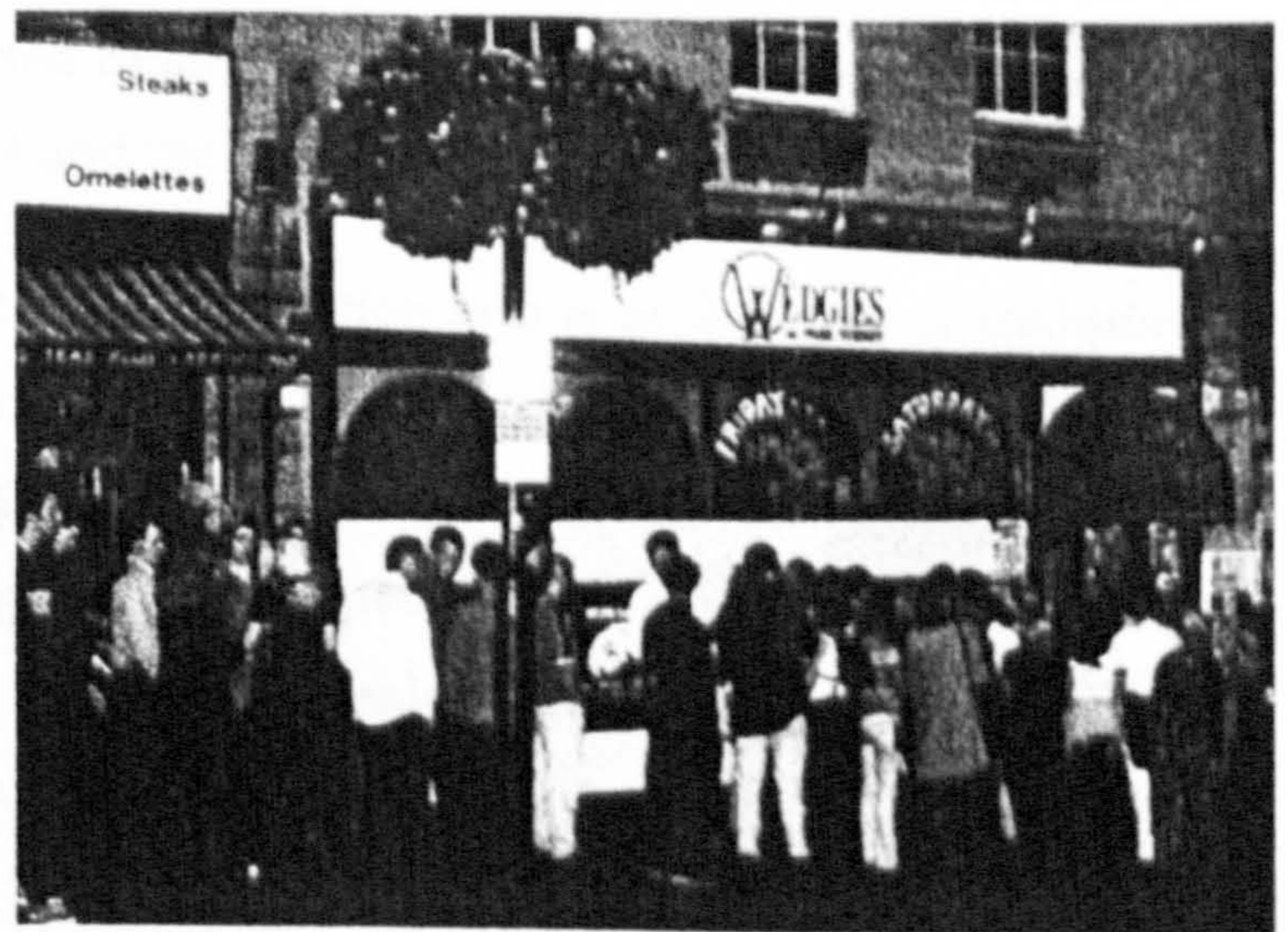
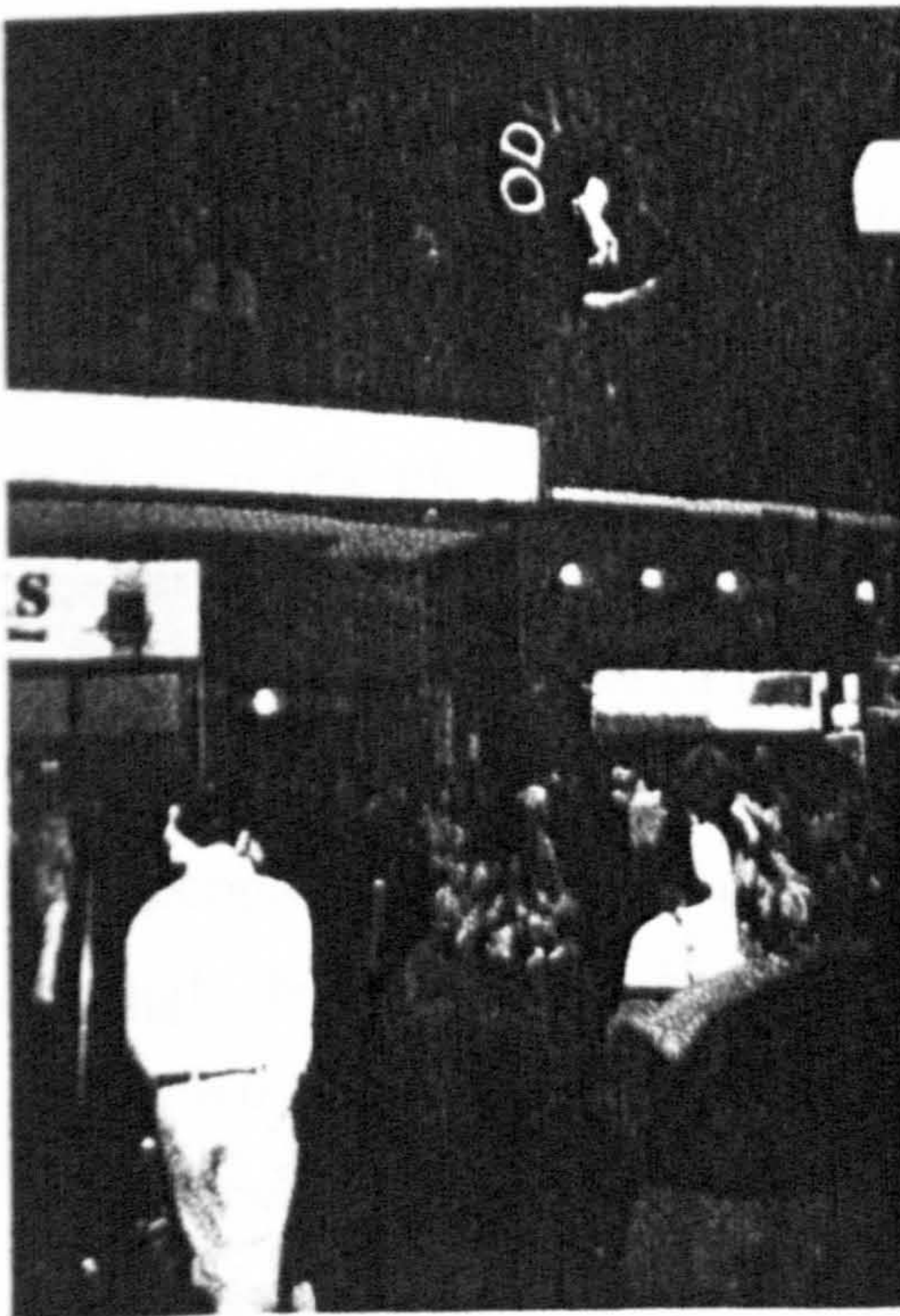
<sup>22</sup> See Thornton (1996) and the many recent magazines devoted to club culture such as MixMag, Muzik, DJ and Jockey Slut.

<sup>23</sup> The Face, 1988, quoted in Hollands, 1995, 3.

though musical taste may not be sufficient to discriminate between different lifestyles, there is no doubt that music is one of the most powerful and influential components of contemporary youth culture" (Johansson and Miegel, 1992, 160).

Night-clubbing was overwhelmingly the most popular activity in the survey of Bristol students. This is not surprising considering the proliferation of dance cultures since the late 1980s and the strength of the clubbing scene in Bristol. In the survey, eight out of ten students indicated that they had been clubbing in the last month. Of those who had been clubbing, an average of between 5 and 6 visits had been made by each student in the month. Seven clubs accounted for three-quarters of all student night-club visits; Odyssey (accounting for 24% of all night-club visits), Wedgies (12%), Club IQ (11%), Kickers (9%), Lakota (8%), Sutra (6%) and Thekla (5%) (Figure 6.13).

FIGURE 6.13: NIGHT-CLUBS AT THE HEART OF THE STUDENT ENTERTAINMENT INFRASTRUCTURE: ODYSSEY AND WEDGIES.



However, night-club participation amongst students is largely comprised of attendance at student-oriented or student-only nights. There are several night-clubs which hold student-only/-oriented nights which cover every night of the week except Sunday. These include The Tube (Wednesday - Saturday), Wedgies (Tuesday, Wednesday), The Steam Rock (Monday - Friday), The Porthouse (Tuesday), Kickers (Monday), Odyssey (Tuesday, Thursday), Club IQ (Tuesday, Thursday), Lakota (Tuesday) the Bierkeller (Friday), Swirl and Mojo at UBSU (Friday) and Sin (Friday) and Massif (Saturday) at UWESU-Frenchay.

Meeting people is the prime motivation behind youthful leisure activities.<sup>24</sup> Night-clubs, then, which offer student-friendly environments, the chance to meet other student friends and late-night drinking and dancing, fulfils most completely the desire for association within student life. Further, as authors such as McRobbie (1984) have commented, dancing and clubbing empowers girls and women and hence student night-clubs are sites which are equally popular amongst men and women.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the night-club market is being affected by the twin processes of fragmentation and specialisation. This explains why larger club-nights at places such as Sutra, Odyssey and Club IQ are unable to sustain large audiences. Increasingly popular are night-clubs which fulfil specific musical tastes. Yet, it seems that many students do not follow such trends and are attracted to large scale student nights because they fulfil the desire for association, shared codes and the possibilities of meeting other students.

If there is one place which epitomises such a situation and is at the apex of traditional student life within the Bristol, it is Odyssey night-club. If there is one time which graphically illustrates the cultural impacts of student in the city it is the Karanga freshers party held at Odyssey on the first night of freshers week (Figure 6.14). A queue of over 3000 people, twenty deep, many to be turned away, makes its way to the doors of the club through the city-centre. Inside, a mixture of formulaic mainstream house-music and weakened and affordable beer raises the expectation and desire for encounter with new conquests and old friends to overwhelming proportions. For nearly 2000 novice-students, this is one of the first, and probably the most memorable, experiences of university life. If

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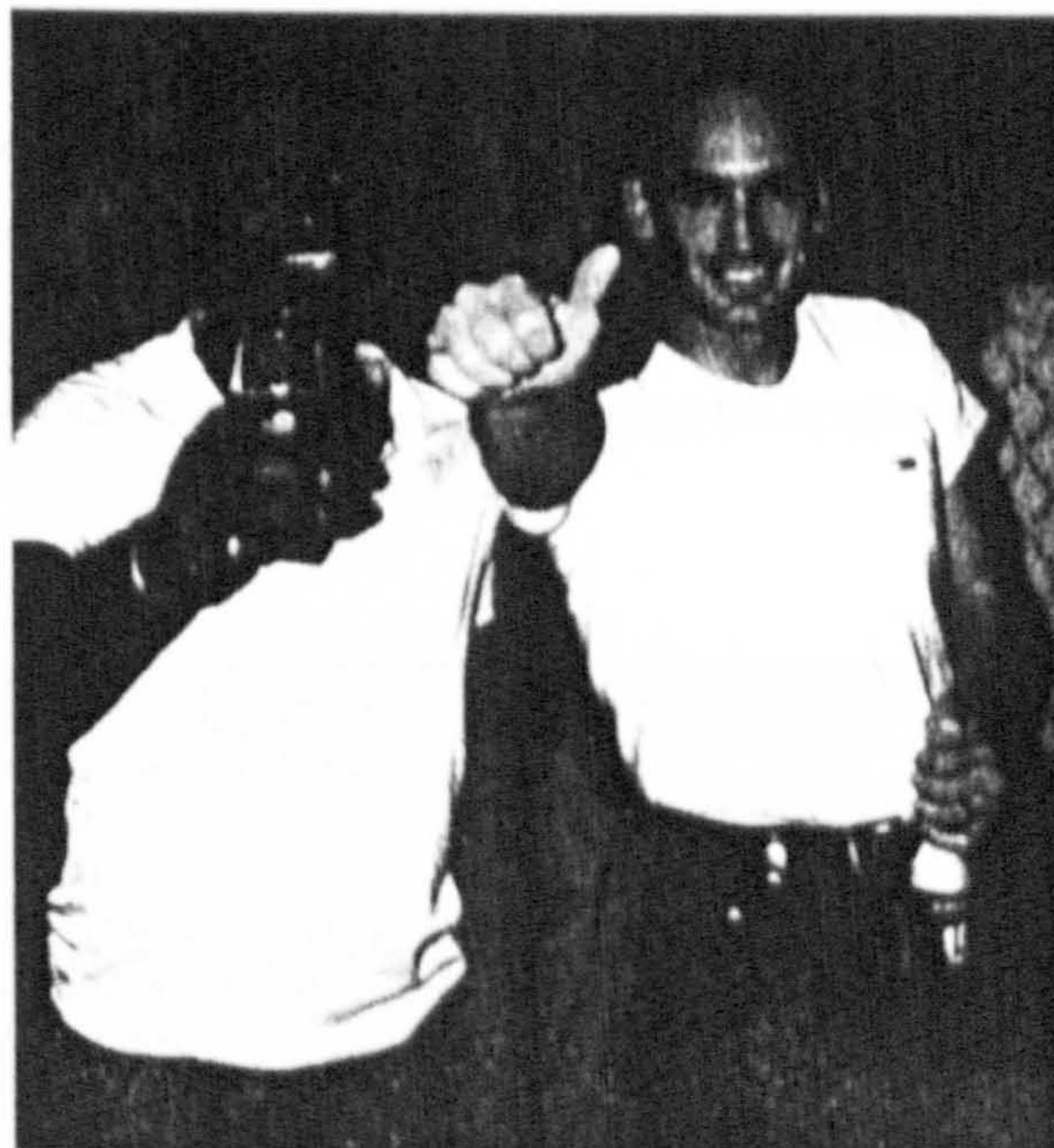
<sup>24</sup> Thornton, 1996, 20.

there was ever a need for affirmation of a moment of association and a display of common dispositions within student life, it exists at Odyssey during freshers week:

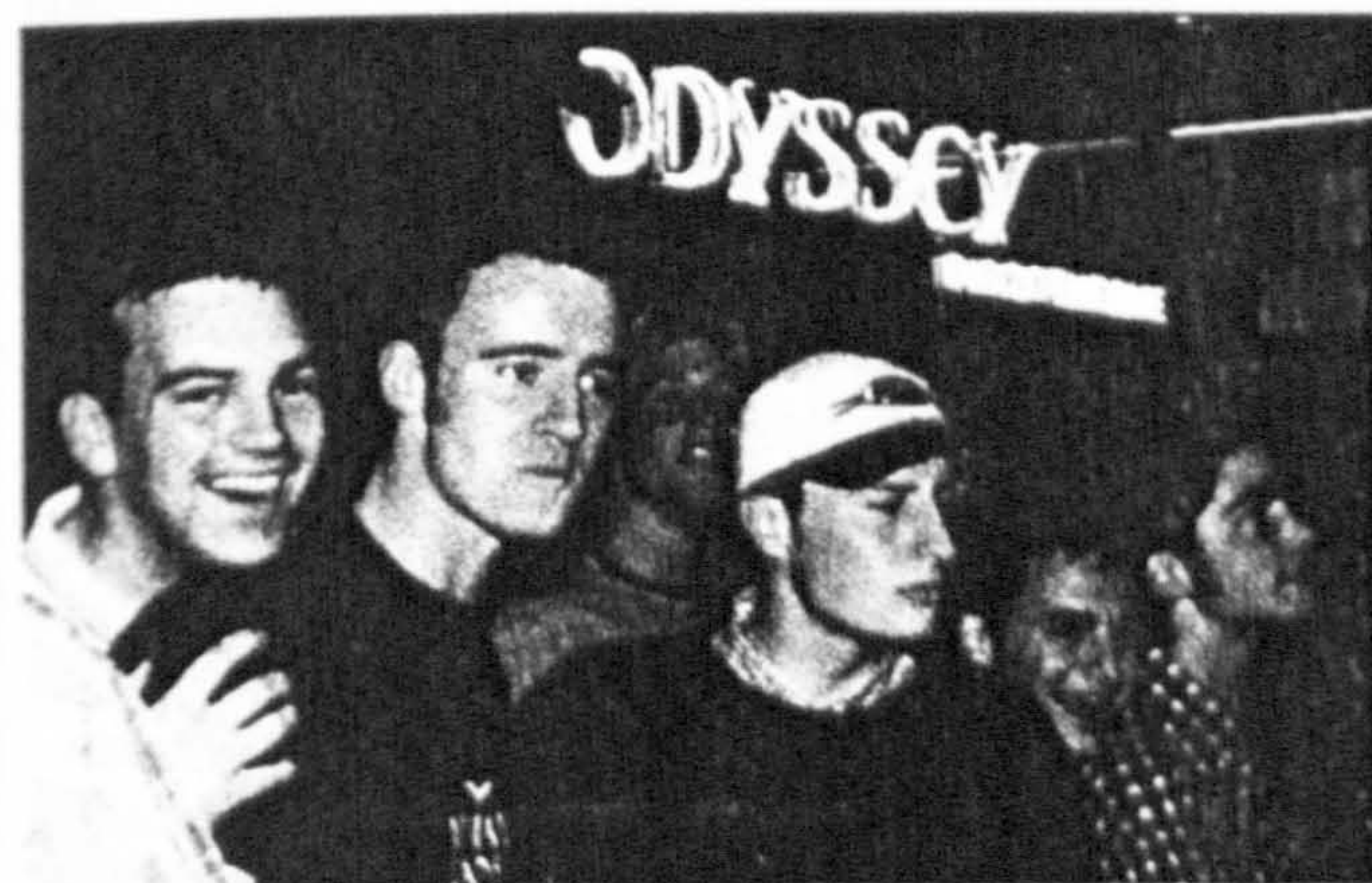
FIGURE 6.14: A NIGHT WITH THE FRESHERS: KARANGA, ODYSSEY, 29/9/97.



9.30 pm The Queue



11.30 pm The Beer



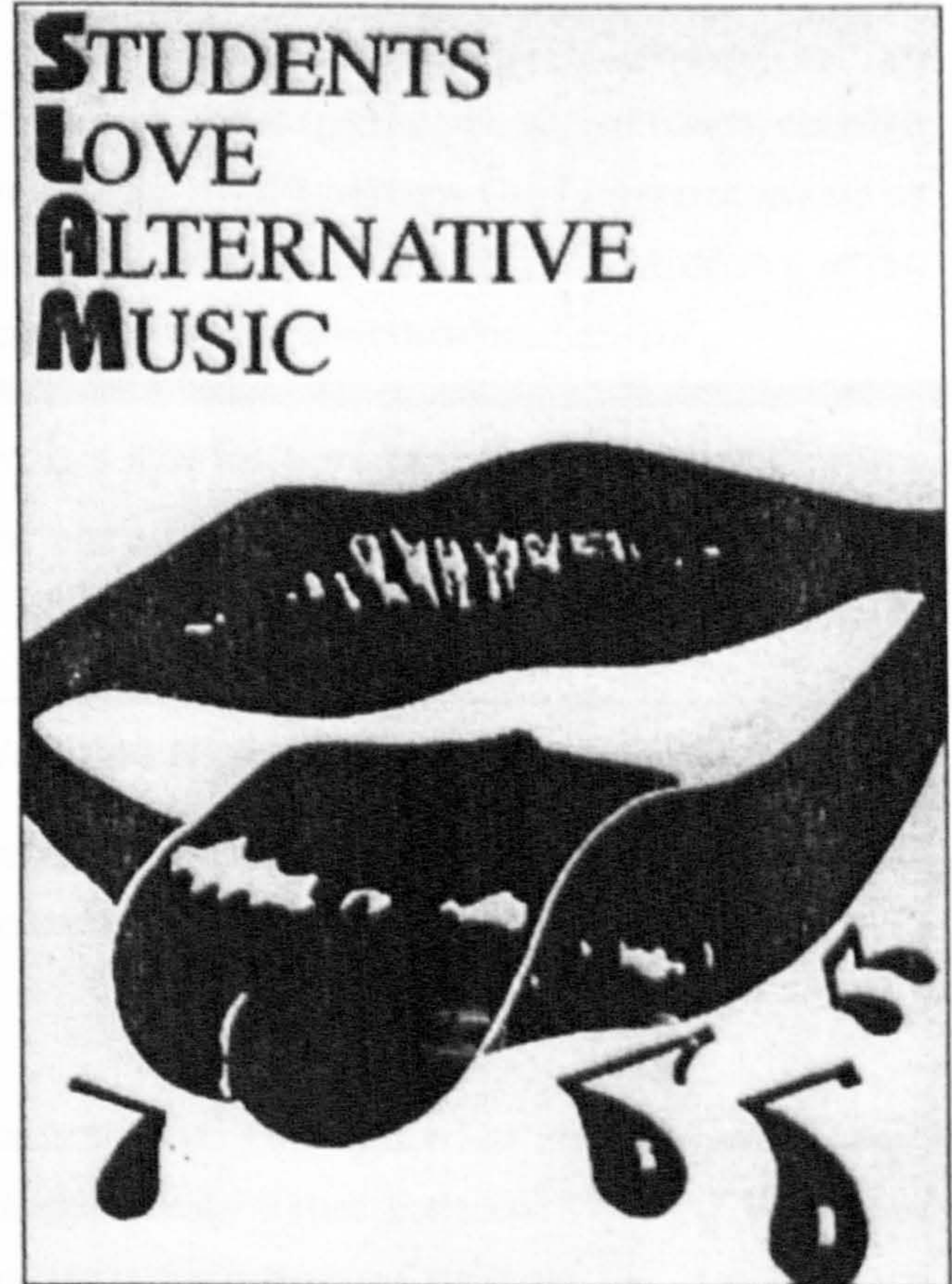
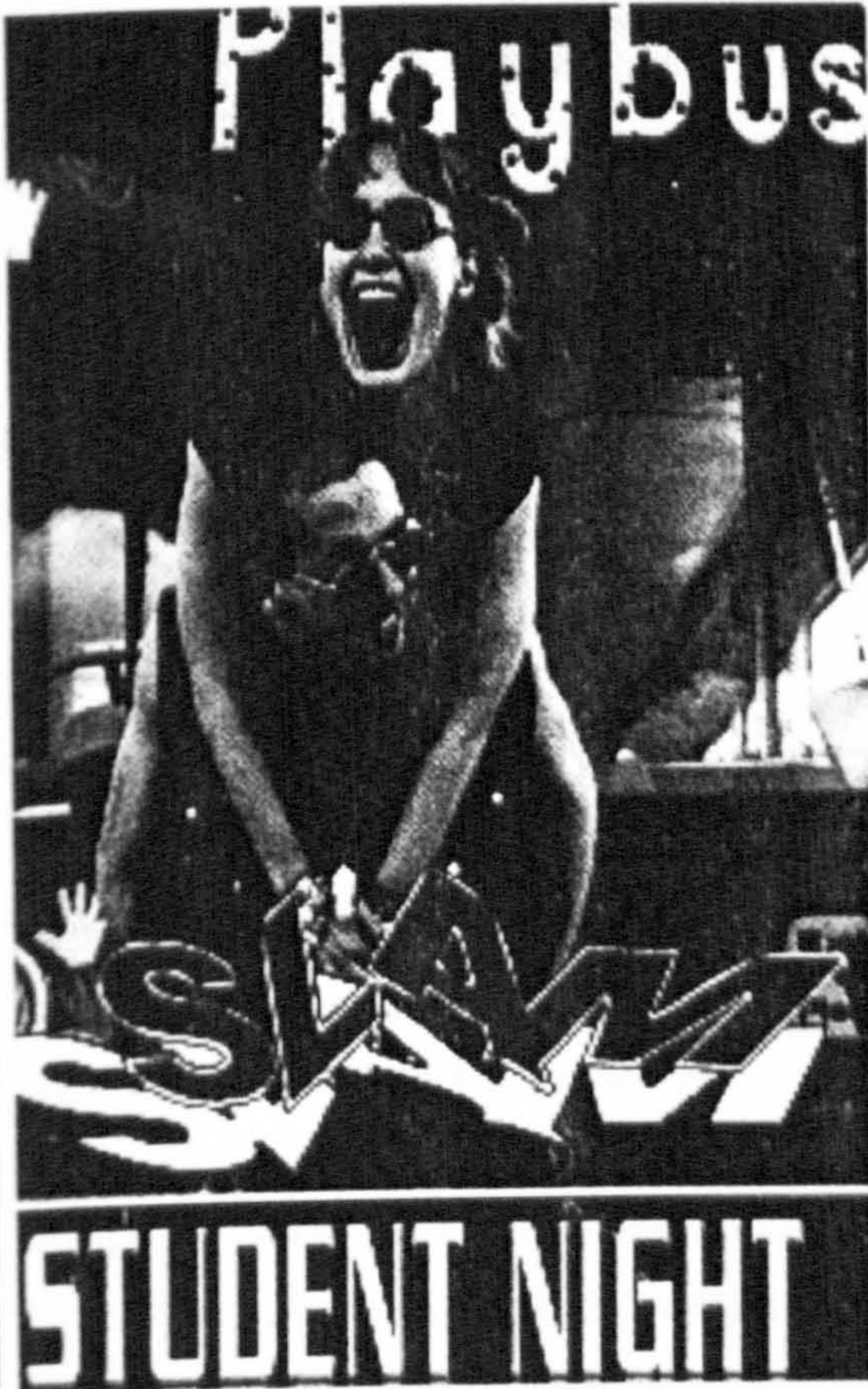
10.30 pm The Wait

Midnight KARANGA!



### Students in the City (2): Odyssey Night-Club, The Centre

With a capacity of 1 800, Odyssey is the largest night-club in the city. It is the most popular destination for students in Bristol accounting for nearly one quarter of all night-club visits. Odyssey holds its student only night, *Slam* (Students Love Alternative Music), on Tuesday, and has a student-oriented night on Thursday. For the last few years, *The House of Sutra* has been held on a Wednesday at Odyssey which is the largest dance night in the city and has been visited by the biggest names in dance music such as Danny Rampling and Jeremy Healy. Because of its size and resources, Odyssey is particularly effective in attracting students. It conducts a massive advertising campaign to attract as many of the 34 000 students in the city as possible and offers drinks promotions, cheap door entry and free buses to attract the lucrative student clubbing market. As the promotional manager explained:



"Tuesdays is completely geared towards students - price, drink, everything wise - because you realise there is a huge student population in Bristol. We put coaches on from White Ladies Road and Frenchay campus [UWE] to bring customers down from pubs such as the Rat and Parrot and Bohemia. A lot of our research into what students want comes from head office but we get a lot from our staff many of whom are past students. Our head office has a student



committee with people from each area. They throw ideas around. We go to the freshers fair and we know they love free things - t-shirts, mugs. We try to do as much as possible and advertise in all the student papers; that's why we're more successful than others.

"We are the main student club for years - we did lose them temporarily when Club IQ opened - but we know how to do student night and how to target them - knowing they have plenty of money to spend. We go into great detail to find out when they will be around and when they will not. We get advice from the university such as the ents. office and our own staff who are students. Students seem to have so much more fun and have more money. I mean everything seems to cater for students in Bristol; they are big money earners but you have to treat them right. The market is getting so tight now for everybody; they see the students and they want them. We're very lucky to be successful with the students. We treat them with respect and good standards. Some people take the piss out of the students and don't do so well.

"To maintain our student audience especially in May we have put on something every week. For example, we have recently had the Wham Tribute and 'Spice Girls' night. It's not just getting them here it's putting in added content to keep them here. Tuesdays is very mainstream; stuff they've grown up with but it can be one of the nicest nights here. I don't know what it is but I think we've got it just right now. My least favourite night is a Friday night because there's so much trouble. But Tuesdays and Thursdays, on these nights there's some beautiful people, especially on Thursday which has some credibility. We keep a tight door every night. We only let people in who fit the image. Club IQ started off very well but didn't sustain it. Also Lakota do a Tuesday student night but it is a more dedicated 70s night. We are different, we play something for everybody. This is why we survive even though students have different time pressures now".

Wedgies, a much smaller club to Odyssey, is a site for a more intimate, rather than mass sense of association which works hard at attracting a certain section of the traditional student population:

### Students in the City (3): Wedgies Night-Club, Park Street

*Wedgies: "The best and tackiest club in Bristol, Wedgies has a reputation for being packed full of sloanes and turning into a snogfest. Unfortunately, the first part is true and the second is false unless you are a 6'4, mentally retarded thug in a rugby shirt" (UBSU, Student Guide, 1996-97).*

Wedgies night-club is a small basement club with a capacity of around 300 located on Park Street adjacent to the main UB campus. In the manager's words, "Wedgies is knackered physically but it has good sound and lighting". In my survey of student clubbing preferences it was the second most popular student club accounting for nearly 12% of student visits to clubs over a one month period; considering its size, this is quite an achievement. Tuesday and Wednesday nights are student-only and are extremely popular with both UWE and UB students. They offer drinks promotions and door concessions and they also have a pre-club warm up at The Square, a pub adjacent to the main UB campus. Wedgies is run by a graduate from a south-west university who is dedicated to attracting a certain section of the university population from both UWE and UB. The imagery of the night-club's flyers acts as a very powerful admission device, attracting certain sections of the 'sloaney' or 'sporty' student community with captions such as 'GET IT HERE!', 'Get Laid', 'A College Tradition', 'Where the men are fit but the birds are FITTER'. As the manager explained:

"I employ students from the two universities to promote the club - one from the Chelsea skane set and one from the Oxford skane set. Academically they weren't bright enough to get into UB so they went to UWE. You can still live in Clifton and hang around with the same skaney set. These are 'Clifton UWE students' who are not like the Gloucester Road set - its surprising how many there are.

"Tuesdays plays uplifting house and commercial chart and a little bit of party but no Brit pop or Oasis. Wednesdays plays commercial chart and then what I call my sports night party set. It's our own party set - soul limbo the cricketing theme, 'oh what a night', 'summer of 68', all the girls and blokes strip off their shirts - that's our theme tune. We try to go cult status with our party set. It's taken us about 3 years to build up a reputation. This was by personal PRing, the two guys at each uni. giving out VIP tickets to the rugger buggers and smart girlies.



**THE SQUARE**  
Cocktail Bar  
In Berkeley Square, opposite Browns. Telephone 0117 9266536.

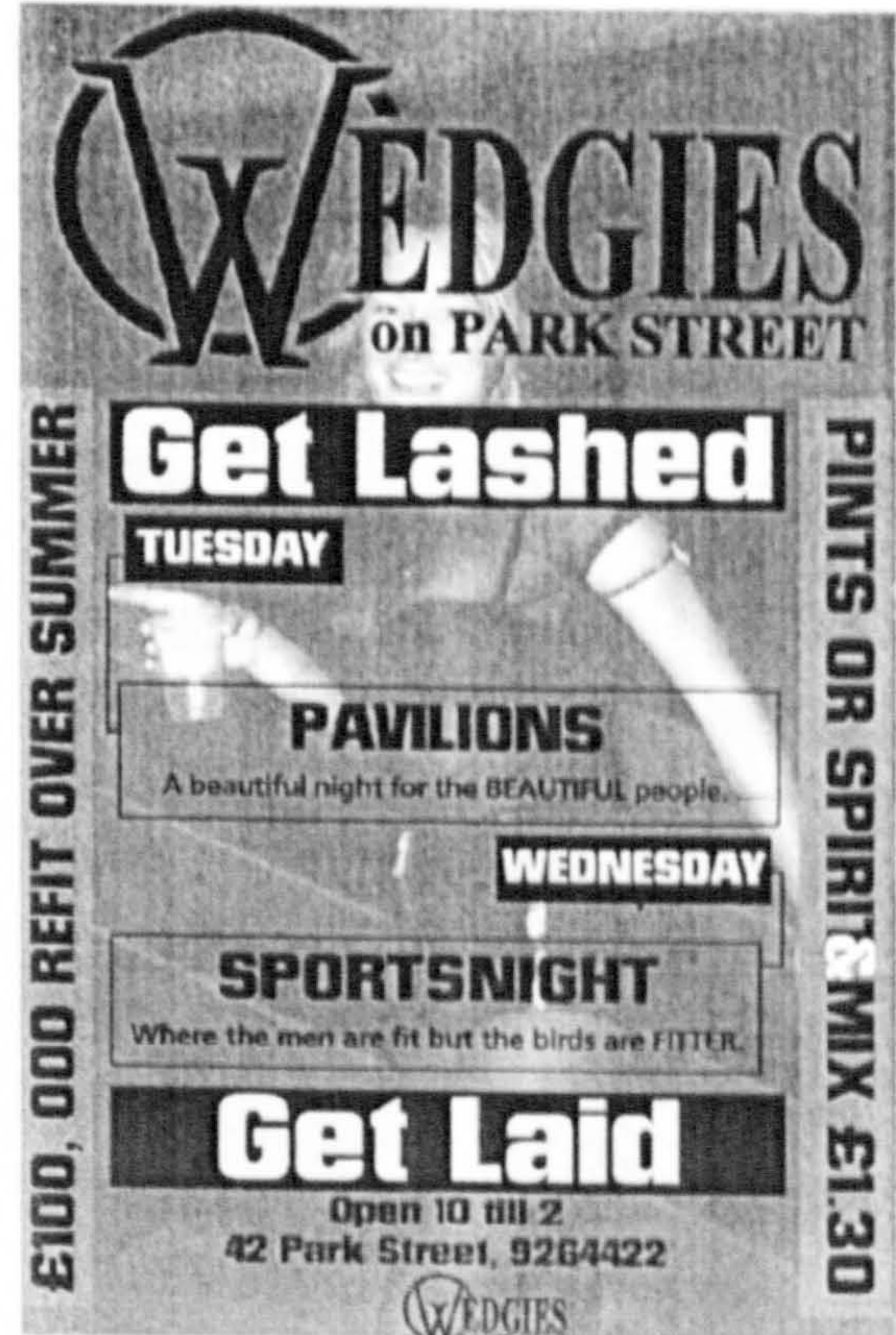
**"GET IT HERE!"**  
Four pint jug of 'Jellybean', bottled beer, cocktails and the rest...

**WEDGIES WARM UP**  
Happy Hour all night Tuesday (Pavilions) & Wednesday (Sportsnight)

**GET STEAMED**  
Cheap bottled beers & spirits every Monday before Steam Rock.

**REASSURINGLY EXPENSIVE**  
Thursday, Friday & Saturday:  
Happy Hour 5.30 - 8 - thereafter, 'only for the affluent'.

**SUNDAYS**  
Happy Hour all night.



**WEDGIES**  
on PARK STREET

**Get Lashed**  
TUESDAY

**PAVILIONS**  
A beautiful night for the BEAUTIFUL people.

**WEDNESDAY**

**SPORTSNIGHT**  
Where the men are fit but the birds are FITTER.

**Get Laid**  
Open 10 till 2  
42 Park Street, 9264422

**£100, 000 REFIT OVER SUMMER**

**PINTS OR SPIRITS MIX £1.30**

WEDGIES

"We had some 1920 style ink cartoons - with amusing comic strips - it had a certain, I don't know, 'officers mess' feel to it pretentious and arrogant. Because it's a small club we can fill it with who we want. I went to all the sports matches at UB to build up the audiences and it spread by word of mouth.

"We have targeted a very specific audience. I know practically every face in there - all the teams and societies. We have a rapport in Epigram [the UB student newspaper]. Last week it said, 'manager of Wedgies do you think you're hard? Sid.' We have all these silly ditties like we locked a student in the club one night. It's fun you know, there's silly press stuff afterwards. I think the key to student nights is rapport with the customers. Some say we're cliquy. It may be a fair comment but its the way you have to be to do business.

"Students that come here are not representative. There's some snobbery and I wouldn't disagree. There's all the society dinners at UB at the end of the year and afterwards they all come to Wedgies. If I appealed to a mass crowd I wouldn't attract these clubs and societies. I get invited to their dinners; so by being so interactive with the student community you know your audience and how to attract it.

"Our Wednesday night is untouchable. Other people have tried to copy us but we just up our direct marketing - going up to all the lads with strong arm tactics and saying you won't get your VIP card if you don't come. Tuesday is the same. There's so much competition and we can't compete with the bigger clubs. But I like to be more expensive than them because I don't like arseholes. If I had to class this night-club I would say it had an 'eccentric' personality".

## WEDGIES - NIGHTCLUB

### TUESDAYS



A CLASSIC EVENINGS ENTERTAINMENT  
FOR THE COLLEGE BRID

WEDGIES  
WEDGIES  
WEDGIES

OPEN  
10pm 'til 2am

WEDGIES,  
A COLLEGE TRADITION  
OPEN EVERY NIGHT FRESHERS WEEK  
Meet us at the Freshers Fair!  
48 PARK STREET  
(0117) 9264422

### PINTS

or mainline  
SPIRIT

'n' GUN MIX

£1.30



WEDNESDAYS  
1995-96

As well as these mainstream student nights there are also a number of sites which act as arenas for the mixing of identities. Lakota, a club which has put Bristol's night-club scene on the national map, is a case in point. As well as staging its own student night, other nights staged at the club, which are nationally renowned, attract student and non-students alike:

the town-gown divide is not as bad because there is a lot of integration between students and locals in terms of the gigs and the club nights - club nights like Cup of Tea [Thekla] and Lakota and high profile ones like 'One Love' [Swindon] are promoted to students and locals jointly (int., Mitchell, 2/2/96).

In sum, because of their high levels of attendance, students make a significant contribution to vitality in the local night-club culture. Further, there are many night-club producers, promoters and DJ's in the city who formerly attended one of the two universities in Bristol and are now active contributors to the local night-club scene. The best example of this is an outfit called Swirl which is comprised of three graduates from UB who regularly stage night-club events in the city. Further, as Chapter 3 discussed, there is much unmonitored activity of this nature, especially at house-parties which are seedbeds for the growth of new musical talent.

## Cinema

A survey undertaken by Research Surveys of Great Britain claimed that "in terms of audience size, cinema-going is probably the most popular form of non-home based cultural activity in the UK" (Cultural Trends, 1992, volume 13, 57). Of particular importance in terms of accounting for the growing popularity of cinema attendance is the emergence of multiplex cinemas. As the Henley Centre commented: "one of the key factors responsible for reviving cinema attendances is the growth in the number of multiplex cinemas."<sup>25</sup>

Bristol is characterised by high levels of cinema activity and provision. The city recently embarked upon a collaborative bid to host the Year of Photography and the Electronic Image in 1998. The city also holds an annual Film Festival, 'Brief Encounters', which celebrates the short film. There are 41 cinema screens in the city of which 26 are multiplex and 4 are art house/independent. The former focuses around the 14-screen, 3600 capacity Showcase multiplex in inner-city Bristol, which on opening in 1994 was the largest cinema in the country and the 12-screen CineWorld multiplex which opened in late 1997 on the outskirts of the city. The latter focuses around The Watershed, Britain's first media centre which plays a leading role in technologically reproducible art forms in the city, The Arnolfini, which specialises in independent films and the smaller 'Art Cinema' which focuses upon second-run independent films.

Table 6.1 illustrated high levels of cinema participation amongst students. Nearly two-thirds of students had attended the cinema at least once in the survey month with the average number of visits per month for active cinema goers at nearly three. Considering the characteristic of the student population, these figures are to be expected if one considers that the 16-24 year old cohort is by far the largest cinema attender and that social classes AB are the most frequent cinema attenders.<sup>26</sup>

If we look in more detail at the nature of cinema participation amongst Bristol students it is evident that one-third of all cinema visits were to the out-of-town Showcase Multiplex cinema. The Showcase was a popular destination amongst all the subsets of students

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<sup>25</sup> The Henley Centre, Leisure Futures, 1995, 2, 90.

<sup>26</sup> The Henley Centre, Leisure Futures, 1995, 2, 29.

surveyed. The most popular films attended at the Showcase were the large Hollywood box-office hits of the time; *The Usual Suspects*, *Apollo 13*, *Species*, *Clueless*, *Pocahontas* and *Nine Months*. This is illustrative of the way in which most students follow national trends by attending block-buster movies. Such high student consumption levels at one of Bristol's out-of-town multiplex suggests that students have access to cars.

The second most popular cinema amongst students was the smaller commercial ABC which accounted for one-fifth of all cinema visits. This cinema is situated in the heavily student-populated Whiteladies Road area of the city where screenings are almost exclusively comprised of students. The ABC mainly screens box-office hits and as a result, mirroring the Showcase, the films most attended by students were *Apollo 13*, *Species* and *the Usual Suspects*. The ABC acts as an important focal point within the student community. It is adjacent to some of the most popular student pubs in Bristol such as the RooBar and the Dog and Duck and plays a central role within the student entertainment infrastructure in the Whiteladies Road area. The other city-centre commercial cinemas, the Odeon and Canon, had much lower levels of attendances and were visited for films which were not screened elsewhere such as *Clueless* and *Jade*.

The Watershed Media Centre accounted for just over one in ten student cinema visits. However, this was overwhelmingly due to visits by Drama students. The commitment of Drama students to this venue is illustrative of the role they play within the media community within the city. They even showed a preference for attending screenings of *the Usual Suspects* at the Watershed despite the fact that it was simultaneously being screened at the Showcase and the ABC on Whiteladies Road. The most popular films amongst students who visited the Watershed were *Land and Freedom*, *Leon* and *Bullets over Broadway* which is illustrative of a preference for, and interest in, 'cult' directors such as Ken Loach, Luc Besson and Woody Allen amongst the Drama students. Late night-screenings of *Withnail and I* and *Apocalypse Now*, two distinctively studentish films, were also popular amongst those students who visited the Watershed.

The Arnolfini cinema had slightly lower levels of student attendance compared to the Watershed. Overwhelmingly, cinema participation at the Arnolfini was, again, by Drama students and the most popular films were double-bills with distinctive student connotations. These included *'Betty Blue and the Big Blue'* and *'Diva and Delicatessen'*.

Other popular films included the Bogart and Bacall classic, *The Big Sleep*, and the dark comedy, *The Young Poisoners Handbook*.

It seems that the Watershed and the Arnolfini are immensely popular with a small section of the student community and cater for those who might be seen as 'film buffs' or have a course-based interest in film. Further, repeat screenings of films which are popular in the student community such as *Withnail and I*, *Reservoir Dogs* and *Betty Blue* suggest that these venues have a screening policy which tries to attract the student audience. However, student cinema consumption was overwhelmingly concentrated at the commercial Showcase Multiplex and the ABC on Whiteladies Road with the latest blockbusters accounting for the most popular films amongst students, in this case *Apollo 13* and *the Usual Suspects*.

Students, then, contribute greatly to the trend towards out-of-town cinema consumption. However, they are also responsible for reversing this trend through high participation levels at cinemas adjacent to student residential areas such as the ABC cinema on Whiteladies Road. Further, because of their more flexible time patterns in general, students also contribute to mid-week and matinee cinema consumption.

### **Theatre and Gallery Activity**

In contrast to the above sections, this final section discusses more 'official' cultural pursuits such as theatre and gallery activity amongst students. A number of Drama and Fine Art students were included in the fieldwork to explore the hypothesis that they would represent the main participants in theatre and gallery activity respectively within the whole student population. This was overwhelmingly confirmed which suggests that even the small amount of this type of cultural consumption by such groups has a large relative effect upon theatre and gallery activity in the city because comparable consumption by other student and non-student groups is so much smaller.

Let us look in more detail at this consumption area. For many obvious reasons, theatre- and gallery-based events were some of the lowest attended activities if one considers all the students in the survey. Only about one-third of students had attended either a gallery or theatre in the survey month, yet those that did attend, made between 2 and 3 visits per month. However, these attendance levels were mainly comprised of Fine Art and Drama students respectively who were responsible for creating higher levels of theatre and

gallery consumption amongst students compared to the general 16-24 year old cohort (Table 6.1).

In terms of theatre, the most popular venues were The Glynne Wickham Theatre housed by the Department of Drama at UB and UBSU's Winston Theatre. However, these attendances were overwhelmingly by Drama students from UB. The most popular theatres in the city were The Theatre Royal, The Arnolfini and The Hippodrome. The first two, with a reputation for devised and experimental pieces, were attended mostly by Drama students, while more commercial Hippodrome was attended by students from all courses equally. The Octagon Theatre at UWE's Frenchay was overwhelmingly supported by students from Frenchay, although showing much lower levels of attendances compared to UB's Glynne Wickham Theatre. It seems, then, that university-based theatre is the most popular and is supported mainly by students inclined to consume high art through course-based interests.

Mirroring the Drama students inclination towards high levels of theatre attendance, Fine Art students comprised the majority of those attending exhibitions/galleries. The Arnolfini and The Watershed accounted for two-thirds of all visits to exhibitions/galleries which illustrates further the role these venues play in structuring the cultural lives of art-based students. The City Museum and Art Gallery, the third most popular venue, was visited by a much broader range of students but to a much smaller extent.

The main point is that if it were not for the Drama students, theatre attendance would have been minimal, and if it were not for Fine Art students, exhibition and gallery attendance would also be minimal. In part then, it is those students who are already inclined to consume culture through their coursework who continue to do so whilst at university. From discussions with art and social science students, it would seem reasonable to suggest that it is students on art-based courses who have a greater interest in activities such as museums and galleries, an interest fostered not just from the family, but from their previous art education. One social-science student hinted at differences between social science and art students:

I'm quite into arts so I go quite a lot; mainly to the museum and the Watershed. I don't think a lot of Geographers go there. It just depends what you're interested in. I mean a lot of

people had interests before they came and people did different subjects at school (1st year, female, Geography student from UB).

In this context, we can refer to work by Bourdieu and Darbel (1991) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) who discuss the important determinant previous familial and schooling culture has upon our engagement with particular cultural forms when at university. Unless such activity is related to one's course, or as Bourdieu (1979, 1984, 1991) suggests, one has gained an earlier propensity to consume art through the family, the student population will be a low consumer and producer of cultural activities such as live art, theatre, gallery or exhibition work. As he states in his work with Passeron:

Specifically student cultural enterprises, such as theatre groups or poetry clubs are, as is well known, rare phenomena, and they only keep going when they are based on university institutions or correspond to scholastic demands" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979, 41).

The co-ordinator of Bristol Arts Marketing (BAM), an organisation which exists to raise the profile of eleven art venues in Bristol, commented on the inevitability of low attendance amongst a group such as students:

My guess is that propensity to consume the arts will increase with age; for example, lifestyles change and people tend to consume more serious arts at 25 plus. The staff of the universities, who are more permanent make up a core of the arts audience in Bristol. Most of BAM's members do have student concessions so what else can be done to increase student consumption? As long as people know the full scope of things available then it's up to them to choose. They may choose the Showcase but at least its an informed choice of what's available. Venues need to be specialist and not attract the lowest common denominator audience (int., Finemann, 5/3/96).

Some Art students expressed their greater enthusiasm for the arts:

Whatever exhibitions are on we tend to go and see them (3rd year, male, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

Yeah, it's good to get on all the mailing lists (1st year, male, Fine Art student, Bower Ashton, UWE).

The following diary extracts reflect some of the course-related activities which are pursued by Art students. The first two highlight the extent to which Art students are involved in actual cultural production in the form of rehearsals, screen-tests and acting



roles. The second two reflect some of the more diverse patterns of cultural consumption in the city by art students, especially in terms of exhibitions, cinema and theatre productions which are course relevant.

2ND YEAR, MALE, DRAMA STUDENT (UB): SUNDAY, TERM TWO

|         |  |                                |   |
|---------|--|--------------------------------|---|
| 7 am    | Got a lift to Cardiff  | Course friend                  | Cotham  |
| 8.30 am | Found location in Cardiff. Had breakfast   | Course friend and other actors | Cardiff, being an extra on a TV Pilot (Harbour and Isles) |
| 10 am   | Sat in courtesy bus  |                                |   |
| 11 am   | Smoked, talked, read books on futurism, drank tea  | Friend and other extras        | "   |
| 2.30 pm | Used as extra walking across road in front of car (Yawn!). Six takes as they wanted to get the right shot. | "                              | "   |
| 6.30 pm | went home  | "                              | "   |
| 7.30 pm | made tea, listened to radio 4, read books on Futurism  | alone                          | Cotham  |

2ND YEAR, FEMALE, DRAMA STUDENT (UB): WEDNESDAY, TERM ONE

|          |   |   |                                 |
|----------|---|---|---------------------------------|
| 7.30 am  | Got ready to go to the Council House  | partner   | home                            |
| 8.30 am  | left home   | alone   | home                            |
| 9 am     | arrived at Council House and met up with the group. Conference started                                      | with the drama group. A group of 6 students from the Drama Dept+Tutor | The Council House College Green |
| 10 am    | We did a 17 minute performance called 'Setting the Scene' for the launch of the Zero Tolerance Campaign     | A very large group of people attending the conference                 | "                               |
| 11 am    | Left conference room, and spent time in the foyer where they were selling books etc. relating to the launch | "   | "                               |
| 12.30 pm | Arrived back home. Bumped into a friend on the way and stopped for a chat                                   | alone   | home                            |
| 1.30 pm  | Reading and making notes for an essay   | alone   | home                            |

2ND YEAR, FEMALE, FINE ART STUDENT(UWE): SATURDAY, TERM TWO

|        |  |               |                             |
|--------|--|---------------|-----------------------------|
| 12pm   | Boston Tea Party for lunch             | course friend | Park St.                    |
| 1pm    | City Museum and Art Gallery exhibition | "             | City Museum and Art Gallery |
| 2pm    | shopping                               | "             | Park St.                    |
| 3pm    | The Georgian House                     | "             | Georgian House              |
| 3.30pm | Wandered home and shopping             | "             | Park St.                    |

3RD YEAR, MALE, FINE ART STUDENT (UWE): SATURDAY, TERM ONE

|        |   |          |                   |
|--------|---|----------|-------------------|
| 1pm    | Went to Bath. In friend's car                                     | friend   | Home to Bath      |
| 2.30pm | gatecrashing a private view at the contemporary art gallery-ooops | friend   | The Booth Gallery |
| 8pm    | Cinema-ing  | Flatmate | cinema            |

Students from Drama at UB are also heavily involved in production work at the Glynne Wickham Theatre. This involves a range of activities from acting and directing to technical work and scenery construction. In addition, they are also able to increase their involvement in art through the department's own experimental space. As some Drama students explained:

Hester *I prefer going to the cinema or devised theatre which people put on here. There's a shed out the back, the VAR, where students put things on. It's a rehearsal space where people can put anything on and practice with the equipment etc. Lots of rubbish gets put on there but good stuff as well about once a week. It's totally non-course based.*

Helen *I prefer to go and see what people put on here. Tickets are cheap or you can get in free if you help.*

Seb *You've heard so much about it that you want to go.*

(All names have been changed)

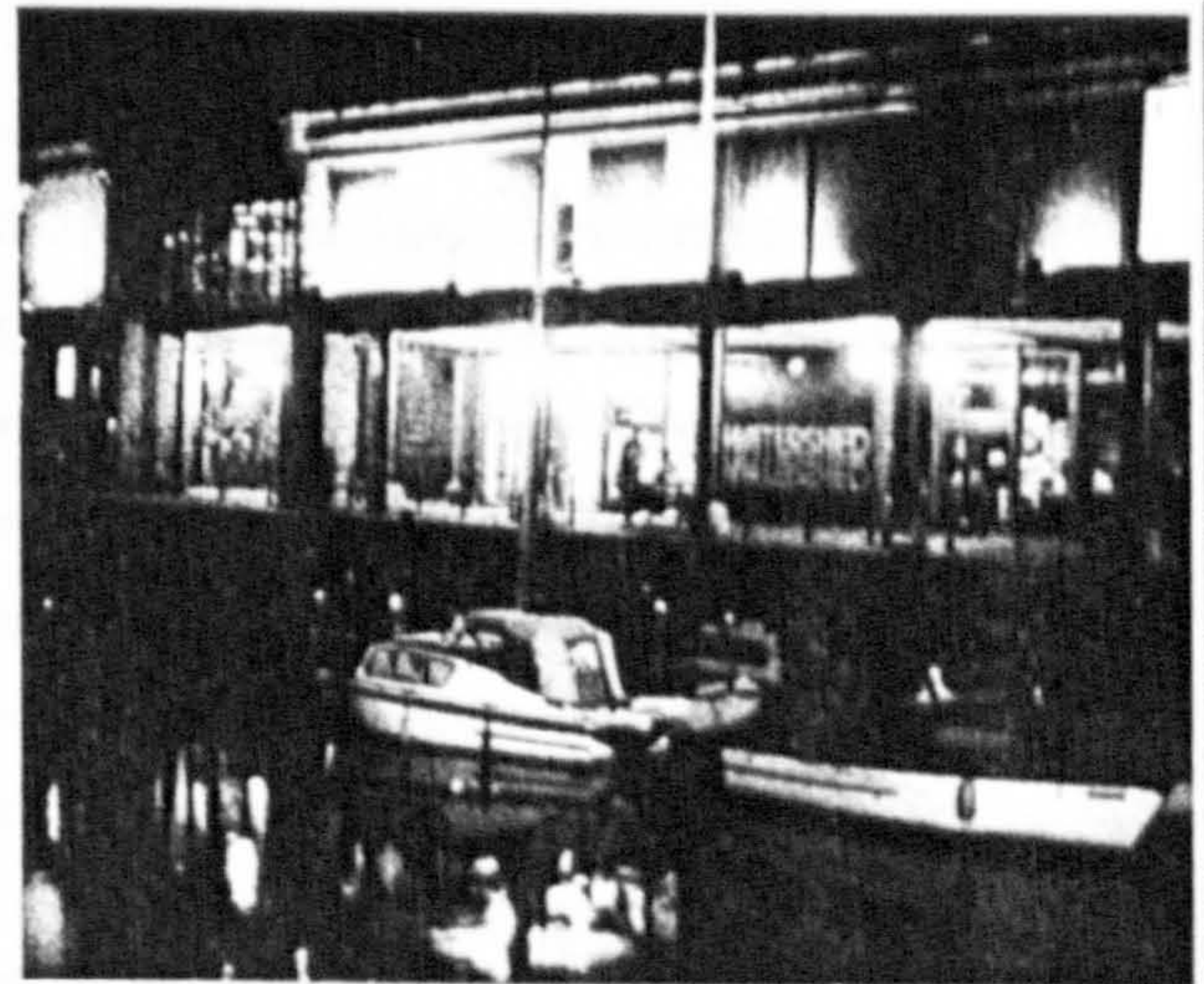
Despite higher levels of art consumption by art students, much of this is still undertaken within a narrow range of, mainly university-owned, venues. The appeal of peer-review and working in a departmental environment results in much enclosed cultural activity within the structure of the course. Participation in the artistic community is restricted to certain, favoured venues such as The Watershed and The Arnolfini. As discussed in Chapter 3, these two venues are extremely popular amongst students, especially those studying courses related to art:

## Students in the City (4):

## The Watershed Media Centre and The Arnolfini, The Centre

**The Arnolfini:** "Harbourside cinema and arts complex. Sip your bizarre bottle of imported European beer while waiting for the art house flick to start. Great waterfront location, not overly comfortable but perfect if you want to flannel on about art" (The Essential Bristol Freshers' Guide, UWE Students' Union, 1996-97).

**The Watershed:** "Bar within Bristol's renowned 'media centre'. Good meeting place, frequented by the intelligentsia and arty types. If you can look svelte and engaging whilst perched precariously on a black metal stool, this is the place for you" (The Essential Bristol Freshers' Guide, UWE Students' Union, 1996-97).



The *Arnolfini Centre for Contemporary Arts*, a major contemporary art gallery established in 1961 with a genuine international reputation and yearly attendances of over a quarter of a million visitors, and the *Watershed Media Centre*, Britain's first media centre which plays a major role in the exhibition of technologically reproducible art forms, are major focal points for student cultural consumption and production in Britain. They are both located in the harbourside area of Bristol about 10 minutes from UB's main campus and 20 minutes from UWE's faculty of Art, Media and Design. These venues are important sites for student activity, especially for students who are involved in media-, design-, art- and drama-based courses. One member of staff at The Watershed commented: "It's obvious to me that the majority of people in both the cinema and cafe bar are students" (int., Gardner, 10/12/96). A recent Visitor survey undertaken by The Watershed revealed that one-quarter of visitors were students. As one 3rd year, Drama student commented, "I hate pubs. I don't like commercial cinemas so I go to the Arnolfini and the Watershed if not just to go to the coffee shop with a cappuccino and a good book". These two venues have become places to just 'hang out'. As another 2nd year Drama student explained, "I like walking round the docks and looking at the house boats. It's just amazing. It's nice to sit outside the Arnolfini."

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| <p><b>WATERSHED</b></p> <p>Cinemas<br/>Photographic Exhibitions<br/>Darkrooms<br/>Digital Facilities<br/>Education Events<br/>Courses<br/>Café / Bar</p> <p>To receive a free copy of our film and photography brochures for three months, please phone the publicity department.</p> <p>Tel: 0117 927 6444</p> <p><b>WATERSHED</b><br/>1 Canon's Road, Bristol, BS1 5TX</p> | <p>Visual Arts<br/>Bookshop<br/>Cafe/Bar</p> <p><b>ARNOLFINI</b></p> <p>Cinema<br/>Performance<br/>Dance</p> <p>Open 7 days a week<br/>Free Admission<br/>16 Narrow Quay Bristol BS1 4QA<br/>Telephone (0117) 9299191</p> |
|--|---|

Chapter 3 explored the numerous ways in which The Department of Drama: Film, Theatre and Television, The Department of Music at UB and The Faculty of Art, Media and Design are associated with the Watershed and Arnolfini at a professional, intellectual and social level. As well as offering student discounts to performances, both venues heavily advertise to the student population and the Arnolfini experimented with a student night on a Tuesday to act as a pre-club venue to night-clubs such as Club IQ and Odyssey. The Watershed and Arnolfini are popular drinking and eating venues during the day and night. In particular, the Watershed has live weekend DJs and is considered one of the most fashionable drinking places in the city. The minimalist advertising from the two venues shown above, which was taken from UWE's student guide to the city, is illustrative of their attempts to attract a particular segment from the student population. One can see the stark contrasts with advertising aimed at students from venues such as Wedgies night-club (see above).

This section has tested the hypothesis that Drama and Fine Art students, because of their course-based interest in the arts, represent the largest consumers of high culture and the arts compared to other students. This has largely been verified. It can be assumed, then, that omitting such art-based students would drastically reduce the levels of high cultural consumption amongst the traditional student population which were evident in Table 6.1. This is illustrative, then, of the role which students on art related courses play in the vitality of cultural sectors such as the visual and performing arts and art house cinema in the city.

### Summary

What are the implications of the presence of over 30 000 students in the city in terms of cultural innovation and vitality? This brief exploration of the cultural consumption practices of traditional students suggests that despite the fact that most of their leisure

time is often undertaken in highly regulated student-only environments, it can be suggested that students go out more and to more places than the 16-24 year old cohort in general. In particular, popular cultural pursuits, especially night-clubbing and drinking, are central to traditional student life (Table 6.1).

What this chapter has shown, then, is that the presence of over 30 000 students in Bristol sustain business for a small number of pubs and night-clubs within or adjacent to the main student areas. Students enhance trade, then, at venues within the main student infrastructure, but no venues stated that they exclusively targeted or relied upon the student population. Yet, the important consequence is that at certain times in the year a large swathe of Bristol is given over to the needs of students and becomes heavily associated with them. Student leisure time creates distinctive time-space patterns based around mid-week, seasonal and both day- and night-time usage which trace certain pathways throughout the city. Further, certain pubs such as the RooBar and night-clubs such as Odyssey are more successful than others within this infrastructure which leads to frustration for other venues. For many students, then, despite displaying higher levels of going-out compared to non-students especially in activity areas such as drinking and clubbing, much of their cultural time is spent within the realms of student-oriented/-only venues.

There are certain privileged sites for student consumption within this student entertainment infrastructure. These include pubs around Whiteladies Road and Clifton such as The Berkeley, the RooBar, the Dog and Duck and the White Bear for student drinking, Wedgies and Odyssey for night-clubbing, The Showcase and the Whiteladies Road ABC cinema for cinema and The Watershed and The Arnolfini for those with more direct interest in culture. University-owned venues were less popular amongst students and the main union bars were less popular drinking sites for students because of their poor physical locations and interiors. Other university-owned venues displayed wider usage throughout the university community such as the Glynne Wickham Theatre and the Victoria Rooms.

Many traditional students display a limited use of the city. This is often through work and financial pressures, laziness or a desire to socialise at home. The following conversation and quotes illustrate some of these trends:

Paul

*What about free time?*

- Andrew *I don't really like going to clubs that much anyway...*
- Caroline *and the clubs in Bristol aren't that good.*
- Julie *I don't think there's that much going on which is that interesting. It's all one type of thing.*
- Caroline *I'd rather the pubs were open later 'cos you can talk. When I go out I like to talk and socialise and when you're in a club its noisy and dark unless you like dancing you know...*
- Julie *I don't really like the music scene at the moment. I like indie and there's only one club. I prefer a pub where you could get coffee till late like abroad with open cafes bars. In France they were wonderful.*

(All names have been changed)

More often than not I like to go out for a few beers locally with my mates. There's ten pubs near where I live in Clifton Village so there's no point in venturing that far. All my mates live up there as well (2nd Year, male Geography student, UB).

I like to catch up with people basically. It's quite hectic at the moment so I like to catch up with people when I've got spare time - just go out have a drink (2nd year, female, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

We spend most of our time visiting our friends because we don't really get on with the people in our house. We do get on with them but we live with a third year, a bloke who's a monk [laughter], a bloke who works for BT (1st year, male, Tourism Management student, Frenchay, UWE).

The contributions which students make to cultural innovation and vitality in the city, then, is concentrated in certain areas of cultural activity and certain areas of Bristol, especially around Whiteladies Road. In particular, the main cultural innovations which are generated by the existence of a large number of traditional students are student-oriented/-only environments.

However, there are also important 'relative' effects from a small segment of the student population who sustain activity in less popular areas such as the visual and performing arts, classical music, opera and art-house films especially at venues such as the Watershed, the Arnolfini and university-owned venues such as the Victoria Rooms and the Wickham Theatre (see also Chapter 3). In this sense, activity by the small number of students with a direct, and mainly course-based, interest in culture, actually has a large impact upon cultural sectors such as art-house film and experimentalist theatre which

exist from relatively small levels of demand. Further, the above section illustrated the contribution of several Drama and Art students to wider cultural innovation in the community through activities such as screen-tests, acting roles and community performance work.

## CONCLUSIONS

I have attempted to explore the lifestyle divisions which exist within the student population in the British higher education sector. This division can largely be regarded as a juxtaposition of traditional and non-traditional students. What I have done is to establish a topography of the lifestyles of the traditional cohort of students. This cohort inhabits only certain sections of the British higher education sector and is particularly evident in Bristol.

What I have stressed is the ways in which the activities of this traditional student cohort characterised by wealth, youth and fashion, have come to determine how the 'Bristol student' is perceived throughout the city despite the fact that there are other types of student identities in the city. These traditional student lifestyles leave their mark upon the city through their distinctive spatial practices and in particular the regulation of their lifestyles through segregated housing and an entertainment infrastructure based around student-oriented/-only environments. Universities themselves, not wanting to miss out, are increasingly involving themselves in this entertainment infrastructure, especially by professionalising their entertainments offices. However, they are unable to realise their full impact because of the poor location and appearance of the students' union buildings.

There are a number of privileged sites within the student entertainment infrastructure such as Odyssey and Wedgies (night-clubs) and pubs such as the RooBar and the Berkeley. The shared student house is also an important component of this spatial framing. In sum, many aspects of traditional student life represent a ritualised, seasonal and closed community within the city which is mediated by a desire for association with other students and a learning and unlearning process which gives students a degree of mobility with regard to their 'student' identity. Clearly, other communities within the city may display similar closed and ritualised behaviour patterns, but traditional student life is an example of a community which is highly regulated and mediated in many ways by many actors such as the university, property owners and entertainment providers.

What the above discussion illustrates is that, following a Bourdieuan framework, the more traditional students do represent a set of common dispositions, a community and a distinguishable lifestyle. This group seems to have an 'esprit de corps' and share similar characteristics based upon being a white, middle-class adolescent and distinguished by wealth, fashion and high levels of socialising with other students. There also seems to be a recognition of a 'student game' with certain rules which creates a distinctive time and space within the city's cultural infrastructure. This is based upon a desire for association which is fulfilled by certain venues.

In relation to their consumption habits, traditional students illustrate strong tendencies towards popular cultural forms which dispels the notion that these traditional students are inheritors and transmitters of consecrated forms of culture. This would seem an apt conclusion in light of the discussion in Part One which explored the cultural re-orientation of the mass university. Students contribute to local cultural innovation and vitality in a number of ways, but mostly in the areas of night-clubbing and drinking. Those students with a more direct, and often course-based, interest in culture also generate significant relative effects in less popular forms of cultural activity.

The Bristol community, then, especially those parts of it which are nearest to the universities and student residential areas, bears witness to the seasonal in-migration of large numbers of traditional students year after year. These students create a semi-permanent landscape, especially in terms of housing and residential provision. For those who live in these areas the existence of a student lifestyle is a reality. Some of them, in their roles as property renters, letting agents, shop owners, publicans and club-owners, have built their livelihoods around it. Others have to tolerate the youthful and rambunctious behaviour of this group. The impacts of traditional students lifestyles, then, oscillates between boosting the local economy and leisure industries, to generating noise, disturbance and resentment from the local community. One thing which is certain is that there needs to be more research into the consequences of these impacts as student populations in many British cities continue to grow.



# PART THREE

## CASE-STUDY AND CONCLUSIONS



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# LESSONS FROM THE USA<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

**T**his chapter is based upon fieldwork which was undertaken at The University of Wisconsin-Madison in the USA between July and October 1996. The fieldwork involved diarywork and focus groups with a number of students (Figure 7.1), interviews with university staff and cultural and arts groups and observations in the campus and downtown area of Madison. The fieldwork also included a number of days spent within fraternity and co-operative communities, and archive work into the university's history. See Appendix A for a fuller discussion of the methodology.

This case-study, rather than being a comparative piece of research, was undertaken to illustrate a number of themes which are emerging in British student life as many British universities move towards the US model of mass higher education.<sup>2</sup> It was also used to observe the ways in which a mass higher education institution and its student population impact upon the community. The USA is a particularly useful context to undertake research on student life as it has a longer research tradition concerning students in both their formal and informal roles. More specifically, there is an official recognition of the 'second curriculum' and the ways in which time spent outside the classroom is regarded as important as time spent inside it:

The majority of higher education students [in the USA] had acknowledged roles other than as learners, so both researchers and institutions regarded the student experience as a broad and valid field of enquiry much earlier than did the UK (Haselgrove, 1994, 6).

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<sup>1</sup> This heading is taken from Mohan (1994a) which was an early impetus for undertaking this case-study in the USA.

<sup>2</sup> Contemporary comparative analysis of the student life in America and Britain are few; amongst the most notable exceptions are Haselgrove (1994), Mohan (1994a, 1994b) and, most recently, Silver and Silver (1997).

Further, to a greater extent than Britain, there is an established tradition of student involvement in the community at universities in the USA through volunteer work and, increasingly, service learning.

There were several reasons for choosing to study The University of Wisconsin State System, and in particular UW-Madison at the centre of this system. UW-Madison, driven by the Wisconsin Idea and its Land Grant heritage, fosters partnership between the university and the community, recognises the 'second curriculum' as an integral part of university education and generates much university outreach and student volunteerism (see Ward 1994, 1995). UW-Madison also has an active campus life, much of which dates back to student unrest in the 1960s and 1970s. The university is spread over a large campus which is closely interwoven with the downtown area of the city and, through its many facilities and vast programme of activities, plays a central role in the cultural life of the community.

This chapter, then, addresses a number of themes which illuminate some of the characteristics of mass student life in the USA, many of which British students will face as the British university sector moves towards the American model of mass higher education provision.

The first theme explores the Land Grant university tradition and the Wisconsin Idea around which UW-Madison has developed. This tradition and idea sets public universities in the USA apart from their British counterparts as they are rooted in public service to the state and have various leitmotifs such as philanthropy, stewardship, partnership. The Wisconsin Idea, in particular, is committed to student leadership, student service and volunteerism and the process of 'education for citizenship'. In contrast to Britain, then, the Land Grant tradition and the Wisconsin Idea create a different backdrop for the way in which universities and their students impact upon the community.

The next theme examines the ways in which student life in the USA has become highly regulated and professionalised in the era of the mass university. This regulation operates through a cadre of student support service professionals who recognise the importance of both the informal and formal aspects of student life. Students at UW-Madison study within a genuine mass institution compared to Bristol students and so such professionalisation is essential to help students find a manageable scale of identification

in the 'second curriculum'. Such professionalisation and regulation can be considered as *post-in loco parentis* structures which have persisted much longer than in Britain.

The third theme relates to the relationship between UW-Madison and the isthmus community, in which downtown Madison is located. The campus of UW-Madison is intertwined with the downtown area to the extent that the two are often inseparable. In particular, art and cultural facilities at UW-Madison play a pivotal role in the cultural infrastructure of the city. UW-Madison, as a mass university, functions as a 'city within a city' whose cultural impacts are diverse and manifold and central to cultural provision in the community.

Finally, some aspects of mass student life at UW-Madison are discussed. In particular, the higher legal drinking age creates alternative life patterns structured around house parties, binge drinking and hanging-out. There are also a number of distinctive communities which can be discerned within the large student population at UW-Madison, three of which are discussed; sporting communities, the Greek system of fraternities and sororities, and the Co-operative housing movement. In sum, it is to be understood that the cultural impacts of UW-Madison and its students on the community occur in a much more regulated and professionalised environment and there is a much more complex university-student-community relationship.

#### FIGURE 7.1: THE STUDENTS

In-depth work was carried out with a small group of students who introduced themselves in the following way:

- Anne, a 19 year old sophomore came straight from High School to UW-Madison:  
*I'm from Aurora, Colorado. I came here partly recruited to swim. I came here to visit and loved the city. I'm majoring in secondary education and geography.*
- Angela 20 year old junior came straight from High School:  
*I'm from Beloit, Wisconsin. People say it's the cess pool of Wisconsin. I'm studying mechanical engineering. I came here because it's the biggest school we have in Wisconsin and I wanted to go to a big school and it has a good programme. I'm doing the geography class 'cos one of my friends did it and recommended it to me.*
- Tim, a 20 year old junior, came straight from school:  
*I'm from Appleton, Wisconsin near Green Bay. I'm majoring in geography and history and I want to teach high school. I guess I came to Madison 'cos it's the only place to go I guess.*
- Jeff, a 22 year old senior, came straight from High school and was recruited by the

swim team:

*I'm from Fort Collins, Colorado but don't know Anne. Fort Collins is a college town as well of about 20 000 and my dad is a Geography professor there. I had a hard time finding a major. I just went for geography but I don't know what I want to do.*

- Laura, 22 years old, comes from Montfort, Wisconsin:

*I'm a senior in rural sociology and international agriculture. Before I came here I was a student in Cornell University in New York state in Ithaca and between that I worked in Americorp in inner-city Milwaukee and Chicago. I'm trying to graduate in May, but maybe not. I also have a job at the capitol as a tour guide.*

- Nathan is also 22 and comes from Madison:

*I'm a senior majoring in rural sociology and natural resources. I'm also getting a certificate in criminal justice. For that I took two semesters of extra classes in criminology in the USA and also I completed a 300 hour internship with the Madison Police Department - that was field observations. I grew up in Madison but it wasn't my first choice. When I was looking at places to go I wanted to go elsewhere but for financial reasons I came here and its a good university so I decided to stay. I was worried I wouldn't expand out as a person by staying here. I think sometimes disarming yourself in a new situation is good. I didn't want to stay in a comfortable situation that I had known all my life. But as it turned out even though the surroundings are the same the people that I was with are immensely different so I learn in that way.*

(All names have been changed)

## **LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES IN THE USA: PARTNERSHIP AND SERVICE**

### **The Land-Grant Tradition**

The foundation of the constitution of the USA in 1787 was also the year of the NorthWest Ordinance which authorised the sale of public land for the support of education (Campbell, 1995). This demonstrated an early commitment within the constitution to promoting higher education. The NorthWest Ordinance was the forerunner of the land-grant tradition, which granted federal land for the sole use of higher education. The Land Grant movement gained momentum in the latter half of the nineteenth century through supporters such as Justin Smith Morrill and Jonathan Baldwin Taylor and President Lincoln. This movement, through the Morrill (Land Grant) Act of 1862, resulted in the official granting of land to establish a land grant university in every state (Campbell,

1995). These universities were seen as the 'people's universities' which were based upon the idea of educational opportunity and service to the public.

A subsequent Federal Act in 1887, The Hatch Act, emphasised their role as "diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects connected with agriculture" (Campbell, 1995, 21). The Land Grant universities, then, play a central role in the success of the agricultural industry in the USA. They also play a key role in the democratisation of higher education in the USA, seen most recently by the incorporation of tribal colleges into the Land Grant system in 1994 to establish agricultural extension programmes focused upon the needs of native Americans (Campbell, 1995, 25). Today, all states in the USA receive a federal grant which support the 105 Land Grant colleges and universities.

There is a parallel development in the USA, then, of public and private universities. However, the boundaries between the two are blurring as public universities receive money from private sources such as alumni and private universities receive federal grants. Yet, the land grant universities still retain their distinctiveness. In contrast to some, more ancient, British universities, the Land Grant universities combined the pure intellect of the German Humboldtian tradition and the raw pragmatism of American populism. Hence, their focus became the application of learning to service (Campbell, 1995, 27). This unique historical development has contributed to the legacy of public service and volunteering within Land Grant universities.

However, there is growing displeasure and lack of trust towards the Land Grant university; for such institutions whose primary mission is to serve, this is galling (Campbell, 1995, 32). Its efforts to serve society, as it seems, failing and its efforts to transform have, some suggest, left the role of the university in ruins (Readings, 1996). Rather than pursuing ideas such as excellence and accountability, some have suggested that restoring public trust in higher education may be achieved through enhancing its public image by fostering a greater understanding of the work which universities undertake (Campbell, 1995).

## The University of Wisconsin System and UW-Madison

Wisconsin is a predominantly rural state in the mid-west region of the USA situated to the north of Chicago and bordered by the Great Lakes to the north and east. Madison is located in the south of the state in Dane county (Figure 7.2).

FIGURE 7.2: THE LOCATION OF THE STATE OF WISCONSIN AND ITS CAPITAL, MADISON, IN THE USA.



The present University of Wisconsin System emerged from the Land Grant tradition and was established to meet the growing demands of the rural farming communities in the mid-west. The University of Wisconsin was established in 1848, the same year which Wisconsin received statehood. With the passing of the Land Grant act of 1862, Madison was placed at the centre of the system as the state's Land Grant institution. In 1971, there was a merger of the University of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin State Universities system which created the current UW System with 26 campuses - 13 universities and 13 freshman-sophomore centres - and a state-wide extension office in all the 72 counties of Wisconsin. The UW System has nearly 29 000 members of staff and an enrolment of nearly 150 000 students, 84% of which are from Wisconsin.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The University of Wisconsin System Fact Book, 1996/97.

UW-Madison is at the centre of this system with 16 000 staff and nearly 43 000 students, two-thirds of whom are in-state students and 30% of whom are from Madison. One-fifth of students are postgraduates, 9% of undergraduates are part-time and 9% are self-identified ethnic 'minority' students.<sup>4</sup> The student population has decreased from its highest peak in the 1980s due to overcrowding. Despite this decrease, the sheer size of UW-Madison makes it a city within a city. In fact, spread over 10 000 acres with a total population of approaching 60 000, if it were a separate city, it would be the eighth largest in the state.<sup>5</sup> It is a true multiversity (Hove, 1991), then, offering an experience of mass higher education.

UW-Madison is a member of the Big Ten Conference, an organisation which was established in 1895 to support collegiate football and currently has eleven members.<sup>6</sup> Despite the fact that these mid-west institutions were derided as 'cow colleges', and that the conference was originally associated with football rather than academic excellence, the Big Ten conference now contains some of the largest and most successful universities in the USA. As a result, the Big Ten has become a powerful metaphor within the university system of the USA (Fossum, 1995). The academic development of the Big Ten is now co-ordinated by the Committee on Institutional Co-operation (CIC) which aims to improve communication among institutions with similar purposes and services (Fossum, 1995, 10). As a result, many cross-institutional groups have emerged, a Travelling Scholars Program has been established and Big Ten universities specialise in certain areas to avoid duplication.

UW-Madison is one of the main players within the Big Ten and is one of the most prestigious universities in the USA. For example, in 1993/94 it had the third largest expenditure on R&D amongst universities in the USA.<sup>7</sup> One student expressed his admiration for UW-Madison:

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<sup>4</sup> UW System, Fact Book, 1996/97.

<sup>5</sup> UW-Madison Office of Relations Promotional Material, 1991, 8.

<sup>6</sup> The Big Ten includes the public universities of Penn State, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Michigan State, Purdue, Iowa, Indiana and Ohio and the private Northwestern University.

<sup>7</sup> University of Wisconsin Foundation, Annual Report on Stewardship, 1994.



I think it's great. There are professors here who are monumentally important in the world in terms of academics. If you go to other state universities you get 'joe schmuck with just a Ph.D.' Coming out of high school you just compete with your class but coming here there's much more competition (Tim).

However, some of the other smaller campuses in the UW System have more in common with the farming communities of the rural mid-west. Some students expressed to me this disparity between more urban UW-Madison and the smaller campuses in other less populated parts of the state:

I'm from Appleton, Wisconsin, near Green Bay. I guess I came to Madison 'cos it's the only place to go. Appleton has 60 000 people and is very conservative. It was a nice place to live but I wouldn't want to spend the rest of my life there (Tim).

I'm from Beloit, Wisconsin. People say it's the cess pool of Wisconsin. I came here because it's the biggest school we have in Wisconsin and I wanted to go to a big school (Anne).

However, the founding principles of the University of Wisconsin based upon a commitment to state-wide public service through the Wisconsin Idea, develops a strong and cohesive state-university identity as discussed below.

## THE WISCONSIN IDEA OF PUBLIC SERVICE

The unique and most lasting legacy of the land grant college and university system has been service to the public. That public service is what has forged and maintained the strong partnership between land-grant institution and the citizens who support them (Campbell, 1995, 27).

The first presidents of the University of Wisconsin such as John Bascom and Charles Van Hise believed that the university should lend its resources to the development of the state and its people (Hove, 1991, 69). This commitment to public service formed the basis of the 'Wisconsin Idea', described by a subsequent president as making "the beneficent influence of the university available to every home in the state."<sup>8</sup> This Idea which builds upon the tradition of land grant institutions as the 'people's universities', has become one

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<sup>8</sup> 1995 Almanac, UW-Madison, 8.

of the centre pieces within the mission statement of UW-Madison as the following extract testifies:

The University must:

*Serve society through co-ordinated state wide outreach programs that meet continuing educational needs in accordance with the University's designated land-grant status.<sup>9</sup>*

In fact, one of UW-Madison's four Directives to shape the university in the next decade is entitled 'Strengthen the university's commitment to public service.' This directive recommends that every faculty and staff member should participate in some form of university-related public service each year, seek to work with colleagues in elementary and secondary education, be a leader in lifelong learning to assist Wisconsin people and be at the forefront of instructional technology transfer to the community.<sup>10</sup>

Such sentiments have been restated in a similar way through UW-Madison's vision for the next ten years which is based upon three overlapping learning themes:<sup>11</sup>

- **The Learning Experience** "How well students learn in the classroom significantly depends upon what happens before and after the classroom hour."
- **The Learning Community** "Belonging to UW-Madison involves membership in a learning community that encourages people to collaborate... We also need fluidity in the boundaries of the university itself."
- **The Learning Environment** "Staff and students must have universal access to networked communications and information."

UW-Madison's continuing commitment to the state through the Wisconsin Idea is also evident in a recent document by the Chancellor, David Ward, entitled 'The University in Partnership with Wisconsin' which outlines the various joint initiatives with partners throughout the state.

<sup>9</sup> 1995 Almanac, UW-Madison, 17.

<sup>10</sup> Future Directions, The University in the 21st Century, The Future Directions Committee, UW-Madison, 1989.

<sup>11</sup> A Vision for the Future, Priorities for UW-Madison in the Next Decade, Office of the Chancellor, UW-Madison, 1995.

These various re-statements of the Wisconsin Idea are attempts to update it and balance UW-Madison's role as an education partner in the state with its role in the global environment. The identity of UW-Madison becomes one of a "complex corporate entity which has been intimately connected to the community since the nineteenth century" (int., Ward, 23/9/96).

One can sense the role which the university attempts to carve out for itself; everyone falls within the 'learning' model of the Wisconsin Idea of which it is at the centre. It is the intention of UW-Madison that this learning model encompasses formal and informal learning experiences and the grey areas in between such as teaching in dorms and networked bedrooms (int., Ward, 23/9/96).

The next part of this section discusses the ways in which the Wisconsin Idea structures student life. In particular, the concepts of philanthropy, stewardship and partnership emerge as guiding principles for the university and student communities, student service learning and volunteering are encouraged as part of the student experience and leadership is promoted as an element of being a Wisconsin student.

### **Philanthropy, Stewardship and Partnership**

I believe there should never be town-gown separation. The university is a key player in Madison along with the government. We employ 18 000 people and have 43 000 students so the university is a medium-sized city. We need to do much so people don't think of the university as a separate enclave, but instead a full partner. We have so much to give and have lots to learn from the community (int., Rouse, 10/9/96).

There are three themes within the Wisconsin Idea - philanthropy, stewardship and partnership - which connect the university to the community. As one senior member of staff expressed:

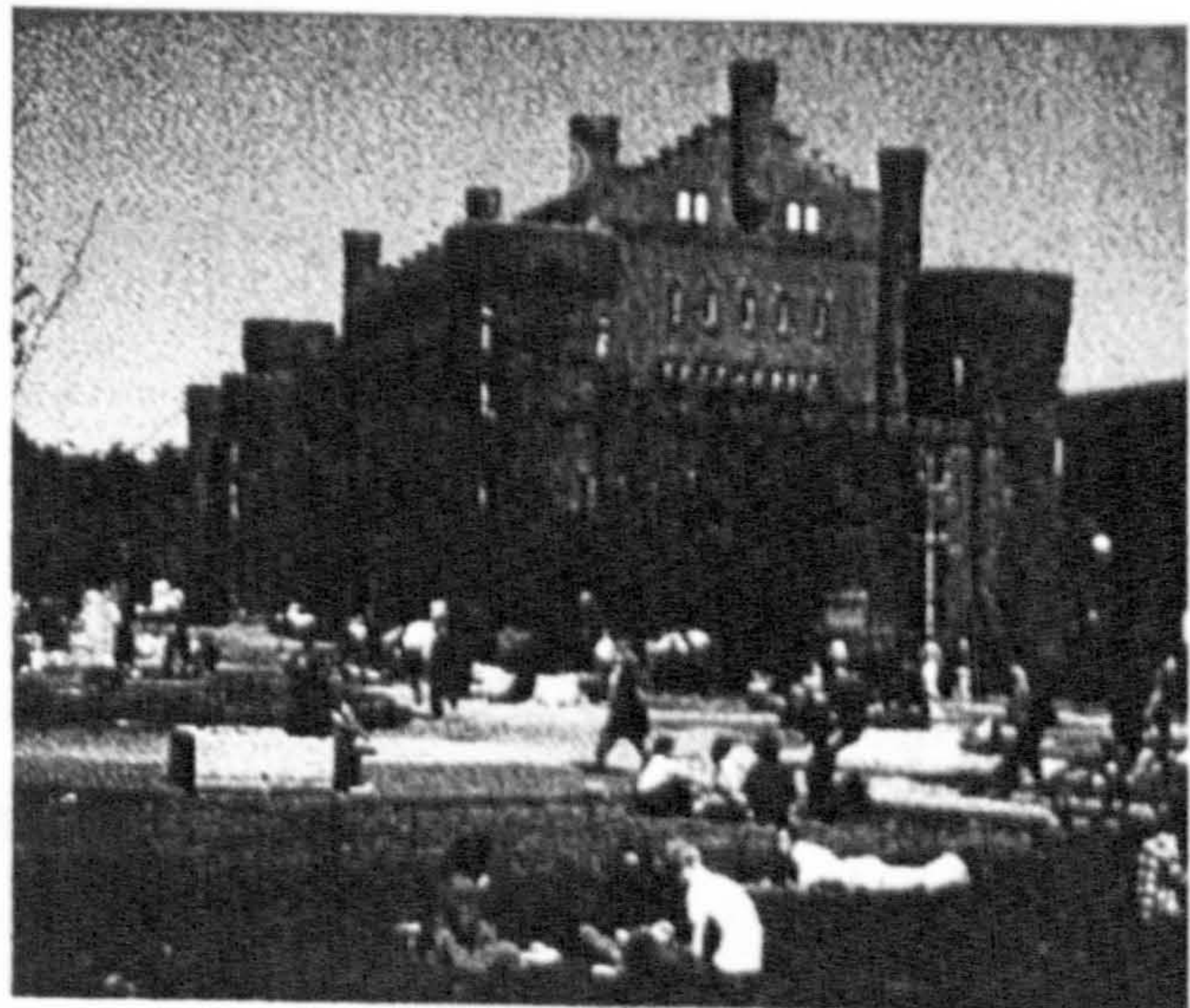
The university leadership recognises the importance of a strong partnership with the Madison community as well as the elected officials. The quality of this institution is not just an accident it is because the people of Wisconsin believe in and are proud of the university. It is extremely important to the campus leaders to make sure that we are sensitive to anything which represents a community issue and we treat our community partners well (int., Langer, 23/9/96).

The Wisconsin Idea generates a unique experience which creates a life long connection between the university and those who encounter it, either as students, alumni or citizens. The university attempts to foster the idea that experiencing UW-Madison is a distinctive and abiding encounter which encompasses the time before and after one's formal university career:

We become involved with the students long before they get involved in the university. We have 115 alumni chapters throughout the world who are involved in identifying and recruiting students for this campus. Chapters are made up of alumni and are formal organisations; they raise money to provide scholarships and involved in recruiting students and informing people about what a 'Wisconsin Experience' would be all about (int., Langer, 23/9/96).

There is a sense, then, that UW-Madison is stewarded by a partnership which embraces all those who encounter it. This tradition of giving back to the university for the benefit of the community is promoted through The University of Wisconsin Alumni Foundation. This Foundation creates links between past, present and future students to carry forward the notion of the Wisconsin Experience; in effect, it tries to create a reservoir of goodwill. The Foundation is the second largest receiver of money in the USA; in 1995 it received \$88m from alumni and other givers.<sup>12</sup> This culture of giving and support from alumni is the single biggest difference between universities in Britain and the USA (int., Ward, 23/9/96).

The Alumni Foundation, along with the Office for Student Volunteers (OSV) and the Dean of Students Office, is to be relocated to **The Morgridge Centre for Public Service** in 1998 to increase the profile of public service to the community from the university. This Centre is being funded by a \$3.5m contribution from two UW



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<sup>12</sup> University of Wisconsin Foundation, Annual Report on Stewardship, 1995.

alumni, Tashia and John Morgridge and is to be located at the centre of the campus in the landmark Old Gymnasium building at the centre of the downtown-campus area. It will have three main roles:

- Support and enhance the learning environment by creating partnerships that link academic study with community service.
- Serve as a clearinghouse of information about service opportunities.
- Support student initiatives and leadership by promoting participation in service facilities.

The creation of The Morgridge Centre, then, is a recognition of the centrality of the concept of service within the mission of UW-Madison. It is also a major source of philanthropy in the community and reinforces the university's vision which encompasses the university and the community as partners in learning.

### **Tradition and the Wisconsin Idea**

There is a strong sense of tradition which maintains the Wisconsin Idea. Traditions associated with UW-Madison are created in a number of ways. For example, The Alumni Foundation established The Badger Action Network which is dedicated to legislative advocacy for UW-Madison throughout the state. Alumni are encouraged to join and to share positive stories with others about the Wisconsin experience and 'always mention UW-Madison when talking to new acquaintances'.

Further, university merchandise, symbols and mascots are heavily used to create and perpetuate a cohesive university-state identity. State Street, the main shopping thoroughfare in Madison, is littered with shops devoted to selling UW-Madison merchandise, especially clothing and sports accessories.

Traditions, symbols and mascots, then, are central to the creation of the identity of UW-Madison; there is even a book devoted to describing them. Many traditions have now been banned because of their dangerous, and often fatal, consequences. Traditions include Ban Capping when caps are turned around when the Badgers win; burning the boat as a symbol of luck for the rowing crew; Cap Night when freshmen caps are burnt, Lake Rush when freshmen are thrown into Lake Mendota; 'On, Wisconsin' the official university, and now state, song; arm waving during the Varsity and, of course, Bucky

Badger, the iconoclastic UW-Madison mascot who is also adopted throughout the state and has come to personify the Wisconsin spirit:



Wearing university clothing and celebrating the symbols and traditions associated with each university, then, is widespread amongst students and non-students in the USA. Such displays of loyalty to the state university is part of the tradition of belonging to one's state. As one student commented: "Wearing the university clothes is a way you can connect with people instantly and its a way of starting conversations" (Laura). The following quote is illustrative of some of the feelings of loyalty within the university-state identity:

It's interesting 'cos people of all social classes seem to connect to universities in the USA. You see people, it is extremely common to see people who haven't even finished high school to have university hats or shirts on. If you live here, whether you go to university or not, its your place. I used to wear things from Michigan State uni. where my parents went. It's almost kind of a professional sports person thing (Nathan).

Support for, and admiration towards, the university is evident throughout the state of Wisconsin. As one senior member of staff commented:

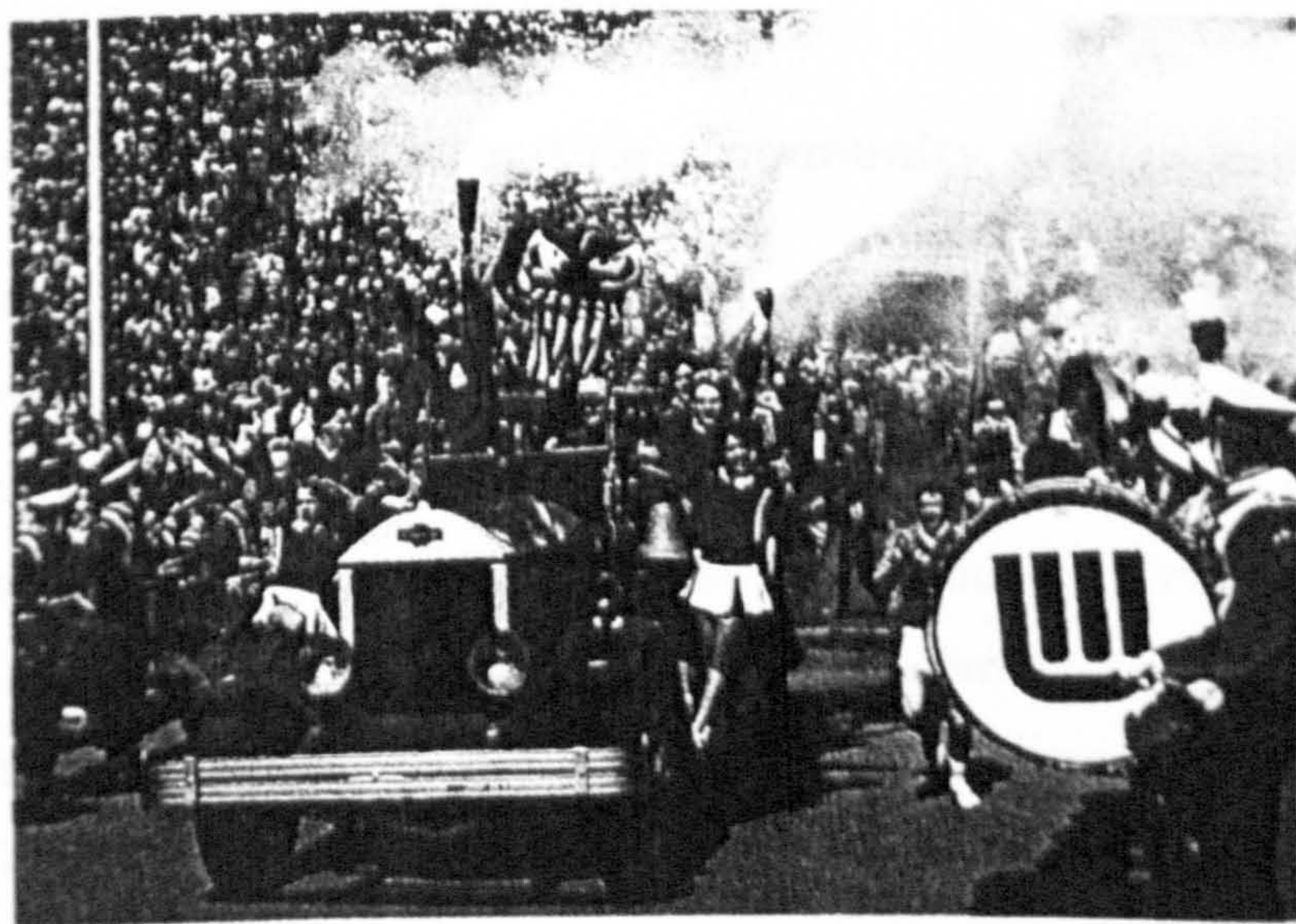
I think Madison is unique. It was voted number one city in the USA, it is the state capital, the power structure is a good influence on the university. The whole population of Wisconsin is extremely supportive of the university (int., Langer, 23/9/96).

One of the most dramatic displays of this university-state support and loyalty is through American Football.

## Football Saturday

American Football is a tradition which crystallises a community spirit at UW-Madison, not least because of the presence of the 100 000 capacity Camp Randall Stadium in the middle of the campus. Camp Randall is home to the Badgers, UW-Madison's American Football team who have recently enjoyed a meteoric rise to fame, not least for winning the Rose Bowl in 1994 and the Big Ten in 1993.

Football Saturday is an occasion which bears witness to over 100 000 football fans, many of whom are travelling supporters from all over Wisconsin, descending upon the campus to support the Badgers. The whole campus becomes oriented towards the afternoon game. However, activities and drinking begin early with tailgating, house parties and events such as 'wreck a car' in which certain fraternities charge \$1 to hit an old car to raise money for charity. By noon, hordes of drunken fans line the streets. Local residents hire out their driveways and grass verges to travelling supporters hoping to find parking spaces and a sea of red and white bodies makes its way to the centre of the campus.



Source: Hove (1996)

There are several rituals associated with the football game itself. The team mascot, Bucky Badger, in the form of a six-foot, over-enthusiastic, Disneyesque, prancing red woodland creature, completes perpetual circuits round the stadium rousing support from the crowd. The Wisconsin band summons the crowd to their feet through 'On, Wisconsin' and the Varsity, and Camp Randall glows red and white. The unifying power of the football experience is illuminated by the following conversation:

Paul                    *What about this football thing?*

- Anne *It's tradition.*
- Angela *I'm not a fan but I just go and hang out.*
- Anne *It used to be a lot rowdier. They'd throw fish, fruit.*
- Jeff *Two years ago when they won the game to get into the rose bowl there was a riot and everyone ran onto the field.*
- Anne *Even when I'm at home someone has been to school here or knows someone who has and they all wear the red and white and go on about it and say 'go badgers'.*
- Angela *I think there's a lot of alumni as well. You see people from all over Wisconsin who came here, all come back and bring their kids. Even the old people who come every year.*
- Jeff *I'm sure there's that feeling at every school in the states especially the big schools. This pride is something which starts much earlier in elementary school. There's a lot of rivalry between high schools so it starts then and at school everyone wears college tops cos it's the cool thing to do.*

Traditions, and tradition making, then, form a central part of the identity of UW-Madison. The university benefits from genuine state-wide support and admiration which is fostered, in part, from the academic and sporting success of UW-Madison and key events such as Football Saturday.

### **Educating for Citizenship: community service and student volunteerism**

Student service in the community, either through credit programmes in the curriculum or extra-curricular activities, is an increasingly important aspect of student life in the USA. Mohan (1994a, 1994b, 1996) discusses the ways in which British universities, through an increased focus upon student-based community service initiatives, can learn from the USA; in Britain, "student participation in community service is largely an extra-curricular matter... The situation in the USA is very different" (Mohan, 1994a, 72). As Silver and Silver (1997, 58) comment:

The American campus life offices have traditionally been much more concerned than their British counterparts with programmes, training - including for 'leadership' - and much more active interpretation of student service, one which is more dynamically integrated with the notion of providing education, fostering community

In Britain, community service is an adjunct of the students' union and is deterred from entering the curriculum by the specialisms of single honours degrees (Mohan, 1994b, 41).



However, there is a growing debate on volunteering in higher education in Britain which draws upon the experience of the USA.<sup>13</sup>

In contrast, in the USA there is a belief that, "By encouraging community involvement as a structured educational experience and research strategy, universities can better contribute to producing an educated citizenry" (ibid.). Land Grant universities in the USA have a particularly important role to play in fostering community service: "From their inception, land-grant colleges and universities have evolved on the primary philosophical premise of service to the public" (Campbell, 1995, 135). It is the extension, outreach, public service mission, then, which makes them unique (ibid.). However, rather than being driven by pure altruism, this community role is also to justify tax-exempt status (Mohan, 1994b, 6). There are also strong influences which deter American universities from greater community involvement such as publication-oriented output, disciplinary tribalism and short-term contracts (Mohan, 1994b, 6).

There are two official programmes which promote the integration of community service within the university curriculum in the USA; Campus Compact and the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL). Community service is also promoted through AmeriCorps within the USA, the Peace Corps which sends volunteers outside the USA and for which UW-Madison recruits more volunteers than any other university and Clinton's National Service Scheme under which students earn entitlements to financial aid through community service.

One of the reasons for a belief in service learning is through the assumed positive association between community service and educational attainment and the health of the student. Further, "community service is also a new way to socialise and a way to meet other people, get connected and make friends" (int., Vanderhei, 13/9/96). The benefits of greater community involvement also involve the acquisition of transferable skills, creating new collaborative ways of working and at a broader level, rebuilding the social fabric and a sense of community (Mohan, 1994a, 74).

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<sup>13</sup> See CVCP/Goddard et al. (1994), Mohan (1994a, 1994b, 1996).

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## Volunteering at UW-Madison

At UW-Madison, service learning is viewed as an obligation rather than a choice: "As a student citizen you have a fundamental obligation to give back to your community through the privilege of being able to experience higher education (int., Rouse, 10/9/96). The Dean of students went on to explain her vision of community service at UW-Madison:

It's wonderful, to link adolescents to something larger than themselves. Volunteering should start very early on to help you realise you are connected to a larger world which contains people with many problems. I don't like to see volunteer work done sloppily like privileged students with no training or understanding of poverty being sent out into the community to volunteer. I'd rather have no volunteer work than bad volunteer work. It needs evaluation and understanding. There needs to be partnership between the university and the other organisation. In the USA it's growing fast. The students want their classroom education to be connected to the wider society. People are recognising that the state can't cope with these problems. This is where university volunteering comes in (int., Rouse, 10/9/96).

The Director of The Voluntary Services Office (VSO) at UW-Madison expressed two reasons why she thought there was a stronger culture of volunteerism at the university. The first concerned the culture of the university itself and the second concerned the national mood:

(1)

At UW-Madison volunteerism has had a very active history since the 1960s. That tradition is a very rich part of our institution and we draw students who are interested in it. The faculty speak to it, while they might not make it part of the classroom they do address the issue of the democratic process and being a good citizen. I think it's just part of the rich tradition of this university. For example, we've always provided the most volunteers for the peace corps. What we have seen on this campus recently is less political activism and more and more involvement in voluntary activities, trying to make a difference to society through schools or community groups rather than taking a political stand on issues. This mirrors the trend in the whole of American society from political activism to more hands on community service...

(2)

A lot of students really have a sense of wanting to make a difference in their society. We've seen this in the last five years. They want to make an impact, they want to make change; they have much more of a worldwide perspective. We are in the middle of the country, the mid-west, part of our mentality is to pitch in and do what needs to be done. I'm not sure you see this attitude on the coasts; there is as strong mid-west work ethic. We have students coming to us who have already done community service; it's what is expected of you and part of getting into university. It starts at a young age but this is a recent trend. There is a debate that there isn't enough community service in our society and they're trying to rejuvenate it. I can see this from the Republican 'restoring values' side and the more Liberal 'helping the underprivileged' side. Both political parties agree upon volunteerism but approach it from a different perspective. The desire to get involved in community service mirrors society in general. It reflects an attitude that you can't trust big government and big corporations. Much of the impetus stems from lack of faith in the government to sort things out. We're not always going to have government to bail us out and so we have to help each other (int., Vanderhei, 13/9/96).

It is important, then, to understand the specificities of the USA as an influence upon volunteering and public service. The impulse to volunteer in the USA is partly illuminated by Tocqueville's comments on the municipal spirit in the townships of the USA.<sup>14</sup> There is also an important influence of the regional culture within the mid-west on volunteerism which stems from the seventeenth century sense of community fostered by the European settlers (int., Ward, 23/9/996).

In its present manifestation, it has been widely suggested that community volunteering amongst students mirrors a decline in participation in formal political activity such as that seen in the late 1960s which was concerned with 'big' issues such as Vietnam and race relations (Mohan, 1994a, 1994b). Students may be more careerist and not as interested in changing the world as their 1960s predecessors, but many are keen to participate in volunteering as a response to other, often more localised, social problems such as homelessness and income inequality in urban areas.

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<sup>14</sup> See Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1988).

However, promoting service learning should not be seen as a panacea for better university-community relations. One problem is that service learning could promote student-individualism as it would be used as a way to acquire skills to be deployed in the market place (Mohan, 1994b). Further, it is easy to undertake unproductive community service:

Reflecting upon the experience is critical otherwise it may reinforce stereotypes of groups. It is important to maintain relationships with the community and reflect upon it; that's where you learn. It has to be a partnership concept. We have to work with the group and have a two way conversation (int., Vanderhei 13/9/96).

Community service, then, is a growing element of student life at UW-Madison. The university is not a member of Campus Compact or COOL, but it is assumed that up to 5000 students from the university are involved in community service as part of the official or second curriculum. Community Service is organised through the Volunteer Services Office and volunteer opportunities are advertised through the Volunteer Fair, a two day event held at UW-Madison in September when community groups from Madison recruit students. In 1995, over 50 groups attended the fair and recruited over 2 000 students in service areas such as tutoring, youth programmes, health care, ageing services, people with disabilities, counselling, environmental issues, criminal justice and cultural and religious groups (VSO, 1996). What is evident from the volunteer fair is that Dane County and the Madison community has a particularly strong voluntary sector which recognises the importance of UW-Madison as a player within it.

Volunteering is also promoted as part of the curriculum and a list of over 300 professors, representing all the major schools, who are willing to sponsor students for directed study credits in the community is published by the Associated Students of Madison (ASM).

### **Education Outreach in Madison**

One of the most important areas of student service learning is through partnership work with schools. This is perhaps the strongest area of public service which UW-Madison undertakes with the community, mainly through the School of Education which is ranked number one in the USA. Through the School of Education and many other departments, a huge array of grassroots partnership programmes are organised with Madison-area schools which include over 60 student learning enrichment and enhancement programmes and 40 school staff and curriculum development programmes. These

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involved over 13 000 Madison school students on academic programmes and over 6 000 on sports programmes.<sup>15</sup> Much of this activity is conducted through UW-Madison's Summer Session Youth Programme.

There is also an extensive range of tutoring and mentoring schemes with local schools. Such schemes attempt to tackle issues such as limited minority participation in higher education and addressing the needs of 'at risk' children. For example, Project Bootstrap which draws upon UW-Madison student volunteers and provides after school programmes for at-risk high school children. There are several other well developed tutoring and mentoring projects which link UW-Madison student volunteers with local schools such as The New Loft, The Urban League of Greater Madison, 4-H, Centro-Hispano and Teen Outreach.

Such education outreach work with local schools is an attempt to create a wider sense of the university community which extends to those who are socially marginalised from the university. It is an attempt, then, to dispel the image of UW-Madison as a vast and remote institution which is not relevant to the overall quality of life in the region.<sup>16</sup>

### **Other Service Opportunities**

There are several other well developed service groups which students are involved in such as the Urban League of Greater Madison, Students helping Others, Madison Hunger Task Force, Third and Fourth Street which attempts to break the homeless cycle amongst single mothers and Best Buddies working with disabled children. UW-Madison also runs its own educationally oriented television station, WHA-TV.

One particular scheme, the Greater University Tutoring Service (GUTS), is an example of students serving students. GUTS is a student-run, volunteer, peer tutoring program which provides free tutorial assistance to other students to help them with course work. Nearly 5 000 students use GUTS at UW-Madison making it the largest organisation of its kind at any American university.

One student explained to me how important it was for him to use extra-curricular learning as part of his university experience. The following quote, as well as suggesting

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<sup>15</sup> School Partnership Programs, A Report from the Office of the Chancellor, UW-Madison, 6.

<sup>16</sup> School Partnership Programs, A Report from the Office of the Chancellor, UW-Madison, 4.

elements of careerism, also points towards community responsibility both within the university and the city and the themes of leadership and education for citizenship:

I always schedule 27 hours into a 24 hour day. There's so many things to do socially and having a job and doing sports that you just lose track of your time. I work for UW 'Safe-Walk'. I've worked a part-time job nearly every semester, not just for money but for the learning opportunity. This safe walk job I have now it's an escort programme. We escort students around campus at night for their own safety. That's something I'm doing 'cos I think the programme is important and it'll look good on my resume 'cos at the moment I'm applying to various police departments in the USA...

I spent the summer working as an assistant to a neighbourhood officer in Madison. There are 13 neighbourhoods in Madison which are considered as having a drug or gang problem. The officer is put in that neighbourhood to answer calls and do more preventative things and I worked as an assistant to him. My weekly schedule was that I worked daytime hours 3 times a week doing schemes like bicycles. The rest of the time we would do foot patrols at night. It wasn't paid but I got three credits for it. I can't graduate without doing it (Nathan).

In sum, then, service learning forms a significant proportion of the formal and extra-curricular activities of students at UW-Madison. Much of this is associated with the notion of responsibility and the concept of 'education for citizenship'. The next part of this section discusses how this student-service aspect of student life, is developed further through the concept of leadership.

### **Leadership**

One of the most important functions of a university is leadership training. You folks are future leaders (int., Rouse, 10/9/96).

The notion of students as future leaders is strongly promoted to the student population at UW-Madison. This process of leadership building begins before the student joins the university:

We [the Alumni Foundation] play a leadership role with the Dean of Students office and the Student Orientation Programme [SOP] held in the summer where students go through two days of orientation with their parents about everything to do on campus including extra-curricular activities and they have a chance to pre-register for their classes. This

weekend [end of September] we run Freshman-Parent Weekend. We have 5 800 students registered as new freshmen with 1 600 parents coming back (int., Langer, 23/9/96).

Various organisations at the university, such as The Alumni Foundation, The Wisconsin Alumni Association (WAA) and The Office of the Dean of Students at UW-Madison operate leadership training programmes:

- The **Wisconsin Future Alumni Association (WFAA)** allows students to gain leadership skills such as marketing, public relations and advertising. The Association involves students in programmes such as 'Career Connections', a programme which sponsors seminars each semester to help students to make the transition from student to alumni by matching them with other alum to advise them on future careers and 'Success Seminars'. WFAA has the following role:
 

the student or parent can pay a fee to be involved with us during their study. We have 2000 students involved in this programme. It automatically involves them with the student leadership base at this university and automatically invites them to special receptions and participate in a programme called 'dinner with matching silverware' - alumni host students and their favourite professor who can discuss what it's like living in a community like Madison (int., Langer, 23/9/96).
- The **Home Coming Committee** also involves students in the leadership process:
 

We also sponsor the Home Coming Committee; a group of 65 students who are involved in connecting the community of Madison to the campus leadership and the student body and celebrating homecoming once a year (where alumni and parents of students come back to their alma mater). It's a whole week of celebration as we head into the homecoming football game in October (int., Langer, 23/9/96).
- Undergraduates also get involved in the **Alumni Student Board** which is a public relations group who give campus tours to prospective students and parents and give a series of talks throughout Wisconsin.
- There is also the **Senior Class Council** which helps students make the transition from student to alum by teaching them that its important to give something back to the university. Students are taught an array of fund-raising, budget, networking, computer and governance skills.

These activities are informed by a particular conception of the future role of the student in the community:

We want to make decision makers who can give something back to the society; to become terrific leaders, give them the confidence so they can excel. Whether it's as a peace maker, political leader, teacher or health care provider, we're growing leaders (Int., Langer, 23/9/96).

In sum, then, public service enshrined by the Wisconsin Idea and the land-grant tradition, plays a central role in structuring the life of students at UW-Madison. Students receive a strong sense of context, responsibility and their future role in society through their education. The cultural impacts of UW-Madison students, structured through the Wisconsin Idea, will in many ways contrast with those of Bristol students who, as described in the previous chapter, are often seen as irresponsible, temporary visitors to the city.

The Wisconsin Idea, then, is a strong guiding principle which intimately links the university and the community. The Wisconsin Idea, by fostering volunteerism and stressing the importance of leadership, also creates a particular student-community relationship. The next section discusses the ways in which this relationship is further constructed and controlled by the regulation and professionalisation of student life by UW-Madison.

## **THE REGULATION AND PROFESSIONALISATION OF STUDENT LIFE**

The cultural life of students in the USA is highly regulated and professionalised through a cadre of student support service professionals. These staff are supported by various publications and structured events. In a similar way to Bristol, although more enhanced, freshmen experience a period of learning and acculturation into student life (Chapter 6). In this sense, attempts by students to find a more manageable scale and identity within the mass university is aided through a plethora of mechanisms. The university and the student, then, have a very strong relationship. Further, the dominance and strength of UW-Madison as a cultural provider in the city means that the cultural life of students is, to a greater extent than in Bristol, catered for, and regulated through, the university.



## **The Professionalisation of Student Life**

There is an established tradition of a professional cadre of student support staff in the USA which has developed to create a highly regulated framework for student life. Students are administered very closely by a large number of student services personnel who have a much wider role in students' lives than in Britain (Silver and Silver, 1997, 61). "The purposes of the American system of student support are extensive and explicit" (ibid., 1997, 60). For example, the previous section highlighted how students are guided by principles such as leadership and public service. This professionalised regulation of student life can be considered as a *post-in loco parentis* structure within American universities. In contrast, British students have retained more autonomy over their extra-curricular lives (ibid., 1997, 61).

This professional regulation of student life in America differs from Britain in the sense that it recognises the importance of the non-classroom experience as part of campus life and the educational mission of the university. In particular, "American 'student government' has been concerned more exclusively than in the British case with... 'the social, or non-academic, aspects of the college experience'" (ibid., 1997, 61). This growth of professional student services in the USA stems from the larger and more diverse student constituencies on campus. It also stems from the student unrest of the 1960s who demanded greater participation and a more professional level of service. Such demands meant that American students were regarded as 'clients' much earlier than in Britain (Silver and Silver, 1997).

There are several such professional support services which structure student life at UW-Madison, the most significant of which is the Dean of Students Office which represents senior level recognition of the needs of students. This Office, in conjunction with a vast array of student support services (see below), is run by hundreds of professional student support staff who are responsible for administering many aspects of student life from health and finance to student organisations and entertainment.

Student self-regulation is of particular importance to this professionalisation of student life. For example, The Wisconsin Union Directorate (WUD) at UW-Madison, exists to allow students a role in self-structuring art and entertainment events on campus. WUD is a volunteer student committee which is responsible for organising the programme of over

1000 events at the Union every year is one of the largest student organisations on campus. It is structured around twelve committees: Alternative Breaks, Music, Contemporary Issues, Film, Performing Arts, Travel, Hoofers, Cross Cultures, Distinguished Lecture Series, Art and Community Services.

Student representation at the university is mediated by The Associated Students of Madison (ASM). This was created in 1994 when the previous student organisation, Wisconsin Students Association which was heavily involved in the student unrest of the 1960s, was disbanded because of mal-administration. The ASM is a non-political lobbying group of thirty three elected student members whose main aim is to provide an official voice for the opinions of students and to run issue-oriented campaigns. Recent topics for such campaigns have included a 24-hour library, extending financial aid, lobbying tuition fees and professor evaluations.

The WISCard scheme is also an example of this professionalised and structured environment. The scheme allows students to pay money into an account which can be debited via their union card. The card can be used to purchase food, rent equipment and buy supplies at a discounted price from university outlets. This professionalised infrastructure is also supported by a number of publications and events which help students learn the rules of university life.

### **Learning the Rules of American University Life**

In a similar way to that discussed in Bristol, but on a much larger scale, there are several mediums through which students are introduced to student life at UW-Madison. These include publications, an array of services and structured learning events. Considered together, these contribute to creating a highly regulated and professionalised student-university-community interface which has developed in the era of the mass university.

There is an abundance of publications in Madison from the university and the community. There are two daily student newspapers from UW-Madison, making it the only university in the USA to have two competing student dailies (O'Neill, 1996). These are the independent, but more popular and right wing, Badger Herald and the university's official, but more alternative, paper The Daily Cardinal. Further, Gametime is the weekly Badger Football newspaper from UW-Madison. There are also two daily city newspapers, The State Journal and The Capital Times, which feature UW-Madison

regularly despite being city-wide. There are also two weekly what's-on guides; Isthmus, which, in a similar way to Venue in Bristol, publishes a comprehensive guide to Madison at the beginning of the university year and ISIT, Madison's guide to the performing arts downtown and on campus which is jointly published with The Arts Consortium of UW-Madison. Two other local publications, The Onion which offers a satirical look at the weeks events and Madison Times, a community newspaper, both regularly feature the university and are distributed heavily on campus. A vast array of information is also presented through the TITU scheme advertising events at the Wisconsin Union and at the numerous bulletin boards and kiosks around campus.



The main official mechanisms through which students receive information is the Dean of Students Office which runs a number of student services through its LINK programme:

- **Campus Assistance Centre (CAC)** This is the main information and referral service for students, staff, campus visitors and the local community which receives 4 000 inquiries per week on issues such as transport, health, housing, social events and student and community groups.
- **Interim Multicultural Centre (IMCC)** which focuses upon the needs of five historically underrepresented American ethnic groups on campus.
- **International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)** which assists international students and their dependants.
- **McBurney Disability Resource** which assists students with disabilities
- **Race Relations Education Programme (RREP)** which co-ordinates race awareness
- **SpeakUp** which offers a discriminatory harassment reporting system
- **Student Organisation Office (SOO)** organises the 650 student organisations.

- **Student Orientation Programme (SOP)** co-ordinates orientation for new students
- **University Health Services** which offer clinical services, counselling, insurance and alcohol and drug information.

The Campus Assistance Centre (CAC) is at the centre of the learning process for anyone who encounters the campus. It has a well developed and documented Referral System which it defines as 'the process of linking people and their needs to services, persons, literature and/or activities that can meet their needs'.<sup>17</sup> For many, then, the CAC is the first information point for what may seem an overwhelming campus.

In addition to these services, the Student Orientation Programme (SOP) organises campus-wide orientation events for new freshmen which has several components. These begin before term through the Summer Orientation Advising and Registration (SOAR) and Wisconsin Welcome Week (WWW) which offers an intensive period of learning for the students at the beginning of the academic year. WWW is based around several orientation events such as Late Night Wisconsin, Union Open Houses, Badger Tailgate party, 'Up All Night' Party, the Chancellor's Convocation Ice Cream Social and Project Community - an introduction to service learning. Welcome Week also involves a series of academic orientation programmes, tours and workshops. Freshman Parent's Weekend is also run at the beginning of this week which extends to parents the idea that they are also a vital part of the campus community. Further, Students Orientating Students (SOS) extends the work of SOAR and Welcome Week by recruiting students to serve as year round mentors for new freshmen.

Such programmes, then, create a highly structured learning environment on campus, especially during periods of intensive learning and initiation at the beginning of the year. Student life is further structured through the professional organisation of extra-curricular activities in what is known as the 'second curriculum'.

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<sup>17</sup> Campus and Community Resources and Referral Guidelines, Campus Assistance Centre, UW-Madison, 1996, 1.

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## The Second Curriculum

In the second curriculum, outside the classroom, we have over 600 organisations registered and have one of the most rich and varied out-of-class curriculum. It's amazing ranging from fraternities to academic and fun societies (int., Rouse, 10/9/96).

One theme which was expressed to me was the 'Second Curriculum', which encapsulated the 650 student organisations which were registered with the Student Organisation Office (SOO) at UW-Madison and shaped extra-curricular activities. As well as organising all these organisations which cover sport, the Greek communities and the plethora of religious, cultural political and special interest societies, SOO also organises a number of special programmes many of which further promote the idea of leadership such as the Student Leadership Programme and the Peer Mediation and Conflict Resolution Programme.

There are a number of activity areas which are prevalent within the second curriculum. In particular, the sporting communities and the popular Hooper Outing clubs attract large amounts of students. Political or issue groups are also numerous and well supported amongst the student organisations. The Wisconsin Public Interest Research Group (WISPIRG), which receives a small proportion of the annual segregated fees paid by the students to the university, is a particularly active group which exists to campaign on several issues such as homelessness, environmental education and voter registration. Further, the Wisconsin Union Directorate (WUD) discussed above, is one of the largest student organisations on campus.

These 650 organisations which structure the second curriculum receive official recognition:

In the spring the Dean of Students, Chancellor and Alumni Office holds an event at the chancellors home to recognise the leadership of all student organisations. All 650 will receive an invite to attend this event to talk to them about the importance of continuing their work on behalf of the university after leaving this campus and salute them and thank them for their contribution to the student experience (int., Rouse, 13/9/96).

The size of UW-Madison, then, comparable to a small city, means that students seek a smaller community within which to develop their own student identity within the mass scale of the university. The second curriculum, through the SOO and its many sub-

committees, is illustrative of attempts to make sense of the mass university. The final part of this section presents some comments from students on aspects of life at a mass university such as UW-Madison.

### **Making Sense of the Mass University**

In contrast to Britain, one aspect of the experience of the mass American university, which was evident at UW-Madison, is shared dorm life and the mass hall of residence. Some students expressed their feelings on room sharing and living in halls:

It doesn't always work out. I've had room mates every year; I've had it work really well and I've had it work terrible. In my first year I lived with someone with personal hygiene problems. He never took a shower or did his laundry and he actually got thrown out after a semester. It's a difficult situation 'cos people come from different family backgrounds and it can be a little confusing when you're used to having full control over your life and your own space (Nathan).

In the halls there are tons and tons of people. It's fun though. It's so bizarre when you think about it. Thousands of people come here and you put two of them together and expect them to live in a room in a building with a few thousand people (Anne).

Looking back halls are not a bad deal. You had food and it was pretty easy. The disadvantage is that you've got to have a room mate (Jeff).

It's really loud especially in the warm weather. People yelling out of their windows through the night: 'Ogg sucks'. It's one of the dorms and everyone says it sucks more than the other two. I don't know why. Then other people join in from the other halls. In my freshman year I just thought what the hell are they doing? Then it gets cold and they shut up (Angela).

The less intimate hall and lecture setting can make meeting people daunting:

A lot of people I know go to small schools and they ask, "don't you feel so small in Madison?" But you just have your own niche of friends (Tim).

Lectures are so huge so you don't meet people. So mainly it's from dorms or through other friends (Angela).

The second curriculum is one mechanism which can reduce the alienation felt towards the mass campus. One student expressed to me how his circle of friends developed through his course and involvement in sports:

A lot of students, especially those from Wisconsin, bring a lot of friends from high school. In my experience I had a lot of friends from high school but I didn't keep in touch with them compared to my sports friends. When you develop into a major, especially those that have small numbers, they develop into a social organisation as well (Nathan).

However, this participation in extra-curricular activities is subject to the same time constraints as in Britain (Chapter 6). The following conversation suggests how influential such time constraints can be:

- Paul            *What about club participation?*
- Angela        *There's a lot of clubs. I've joined stuff for a couple of months and then don't go any more 'cos I don't have any time but I still know the people from the clubs.*
- Tim            *I was in Amnesty and in the Clinton campaign but I have a heavy work load this semester.*
- Angela        *I was on the music committee for the union in my first semester but I don't have the time.*
- Jeff            *I think if I had the time I would.*
- Anne           *That's the thing, the time.*
- Angela        *I was going to be a big joiner at the beginning of the year, all the engineering societies, but I don't know if I've got the time.*
- Jeff            *I'd like to do the hoofers, the outdoor things, skiing, snowboarding, sailing, rock climbing.*

However, one student expressed to me how she was preparing to deal with such time constraints and make sense of the mass university in a unique way:

I'm trying to go abroad as well in the Spring through the Semester at Sea programme. My advisor said 'Go ahead and do it'. They have courses and professors on the ship who also do it. It costs \$6 000 and I can transfer my financial aid to there as well so it won't work out much more expensive. It starts in the Bahamas then to Venezuela then the Amazon, goes over to South Africa and then to Kenya on a Safari and then to India and Hong Kong, Hoi Chi Minh City, and then Japan and Seattle. It lasts a full semester, January to May. I'll take three courses on the boat (Laura).

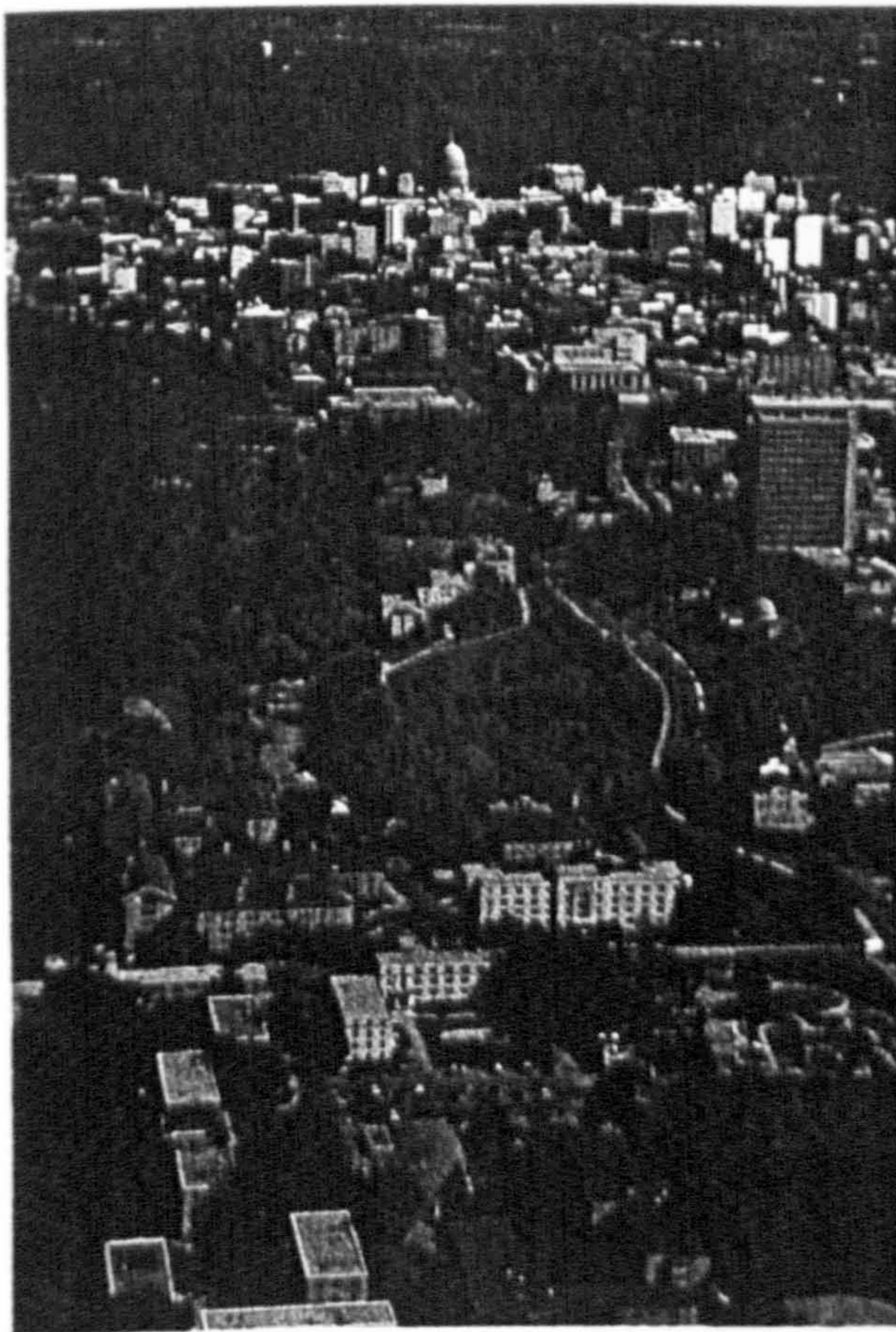
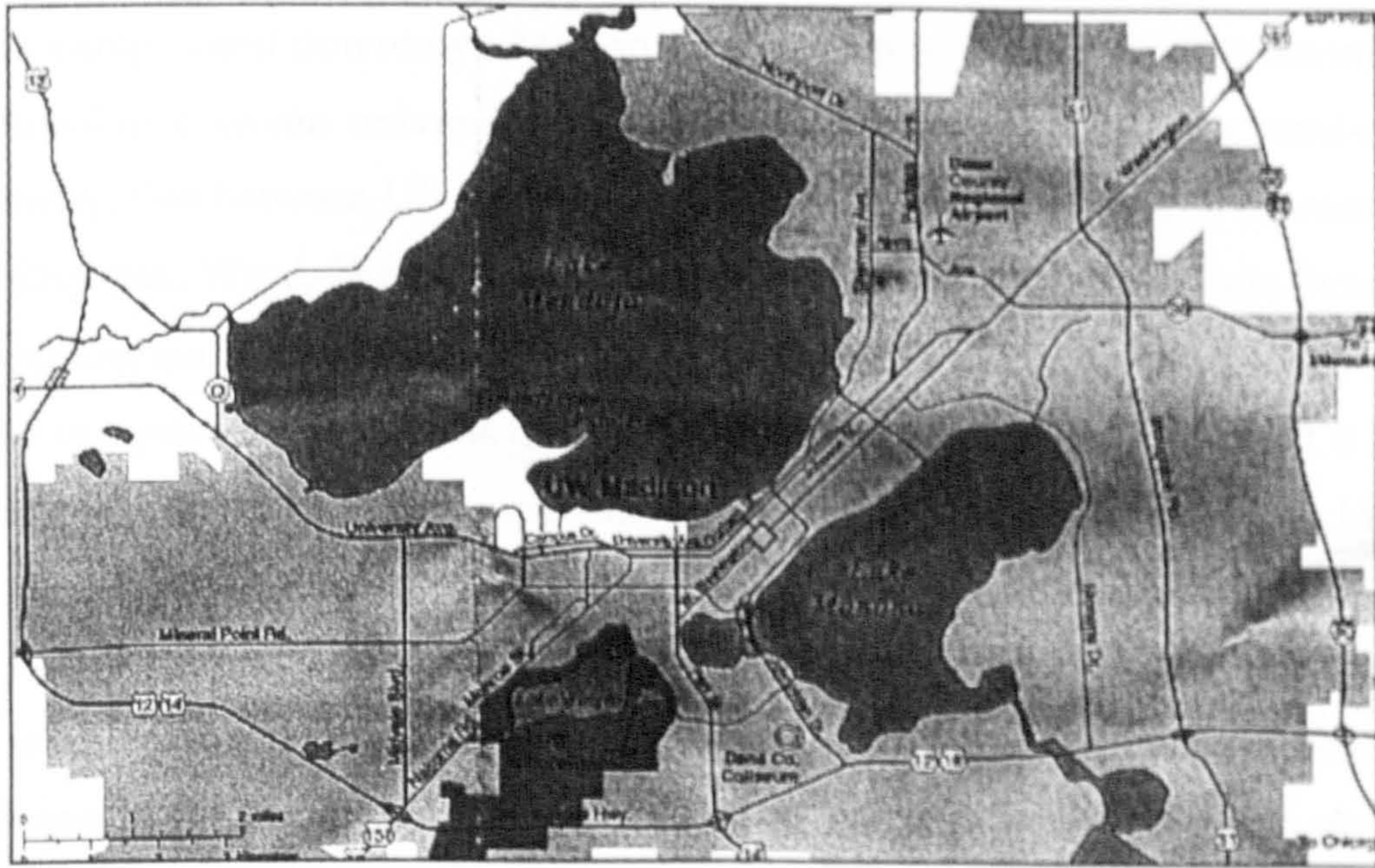
The construction of a highly regulated and professionalised second curriculum, then, seems to create sufficient opportunities to allow students to make sense of the mass university and find groups which fulfil their common interests and needs. Discussed below in more detail are a number of communities within the student population who have developed distinct identities. However, before that, some aspects of the relationship between UW-Madison and the city are discussed.

## **UW-MADISON AND THE ISTHMUS COMMUNITY**

Madison, a medium sized city with a population of about 200 000, was voted number one place to live in the USA in 1996 by the Money Magazine (Fried, 1996). The reasons for its success are associated with the location of the state capital and the largest institution of the UW System in the city, both of which provide recession-proof jobs (ibid.). Another reason is the beauty and distinctiveness of the city, surrounded by five lakes, forests and hills. Downtown Madison is located on a half mile wide isthmus between the largest two lakes, Mendota and Monona. This Isthmus community which extends from the state capital building to the university campus linked by the main thoroughfare State Street, is the basis of the distinctive identity of Madison (Figure 7.3). The following section analyses some aspects of this campus-isthmus community, namely, the relationship between the two, the strong attachment to place which is expressed towards this community, its history of radicalism and the prominent role UW-Madison plays in terms of cultural provision in this community.



FIGURE 7.3 THE ISTHMUS COMMUNITY: THE STATE CAPITAL, UW-MADISON CAMPUS AND STATE STREET.

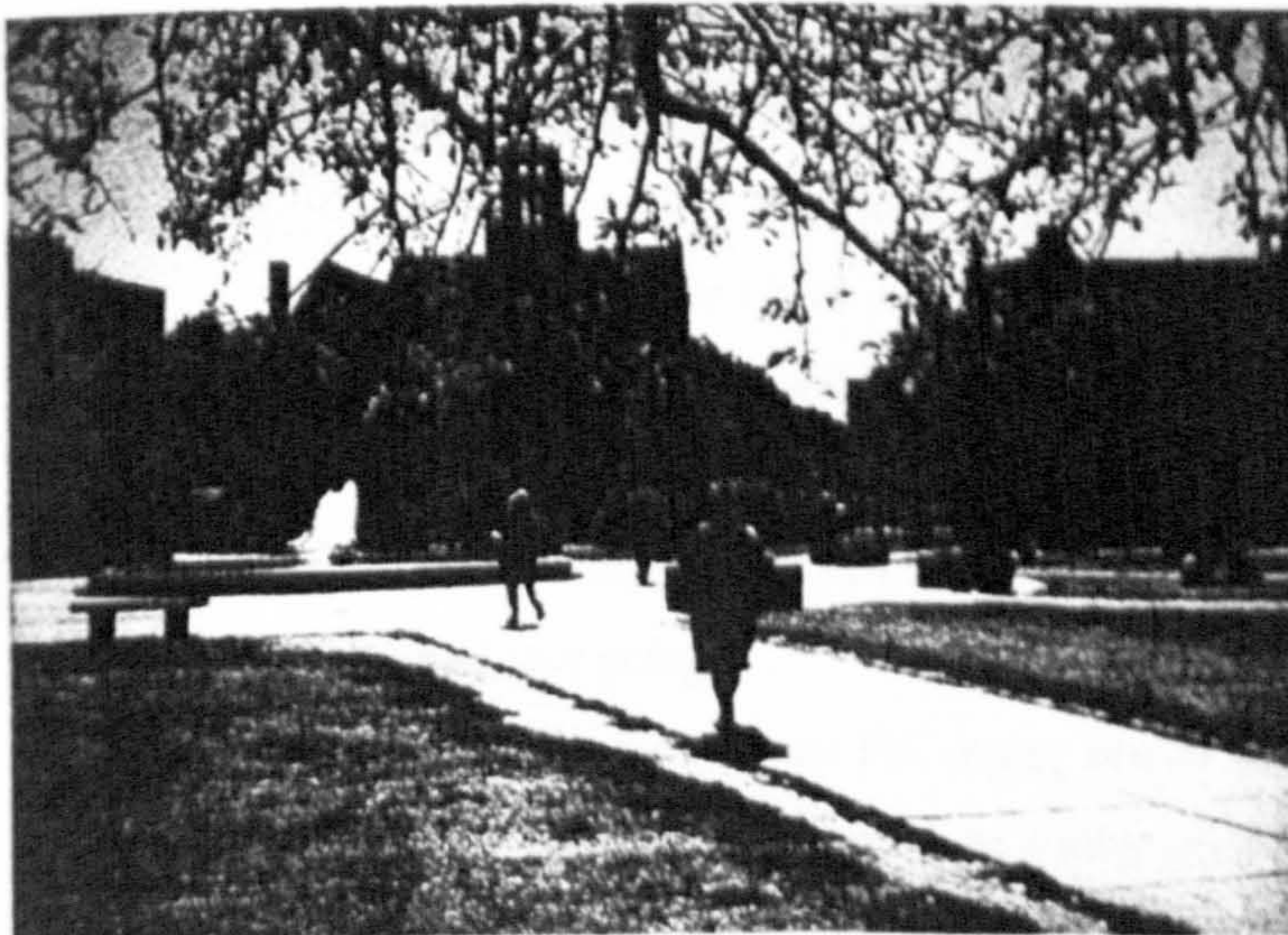


### The Campus and the Isthmus

The identity of the isthmus community is characterised by the intermingling of the university campus and downtown Madison. In contrast to Bender's (1988) comments that the relationship between university and the city is often marked by a semi-cloistered heterogeneity, that between UW-Madison and the isthmus community is characterised by permeability (int., Ward, 23/9/97). The main thoroughfare in the city, State Street, which is the shopping and entertainment focal point in the city runs from the state capital to the university campus (Figure 7.3). At the end of this street is Library Mall which is bounded by the Memorial Union, the university library, bookstore, the proposed Morgridge Centre, the State Historical Museum and Langdon Street, a street almost exclusively occupied by students. This square, decorated with fountains, lawns and benches and littered with food kiosks, hair braiders, buskers, public speakers, street vendors and leafleters especially during lunch hour, represents a public sphere which is used by the university and local communities.



State Street



Library Mall

These are areas of incessant movement. The university library, open 24-hours, is in constant use, the Memorial Union is open after midnight playing host to bands and late-night drinking, the many coffee shops on State Street are patronised into the night by students studying and Langdon Street is an area of constant noise and movement as students make their way home and move between the various house parties. It is an area, then, of perpetual student transit which is illuminated by the following comments:

80% of our 43 000 students live within a mile radius of campus - this means campus life is very rich as people live near it. This is very much a residential campus (int., Rouse, 10/9/96).

We are not really an urban university, we are really part of this isthmus community. We are very centralised. This is a statement made by the students that they want to be close and involved. They want to be close to the university, capital and centre of activity (int., Langer, 23/9/96).

One distinctive aspect of the isthmus community, then, especially around the campus and State Street, is an atmosphere of movement and activity:

There's a lot of young people around and there's a different kind of energy. I used to live on State Street and it has a life of its own - people just talking or a guy playing his guitar till 2 in the morning (Tim).

The following conversation illustrates the diversity of activities in which students participate in the isthmus community. These range from hanging-out and exploring the surrounding countryside to attending gigs and theatre at the university:

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>Paul</b>   | <i>What do you like to do?</i>   |
| <b>Tim</b>    | <i>Play basketball.</i>  |
| <b>Anne</b>   | <i>If it's nice I come to the terrace and hang out.</i>  |
| <b>Angela</b> | <i>If it's nice I like to go for a bike ride - we've been on some 3 hour rides miles from here. Otherwise I have a car and I like to go to the malls to buy something.</i>               |
| <b>Jeff</b>   | <i>There are a lot of good state parks, Devils lake. I like to check those out.</i>  |
| <b>Anne</b>   | <i>They have the farmers market at the Capital on Saturday. There's tons of people from all over. It doesn't seem very suburban here which is nice. It seems low key and easy going.</i> |
| <b>Angela</b> | <i>I like to go see plays. I'm seeing two at the civic centre which has two places for stuff to happen and then there's some good stuff on at the two student theatres here</i>          |

*and it's really easy cos you can walk to any of them. I like the free concerts here [at the Terrace] on a weekend too.*

**Angela** *They have some really good music, blues, jazz and a swing band which was really good.*

**Jeff** *There was a free concert on campus last night with Arrested Development and the Descendants. It's the Halloween party, early this year 'cos the weather gets bad later. Last year the Bosstones played.*

The area around the Library Mall, State Street and the campus, then, is a place to just hang-out or participate in the wide range of cultural events which occur there.

However, it is important to be aware of dissenting voices rather than regarding the relationship between UW-Madison and the isthmus community as one of perfect symbiosis. Two local students expressed to me how they felt about the role of university in the city:

*The university adds a lot of richness to Madison. But in other ways you always hear that in Madison they're glad the students are gone and that its a quieter more peaceful city and you can go down the bike lanes without running into students. So it's two ways (Laura).*

*Growing up in Madison I liked the opportunities which the university brings. But unfortunately what the university has done is taken a small town and given it a fairly large population. It's getting better but it never used to have the infrastructure and resources to deal with it. A lot of times people feel the city government spends so much time worrying about university issues that the poorer communities don't get heard (Nathan).*

The city of Madison then, has experienced the development of another city - a UniverCity<sup>18</sup> - within it until the two have become almost synonymous. However, the city of Madison is not reducible to just the isthmus community and the downtown area is not just the UW-Madison campus. Such reductionism neglects other areas of the city. The following quotes voice such concerns:

*Madison is the University. So if you want to do anything apart from the bars you have to go to Chicago or Minneapolis or Milwaukee. If you're not 21-26 and not interested in going to main street bars there's nothing to do (Nathan).*

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<sup>18</sup> Wright (1994).

I think the campus is fairly isolated from the rest of the community 'cos of the shape of the town; It's skinny [the isthmus] and the suburbs are on each side and forgotten about (Jeff).

The next part of this section discusses how a strong, yet rather intangible, sense of place has developed towards the campus and isthmus community.

### **The Attachment to Place**

Many people conveyed to me a strong personal attachment to the lakeshore campus and the isthmus community. This was often directed at the beauty of the surroundings:

In fall I get so excited riding around campus. I had a room mate and I'd go back to her and say this place is so awesome. It's like when the trees change colours and stuff. It sounds stupid but a lot of campuses I've seen, if they're in a city there's nothing. They don't have two lakes and tons of forests surrounding them (Anne).

UW-Madison and the isthmus community, then, evoke a powerful sense of place. Many people endeavoured to define a sentiment about the university which was for them largely undefinable: "Being in Madison is special. It's the feeling of the place. It's just different as soon as you walk on campus" (int., Hove, 24/9/96). This unique attachment was explicated further in the following quote:

Maybe it's to do with the liberalness of the campus - encouraging people to think, and how to develop their own opinion and to make a significant difference and contribute back to society. We have the beauty of the campus which contributes to their experience. We have unique classroom experiences - professors come to the dorms to teach. It's as much of a family experience as you can create at a public institution. There's just something magic which happens when you adopt his university as your alma mater. The quality, the caring which are expressed to those who are enjoying student life (int., Langer, 23/9/96).

The Chancellor of UW-Madison also suggested that there was something about generic college towns of 20 000 inhabitants or more which make them do very well (int., Ward, 23/9/96). However, the factors which contribute to this success, such as Madison's meteoric rise to the status of 'Best city to live in the USA', seem difficult to identify. The Wisconsin Experience and Idea, then, is expressed through a rather intangible and unique sense of place. As discussed earlier, the construction of this sense of place is also constructed through tradition.

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**UW-Madison: The radical haven in the mid-west**

The campus of UW-Madison has a reputation as a place of radicalism which stems from the student unrest of the late 1960s and 1970s. The worst unrest was experienced during 1969 and 1970 at UW-Madison. In 1969, a four week student strike was held in support of rights for black students and staff which resulted in the creation of study programmes and support services for minority students. More severely, after further incursions into Cambodia by US troops, two weeks of protest ensued in which a home-made bomb was exploded by a student destroying part of the university and killing a graduate student and the National Guard troops were summoned to maintain order (Hove, 1991, 247). I am led to believe that the ex-bomber, after over twenty years in prison, now sells smoothies from a kiosk on Library Mall as a penance for his crime.

Most of the 1970s saw a lull in student activity until two years of absurd student government by the Pail and Shovel Party between 1978 and 1980 run by self-styled clown leaders Mallon and Varjain. The electoral success of this party was due to a reaction against the humourless ultra-left student leaders from the period of student unrest (Mahany, 1996). The Pail and Shovel Party owes its name to the plan to convert the university budget into pennies and dump them on Library Mall and let the students dig their own share out with pails and shovels. They also promised to replace all the campus parking metres with bubble-gum machines, flood the football stadium with water and stage mock naval battles and change all student names to Joe Smith so staff would remember all student names (ibid.). They were responsible for buying 1008 plastic pink flamingos which were placed on the campus and constructing a papier mache replica of part of the Statue of Liberty which cost over \$5000. They also attempted to raise \$1568 to fly Vern, a grey and white fieldmouse, to Iran to gnaw a hole in the US Embassy wall to rescue American hostages and allegedly organised the world's largest toga party attended by 15 000 people (Cardinal Times, 11/17/79).

This type of activity has left its mark on UW-Madison and the isthmus community. However, there have been many changes in the student population which has changed the tenor of activity. An annual study which explores the attitudes amongst a quarter of a million freshmen undertaken by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute found that in 1996 they displayed the lowest interest in politics since the survey began (Brook, 1996). However, this political apathy is not from ignorance or laziness. Rather, one Madison

candidate suggested that politically, what currently distinguished students in Madison was not their apathy but their inability to motivate themselves to join in mainstream politics because of their distrust of government and big organisations. Many were worried at this lack of participation, especially in the presidential primaries in August 1996, since students represent a key voting group in the politically marginal Madison area.

This creates a difference from previous student activism: "You can't compare student activism today to student activism in the 1960s. There isn't one all-encompassing student movement like the peace movement" (Friedman, 1996). Many voiced concern over the drop of campus activism at the university. One senior member of the Legislative Office at UW-Madison suggested a reason for this: "We don't have the same economic position that the former student generation had" (Brook, 1995). The UCLA study also pointed towards time and money as two of the main contributors to political apathy.

Further, the Dean of Students at UW-Madison commented that "students seem pretty disappointed in the political process and more interested in their own personal futures" (ibid.). In terms of the leadership building role of universities such political attitudes amongst students are worrying: "Tomorrow's leaders are a bunch of uninformed, apolitical, and apathetic college kids worried about little more than their own self interest" (Brook, 1996).

Such disillusionment with mainstream politics seems to be one of the main reasons why students are turning to volunteering in large numbers which, unlike voting, offers concrete results. As a result, the campus bears witness to fewer protests than the in the 60s and an increase in the level of community work (ibid.). Despite its radical heritage and its growing levels of public service and volunteering, UW-Madison is largely still the domain of certain socio-economic and ethnic groups. As one student observed:

It's a majority white campus. I never noticed it until I was here for a while that there aren't many minorities. For the liberal place its meant to be it surprises me (Anne).

Much of the original radicalism, as well as transforming into disillusionment, also manifests itself through hedonism. An annual street party held on the heavily student populated Mifflin Street which seemed to have moved into student folklore, captures some of the mood of the 1960s. This party was recounted to me on several occasions:

- Anne *I live on Mifflin St. which has its own reputation. It's like the party street.*
- Angela *They have a big party in May which turned into a riot last year and it's probably banned now. They block off the street now.*
- Anne *It's a publicly sanctioned day of drinking and drugs starting at noon and goes all night.*
- Paul **What about underage drinking?**
- Angela *They can't stop anyone 'cos everyone goes down. There's 10 000 people there just in two blocks.*
- Jeff *The police block the street off and if you stay in side to drink you'll be OK.*
- Angela *They have bands that play and there's a beer garden. Everyone's house is open and you can just go in.*
- Jeff *They've had it every year since the 60s but its not going to happen again. Last year it got out of hand and burnt a car and loads of fires.*
- Angela *The politicians and landlords are doing everything they can to stop it.*

UW-Madison contributes to the atmosphere of the isthmus community in other significant ways. Of particular importance is the leading role which UW-Madison plays in the cultural infrastructure in the city.

### **UW-Madison and the Cultural Community**

UW-Madison is home to many important cultural and arts facilities in the city. Amongst the most heavily used by the Madison community is the Wisconsin Union:

#### **The Wisconsin Union**

In contrast to the role of Students' Unions in Britain, The Wisconsin Union has a much broader role:

*"The Union is an integral part of the educational program of the University, complementing the classroom experience with out-of-class learning opportunities. It is a setting which students can develop leadership skills and... makes study and leisure co-operative factors in higher education"*

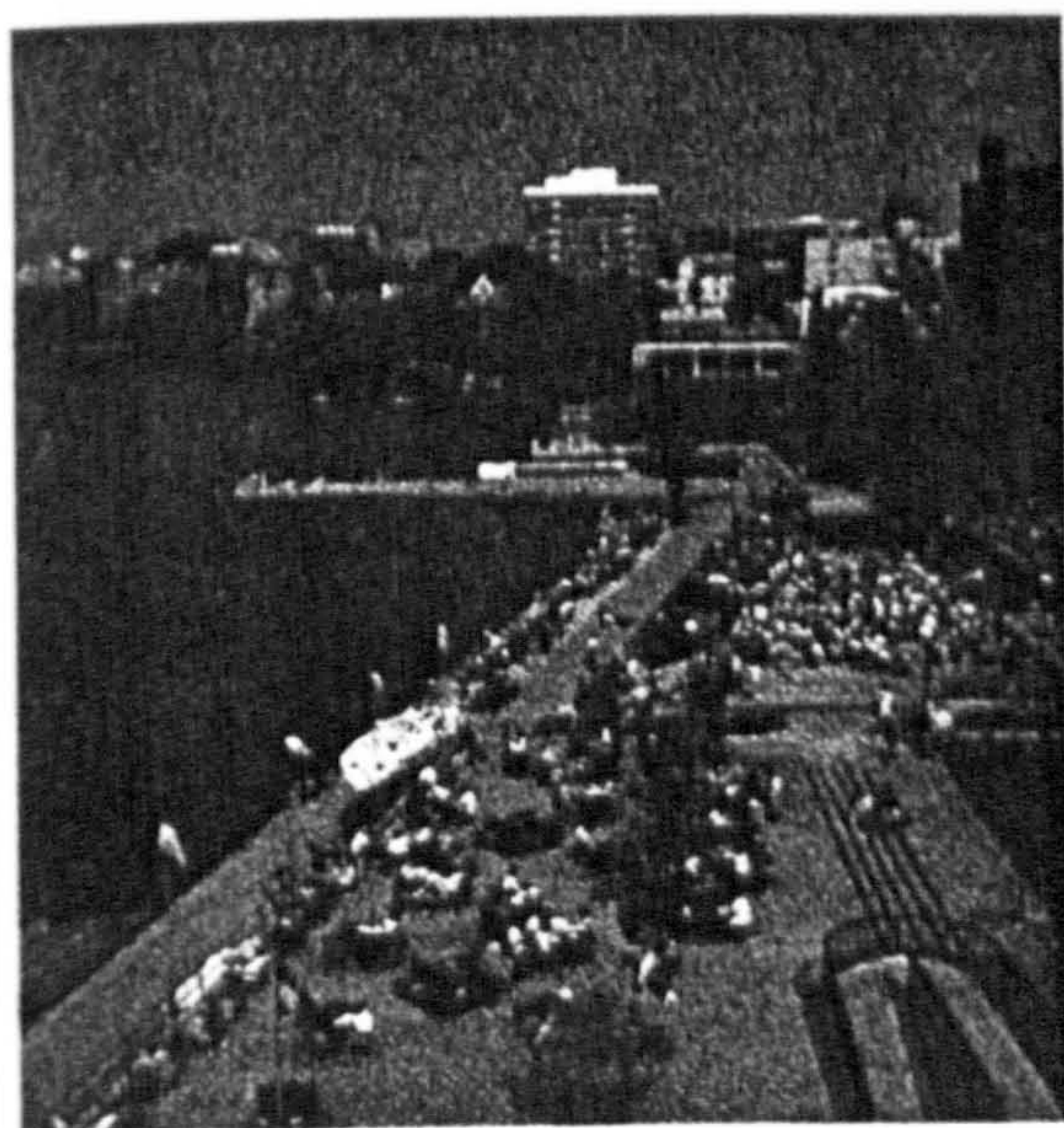
*(The Wisconsin Union Guide).*





The Wisconsin Union was founded by efforts of alumni in the 1920s who wished to build "a home for the Wisconsin spirit." The Wisconsin Union now exists on two sites; the main Memorial Union Building by the shore of Lake Mendota and the smaller Union South. The Wisconsin Union serves the university community which extends to students, faculty, staff, alumni and townspeople. The Union, then, is a focal point for several communities; it is not just a students' union, but a union for the whole community. There are around 100 000 members of The Wisconsin Union which comprises the current student population and 60 000 members drawn from ex-students, staff and the public. Life membership can be bought by anyone for \$200 and for a reduced rate of \$50 for new alumni.

It is estimated that an average of 30 000 people pass through the two union buildings daily (The Wisconsin Union Guide, 7) and so one cannot capture the sheer diversity of uses within the Wisconsin Union. The Today in The Union (TTU) scheme lists all the official activities occurring in the Union each day, although this list is not exhaustive and does not cover the many informal meetings which take place there.



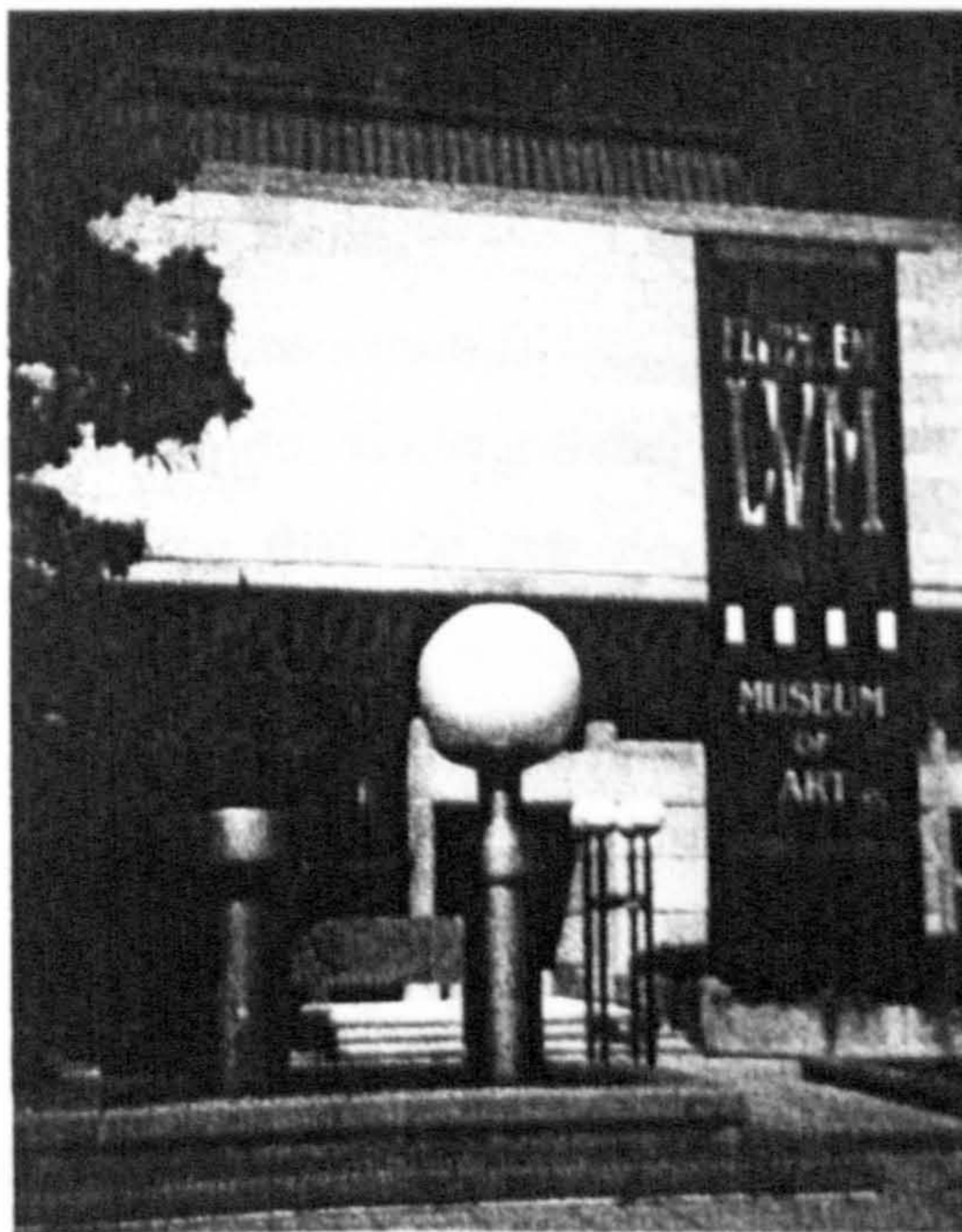
The Memorial Union, which was the first union in the USA to house a gallery and a theatre in its building and was the first union to serve beer, has an impressive array of facilities. The main centres of activities at the Memorial Union are the Rathskeller Bar, a mock German Beer Hall and The Terrace Bar, along the lake shore of Lake Mendota. The Terrace won 'Favourite place to meet people in Madison' in The Isthmus's reader poll and functions as a focal point for the whole city. The Memorial Union is also home to the 1400 capacity Union Theatre, Madison's first home for the arts and entertainment since 1939 which hosts various events such as musicals, orchestral pieces and political debates. It also has two cinemas which show films throughout the week and the Wisconsin Union Art Collection and Gallery with over 800 works. The important point to note is that all activities at The Union are open to, and regularly used by, the community.

Unlike students' unions in Britain, The Wisconsin Union does not function as a focal point for drinking amongst the student population. The most obvious reason for this is that the drinking age of 21 is strictly enforced and the building is also a non-smoking environment. It has also been suggested that evening use by students has fallen because of the reduction in total student numbers at UW-Madison since the early 1990s and the fact that by the legal age of drinking at 21, students have other patterns of socialisation away from the Student's Union (int., Smith, 1999/96). As a result, the Students' Union fulfils a much wider social role. For example, The Terrace Bar is used much more by the local adult and faculty populations rather than students.

UW-Madison Student's Union, then, is not only a focus for student life, but is a main focal point for the surrounding community. The Terrace Bar, in particular, is used by students and non-students of all ages. As Nathan commented: "This place [The Terrace] is great especially since there's no age restrictions and there's bands."

Outside the Union there are several other major cultural facilities at UW-Madison:

- **UW Dance program** which offered the first dance degree in the USA and offers various dance programmes in its five studios.
- **Wisconsin Centre for Film and Theatre Research** is a world renowned archive run jointly by UW-Madison and the State Historical Museum.
- **University Theatre** is a 300 capacity laboratory space for the Department of Theatre and Drama which had a total attendance of over 16 000 in 1995/96.<sup>19</sup>
- UW-Madison houses two galleries: the **Gallery of Design** and the **Department of Art Gallery**.
- The **School of Music** houses three major musical spaces, Mills Concert Hall, Murphy Recital Hall and Eastman Recital Hall, which present over 300 annual performances.
- The **Elvehjem Museum of Art** is the second largest art museum in Wisconsin with a permanent collection of over 15 000 objects.
- The **Department of Continuing Education** also runs an extensive programme of courses in the visual and performing arts.



The Elvehjem Museum,  
UW-Madison

Some of these facilities, such as The Elvehjem and the University and Union Theatre, are major cultural resources in the city. The large range of facilities at the Union and

<sup>19</sup> Smith, 1996, 54.

throughout UW-Madison place the university at the centre of the city's cultural infrastructure, a role which is enhanced by the lack of federal support for art and cultural provision in American cities. Because of this dominance, collaboration rather than competition defines the relationship with other downtown venues such as The State Historical Museum and The Madison Civic Centre which houses Madison Repertory Theatre, -Art Centre, -Symphony Orchestra and -Opera.

This spirit of co-operation and partnership between the university and the community in the arts has been consolidated through the formation of the 'UW Arts Consortium' at UW-Madison. The Consortium exists to represent the university arts community and co-ordinate course-based art activity which span several programmes of study such as Art, Art History, Communication Arts, Dance, Environment, Textiles and Design, landscape Architecture, Music, Theatre and Drama and involves nearly 2 000 students. There are also several thousand Wisconsinites on art-based courses through the Department of Continuing Education.

The Consortium aims to co-ordinate and promote art events at university and community facilities. This process is reinforced by the establishment of ISIT, Madison's termly calendar for the performing arts, which is a collaborative exercise between the Consortium and other downtown arts groups.

The concern of the Consortium is that arts-based activity is dispersed across the campus which hinders a campus wide interest in the arts (Smith, 1996, 3). This is a significant problem considering that the arts continue to be an important part of the campus' educational mission (ibid., 1996, 6). In this sense, the Consortium is heavily involved in public relations as "the arts look as if they are in disarray because the arts are spread all over campus."<sup>20</sup> The Consortium, then, addresses the important issue of creating an image and some coherence for art activity at UW-Madison. Further, the Consortium is involved in audience development in the performing arts at the university because of the concern that "for the most part, arts groups preach to the converted" (int., Balio, 24/9/96). An important part of this is ISIT which aims to increase the profile of university-based arts in the community. The various arts activities which are produced and performed at UW-Madison, then, "play a significant role in bringing arts to the

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<sup>20</sup> Arts Consortium Meeting, (15/5/96, 4).

community" (Smith, 1996, 6). Further, the "arts faculty on this campus continue to uphold the great tradition of practical service to the state that has been a guiding principle of the Wisconsin Idea" (ibid.).

In sum, the UW-Campus and the isthmus community are intimately connected. They have largely developed together and have a shared history which is defined by the development of the university and its student culture and radicalism. However, the role of UW-Madison in terms of cultural provision in the city should not be overstated. In this sense, it is important not to marginalise other areas as sources of cultural vibrancy in the city.

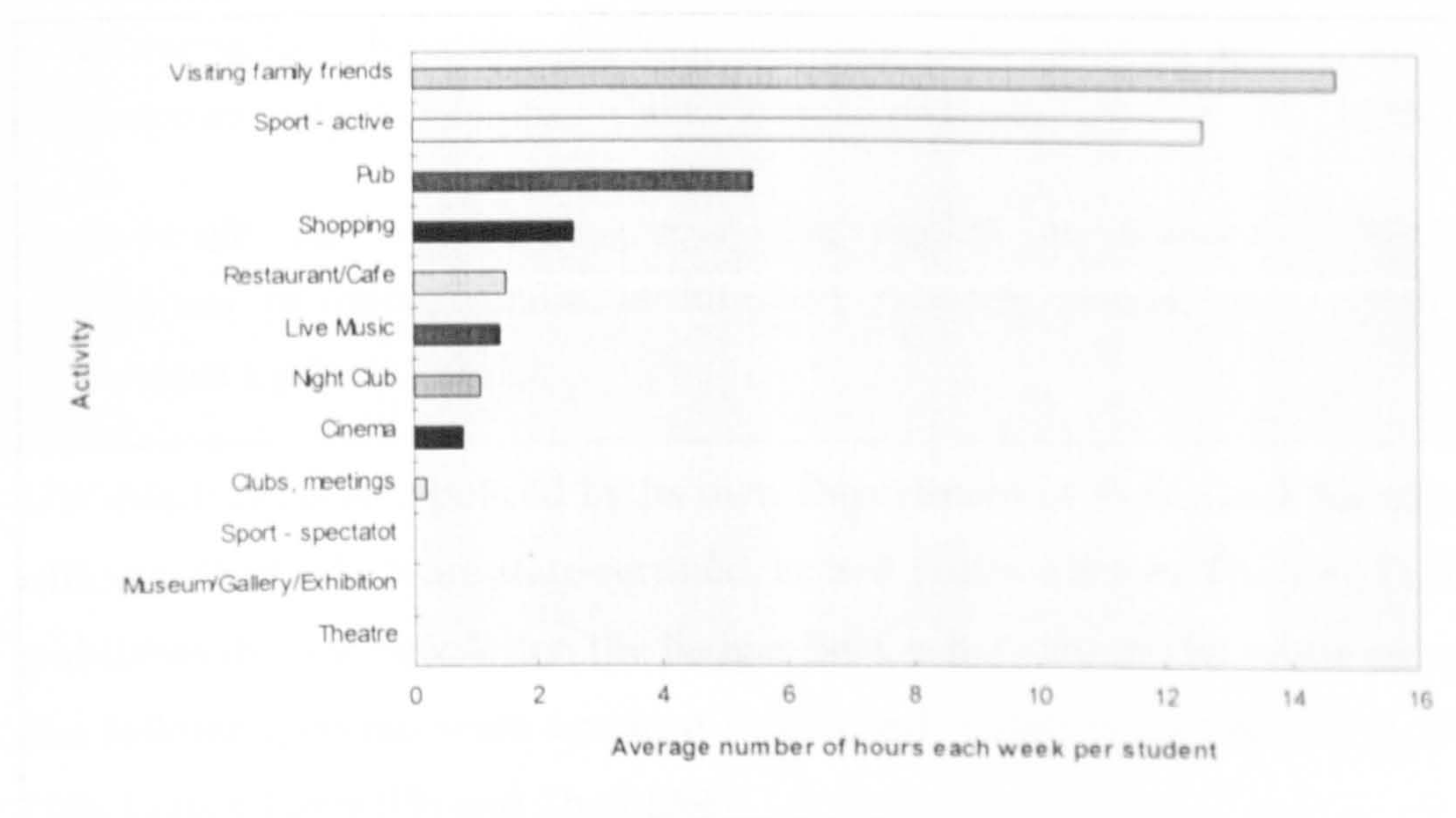
## **COMMENTS ON SOME STUDENT COMMUNITIES**

### **WITHIN UW-MADISON**

In this section a number of distinctive communities which I encountered during my fieldwork are discussed. Certain communities, for example those related to sporting activities, the Greek system of fraternities and sororities and the co-operative housing movement, create distinctive identities within UW-Madison's student population. There is also the issue of drinking and its higher legal age compared to Britain and the influence this has upon alternative pursuits such as the culture of 'hanging out'.

The following graph illustrates some of the different time patterns of students in the USA which can be compared to those for Bristol students in Chapter 6. Some clear differences emerge such as the dominance of visiting friends and sports activities and the lower importance of drinking. There are also lower amounts of time spent on other activities such as theatre and museums. The first part of this section discusses the role of drinking within student life in the USA. The rest of the section highlights some communities which act as the basis for distinctive student identities and also the importance of 'hanging-out' in American student life.

FIGURE 7.4: STUDENT TIME USE AWAY FROM HOME AT UW-MADISON



## Student Drinking

An important aspect which frames student life in the USA is the higher legal drinking age of 21:

Drinking as part of the undergraduate rite of passage has an enormous international history... In the United States the recent history is complicated by the raising of the legal drinking age to 21 in most states in the late 1980s" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 112).

Because of this inability for most undergraduates to drink legally, alcohol consumption is often associated with house parties and binge drinking. It was suggested to me that UW-Madison had a bigger drinking problem than many other universities. A survey by The Harvard School of Public Health in 1994 found that UW-Madison displayed higher levels of drinking than any of the other 140 colleges surveyed (Badger Herald, 12/3/95). These higher levels of drinking at UW-Madison is due, in part, to the stronger drinking culture of the region which stems from the historical influence of the northern European populations and the strength of the brewing industry in the state, through, for example, Miller Breweries in Milwaukee. The severity of the problem was demonstrated by Madison Police Department who, under-cover, embarked on the covert 'Operation Sting' to infiltrate illegal student drinking parties. The Madison Police Department currently issues the following citations to students for the following violations:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Procuring for or furnishing alcohol to underage person or underage person entering or attempting to enter licensed premises                        | \$332 (1st offence)<br>\$947 (4th offence) |
| • Underage person consuming/possessing alcohol off licensed premises or carrying false identification showing person has obtained legal drinking age | \$148 (1st offence)<br>\$640 (4th offence) |

UW-Madison is also policed by its own Department of Police and Security which has 98 officers, 45 of which are state-certified, armed police officers. The UW Police Department publishes its own newsletter, the Badger Beat, which chronicles crime on campus. In 1996 the following crimes were amongst those cited: Indecent exposure (11), Drug Violations (15), Liquor Laws (79) and Theft (268).

However, the age restriction does not seem to impinge upon drinking within student life. As Nathan commented: "drinking is a big part of student life here, a lot of people have fake ID's." State Street is known for its bars, yet none of these have strong student identities and are mostly populated by non-students. It was explained to me that some of the older undergraduates and postgraduates do visit the State Street bars, but only occasionally do they function as meeting or all-night socialising places. Even if undergraduates do get false identification, it seems that they do not frequent most bars as they do not provide a student atmosphere.

House parties, then, rather than bars, are the main site for drinking. Many people charge entrance fees and run paid bars to cover the cost of these parties, many of which are held in large houses and their basements. The Fraternity system plays a central role in the house party culture within American student life:

**Paul**            *What about underage drinking?*

Anne            *Everyone drinks anyway.*

Jeff            *It's not hard to get fake ID.*

Anne            *Most people have fake ID. Most bars look away and let you get away with it.*

Angela            *Most people otherwise just go to house or frat parties. Frats almost never get busted.*

**Paul**            *Why?*

Jeff            *They register their parties. It's just a given. They bust other houses with undercover cops.*

- Anne *There have been a lot of busts this year*
- Tim *I haven't been to a house party this year. I've heard so many getting busted I'm just afraid to.*
- Anne *Some of these houses that get busted get \$20 000 of fines. They charge you for every single person underage and for you selling alcohol...*
- Jeff *Operation Sting was granted \$9 000 to do this .*
- Tim *They normally do it at the beginning of the year and by next month the busting will stop.*
- Angela *My boyfriend's house has parties nearly every weekend and what they do is only let people in with student ID. The under-cover cops can't get ID. Usually houses with big basements have parties so you can pack people in. These are big, hundreds.*
- Jeff *We have small parties at my house, probably 50 max.*
- Anne *Most people over 21 go to the parties and then go to the bars after. But after a while the money runs out cos the bars are expensive. In the parties you can pay \$3 and drink all night.*

The fraternity community and the Greek system, then, seem to personify some of the excesses of student life as the following section discusses.

### **The Greek Community**

The Greek system of Fraternities and Sororities forms a large community within many universities in the USA. The Greek community is structured around three councils; The National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) of social sororities for women, the National Interfraternity Council of Fraternities (NIC) for men and the National Pan-Hellenic Conference (NPHC) of historically African American fraternities and sororities. Each council contains several national chapters, all of which are represented by Greek letters such as ΔΘΣ (Delta Theta Sigma) or ΠΒΦ (Pi Beta Phi). Joining the Greek system entails life long membership of a particular chapter and adherence to its principles such as leadership, scholarship and philanthropy. The role of the Greek community in voluntary work is particularly strong and helps to counter some of its negative connotations such as violence, excessive drinking and elitism. Overall, the Greek system is a distinctive element of American college life and seems to be a particularly pervasive structure which reverberates throughout the life of graduates.

The Greek system can be characterised as a rite of passage experience with various initiation ceremonies. These include Rush Week where the various chapters are visited by prospective members, an invitation to Pledge which is a trial period within the chapter and Initiation where the traditions and principles of the chapter are learnt. Each chapter also has its own rituals and passwords. However, certain rituals in the Greek community such as hazing during Rush, are being outlawed as they involve practices such as 'paddling', public stunts, physical and psychological shocks and the forced use of excessive alcohol many of which have led to the death of several rushees. In particular, "the fraternities have traditionally had an image of macho attitudes, drunkenness and intolerance... and discrimination against black, Jewish and other groups of students" (Silver and Silver, 1997, 52). This closed world of tradition and ritual of the Greek community, then, can be a divisive element on campus:

The fraternities are too numerous and, I think, should be abolished as they are in principle dedicated to what college should not be; that is, members are all too often of the same background (i.e. each fraternity attracts a certain type of person. There are Jock fraternities, Wasp fraternities, Jewish fraternities etc.) These students are not participating in the social melting pot college should be (Penn State student, 1976, quoted in Silver and Silver, 1997, 53).

At UW-Madison there are 25 residential fraternities, 11 residential sororities and 7 non-residential, historically African American fraternities/sororities which, together, involve around 10% of the student population. During my time in Madison I visited several houses in the Greek community. I had the privilege of being the only man to ever enter one particular sorority, Gamma Phi Beta ( $\Gamma\Phi\beta$ ) at UW-Madison to chat and make some observations. Gamma Phi Beta is a 26 bedroom house on Langdon Street adjacent to the main campus. The quality of the interior of the house was palatial, resembling something similar to a stately home in terms of layout, decoration and furnishings. The house is run by several full time staff which include a full-time cook and cleaner and house-mom and has several facilities such as a study room and networked computer room. The sorority also owns a weekend retreat. Each house is heavily subsidised by the national chapter with each resident paying only \$4000 annually. The atmosphere within the house seemed to be very supportive and sociable. The women live in shared bedrooms and each sorority member has a house sister to guide them through their first year. They also adopt a particular role within the house such as treasurer, education officer etc.



I also spent a longer amount of time with some fraternity brothers from Sigma Phi Epsilon ( $\Sigma\Phi E$ ). The environment of the fraternity is quite different from that of the sorority. In the communal living room, which doubles a party venue every weekend and is adorned with permanent fixtures of disco lights, speakers, turntables and cocktail bar, several brothers



seemed to be constantly lounging around playing video games, drinking beer and discussing strategies for the next party and ways to meet the sorority girls. However, there was also a keenness to discuss chapter matters. In particular, Sigma Phi Epsilon was based upon the three principles of virtue, diligence and brotherly love and there was a bonding between the house members which seemed unwavering.

However, there is a certain amount of tension and division between the Greek community and the rest of the university community at UW-Madison:

We have had historically lots of problems with the residential fraternities and sororities. We commissioned a report in 1989 which set out 13 recommendations for improvement. In the last 6 years they have improved themselves considerably as a response to this (int., Rouse, 10/9/96).

One student described the lack of integration between the Greek system and the rest of the university community:

The university as a community and the frats have never coexisted very amicably. There was a student movement in the 1970s to get them banned from the campus altogether. It came very close. The frats tend to include a small not very diverse group of students so it doesn't include the majority of student's interests. They are also very expensive especially if you're trying to pay for university tuition in the first place (Nathan).

The following conversation highlights some of the tension felt towards the Greek system:

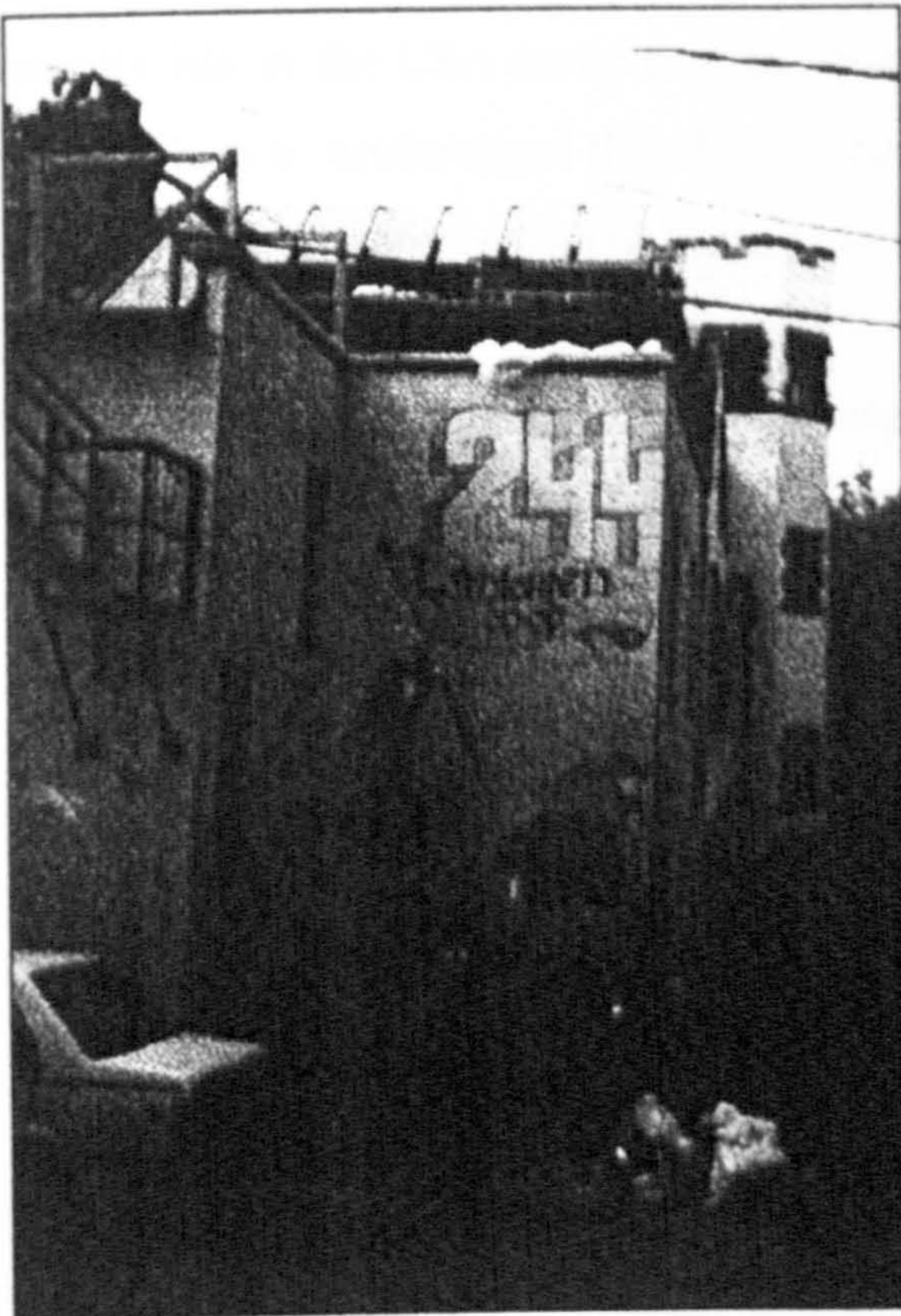
- Paul *what about the frats?*
- Jeff *I hate them.*
- Tim *I hate them too.*
- Angela *The sorority girls. I don't know how you explain it. They only go out with frat men. The rest of the sorority would look down on you if you went out with someone outside the frats.*
- Jeff *People grow out of it. I know people who were in it and now they've got bored of it.*
- Anne *It's also people with money 'cos you have to pay dues.*
- Tim *Most people don't like them.*
- Anne *At smaller schools where there's nothing else to do most people are in frats and they're cool. It depends on the uni. Here it's very high profile and exclusive.*
- Angela *I've heard horror stories about girls getting drunk and passing out somewhere. There's a lot of problems with that.*
- Anne *For girls, going to a frat party is setting yourself up. You can't get drunk or else you're in trouble. If you're drunk you're considered fair game. You can't go and hang out. Most of the time its awful, like a meat market. All the girls showing off and flirting.*
- Angela *They're all dressed up totally. I've been to one and I felt miserable.*
- Jeff *The fraternity brothers themselves, I've had a lot of run-ins with them. A lot of testosterone. They're wankers.*
- Angela *The exception is the academic frats which are just a group of friends who get together with a common interest.*

The Greek system, then, receives a significant amount of bad press. Laura summed up some of the reasons for their pejorative connotations: "I went to a frat party during high school. I came up here [UW-Madison] and I was turned off by the whole scene. It's the way they treated people especially women". Despite the declining importance of the Greek community in Madison it does represent a significant and distinctive element of student life, one which is particularly active in some of the themes discussed earlier such as public service and leadership.

## The Co-Operative Community

The housing co-operatives form another distinctive, if smaller, community within the university population. Housing Co-ops are based around the notion of a strong community where each member is responsible for certain aspects of the running of the house. Madison has a well developed co-operative community which is organised through Madison Community Co-op (MCC). MCC was established in 1968 and now organises 10 houses with a few hundred residents all of which are located within half a mile of the campus. MCC belongs to the national co-operative community, the North American Students Co-operative Organisation (NASCO). The character of each co-op differs immensely. Many cater for specific groups such as the Women's Co-op, Martha's Co-op for children, or Ofek Shalom, a Jewish Co-op. There are also five independent co-ops in Madison who are not affiliated to MCC.

The Co-ops and the student residents, then, are assigned a particular identity associated



with characteristics such as being a 'vegie', a 'lefty' and more politically active. Historically, there has been tension between the Greek and Co-operative communities on campus. Both are based upon a strong desire for community, yet represent opposite ends of the political scale. Since the student riots in the 1960s at UW-Madison which tried to eradicate what were seen as the elitist fraternities and sororities, there has been a proportional decrease in the Greek community and increase in the Co-op community on campus. Many Fraternity houses which suffered

declining admissions were taken over by those involved in the Co-operative movement. The main street adjacent to the campus along the shore of Lake Mendota, Langdon Street, has a particular identity based around a tension between the high concentrations of fraternities, sororities and Co-ops on the street.

During most of my time in Madison I resided at the Phoenix Co-operative which had twenty five members. It was a fairly new co-op and the residents were only just getting to know each other. A mixture of curiosity and lack of co-ordination from the residents enabled me to secure food and bed at the Phoenix for \$5 per day! I also stayed at other co-ops which were much less organised such as Lothlorian, which had a notorious reputation for its parties. I was forced to leave in the middle of my second night there as a number of drug-fuelled gate crashers took over my bedroom.

Despite the small scale of the Co-operative community, it does offer an alternative and distinctive environment separate from the halls and the Greek community within which to develop one's identity as a student.

### **The Sports Community**

Another prevalent community identity at UW-Madison stems from sporting activities. It must be remembered that sports teams and activities are a much more central part of university life in the USA compared to Britain. One only has to compare the standard of sports facilities to understand this. Many students are scouted and recruited by university sports teams and receive scholarships. This creates a specific way of being a student. Jeff, Anne and Nathan were all recruited to UW sports teams and explained to me some of the different ways they experienced being a student:

Being in the athletics department everything is handed to you - tutors and counsellors and medical services. There's everything you need. They cater for all our needs. But the amount of time you have to commit (Jeff).

Sometimes it's so hard 'cos the only morning you can stay in is Saturday and the rest of the time I'm totally tired. Sometimes knowing just athletes isolates you. Sometimes I want to meet other people but it's also good 'cos they know what you're going through (Anne).

I meet a lot of people but don't participate socially with them as their personal schedules are so different to mine. They are doing things 'til 3 in the morning and I get up two hours after that for practice... I'm in crew [rowing] and Tai Kwondo. Crew training is everyday there is class and then two weeks before class and then two weeks after class is done. We train six days a week. They're very good, we're in the top five in the USA (Nathan).

A post-match interview conducted at the Camp Randall Stadium with Bob Adamov, the strong safety for UW-Madison's American Football team The Badgers, towering above me

at six and a half feet and two hundred and fifty pounds, revealed the stark differences between these prized students and the rest of the student population:

We have a lot less time you know, er, we have to have all our classes done by 2 o'clock because we have to practice for the rest of the day. Then you're tired, you have to get something to eat. Then you have to study at about eight o'clock and still get a good night sleep, so it's real constricting on your time.

Clearly, the level of commitment which is required from the football players, many of whom are also local celebrities, creates a radically different way of being a student:

We have a reputation. It's important to stay out of trouble. We'd be in the papers for drinking or fighting. You get guys coming up to you and having a go at you 'cos you're in the football team. It's high profile 'cos we represent the school and the team. Some resent us because they think we get all these perks (int., Adamov, /9/96).

The following diaries shows the type of commitment required from those in UW-Madison sports teams. The first one is from Nathan who woke at 5.30 am every morning to join the crew for training:

NATHAN, THURSDAY

|         |                                     |                           |  |
|---------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 5.30 am | Wake up/get dressed                 | alone                     | at home                                  |
| 6 am    | Attend UW crew practice             | teammates and coach       | UW boat house                            |
| 8 am    | make/eat breakfast, take shower     | my roommates              | at home                                  |
| 9 am    | ride to class, attend nmml soc. 605 | classmates and prof.      | on the street, on my bicycle at Ag. Hall |
| 11 am   | study, check mail                   | alone                     | at Steenbock library                     |
| 1 pm    | Ju Jitsu class                      | classmates and instructor | Natatorium                               |
| 2.30 pm | Sociology of population class       | classmates and Prof.      | Sociology building                       |
| 4 pm    | ride back home, eat dinner          | roommates                 | at my apartment                          |
| 5 pm    | Tae Kwon Do club practice           | club members, instructor  | Natatorium                               |
| 7.30 pm | Take shower, Drive home             | alone                     | my apartment                             |
| 8 pm    | eat dinner                          | roommates                 | "  |
| 9 pm    | study, listen to music              | alone                     | "  |
| 11 pm   | sleep                               | "                         | "  |

## JEFF, TUESDAY

|         |   |                |                 |
|---------|---|----------------|-----------------|
| 5.30 am | Wake up and drive to pool for workout     | alone          |                 |
| 6.30 am | SWIM                                      | with swim team | pool            |
| 8 am    | drove home                                |                |                 |
| 8.30 am | meet friend for breakfast                 | friend         |                 |
| 9.30 am | bike to class                             | alone          |                 |
| 10 am   | class                                     |                |                 |
| 12 pm   | to library to do e-mail                   | alone          | college library |
| 1 pm    | class                                     |                |                 |
| 2 pm    | bike home, eat, relax                     |                |                 |
| 3 pm    | bike to stadium to run, lift weights      | with swim team |                 |
| 4 pm    | run, lift                                 | "              |                 |
| 5.30 pm | bike home, eat crappy dinner (Spagettios) | alone          |                 |
| 6 pm    | bike to campus for concert, have much fun | friends        |                 |
| 9.30 pm | have a beer at the union                  | "              |                 |

As well as involving commitment to the team, being part of a sports team also structures leisure time. The two students involved in the swim team used the team as a basis for socialising and outings as the following diary extract shows. The first extract was prefaced with the comment: "sorry this is so bizarre. It was a very strange night!"

## ANNE, FRIDAY NIGHT

|          |  |                  |                          |
|----------|--|------------------|--------------------------|
| 7 pm     | Team meeting   | womens swim team | team-mate's house        |
| 7.30 pm  | hanging out, karaoke, music, dancing, playing around   | "                | "                        |
| 10 pm    | organised into groups. Sent everyone out to a different house where the men swimmers lived to play a trick on them   | "                | out and about in Madison |
| 12 am    | Met my whole womens swim team. Went to my house - bombarded male swimmers on neighbouring porch with water balloons then had to run away                   |                  |                          |
| 12.30 am | Headed back to 1st team-mates home while trying to avoid revenge from male swim team. One guy got hit by a pizza delivery man trying to settle/stop fight. | "                | Langdon Street           |
| 3.30 am  | walked home  | with boyfriend   | his house                |

JEFF, SATURDAY

|         |   |           |             |
|---------|---|-----------|-------------|
| 11 am   | meet swim team at pool and drive south to Yellowstone lake (camping)      | swim team |             |
| 1 pm    | arrive at camp site, play frisbee, gather firewood, play capture the flag | "         | camp ground |
| 6 pm    | start fire and begin to cook brats for 15 people                          | "         | "           |
| 7:30 pm | eat dinner  | "         | "           |
| 8:30 pm | relax around fire, drink, talk  | "         | "           |
| 12 pm   | go to sleep outside of tent   | "         | "           |

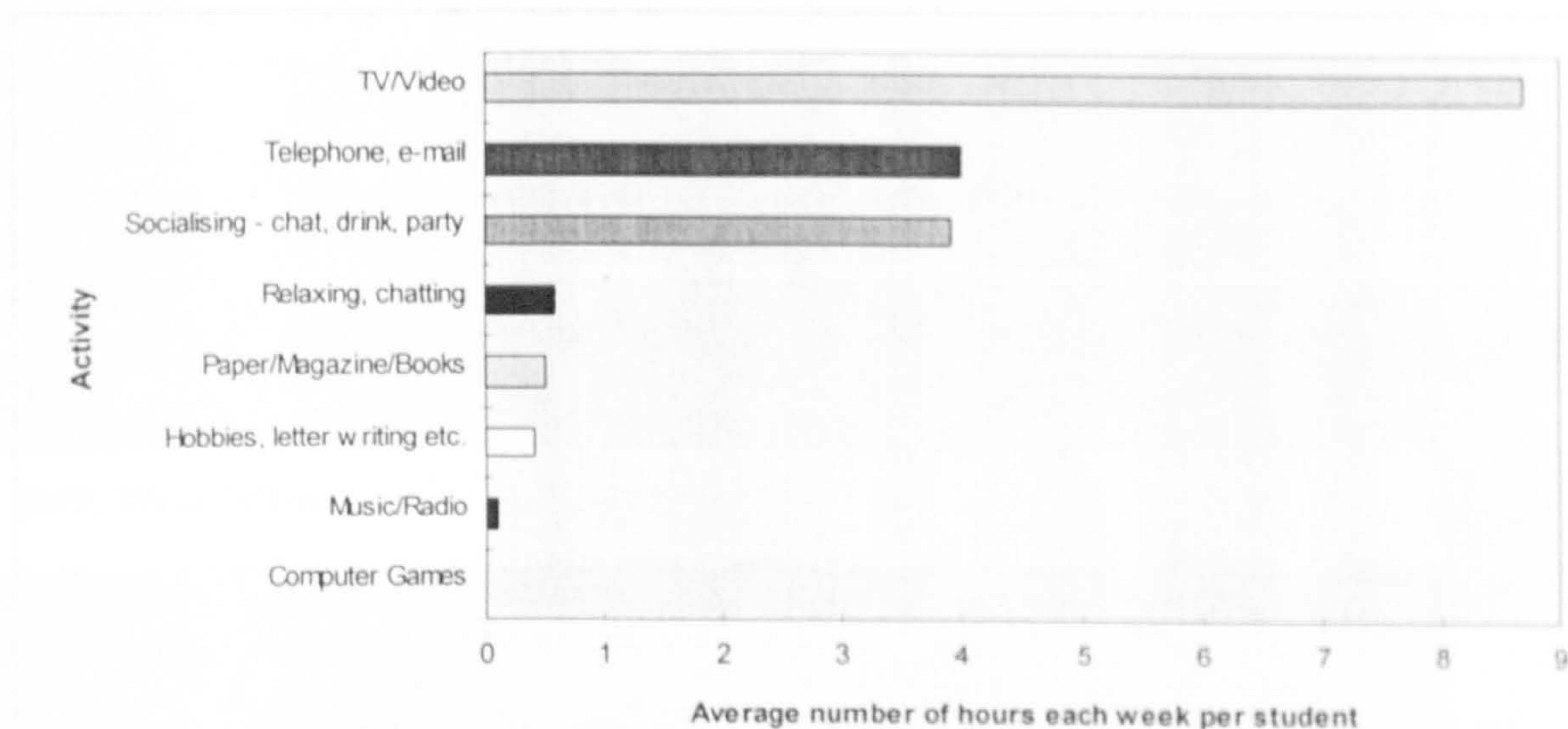
Sports teams, and more generally exercise and health, structure large parts of life for the American student. Such teams provide an additional identity for the student at university which is as important as their role of learner. This sporting identity is particularly strong if the student was scouted and recruited by one of the university sports teams. There is also another significant dimension to student life, hanging-out.

### **Hanging-Out: the home and life without the pub**

Because of the illegality of drinking throughout most of undergraduate life, there is a greater emphasis on hanging-out which takes place within the large shared houses, apartments and shared dorms and the many coffee houses and downtown hang-outs in Madison. During my time in Madison, it became clear to me that certain cafes, bars and bookshops along State Street and the Rathskeller in the Memorial Union acted as hang-outs for many students who wanted to work or chat over a coffee late into the evening. Such a scene, which was marked by a student atmosphere, is juxtaposed heavily with the British student culture of pub drinking and pub crawls.

The home also seemed to be a much more central element of student life in Madison, explained in part because of the inability of students to visit many licensed venues in the city and perhaps, greater work and money pressures. As Figure 7.5 shows, in a similar way to Bristol students, TV and video remains the highest home-based leisure pursuit but telephone and e-mailing is more prominent, which is accounted for, in part, by the greater level of dorms and homes which are networked to the internet and, presumably, cheaper telephone service.

FIGURE 7.5: STUDENT LEISURE ACTIVITIES AT HOME AT UW-MADISON



Hanging-out as a pastime was touched upon in the following conversation extract:

- Paul            *What do you like to do in your free time?*
- Tim            *We go in fits and play Ninetendo and play all night. One day we played football on it from 2 till 10 in the evening.*
- Angela        *My boyfriend plays this game for days on the PlayStation.*
- Anne         *Because I swim I haven't got loads of free time. I should be studying but I like to hang-out and talk to my room mates and watch videos.*

Further, the following diary extracts show some aspects of hanging-out:

ANGELA, THURSDAY

|         |                                  |                                    |              |
|---------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2pm     | Took a nap                       | alone                              | my dom       |
| 3pm     | watched TV and knitted (sweater) | my room mate                       | my dom       |
| 5.30pm  | Hang out at Paul's               | Paul (boyfriend) and his roommates | Paul's house |
| 6.30pm  | homework                         | friend                             | "            |
| 7pm     | eat dinner                       | "                                  | "            |
| 8.30pm  | hang out, watched TV             | Paul                               | "            |
| 10pm    | knit my sweater, made some tea   | "                                  | "            |
| 11.30pm | sleep                            | "                                  | "            |



## TIM, THURSDAY

|          |                                       |           |              |
|----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| 11.30 am | studied                               | alone     | home         |
| 1 pm     | watched a movie 'Goonies'             | roommates | my apartment |
| 2.30 pm  | washing dishes                        | "         | "            |
| 4 pm     | studied                               | alone     | "            |
| 5.30 pm  | prepared and cooked dinner            | roommates | "            |
| 7.30 pm  | more dishes                           | "         | "            |
| 8 pm     | took a shower                         | alone     | "            |
| 8.30 pm  | watched a movie 'Legends of the Fall' | "         | "            |
| 11 pm    | sleep                                 | "         | "            |

## JEFF, WEDNESDAY

|         |  |                     |              |
|---------|--|---------------------|--------------|
| 6.30 pm | e-mail and read at library   | alone               | library      |
| 7.30 pm | tried to straighten new bedroom, had a couple of beers                                 | "                   | "            |
| 9 pm    | drove to liquor store, drank and visited with friends                                  | roommate and friend | home         |
| 10 pm   | another friend came over   | "                   | "            |
| 11 pm   | drove to another friends house - all students and met up with others and just hang-out | "                   | Jake's house |

This section, then, has provided some brief snap-shots of student life at UW-Madison. The diary extracts, conversations and quotes from the students illustrate some of the differences between student life in the USA and Britain. In particular, the Greek, Co-operative and sporting communities create the basis for distinctive student identities to be formed. Further, the higher legal drinking age means that drinking, at least publicly, has become a much less distinctive part of student culture in the USA compared to Britain.

## CONCLUSIONS

I have used this chapter to draw out a number of themes which influence the cultural impacts and roles of UW-Madison and its students on the community. These themes can be used to illuminate some of the trends in British student life as many British universities move towards a system of mass higher education.

Firstly, the land-grant tradition and the Wisconsin Idea of public service is a significant influence in shaping the cultural impacts of UW-Madison on the community. UW-Madison students are placed within an institution which is intimately embedded and intertwined with the community. Because of the influence of the public service tradition, being a 'student' is constructed through different priorities at UW-Madison compared to

Bristol through roles such as 'leader' and 'volunteer'. These perceptions of students at UW-Madison are in contrast to many of the perceptions of Bristol students who are often seen negatively and as seasonal visitors in the community.

Student life is also highly regulated and professionalised at UW-Madison through a professional tier of student support staff, a vast range of mechanisms such as the Campus Assistance Centre and the Student Organisation Office and organised events such as Welcome Week and the Student Orientation Programme. What this adds up to is an official recognition of the importance of the 'second curriculum' and how this shapes the student experience. Such mechanisms represent vital *post-in loco parentis* structures which allow students to find a manageable and personal scale within the mass university. In contrast, many British universities are experiencing 'growing pains' as they fail to keep up with the demands of their expanding student population.

The relationship between the university and the city is also of vital importance in terms of understanding the cultural impacts of UW-Madison on the community. Because of the wide range of art and cultural facilities, UW-Madison plays a much larger role in student entertainment provision and, more generally, in the cultural infrastructure of the city. Much of downtown Madison owes its identity to the university. Such attachment is seen not just in the city but also throughout the state and is strengthened by tradition especially those associated with football. It will be interesting to observe how the relationship between the university and the community in Britain develops as universities and the number of stay-at-home and local students grow.

There are also many distinctive elements to student life in the USA compared to Britain. Only a few were discussed here such as the different drinking age for students, alternative non-drinking sites for leisure and hanging-out and distinctive student communities and in particular those related to sporting activities, the Greek System and the Co-operative housing movement.

In sum, there is no doubting the significant role which UW-Madison plays in shaping the city. Facilities such as the arboretum, science park, Memorial Union, The Terrace Bar and The Elvehjem Museum of Art, to name just a few, are major community *and* university resources. The identity of much of the downtown area has a distinctive identity based upon the shared history of UW-Madison and the community. The boundaries between

UW-Madison and the community are extremely permeable and the cultural impacts of UW-Madison and its students on the community are largely positive because of this close relationship. In fact, to talk of the role or impacts of the university or the community in isolation is insufficient as it overlooks the interconnectedness of the two.

However, UW-Madison should not be seen as a panacea for university-student-community relationships. There are many drawbacks such as the restrictions laid upon the university by obligations from the state and alumni givers. Further, there are also concerns that the university is too dominant and powerful within the community and that local community development issues may be incorporated into the wider goals of UW-Madison. There is also the problem of identity confusion between the university and the community. Despite such problems, there are still lessons which can be drawn from UW-Madison. This would entail understanding the consequences of the development of a more complex and intimate university-student-community relationship in Britain, which, as many of its universities grow into mass higher education institutions and can no longer afford to be removed from the community, will increasingly serve as a model for British universities.

## CONCLUSIONS

**T**his concluding section is structured into three parts. The first section summarises the main findings of Part One and Two of this thesis and presents some theoretical reflections. The second section discusses some omissions from my research and suggests possibilities for future research in this area. The last section, which draws upon the case-study from the USA presented in Chapter 7, explores several inter-related implications of this research associated with higher education and cultural policy, namely; universities, students and the cultural infrastructure; the transition from elite to mass higher education; the divided city; the residential traditional of British student life; and, the links between universities, culture and responsibility.

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

#### Part One: Universities and the Community

The focus of Part One was the cultural relationship between the university and the community. The nature of this relationship is determined, in part, by the different histories, characteristics, missions, territorial focuses and 'ideas' behind each university. For example, the University of Bristol is firmly encamped with the 'old' universities and has many non-local aspirations and a more paternalistic, high cultural role. The University of the West of England, in contrast, is associated with the 'new' universities and has a much more self-consciously local and regional cultural role arising out of, in part, its shared history with the local college of Arts and Technology. As a result, the two universities have developed different cultural roles and impacts on the community.

However, what is evident, is that as the idea of the university is changing and becoming more plural, so too is the cultural 'idea' of the university (Chapter 3). In this sense, universities, both old and new, often undertake a number of parallel cultural roles which range from that of the 'keeper of the canon' to involvement in more popular cultural activity such as live music, studio recording and training for the media, animation and design industries. The fieldwork in Part One suggested three areas through which these various cultural roles of the university could be understood.

Firstly, the two universities, mainly through their students' unions, have a role to play in the popular cultural infrastructure of the city. In particular, live music events at the Anson Rooms and UWE's termly dance event at Sutra are well attended sites for live music and clubbing in the city. Yet, there are also major problems with the two students' unions in Bristol. Both fail to act as central sites for the cultural life of students or the community; the UBSU building is hindered by its poor physical appearance and its location within an residential area and UWESU-Frenchay suffers from its remote location several miles out of the city-centre. In particular, the inadequate size and unappealing appearance of the Anson Rooms reduces its ability to fulfil a role as a major live music venue in the region and Sutra ceased to exist because of poor attendance and its remoteness at Frenchay. Further, unlike many other students' unions, neither UBSU nor UWESU provide a major weekend night-club at the centre of student life. This re-inforces the popularity of non-university entertainment venues in the Whiteladies Road and Gloucester Road areas.

However, entertainment provision by the two students' unions is becoming professionalised through, for example, full-time entertainment staff which is a recognition of the role of the students' unions within the cultural infrastructure of the city. This professionalisation is also a recognition of the growth of the student entertainment market and is part of an attempt to gain a larger stake in this market in the city as competition from non-university entertainment providers increases, especially in the Whiteladies Road area.

At the same time, the two students' unions are reducing public access to their buildings to exclusively cater for the entertainment and welfare needs of their growing student populations in the era of the mass university. This signifies the need to provide student-only leisure environments to ensure student safety and to reduce violence and damage to the venue and equipment. Such environments also seem to fulfil the desire for association amongst traditional students and play a central role in the 'learning process' within student life as highlighted in Chapter 6.

Secondly, university-based facilities contribute to the 'official' cultural infrastructure of cities which, for an older university such as the University of Bristol, re-inforces its role as 'keeper of the canon'. This role is evident at the Victoria Rooms which is a venue for classical music and The Glynne Wickham Theatre at UB but also at the Centre for

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Performing Arts at UWE. However, it is evident that the two universities are also moving away from this traditional cultural role into new areas of cultural activity such as digital and sound recording, animation and multi-media. This can be seen as an effort to preserve and re-valorise their cultural authority and maintain the relevance and value of the academic field in the face of the emergence of alternative sites of cultural knowledge and consumption.

It should be noted that much of this official cultural activity generated by the two universities caters for audiences comprised mainly of its staff and students. Therefore, in many respects the cultural impacts of the two universities equates to generating artistic and cultural demand within the university population rather than the local community. Yet, such cultural activity does have the potential to generate wider audiences in the cultural sphere in the city and has an important relative effect on smaller-scale cultural forms such as art-house film and experimental theatre.

Finally, the two universities also function as a resource in the cultural infrastructure. In particular, they contribute to the development of certain cultural sectors such as media and animation, they are involved in the art community and community art, they integrate the creative community through personnel-based exchanges, graduate retention and the patronage of certain venues by staff and students and they contribute to the cultural management of the city.

The Faculty of Art, Media and Design at UWE-Bower Ashton and its facilities such as the Media Centre is one of the main resources for the Bristol cultural community especially for the media and animation sectors. However, fears were expressed about the need for the Faculty to maintain its distance from the vocational needs of the community in order to preserve its role as a critical knowledge generator. UB also has a role to play as a resource in the community. For example, the Departments of Drama and Music have self-conscious roles as part of the musical and theatrical communities in the city through interfaces such as the recording studio and auditorium in the Victoria Rooms and the Glynne Wickham Theatre, one of the city's experimental spaces. Further, the Department for Continuing Education at UB provides liberal adult education and professional courses in art.

There are several sites in the city which bring together the artistic and cultural communities within the two universities and the local community. In particular, The Watershed and The Arnolfini act as meeting points for the staff and students from the two universities and for practitioners in the community. The artistic and creative community within the universities, then, generate demand for art and cultural related goods, services and performances at various sites within the city and especially at privileged sites such as The Watershed and The Arnolfini.

The discussion in Part One of this thesis has a number of theoretical contributions to make to the debates surrounding the idea of the university and its relationship with the community. It is clear that the idea of the university is under contestation and that universities currently face a number of crises (Readings, 1995, Bourdieu, 1988). However, rather than trying to reinvent the university (Scott, 1995, Bauman, 1997) it may be more profitable to recycle the idea of the university by building upon some of its historical strengths. In this sense, echoing Kumar (1997), Bender (1988, 1996) and others, I have been keen to stress the university as a special place and the potential of reinvigorating the local civic role of the university through building upon the many existing links between the university and the community. However, this role is only likely to be fulfilled if it becomes an inclusive institution offering, as Bender (1996) suggested 'dialogue and difference'.

The examination of the cultural impacts of universities in Part One of the thesis allows us to contribute to the debate concerning the future idea of the university and its relationship with its community. As was highlighted in chapter 1, the cultural idea of the university is an under-researched area and the cultural role of universities in the community has been, at least in Britain, largely overlooked. Part One of this thesis has attempted to fill some of the gaps in the literature by stressing the multiplicity of cultural roles of the university in the community and in particular, the capacity of the university to function as a significant resource and source of expertise in both high and popular culture in the community.

These various cultural roles potentially enable universities to function as leading institutions in the local public sphere. However, currently, there are a number of impediments to this civic role, especially amongst Britain's older universities, such as the lingering elitist perceptions of universities, their lack of systematic management of

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interfaces with the community and poor marketing of the resources which are open to the local population. If there are any lessons to be drawn from this research, then, it would be to highlight that the manifold cultural links between the university and the community can allow the university to develop its role as a major player within the public life of the community. The future of the university is predicated upon its ability to function as an inclusive institution and its commitment to developing a partnership role with the local community whilst also stressing its institutional uniqueness as a special place. In the words of Bender (1996, 23): "the city offers as many lessons for the university as the university does for the city".

### **Part Two: Student Lifestyles**

Part Two explored the concept of student lifestyles. Chapter 6 stressed that the qualitative and quantitative growth within British universities has resulted in the incorporation of many new identities and has resulted in a juxtaposition between 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' student lifestyles. The concept of student lifestyle needs to be understood as crossing many boundaries and identities such as those within and between different universities and divisions of age, gender and class. Further, changing circumstances such as increasing work and financial pressures need to be acknowledged to understand the contemporary 'student lifestyle'.

However, some universities have resisted many of the changes which have occurred in the British higher education sector and within such institutions there exists a traditional student cohort who share common dispositions and similar educational and social backgrounds. The University of Bristol, and to a lesser extent UWE, is a case in point and areas around the Whiteladies Road are popular amongst these students who are distinguished by wealth, youth and fashion. This group perpetuates enduring images of student life and ways of being a student. They also largely determine how student lifestyles are perceived within the Bristol community which marginalises other student identities. In this sense, the perception of students throughout the city is informed less by actual contact and experience with students and more by inherited perceptions of a subset within the student community.



This traditional student lifestyle has a particular impact on Bristol. There is a social construction of the space of traditional students through collective mythologies (informal and embedded knowledge of student places) and actual interventions (the construction of student housing and entertainment facilities for these students) within certain parts of the city. The traditional student cohort, then, inhabits a regulated social space which is evident through segregated residential environments such as the hall of residence and the student house which is an important space for student socialising. This regulated social space is also evident through the existence of a student entertainment infrastructure in the city which consists of pathways of student-only/-oriented environments. The use of this space is mediated by a learning and unlearning process and the popularity of such spaces stems from the desire to meet other students and to ensure safety and reduce violence.

Drawing upon a Bourdieuan framework, it is evident that these social spaces within traditional student life generate distinctive ways of being and a common set of student dispositions. Although traditional students are the most visible example of these sets of dispositions, they also extend to those in their pre-traditional student phase (A-Level and gap year students) and those in their post-traditional student phase (recent graduates). There is evidence of tension in spaces where this group and other non-student groups mix. However, most traditional students display a limited geographical use of Bristol which reduces such tension and conflict. This world of traditional students, then, is removed from many other less traditional student groups and the non-student world. In this sense, their lifestyles unfold within a relatively closed and ritualised world and represent a temporary and seasonal imposition in the city. Yet, more research is needed to assess the actual extent of lifestyle differences between students (both traditional and non-traditional) and non-students. Therefore, it is clear that the lifestyle of traditional students represents isolated activity patterns, but whether these are any different to those displayed by non-traditional students or non-students is an area for further investigation.

In relation to cultural consumption by traditional students, it was suggested that despite the fact that most of their leisure time is often undertaken in highly regulated student-only environments, they go out more and to more venues than other groups. In particular, popular cultural pursuits, especially night-clubbing and drinking, are central to traditional student life. The discussion revealed certain privileged sites for student consumption which play a central role within the student entertainment infrastructure.

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These include pubs around Whiteladies Road and Clifton such as The Berkeley, the RooBar, the Dog and Duck and the White Bear, night-clubs such as Wedgies and Odyssey, cinemas such as The Showcase and the Whiteladies Road ABC cinema and, for those with more direct interest in culture, The Watershed and The Arnolfini. University-owned venues were less popular amongst students unless they used these venues as part of their course, and the students' unions were under-used because of their poor physical locations and appearances.

In this sense, the contributions which traditional students make to cultural innovation and vitality in the city are concentrated in certain areas of cultural activity and certain areas of Bristol. Because of the centrality of drinking to student culture, one of the main impacts of the lifestyles of traditional students on the community is the trade which they generate at numerous pubs and clubs around the university and student residential areas, especially the RooBar and the Berkeley. Further, because of the strength of the Bristol night-club scene (Chapter 2) and the dominance of night-clubbing as an activity for most traditional students (Chapter 6), students also make a significant contribution to cultural innovation and vitality within Bristol's night-club culture. This is reinforced by the growing number of student DJ's and their involvement in small-scale night-club and pre-club production and promotion. There are also important 'relative' cultural effects from the small number of students who regularly consume less popular areas of high or official culture.

This study of Bristol has shown that a definable student lifestyle based upon wealth, youth and fashion is a significant element within certain parts of Bristol. These lifestyles are the basis of many people's livelihoods but, as Chapters 3 and 6 explored, are also the source of annoyance and resentment. However, it must be remembered that Bristol is a particular context which demonstrates some of the excesses and stereotypes associated with student lifestyles such as social and educational privileges, hedonistic socialising, higher levels of free-time and, in some cases, higher disposable incomes compared to non-students in the 18-21 age cohort.

A number of broader theoretical reflections concerning lifestyles emerge from this discussion of traditional students. In relation to traditional university students (the most affluent third of young people in Britain today), it seems more apposite to discuss their lifestyle through Bourdieu's approach of 'generative structuralism' (Wacquant and

Bourdieu, 1992). These middle-class youth are socialised into a particular way of life which persists once they leave the student 'field'. These young people show a strong desire for association with their contemporaries and display a lifestyle built more upon a sense of belonging than experimentation. Much of their lifestyles are structured in space and time in the city in bounded fields which exclude other incompatible identities. This contradicts much of the postmodern theorising on lifestyles which is concerned with tribalism, fragmentation, ephemerality and eclecticism.

However, one area in which a postmodern framework is more useful than a Bourdieuan one is in terms of understanding the nature of cultural consumption of this group. In spite of the breadth of Bourdieu's work, he fails to acknowledge the centrality of popular culture within lifestyle formation. His work pays little attention to the lifestyles of young people and certain types of activity such as night-clubbing, and fails to acknowledge them as growing sources of cultural capital. It seems that Bourdieu is convinced too much by his own theory of capital formation and over-values the 'centre' and the existing cultural orthodoxy as a generator of new forms of cultural authority at the expense of the 'margins' (cf. Fowler, 1997). In sum, Part Two highlights some of the ways in which the lifestyle of young people is structured as opposed to being incoherent, but which also acknowledges that Bourdieu's version of structuralism clearly misses some of the new sources of cultural authority which are derived from popular cultural activity such as the dance and music cultures of the late 1980s and the 1990s. Further, one of the main contributions of the thesis has been to develop a reflexive social geography, which illuminates social and spatial exclusion as a growing feature of many parts of those cities in Britain which are becoming ghettos for significant numbers of traditional students.

## RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Because of the diversity and size of the British higher education sector, the discussion in this thesis was limited to certain universities, places, issues and types of students. Clearly, there is a much broader range of contexts which could be used to analyse the cultural impacts of universities and their students upon the community.

This work, then, is a snapshot of university and student life in time and space. Many students were omitted. For example, an early decision was to only focus upon undergraduates because of their different motives for entering into higher education.

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Many non-traditional, 'new' students were also excluded. In this sense, much of the research did not include, for example, married, disabled or part-time students or returning or recurrent learners. This reflects, in part, the lack of such groups within my own host institution, UB, and other pressures faced by these students which dissuaded them from participating in this research. I also restricted the research to Bristol and did not consider time spent by students outside of the city, especially in the neighbouring city of Bath with its own student population.

The fieldwork and subsequent discussions, then, largely concentrated upon the cohort of traditional students. However, there needs to be a finer understanding of this cohort. For example, being a traditional student is only one manifestation in a wider process of socialisation and acculturation into a particular way of life (cf. Bourdieu, 1984). In this sense, there are those who occupy a pre-traditional student stage such as A-Level students and those on gap-years, and those who occupy a post-traditional student stage such as graduands and recent graduates. In one city, then, A-Level students, people on gap-years and recent graduates can be identified as part of a broader process of identity formation, one part of which is being a 'traditional student'.

Further, the boundary between traditional and non-traditional student lifestyles is not a clearly demarcated one. Contrasting an adolescent middle-class white student from the rural home counties who attends an old red-brick university with a mature, married, student from an ethnic minority group in inner-city London who attends a new university remains a useful exercise in terms highlighting the very real lifestyle differences which exist in the contemporary British higher education sector. However, there are also a multitude of other identities which exist between these two lifestyle poles which blur the distinction between traditional and non-traditional student lifestyle.

The thesis, as well as not focusing upon non-traditional students, did not focus upon the cohort of non-students in the city. In this sense, the issues raised concerning division and conflict between traditional students and non-students remains based upon impressionistic accounts gained from observations in the main student areas and conversations with representatives from the university and cultural communities in the city. No fieldwork was undertaken with the cohort of non-students in the city, which includes those who are destined and not-destined to go to university. Clearly, such comparative work is an important area for future research.

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There are other future directions for research in this area. Of particular interest would be to widen the scope of the study to include other universities and groups of students to compare the analysis with that of Bristol. There is a recognition that the city of Bristol and its universities are distinctive because of the relative affluence of the former and the prestige of the latter, especially UB. Such affluence and success is reflected in the student population and in this sense there is a problem of 'representatives' and of comparing Bristol students to students at many other British universities.

Other interesting future research could concern the consequences of the production of over half a million graduates in society every year. Clearly, there is an indication that university graduates are somehow different to non-graduates, especially in terms of their place in the labour market. But they may also represent different political, social and cultural attitudes as a result of their university experience.

Research should also be undertaken on the paths which are drawn between student cities. It can be hypothesised that there is a significant amount of movement between student communities around Britain because of the residential tradition of British universities. Visiting student-friends or partners in other student cities is a significant aspect of student life. Further, weekends away and time spent at home during holidays also accounts for a significant proportion of student time.

Finally, some attempt should be made to link this research more fully with issues of social equality and social exclusion. In particular, there needs to be a more thorough examination of tension and conflict between the traditional cohort of upper-/middle-class, adolescent in-migrant students and other non-student groups, especially those in the 18-21 age bracket who live locally and are excluded from higher education. Future research of this type should be concerned with preserving the student experience whilst widening access and increasing local participation within it. This is an attempt to establish more links between the university and the community and to foster greater community understanding and responsibility as an integral part of student life.

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## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

### Universities, Students and the Cultural Infrastructure

Chapter 3 and 6 discussed the ways in which universities and their students contribute to cultural vitality and innovation in the community. What was apparent from these discussions is that universities are major cultural providers and resources within the community and student lifestyles have a visible impact within certain areas of Bristol, especially in terms of sustaining trade at numerous pubs and night-clubs. The existence of over 30 000 students and 10 000 staff in the city, then, generates and sustains cultural demand across both the popular and official cultural infrastructures in the city.

In the age of mass student populations and the proliferation of youth and music styles, then, the university has to rethink its cultural role. The fieldwork found that night-clubbing and drinking were central aspects to traditional student life. Certain pubs and clubs are meeting points for students which are as important to the student experience as the lecture theatre or the library. However, the universities and students' unions in Bristol failed to play a significant role within these aspects of student life, in part because of the remoteness of UWESU and the residential location of UBSU.

In these two cases, it seems that the students would be better served if the students' unions focused more upon non-entertainment student services and expanded their entertainment services in more suitable locations in the city-centre or in student residential areas to maintain a stake in this significant aspect of student life. In this sense, the two universities in Bristol, preferably in collaboration (which would reduce inter-university rivalry in the city), should invest in city-centre entertainment provision. Both UB and UWE are completely absent from the city-centre entertainment market since UWESU recently withdrew from the night-club, 'The Tube Club'. If we consider that the 'second curriculum' is a vital part of the university experience (Chapter 7) and that universities are responsible for the seasonal existence of large numbers of young, wealthy people in many cities, it is surprising that they do not show a greater concern towards student entertainment provision in the city.

University investment in the city-centre entertainment market has many benefits; it would help universities to capture the lucrative student entertainment market in city-

centres; ensure student safety; promote student socialising, solidarity and out-of-class discussions; function as a showcase for many of the cultural talents which are contained within the student population; provide part-time work for students; and regulate student drinking. Several universities have already invested in city-centre pub and night-club facilities for the above reasons. In particular, Chapter 7 discussed the role of the Wisconsin Union which was a major entertainment venue for the university and the community during both day and night.

Other areas of cultural activity such as the theatre, museums and galleries were in general only popular amongst those students in Bristol who had a course-based interest in such activity. However, the two universities in Bristol play an important role as a 'provider' within the official cultural infrastructure. Such a role sustains levels of artistic and cultural activity, much of which is experimental, at a time when many local authorities are reducing their spending on the arts and culture. As was discussed in Chapter 2, partnership plays a central role in the cultural strategy in Bristol. There needs to be a greater recognition of the role which universities, as generators of cultural knowledge and authority, and providers of cultural facilities and events, can play in this partnership model. Of particular importance here is the under-representation of the universities in the Harbourside development in Bristol.

This thesis has established the extent to which the two universities in Bristol and their students are major players within the city's cultural infrastructure. Despite this significant cultural role, there is an absence of a strategic approach in terms of managing the university-community cultural interface. It is hoped that investigations such as the one undertaken in this thesis will allow the community to appreciate the ways in which the two universities and their students impact upon it culturally, and allow the university to recognise that it is a significant local cultural actor with all the responsibilities this role entails. Better management and promotion of cultural facilities and events at both the universities in Bristol could include, for example, a one-stop information point to serve all those in the universities and the community.

### **The Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education**

The recent growth of universities has resulted in over 1.5 million students participating in higher education institutions around the UK. This represents a transition from an elite to

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mass system of higher education. Clearly, one important implication of this transition is that student populations have grown in Britain's two- or multi-university cities.

The smaller-scale, collegiate student experience of the elite system of higher education in Britain was characterised by a removal of the life of the university and its students from the community. The advent of a mass system of higher education means that student life permeates much more into the city. Clearly, each community has a different student population which reflects the different academic mix of the university, its history and place in the present higher education sector. Many universities have a stronger legacy of the collegiate, residential student experience and *post-in loco parentis* structures which isolates students from the community. Other universities offer a much weaker regulatory framework for student life and as a result their students are much more integrated into the community.

It seems logical that the introduction of tuition fees, the drop in maintenance allowances, the greater dependency on loans and earnings from part-time employment and the concomitant accumulation of student debt (at around £1700 per student in 1996, Callender and Kempson, 1996) will increase the number of stay-at-home students and deter many from applying to university in the first place. One scenario is that the rising costs of going to university will mean that the residential tradition of travelling away from home to attend university will become the preserve of middle-class youth. The most traditional students, then, will comprise the majority of seasonal immigrants to the community. This has important consequences for integration, conflict and division in the student city.

What the era of the mass university means for the community is the increase in seasonal visitors within these student cities - or as Wright (1994) suggested, 'UniverCities' - with whole swathes of the city devoted to residential or entertainment provision for students. These areas often become ghettoised and tension and conflict emerges along fringe areas when student and non-students come into contact. Clearly an important aspect of both higher education policy and urban policy and planning would be to recognise the dynamic which is being introduced into certain areas within many British cities because of the segregated growth of a population of upper-/middle-class, adolescent outsiders.



### The Postmodern City: The Divided City

*Mis-shapes, mistakes, misfits.  
 Raised on a diet of broken biscuits,  
 oh we don't look the same as you,  
 we don't do the things you do,  
 but we live round here too Oh really.  
 Mis-shapes, mistakes, misfits,  
 we'd like to go to town but we can't risk it,  
 oh 'cause they just want to keep us out.  
 You could end up with a smack in the mouth just for standing out,  
 Oh really.  
 J. Cocker, Pulp, 1995.*

Traditional student lifestyles, then, form a distinctive mini-community within the city (Hollands, 1995). What are the consequences of these lifestyles within the city? Many commentators have suggested that city-centres have become arenas within which distinct identities, especially at night, are expressed (Featherstone, 1991; Hollands, 1995; O'Connor and Wynne, 1995, 1995a). In particular, O'Connor and Wynne (1995a, part 3, 4) describe the city-centre in terms of a 'stage' or 'edge' where a theatrical presentation of self can be played out in a realm which offers experimentation and negotiation of identity. City-centre living becomes more about 'cultural' rather than 'economic' investment and is associated with self-development and finding a space to explore one's lifestyle needs rather than economic gain (O'Connor and Wynne, 1995a, part 3, 4). Further, Hollands (1995, 8) pointed towards the "increasing role the city plays in shaping young adult's experience of modern life." The city-centre offers various resources such as drinking, drugs and music which create distinct communities:

different forms of social interaction expressed in the night time economy, including group drinking rituals, fashion, music, and dance and drug cultures are, in essence, modern equivalents of community (Hollands, 1995, 1)

Such remarks fall under the umbrella of postmodern theorising. Featherstone (1991, 99) suggests that "commentators have adopted the rhetoric of postmodernism to understand the changes to the culture of cities and urban lifestyles." In particular, "postmodern cities have become centres of consumption, play and entertainment, saturated with signs and images to the extent that anything can be represented, thematized and made an object of interest" (ibid., 1991, 101). Further:

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postmodernizing tendencies can be observed in the new urban spaces which point to a greater aestheticisation of the urban fabric and the daily lives of people, the development of new consumption and leisure enclaves... and the drawing back of new middle-class gentrifying populations into the inner-city (Featherstone, 1991, 109).

The contemporary, perhaps postmodern, city, then, is a particular place for the expression of lifestyles and a stylisation of life. There has been:

a shift in attention from lifestyle conceived as a relatively fixed set of dispositions, cultural tastes and leisure practices which demarcate groups from each other to the assumption that in the contemporary city lifestyles are more actively formed. Hence the focus turns away from lifestyle as class- or neighbourhood-based to lifestyle as the active stylisation of life (Featherstone, 1991, 101).

As discussed earlier, this has particular resonance for the creation of a student identity:

there is a tendency on the part of some groups (especially the young, highly educated, sectors of the middle-classes) to take on a more active stance towards lifestyle and pursue the stylisation of life (Featherstone, 1991, 97).

The emergence and growth of a regulated student entertainment infrastructure in many cities is a central mechanism for the construction and maintenance of a student lifestyle and student image. Through this infrastructure, a student identity is actively formed - a stylisation of life is enacted.

Clearly, as discussed in Chapter 5 and 6, we need to be cautious of celebrating the consumption-oriented postmodern city as a stage for the enactment of lifestyle. As Featherstone (1991, 110) comments: "Against this seductively oversimplified postmodern story of the end of history we have to point to the persistence of classification, hierarchy and segregation within the city." In terms of the student entertainment infrastructure, we need to analyse it as a space which not only allows student lifestyles to be made and enacted, but also as a space which is a source of division and conflict. The existence of student-only/-oriented residential and entertainment spaces is a clear source of identity demarcation and boundary drawing between groups. Certain spaces in the city, then, are designated as either student or non-student which is regressive to the idea of public culture and a public sphere. As Zukin (1995, 259-260) commented about such spaces:

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Public spaces are the primary site of public culture; they are a window into the city's soul... public spaces are important because they are places where strangers mingle freely. But they are also important because they continually negotiate the boundaries of human society... public spaces enable us to conceptualise and represent the city.

Traditional student lifestyles, then, draw boundaries around certain areas. Much of this boundary drawing is based upon fear of the unknown, which in turn is based upon assumptions rather than experience. Currently, then, the geography of traditional student life in Bristol represents a 'geography of exclusion' (Sibley, 1995), or more realistically, considering the social composition these students, a 'geography of privilege'.

In this respect, an important consideration would be to ensure that the expansion of universities also involves an increase in participation of non-traditional groups. This would dilute some of the boundaries and divisions which were discussed in this thesis between student and non-student entertainment and residential areas. Under such conditions, student residential and entertainment ghettos, although still targeted at students, would be populated with those who have not historically been perceived as students. In particular, participation should be extended to the city's under-privileged youth who are excluded from local higher education and have an identity which contrasts heavily with traditional in-coming students.

### **Britain's Great Teenage Transhumance<sup>1</sup>**

A remaining feature of the exceptionalism of British universities is the state subsidy of an annual migration of upper-/middle class teenagers to the numerous growing student cities in Britain. However, the question to be raised is whether the expense involved in this process can be justified and whether this experience is still edifying considering increasing overcrowding and financial and work pressures (Walker, 1997). There are many reasons for defending this migration and the student experience, if not only because many universities lack sufficient catchment areas to function from local populations. Further, experiencing different contexts and cultures is a positive learning experience. Many students, for example, travel away from home to go to university in order to sample the cultural life in Britain's capital and large provincial cities such as

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<sup>1</sup> This phrase is taken from Walker (1997).

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Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle and Bristol (Chapter 4). The university is also one of the only true public spaces left which offers a time for contemplation, reflection and dialogue with others (see Chapter 1: Bender, 1996; Kumar, 1997).

But the rules of this migration have to be changed. Leaving home to study is not much of a learning experience if the only people you encounter are people from similar social and economic backgrounds. Many universities in Britain, then, have lost their way in terms of what Bender called 'dialogue and difference' (1996). Clearly, the only way in which residential student life could be considered a real learning experience is if the seasonal student population represented an encounter of many different identities. Clearly, Bristol represents a particular student environment in which many students live, work and socialise with people of similar social, educational and geographic backgrounds. What of the third of the young adult population from ethnic minorities, under-achieving schools and inner-cities? "Break them out of their culture and dead expectations by giving them the chance to live away from home. That would really give the 18-year-old transmigration some point" (Walker, 1997).

### **Universities, Culture and Responsibility**

The final implication I would like to discuss concerns the perceptual problem of students in the community. This was summed up best in Chapter 4 (p. 129): "The university is important as a large employer - but the problem is that its immediate customers [the students] are a complete pain." Negative perception are often aroused towards students within the community which largely stems from the traditional students who have a more visible identity based around wealth, fashion and youth. There is an ambivalence towards this group; whilst many sections of the community displayed hostility towards their privileged lifestyles, there is also an appreciation of their significant economic impacts on the Bristol economy which, as Chapter 4 showed, is in the region of £170 million per year.

There seems to be a problem in terms of integrating these adolescent, hedonistic and seasonal lifestyles into the community. Such integration problems may reflect a more general attitude of moral panic towards youth culture (Chapter 4: see for example Wilson, 1970; Cohen, 1980). As one leading member of the Bristol business community commented:

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For youth, the basis of culture is driven by the need to pair and drink. Later on in life, culture has to be more organised to appeal to more modified and moderated requirements. It is a responsibility of the community to develop youth culture in a productive and responsible way. Youth culture is about what youth wants in order to function as youth, I don't see it as being capable of being productive for a community unless it does create, unless there is a net gain on the economy of it. I see youth culture is more absorbent than creative, whereas as you get older you try to put some lasting effect on something. I think youth culture is demanding rather than yielding - adult culture tries to be more yielding (int., Savage, 4/4/96).

Clearly, many students come to university to sample the 'culture' of other cities. In this sense, Bristol has many 'pull' factors such as the strength of popular cultural activity in the city. Many students, then, come to Bristol as much for the quality of life and its culture as for the quality of its higher education. The result of this is that the 'student community' is distanced from the 'university community' and the ability of the university to claim responsibility for the activity of students is diminished.

Answers towards such problems can be drawn from examples such as the Wisconsin Model at UW-Madison in the USA. At UW-Madison, there are many more post-*in loco parentis* structures which integrate the students with the university. As a result, students are seen less as temporary, irresponsible visitors and more as the elite of the state who will later become its leaders. The strong state-university identity model amongst the Land Grant universities and the dominance of in-state students at most public universities in the USA also means that the perception of students as visitors or outsiders is reduced.

At UW-Madison, students are seen much more as a positive input to the community because of the public service tradition of the Wisconsin Idea and the Land Grant heritage (Chapter 7). There are high levels of course based and extra-curricular service learning as part of education for citizenship. Further, university facilities at UW-Madison are a much more central part of community life. However, these higher levels of university-community integration often exist to justify the tax exempt status of land-grant institutions. Physical location is an important determining influence of the relationship between the university and the community. The boundaries between UW-Madison and the community are extremely permeable and the campus represents a shared space. In contrast, the remote campuses of UWE and the removed precinct of UB exclude and deter 'outsiders' which is a detrimental physical and mental barrier to fostering a more

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productive university-community cultural relationship. Clearly, there are still shortcomings associated with the university-community relationship at UW-Madison. These include the universities over-dominant role in the community and the restrictions laid upon the university's autonomy because of its obligations to the state and to the numerous alumni who make significant financial contributions each year.

Students do have some input into the community in Britain through Student Community Action (SCA), but this represents much smaller levels of community service compared to the USA. However, efforts need to be made to integrate local community issues into undergraduate education. This could be as simple as increasing awareness and knowledge of the local community amongst the immigrant student body. It could also include validating many of the activities which are presently considered as outside the university experience by formally recognising them as part of the 'second curriculum' as in UW-Madison. Community involvement does not equate to an infringement of the university's role as an autonomous and critical generator of knowledge. It would simply act to ameliorate the perception of students as irresponsible seasonal visitors and universities as detached ivory towers.

It is clear that the student population in Britain has a large community service potential which would ameliorate some of the negative connotations of traditional students as irresponsible, seasonal visitors. For example, if each of the 34 000 students in Bristol gave up just one hour of their leisure time per week this would equate to 34 000 hours. On the basis of a 40 hour week and a 40 week year, this represents the equivalent of over 20 years of service time for the community or 850 full-time community volunteers working in Bristol! This would be an easy commitment to make considering that Figure 6.6 showed that, on average, students spent 10 hours per week watching TV and/or videos and Figure 6.12 showed that students spent 8 hours per week in the pub. In sum, a very small adjustment to the lifestyle of students would result in a very large gain, especially perceptually, for the community.

My final point refers to the discussion in Chapter 1. For many, student life is, and should be, a time of enjoyment and personal development. In this sense, the special time and place of the university and the student experience are worth preserving. However, studenthood also represents privilege and exclusion. It is a fact that social classes are still very unequally represented in higher education and there is an assumption that those

who are excluded from higher education exclude themselves because of their lack of educational achievements. The reality is that their less-advantaged social and educational backgrounds act as significant barriers to gaining entrance to universities (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1979). The means of access to this unique time and space of the university and the student experience need universalising. It is hoped that future growth of universities will be directed at allowing more people, especially under-privileged youth within Britain's large university-cities, to gain access to the state-subsidised student experience. Such equitable growth could reduce conflict and division between privileged in-migrant students and local non-student groups in the city, enhance the relationship between the university and the community and adhere to some of the founding principles of the 'idea' of the university.

# APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

The fieldwork undertaken for this thesis included several overlapping methods. Three main methods were used which included a questionnaire survey of 500 students from four courses at the two universities and diary-work and focus-groups with a sub-set of students from these four courses. These were supplemented with participant observation in various areas and venues in the city and interviews with those involved in 'culture' in the city such as venue managers and promoters and representatives from the business, public sector and university sectors. Taken together, these methods represent a sequential exploration of the cultural roles and impacts of universities and students the community. In this sense, the largest and most impersonal method (the questionnaire) acted as a starting point and sounding-board from which to pursue further issues through diary-work, focus groups, participant observation and semi-structured interviews. The various methods, then, supplemented and re-inforced one another and displayed a level of methodological triangulation which enabled hypotheses to be cast and recast. With regard to the case-study in the USA, a similar framework was used which employed diary work and follow-up focus groups, interviews and participant observation. However, questionnaires were not used because of the lack of knowledge of the context.

Only chapters 6 and 7 draw heavily upon the questionnaire, diaries and focus group work. In contrast, information gathered during interviewing and participant observation is used throughout the thesis in chapters 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8. All the information gathered was treated with strict confidence and only used with the permission of the participants within the confines of this thesis. In particular, the identity of the students was protected as the names of those from Bristol which appear in the text have been changed. The names of the students from UW-Madison in the USA remained, with their consent, unchanged as it was felt that confidentiality would not be endangered between the two contexts. The following sections briefly discuss each method and, by way of a guide for other researchers, highlight some of the strengths and weaknesses of each method when used in this research area.



## Questionnaire

The first method to be conducted was a questionnaire survey which was used to gauge the basic characteristics of cultural consumption amongst students. The survey encompassed nearly 500 students from four courses and years one, two and three of study. The choice of course was significant in that two arts based courses were selected to represent students more inclined to have an active interest in culture and the arts and two social science courses were selected to represent more average or typical cultural behaviour within the student population. Table A.1 shows a summary of the characteristics of those surveyed:

TABLE A.1: CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY POPULATION

| COURSE                    | DRAMA    | FINE ART  | GEOGRAPHY      | TOURISM<br>MANAGEMENT | ALL |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|----------------|-----------------------|-----|
| No. of students in survey | 69       | 63        | 193            | 161                   | 486 |
| University type           | old (UB) | new (UWE) | old (UB)       | new (UWE)             | -   |
| course type               | arts     | arts      | social science | social science        | -   |
| <21 years old (%)         | 80       | 54        | 100            | 80                    | 79  |
| Private school (%)        | 35       | 12        | 48             | 35                    | 33  |
| Local (Avon) (%)          | 8        | 26        | 2              | 14                    | 13  |
| Parent in Class AB (%)    | 89       | 80        | 89             | 81                    | 85  |

What is evident from the above table is that the students in the survey largely represented a cohort of traditional students (adolescent, non-local, middle-/upper-class, in-migrants). These specific characteristics of the survey population influenced the patterns of consumption which were found. In particular, the youthful nature of the group accounts for the preference of pub and night-clubbing based activity.

The survey explored the range and frequency of visits to various venues in several activity areas; the performing arts, galleries/exhibitions, night-clubbing, cinema, live music and going to the pub. It asked students to place a number in the box next to each venue to indicate how many times they had visited the venue in the preceding month (Figure A.1). The timing of the survey influenced the results. The survey was conducted in November 1995, and so surveyed activity in October, the first month of the university year. This month was chosen as it represents the peak of leisure activity amongst students

during which financial and work pressures are at their lowest and the desire to socialise and meet other students (especially amongst freshers) is at the highest.

FIGURE A.1: STUDENT LEISURE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please place a number in each box to indicate how many times you have visited any of the venues listed below in the last month.

**Performing arts**

- University of Bristol - Glynne Wickham Theatre
- University of Bristol - Winston Theatre and Lady Windsor Theatre
- The University of the West of England - The Octagon
- QEH Theatre
- The Hippodrome
- Theatre Royal (Old Vic)
- The Colston Hall
- The Redgrave Theatre (Clifton College)
- Bristol Dance Centre
- The Inkworks
- The Hope Centre
- Arnolfini - Live Dance and Performances
- Other (please state)

**Galleries/Museums**

- City Museum and Art Gallery
- The Arnolfini Gallery
- The Watershed Gallery
- The Royal West of England Academy
- Bristol Industrial Museum
- The Red Lodge
- The Georgian House
- Other (please state)

**Cinema**

- MGM - Whiteladies Road
- Cannon - Frogmore St.
- Odeon - Broadmead
- Showcase Multiplex
- The Watershed
- The Arnolfini
- The Arts Cinema
- Other (please state)

**Live Music**

- University of Bristol - Anson Rooms
- University of Bristol - The Great Hall - Wills Building
- University of the West of England - Frenchay Campus
- Bierkeller
- Colston Hall
- The Hippodrome
- Bristol Cathedral
- Fleece and Firkin
- Howlin' Wolf
- The Victoria Rooms
- St. George's - Brandon Hill
- The Backroom - King's Arms
- The Brewhouse
- The Louisiana
- The Malaap
- The New Trinity Centre
- The Thekla
- The Polish Club
- Other (please state)

**Clubs**

- The University of the West of England (e.g. Sutra at Frenchay)
- Club Loco
- The Malaap
- Lakota
- Blue Mountain
- Bierkeller
- Odyssey
- Ritzy
- Club 49
- Mandrake
- The Tube Club
- Wedgies
- La Roca
- The Steam Tavern
- Kickers
- The Garden Club
- The Malcolm X Centre
- St. Nicholas's House
- Vadims
- The Alexandra Club
- Other (please state)

Any other venues/attractions outside Bristol e.g. Bath.

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 -----  
 -----

**Other activities (e.g. seminars)**

- The Watershed
- Arnolfini
- The University of Bristol
- The University of the West of England
- Other (please state)

Which are the main pubs you have visited in the last month?

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 -----  
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 -----  
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 -----  
 -----  
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If anybody would like to help in a longer questionnaire on their cultural involvement in Bristol could they please contact Paul Chatterton, Dept. of Geography, University of Bristol, University Road, BS8 1SS.

E-mail: chatter@bris.ac.uk

Tel: 928 9000 ext. 3851.

Carrying out the questionnaire involved a number of specific steps. Contact was initially made with the course tutors/leaders in each of the chosen four courses and the project was introduced and explained. All the tutors were interested in the fieldwork and gave me permission to distribute the questionnaires to their students in a five minute slot at the beginning of one of their lectures. In this context, I had a captive audience and response rates of virtually 100% in each case. The information from the 500 completed questionnaires was then entered into a spreadsheet and some basic frequency analysis was undertaken to establish the most popular areas of consumption. Figure 6.1 and subsequent discussions in chapter 6 were derived from this analysis.

There are a number of strengths and weaknesses within this 'captive group' approach to questionnaire distribution which sets it apart from other questionnaire methods (such as postal or individual approaches). Firstly, students often sit in lectures in seating arrangements which mirror their social networks. In this sense, it was evident that students filled in the questionnaires in groups rather than individually, asking others around them which venues had been attended. This group approach re-inforces some of the theoretical hypotheses raised in chapter 6, namely that socialising with other students is a large part of what students do during a night-out. Further, analysis of the data once it was entered sequentially on the spreadsheet (student by student in the same order as they sat in the lecture theatre) further confirmed this group dynamic as there were large groupings of similar ticked boxes which represented that those who sat next to each other also socialised together.

Secondly, this 'group' approach also had drawbacks in that the filling-in process provoked lively debate which took up much of my allotted time and, despite the assumed benefits of having a captive audience, many questionnaires contained insufficient detail. Further, the tick box approach may have encouraged students to 'over-tick' the number and frequency of venues attended and hence over-represent their leisure time to impress other students. However, if the form had been an 'open' questionnaire with no venues stated then inadequate memory recollection for the preceding month may have been a more significant problem which would have resulted in under-representation of their leisure time.

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## **Diaries**

Time-budget analysis is an activity with a long pedigree, which has been used in the UK and elsewhere to investigate the use of time in the areas of both leisure and work (Gershuny et al, 1986). Time budget diaries can take a variety of forms. For example, they can be used to record open or fixed time slots and they can include precoded or open categories of activity. The format which I chose was taken from research undertaken by Gershuny et al. (1986) for the ESRC and represents an open-coded, self-completion, seven-day consecutive diary (Figure A.2).

FIGURE A.2: TIME BUDGET DIARY FROM GERSHUNY ET AL. (1986)

| Time  | What were you doing?            |                                    | Who was with you in the main activity | Where were you doing the main activity? | Time  |
|-------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------|
|       | Main Activity in each half hour | Other Activities in the half hour? |                                       |   |       |
| 12:00 |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 12:00 |
| 30    |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 30    |
| 1:00  |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 1:00  |
| 30    |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 30    |
| 2:00  |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 2:00  |
| 30    |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 30    |
| 3:00  |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 3:00  |
| 4:00  |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 4:00  |
| 30    |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 30    |
| 5:00  |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 5:00  |
| 30    |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 30    |
| 6:00  |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 6:00  |
| 30    |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 30    |
| 7:00  |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 7:00  |
| 30    |                                 |                                    |                                       |   | 30    |

Day of Week \_\_\_\_\_

A smaller subset of 24 students (six from each of the four courses) participated in the diary work. These students were self-selected in the sense that they were either encouraged to participate by the course leader or came forward to participate in the research through, presumably, an interest in the research area. In this sense, the students who participated in the follow-up work were not a random sample of students from the four courses and may have represented students who were more eager to share their experiences of university life and their activities in the city. The table below presents some basic biographical information from the diary participants who agreed to supply this information. What is evident from these biographical profiles is that the art courses (Fine Art and Drama) contain students with less traditional student identities compared to the social science courses (Geography and Tourism Management). However, overall, the characteristics of the group still has more in common with the traditional rather than the non-traditional student cohort.

TABLE A.2: CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED DIARY PARTICIPANTS

## GEOGRAPHY

| Name                       | Louise     | Naomi          | Paul       | Ed       | Steve    |
|----------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------|----------|
| Year of Study              | 1          | 1              | 1          | 2        | 3        |
| Age                        | 18         | 18             | 18         | 20       | 20       |
| Sex                        | F          | F              | M          | M        | M        |
| Area of domicile           | Swindon    | Trowbridge     | Hastings   | London   | London   |
| Bristol Postcode           | Halls BS9  | Halls BS8      | Halls BS9  | BS8      | BS8      |
| Father's job               | Dentist    | Lab technician | Manager    | Lecturer | retired  |
| Mother's job               | Housewife  | Clerical Ass.  | Teacher    | Teacher  | Manager  |
| Previous school            | Comp.      | Comp.          | Ind.       | Ind.     | Ind.     |
| Activity before university | A - levels | A - Levels     | A - Levels | Gap Year | Gap Year |

## DRAMA

| Name                       | Helen                    | Alan          | Hester   | Seb       |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| Year of Study              | 2                        | 2             | 4        | 3         |
| Age                        | 34                       | 30            | 23       | 21        |
| Sex                        | F                        | M             | F        | M         |
| Area of domicile           | Bristol                  | Bristol       | Surrey   | Argentina |
| Bristol Postcode           | BS6                      | Halls BS8     | BS2      | BS8       |
| Father's job               | RAF officer              | -             | Engineer | Tourism   |
| Mother's job               | Teacher                  | -             | Teacher  | Tourism   |
| Previous school            | Drama college            | Drama college | Ind.     | Ind.      |
| Activity before university | Work/A-Level night class | Work/Travel   | Gap year | Gap year  |

## FINE ART

| Name                       | Phil      | Paul                | Caroline | Julie   | Andrew            |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------|----------|---------|-------------------|
| Year of Study              | 1         | 2                   | 2        | 3       | 3                 |
| Age                        | 32        | 20                  | 29       | 29      | 21                |
| Sex                        | M         | M                   | F        | F       | M                 |
| Area of domicile           | Bath      | Stratford upon Avon | Bristol  | Bristol | Preston           |
| Bristol Postcode           | Bath      | BS8                 | BS3      | BS1     | BS3               |
| Father's job               | Teacher   | Antique restorer    | Usher    | Retired | foreman           |
| Mother's job               | Housewife | Housewife           | -        | Teacher | Bank              |
| Previous school            | Ind.      | Comp.               | Ind.     | Comp.   | Ind.              |
| Activity before university | Work      | A - levels          | Work     | Work    | Foundation course |

## TOURISM MANAGEMENT

| Name                       | Ed       | Alice     | Corrina         | Becky     | Laura      |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Year of Study              | 1        | 1         | 2               | 3         | 3          |
| Age                        | 20       | 20        | 21              | 22        | 20         |
| Sex                        | M        | F         | F               | F         | F          |
| Area of domicile           | Clywd    | Salisbury | Wiltshire       | Surrey    | Berkshire  |
| Bristol Postcode           | BS7      | BS6       | BS6             | BS1       | BS7        |
| Father's job               | Retired  | Army      | Teacher         | Engineer  | Director   |
| Mother's job               | Cleaner  | -         | Social services | Secretary | Temp       |
| Previous school            | Comp.    | Ind.      | Comp.           | Comp.     | Comp.      |
| Activity before university | Gap year | Gap year  | Travel and work | B-TEC     | A - levels |

The diaries were distributed at the beginning of the second term in February 1996 and the participants were asked to record what they did, where they were and who they were with at half-hour intervals, continuously over a period of seven days. This may seem a lot to ask, especially to a group of young people who may be inclined to forget or treat the task as a chore, but completion rates were surprisingly high with only a few diaries either blank or spoilt. This may be explained by the fact that the diaries were distributed through course tutors and the students may have felt that the diaries were a more formal task than if they were distributed directly from me. At UW-Madison in the USA, diaries were distributed and completed with less problems which may be explained by their fascination of an 'outsiders' interest in their lives.

In terms of developing a coding framework for the diaries, I followed a reduced set of 40 codes from one of the original Szalai (1972) activity coding schemes of 99 codes. However, because of the character of this particular group a modified set of 46 codes was used:



TABLE A.3: CODES USED TO ANALYSE DIARIES

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Work</b>                        |  |
| 01                                 | Lectures/practicals/tutorial/exams                         |
| 02                                 | Library  |
| 03                                 | personal study/ creative work/ rehearsals                  |
| 04                                 | part-time job  |
| 05                                 | travel to above  |
| <b>Housework</b>                   |  |
| 06                                 | cooking  |
| 07                                 | home chores  |
| 08                                 | laundry  |
| 09                                 | marketing - everyday shopping                              |
| <b>Other household obligations</b> |  |
| 10                                 | garden/animal care   |
| 11                                 | shopping - durable, consumer goods                         |
| 12                                 | other duties - bills, caring, appointments - hair, doctors |
| <b>Child</b>                       |  |
| 13                                 | child care   |
| 14                                 | other child - baby-sitting, talking, helping               |
| <b>Personal Needs</b>              |  |
| 15                                 | personal care/ getting ready                               |
| 16                                 | eating/drinking  |
| 17                                 | sleep/bed  |
| <b>Non-work travel</b>             |  |
| 18                                 | personal travel  |
| 19                                 | leisure travel   |
| <b>Study and participation</b>     |  |
| 20                                 | study at home  |
| 21                                 | religious  |
| 22                                 | meetings, clubs/ band practice                             |
| <b>Mass Media</b>                  |  |
| 23                                 | Radio  |
| 24                                 | TV home  |
| 25                                 | TV away  |
| 26                                 | read paper   |
| 27                                 | read magazine  |
| 28                                 | read book - leisure  |
| 29                                 | cinema   |
| 30                                 | video  |
| <b>Leisure</b>                     |  |
| 31                                 | social - home (drinking etc.)                              |
| 32                                 | social- other home in Bristol                              |
| 32a                                | family visit   |

- 32b friend visit - out of Bristol
- 33 conversation
- 34 listening to music
- 35 club sports
- 36 exercise/keep fit/ leisure sports -squash, football etc.
- 36a walk
- 37 sports events - spectator
- 38 restaurant
- 39 pub, cafe
- 40 night club
- 41 live music
- 42 theatre
- 42a museum/exhibition
- 43 resting, relaxing, thinking
- 44 telephone/e-mail
- 45 computer games
- 46 other leisure - letters, instruments, pastimes, games

**Source:** Modified from Szalai's 99 categories (1972).

This modification of the coding scheme furnishes us with a number of lessons for time budget analysis. Initially, the coding list had to be modified and expanded in order to tailor the list to the characteristics of the group and the specific research questions within the thesis. In particular, categories such as 'library', 'lecture', 'night-clubbing' and 'socialising at home' were added whilst categories such as 'child care' were redundant for many diary participants.

Further, many students may not have felt confident with the confidentiality of the diaries and as a result omitted activity areas of a sensitive, personal or illegal nature. In particular, activities such as sex and drug-use were generally omitted but there were several oblique references to such activities! However, these activities were subsumed under other codes. Students may also have under-played their social lives and over-played their academic lives through fear of exposure to outsiders, especially course tutors. Finally, the diaries were used in a number of different ways and filled in using a number of different styles which ranged from very functional one-word responses to anecdotes, sketches and stories. These differences can partly be explained by the open format of the diaries, but it also reflects the different personalities involved in the fieldwork and their different perceptions of their role within it.

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The information from the diaries was translated into the coding framework and entered into a spreadsheet. Frequency analysis was carried out on this data set to establish patterns of time use in various activity groupings such as work, leisure-at-home and leisure-out-of-home. The results of these can be seen in Figures 6.6 and 6.12 and were used to double-check the consumption trends found in the larger student consumption questionnaire. Further, diary extracts were used throughout chapters 6 and 7 to illuminate the research questions in the thesis.

### **Focus Groups**

The third main method used was the focus group discussion. The focus group is an effective tool which can be used to supplement other methods, or as a means for triangulation in multi-method research strategies (Goss, 1996). In this sense, the focus groups were used to pursue a number of questions which were raised from the questionnaires and diaries. Focus groups were conducted at the end of the second term with the same four groups of six students who completed the diaries. The conversations from the focus groups lasted about one hour and were taped and transcribed. The text was analysed to pursue in greater detail some of the questions in the thesis. Extracts from the focus groups appear throughout chapters 6 and 7.

However, there were a number of specific problems in terms of establishing and running the focus groups which are largely associated with the youthful and often nonchalant characteristics of this group. Although the students agreed to participate in the focus group discussions when the original diaries were distributed and subsequently re-confirmed their participation the week and night before they were due to occur, attendance at the focus groups was low. In one group, only 3 out of 6 students attended, whilst in others 4 or 5 attended. Considering the amount of time and energy I spent organising the groups, there seems little way to guarantee higher attendance rates. An early understanding the characteristics of each group, then, seems essential in terms of determining the success of the focus group method. As with the diaries, focus groups ran more smoothly in the USA, which, similarly, can be explained by the attraction of the 'outsider'.

A further problem with the focus groups related to the mixing of different student identities. In particular, running focus groups which simultaneously involved 1st, 2nd

and 3rd year students hindered the flow of conversation as often the 1st years felt intimidated by the more vocal and confident 3rd years. In retrospect, it may have been more successful to bring together group identities which reflected student socialising patterns more closely such as students from the same year of study or people from the same house or hall. However, all focus groups 'worked' in the sense that lively, and often provocative, debate was generated concerning the students' relationship to other students and the city.

### **Interviewing**

After the three main methods of questionnaires, diaries and focus-groups were completed, a number of interviews were conducted in the city to gather information on how other people understood the cultural role and impact of universities and students in the community. Interviews were undertaken with representatives from the universities, such as academics, administrators and students' union representatives/sabbaticals and the local cultural community such as venue owners, cultural managers and lobby groups. Interviews were semi-structured and a simple aide-memoir was used as a guide.

The subject matter often proved to be controversial and provoking and it was difficult to adhere to a structure with many of the interviewees, especially the more vocal and opinionated venue owners. In particular, most people were extremely expressive about their interpretation of town-gown relationships and their impression of the student body. In the context of the USA, everyone I approached was willing to be interviewed and eager to discuss my research area. This may have been due to their own interest with my research area and, again, a fascination with the interest of an 'outsider'.

The interviewing process was very profitable and interviews were transcribed (selectively transcribed for the longer ones of over 2 hours) and analysed to further pursue the research questions. Interview extracts appear in chapters 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 to further illuminate the research questions in the thesis. A full list of interviewees appears below.

TABLE A.4: INTERVIEWS UNDERTAKEN DURING THE FIELDWORK

| <b>UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL</b> |                              |         |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| Helen Spillane               | Entertainments Officer, UBSU | 10.1.97 |

|                      |   |          |
|----------------------|---|----------|
| Don Carleton         | Information Officer                     | various  |
| Sarah Sansom         | University President 1995-96            | 13.3.96  |
| Matt Salter          | University President 1996-97            | various  |
| Jason Murphy         | Student Community Action Co-ordinator   | 8.1.97   |
| Wyndam Thomas        | Music, Head of Department               | 10.12.96 |
| Martin White         | Drama, Head of Department               | 17.12.96 |
| Madeleine Mitchell   | Film and Television, Course Leader      | 20.1.97  |
| Christopher Robinson | University Theatre Collection           | 15.1.97  |
| Leslie Mason         | Client Services Manager, Victoria Rooms | 12.12.96 |

### UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND, BRISTOL

|                   |  |         |
|-------------------|--|---------|
| Brian Hughes      | Course leader, Graphic Design, BA          | 15.7.97 |
| Gill Sandford     | Course Leader, Fashion/Textile Design, BA  | 16.7.97 |
| Mark Dunhill      | Course Leader, Fine Art, BA                | 15.7.97 |
| Nicholas Lowe     | Course Leader, Fine Art in Context, BA     | 15.7.97 |
| Stephanie Brammar | Media Centre Director, BA                  | 25.7.97 |
| Kirsty McArdle    | Entertainments Officer                     | 9.7.97  |
| Ron Griffith      | Lecturer, Faculty of the Built Environment | 4.3.96  |
| Shaun Darley      | Centre for the Performing Arts, Director   | 12.3.96 |
| Lyndsey Mclennan  | Information Officer                        | 1.12.94 |

### UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON, USA

|              |  |         |
|--------------|--|---------|
| Tino Balio   | UW Arts Consortium                     | 24.9.96 |
| Bob Adamov   | UW Badgers Strong Safety               | 24.9.96 |
| Jay Prasad   | ΣΦΕ Fraternity                         | 28.9.96 |
| Jordana      | ΓΦΒ Sorority                           | 29.9.96 |
| Gayle Langer | Alumni Foundation                      | 23.9.96 |
| Angie Smith  | President, ASM                         | 23.9.96 |
| Clayt Freed  | Wisconsin Union Directorate            | 19.9.96 |
| Tom Smith    | Associate Director, Wisconsin Union    | 19.9.96 |
| Art Hove     | Author of UW-Madison Pictorial History | 24.9.96 |

|                 |                               |         |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| David Ward      | Chancellor, UW-Madison        | 23.9.96 |
| Mary Rouse      | Dean of Students              | 10.9.96 |
| Mark Weglen     | Editor Daily Cardinal         | 12.9.96 |
| Susan Vanderhei | Volunteer Services Office     | 13.9.96 |
| Sheila Spear    | International Students Office | 13.9.96 |

### CULTURAL COMMUNITY, BRISTOL

|                 |  |          |
|-----------------|--|----------|
| Sandy Holmes    | Odyssey Night-Club   | 27.5.97  |
| Adam Marlow     | Club IQ Night-Club   | 28.5.97  |
| Mark Horic      | Wedgies Night-Club   | 16.6.97  |
| Snoopy          | Roo Bar Pub  | 30.5.97  |
| Kevin McDonnell | Berkeley Pub   | 27.5.97  |
| Dave Wells      | Fraternity House Bar   | 27.5.97  |
| Bronwen Gwillam | Arts in Communities<br>Action Network (ACAN)                           | 18.4.96  |
| Gary Churchill  | Arts Strategy for Bristol, Editor                                      | 12.3.96  |
| Roan Finemann   | Bristol Arts Marketing   | 5.3.96   |
| Andy Hay        | Artistic Director, Bristol Theatre Royal                               | 8.3.96   |
| Rachel Fear     | Royal West of England Academy for the<br>Fine Arts, Academic Secretary | 6.3.96   |
| Chris Butcher   | South West Arts, Devon Arts Centre                                     | 4.5.96   |
| John Savage     | Bristol Chamber of Commerce  | 4.4.96   |
| John Mitchell   | Venue Music Editor   | 2.2.96   |
| Andrew Kelly    | Cultural Development Partnership                                       | various  |
| Louise Gardner  | Watershed Media Centre   | 10.12.96 |
| Tessa Jackson   | Arnolfini  | 11.2.96  |

### **Participant Observation**

One important element of the fieldwork which was briefly discussed in chapter 4 is the blurred nature of the fieldwork boundary. Much of my time as a postgraduate student was spent not only researching in the 'field', but also living and socialising in it. There were few retreats and less opportunity for critical, distant reflection. In this sense, it was

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difficult to break away from the field especially when I was socialising as every encounter and event was of potential interest. Clearly, this presents problems, not just in terms of the way it affected my research findings but in terms of constructing a life for myself outside my own research! As a result, participant observation became part of my daily life and I often drew upon chance encounters in and around the university areas for my research.

More structured and pre-arranged participant observation was also undertaken at the many student pubs and night-clubs in Bristol. Although this was interesting and enjoyable research to conduct, it was also difficult at times. For example, as a postgraduate I had been 'socialised' out of such environments a number of years ago and I found it difficult to research profitably when surrounded by drunken adolescents. Further, such an environment is not the best place to compile field notes. However, participant observation was another essential supplementary method to pursue some of the hypotheses raised by other methods. The impressions gained through participant observation allowed me to refine my understanding of my research questions. Further, the photographs which appear in the thesis are a result of spending time in the university and student 'field'. Clearly, there are important differences which need to be acknowledged between observing and photographing such a field during the night and the day. In particular, the risks involved in standing outside night-clubs, photographing and note-taking at 2am, should be considered well in advance!

Participant observation at UW-Madison in the USA was a different experience. Although the context was previously unknown, the 'field' had a distinctive and familiar student feel. Almost everybody I encountered was extremely willing to share their views with me and to spend time with me. This may have stemmed, again, from factors such as fascination with 'outsiders' and also pride for the university and the city. Further, participant observations at sites such as fraternity parties and dorms were particularly useful and revealing in terms of understanding the student field. In sum, the experience of conducting fieldwork in the USA, and the amount of information and opinions gathered, was extremely profitable, if not overwhelming at times.

In sum, although the methods used in this thesis are well-known and well-used, I hope my experiences of researching students will enable future researchers to make a number of refinements to them, especially when researching young people.

# APPENDIX B: STUDENTS' UNION

## SOCIETIES AND CLUBS

All numbers refer to total number of students signing up for each club/society at freshers week. Societies or clubs without numbers did not compile a membership list.

### UBSU SOCIETIES

#### GENERAL

|                                 |                           |                         |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| After Hours Society -           | Alexander Technique -     | ArtSoc 87               |
| Bottled Beer Society -          | BITS - Computer 47        | Bridge Club -           |
| Exotic and Wild Animal 57       | Explorers Club -          | Reflections -           |
| Bristol Real Ale Society -      | Guide and Scout Club 34   | Top Soc -               |
| Buddhist Thought/Meditation -   | BUHABS - ballooning 120   | BUNAC - travel 500      |
| Chess Club 32                   | Mr Men Society -          | Yoga 88                 |
| Choc Soc                        | Circusoc 60               | Conservation Group 83   |
| Debates 1001                    | Erasmians -               | Expeditions Society 126 |
| Duke of Edinburgh Society 66    | Graduate Association -    | 300 Group -             |
| Fresh FM -                      | Massage Society -         | Motor Club 79           |
| Model United Nations 154        | Pottery Society -         | Red Cross 42            |
| PhotoSoc 162                    | Spelaeological Society 63 | T'ai Chi -              |
| Science Fiction and Fantasy 110 | Wine Circle 160           | Women's Group 86        |
| Wayzgoose 30                    |                           |                         |

#### SUBJECT BASED

|                               |                           |                         |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Acton -History 69             | Critical Legal Group 38   | German 41               |
| Archaeology 44                | Dental Students Society - | History of Art 81       |
| Biochemistry -                | Economics 74              | Law 387                 |
| BioSoc 190                    | Falstaff - English 121    | MathSoc -               |
| Centaur Chaos - Physics 44    | FrogSoc 174               | Philosophy 55           |
| ChemSoc 190                   | Galenicals 135            | Psychology 59           |
| Chemistry and Law Society -   | Geography -               | TUBES Engineering 36    |
| Classic and Ancient History - | Geological 145            | Whips and Spurs -Equine |



**DRAMA AND DANCE**

|                      |                             |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Ballroom Dancing 120 | Uni. Bristol Drama -Society | PantoSoc 63           |
| DanceSoc 129         | Le Roc 66                   | Rag Morris -          |
| DramSoc 280          | OpSoc 146                   | Stage Technicians 247 |

**MUSIC AND FILM**

|                             |                      |                         |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Amateur Films -             | Change Ringers 30    | Madrigal Ensemble 37    |
| Doctor Who Society -        | Fine Films Society - | Rocksoc 88              |
| Bristol Uni Music Society - | Jazz/Funk/Soul       | University Church Choir |

**CULTURAL**

|                            |                           |                       |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| African Forum 52           | Hellenic Society 52       | Malaysian/Singaporean |
| African Caribbean 107      | Hong Kong Society 31      | Russkies 41           |
| Asian Cultural Society 111 | Jewish/Israel Society 83  | SpicSoc 119           |
| Chinese Society 81         | Malay Cultural Society 75 | Turkish 30            |

**CAMPAIGNING**

|                           |                       |                |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Amnesty International 117 | Conservation Group 83 | LGB Society 61 |
| Coalition for Tibet -     | Green Group 60        | WWF 68         |

**BUSINESS**

|            |                            |                        |
|------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| AISEEC 265 | Student Industrial Society | Young Entrepreneurs 70 |
|------------|----------------------------|------------------------|

**POLITICAL**

|                             |                         |                           |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Conservative Association 47 | Liberal Democrats 31    | Socialist Workers 41      |
| Labour Club 122             | The Political Society - | UB Politics Starchamber - |

## RELIGIOUS

|                       |                        |             |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Anglican Society 54   | Catholic Chaplaincy 57 | Islamic 128 |
| UB Christian Union 38 | Christian Science -    | MethSoc 33  |
| BURC -                |                        |             |

Source: Societies Office, UBSU, 1996.

## UBSU ATHLETIC UNION SPORTS CLUBS

### ATHLETIC UNION SPORTS CLUBS

|                  |                        |                     |
|------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Archery          | Men's Hockey 90        | Skydiving 91        |
| Athletics        | Women's Hockey 66      | Snooker 63          |
| Badminton 151    | Jiu Jitsu 85           | Snowboarding -      |
| Basketball 74    | Judo 37                | Men's Soccer 114    |
| Boat Club 180    | Black Snake Karate 79  | Women's Soccer 27   |
| Canoe 98         | Korfball 30            | Men's Squash 96     |
| Clay Pigeon 44   | Lacrosse 46            | Women's Squash 45   |
| Combat Karate -  | Mountaineering Club 87 | Surf Club 114       |
| Cricket 78       | Netball 53             | Swimming/waterpolo  |
| Cross Country 52 | Orienteering 20        | Table Tennis 40     |
| Cycling -        | Riding 131             | Tennis 178          |
| Explorers 304    | Men's Rugby 129        | Tae Kwon Do 76      |
| Fencing 59       | Rifle Club -           | Triathlon -         |
| Gliding 61       | Women's Rugby 49       | Ultimate Frisbee 51 |
| Golf 42          | Sailing 80             | Underwater 108      |
| Handgliding -    | Ski 68                 | Volleyball 46       |
| Water-ski 49     | Weightlifting 70       | Windsurf 81         |

Source: Athletic Union Office, UBSU, 1996.

## UWESU SOCIETIES

### GENERAL

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Live 68      | Photography 17  |
| Role Play 62 | Law 813         |
| Motorbike 15 | PostGraduate 31 |

### ENTERTAINMENT

|                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Juggling 40     | Roc 41         |
| Poly Players 60 | Double Take 12 |

### CULTURAL/RELIGIOUS

|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| African/Caribbean 68 | Buddhist 20       |
| Eurociety 25         | Chinese 35        |
| Asian Cultural 70    | International 51  |
| Greek Society 25     | Jewish Society 62 |
| Lesbian/Gay 30       |                   |

### CAMPAIGNS

|                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Animal Rights 25     | Amnesty International 40 |
| Bicycle Users 5      | Militant 23              |
| SAFE (Disability) 26 |                          |

### POLITICAL

|                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| Conservatives 17 | Militant 31  |
| Labour 45        | Socialist 47 |

Source: Clubs and Societies Office, UWESU, 1996.

## UWESU ATHLETIC UNION SPORTS CLUBS

### ATHLETIC UNION SPORTS CLUBS

|                          |                             |                          |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Aikido -                 | Karate (combat) 37          | Ten Pin Bowling -        |
| Badminton 96             | Korfball 26                 | Underwater 53            |
| Basketball 48            | Lacrosse 36                 | Volleyball 11            |
| Boat 100                 | Mountaineering/Climbing 136 | Windsurf 49              |
| Canoe 76                 | Paintball -                 | American Football 73     |
| Cricket 36               | Paragliding -               | Kickboxing 205           |
| Climbing -               | Parachute -                 | Trampolining 21          |
| Cycling -                | Netball 14                  | Hang Gliding 23          |
| Duke of Edinburgh -      | Riding 41                   | Go-Karting 19            |
| Explorers/Fellwalkers 95 | Rowing 130                  | Aikido 46                |
| Fencing 7                | Rugby (mens) 114            | Rugby (womens) 159       |
| Gliding 70               | Snooker 9                   | Sailing 76               |
| Golf 61                  | Soccer (mens) 138           | Ski 78                   |
| Hockey (mens) 72         | Soccer (womens) 19          | Sky Diving/Parachute 116 |
| Hockey (womens) 90       | Squash -                    | Surf -                   |
| Jiu Jitsu 31             | Surf 152                    | Waterski -               |
| Karting -                | Swimming/Waterpolo 42       | Windsurf -               |
| Kick Boxing -            | Tennis 80                   |                          |

Source: Clubs and Societies Office, UWESU, 1996.

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