

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

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P A R T IV

**"IMAGES" OF SOCIETY, SOCIAL STRATIFICATION
AND THE ADJUSTMENT TO EMPLOYMENT**

C H A P T E R X I X

"IMAGES" OF SOCIETY AND SOCIAL CLASS

Various studies of modern industrial societies have led to the conclusion that individuals formulate "images" of their own society, and in particular of the system of social stratification that characterises it. The work of F.M. Martin and of Bott provides examples in Britain, and there are further examples from the United States and Europe.¹ The process whereby such images are formulated is complex, and does not consist merely of the individual "internalising" a given pattern. Rather does the individual perceive himself to be located in a particular position or positions in regard to various facets of his life—at school and at work, in the neighbourhood and in the larger society:

¹F.M. Martin, "Some Subjective Aspects of Social Stratification", in D.V. Glass, (ed.), Social Mobility in Britain, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1954; Elizabeth Bott, Family and Social Network, op.cit.; R. Centers, The Psychology of Social Class, Princeton, 1949; H. Popitz, et al., Das Gesellschaftsbild des Arbeiters, Tübingen, 1957; A. Willener, Images de la société et Classes Sociales, Berne, 1957.

and he seeks, on the basis of his knowledge and experience, to make some sort of sense of the situations in which he is called upon to act, so that, as Bott says, "Whilst everyone appears to operate a model of the class structure, the model is fluid and variable and (is) used differently in different social contexts." Furthermore, the individual "is not just a passive recipient assimilating the norms of concrete, external, organised classes. He creates his own model of the class structure and uses it as a rough-and-ready means of orientating himself in a society so complex that he cannot experience directly more than a very limited part of it".¹ We are concerned, then, not with "objective" social class structure, as defined in accordance with given criteria of a socio-economic, political or cultural order, but with individuals' perceptions of the system of social stratification, and of the part of it in which they are located.

The foregoing analysis of the young workers' attitudes and behaviour in regard to work, education, social class, political affiliation and trades unions has revealed certain facets of the images of society which they hold. I propose in this Chapter to draw together certain themes, with the object of demonstrating the extent to which theories in regard to images of society are supported by the present study, and of suggesting certain dimensions which have hitherto either been overlooked or insufficiently stressed.

¹Op.cit., pp. 169 and 165

In discussing images of society and of social stratification, we are making use of an ideal type approach. This represents a "one-sided accentuation, by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discreet, more-or-less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged into a unified analytical construct. In its conceptual purity, this mental construct cannot be found anywhere in reality".¹ John Rex has succinctly described the exercise of constructing ideal types as "the high-lighting, the special emphasis, even the caricature of certain aspects of the subjects' behaviour".² The concern, then, is not to describe the experience or actions of a particular individual or group of individuals, but to provide an analytical framework by reference to which their attitudes and behaviour may be understood. For present purposes, it is necessary to extend the ideal types back into the configuration of influences shaping their formation, and forward into the actions which flow from the images. The ideal types now under discussion are composed, then, of four main constituent parts (a) pre-work influences upon the construction of images of society (b) the nature of the images constructed (c) work and concomitant non-work influences upon the image, which normally

¹Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, Glencoe, Illinois, 1949, pp.90 and 93.

²"Is Sociology Doing Its Job?", The Listener, 28th August, 1958, p.305. In suggesting the utility of caricatures, Rex suggests that controversy is feared too much in Sociology, and that controversy could be the guarantee of the accurate testing of hypotheses, rather than its enemy.

consolidate it but may lead to its re-formulation (the latter development is considered separately) and (d) the actions and attitudes associated with the images and the explanations for them. In fact, the images held by particular individuals tend to be blurred and partial. They may, too, be seemingly contradictory or inconsistent in that one type of image is applied to one situation and another type to another situation—Bott distinguishes a category of respondents who operated, or at least explained situations and behaviour to themselves, in terms of a mixed power and prestige model,¹ rather than adhering to the power or the prestige model, as did the majority of the respondents. This is a point to which we will return.

Images of class stratification are built up by the individual in consequence of the necessity for him—in order to lead his daily life—to make some sense of his social surroundings. The images tend, therefore, to be built out of local and limited experiences. As Lockwood points out "for the most part men visualise the class structure of their society from the vantage points of their own particular milieux, and their perceptions of the larger society will vary according to their experiences of social equality in the smaller societies in which they live out their daily lives".² Bott makes the same point, arguing that "people

¹Op. cit., p.178

²D. Lockwood, "Sources of Variation in Working Class Images of Society," The Sociological Review, Vol.14, 1966, p.249.

do have direct experience of distinctions of power and prestige in their place of work, among their colleagues, in schools and in their relationships with friends, neighbours and relatives. In other words, the ingredients, the raw materials, of class ideology are located in the individuals' various primary social experiences, rather than in his position in a socio-economic category".¹

Although, it should be added, position in a socio-economic category, by virtue of the differential life chances implicit in different categories, helps to shape the primary social experiences which the individual undergoes. Of course, images of society are affected by the fact of education, and the student of politics and ideologies may, as it were, consciously amend his image of society by reference to criteria derived from his studies. So that broader experiences than those to which Lockwood and Bott refer may play an important part in shaping an individual's model of society. Indeed, there was some evidence in the present study that the more politically aware young workers had more clear-cut images of society—whether of the dichotomous or of the prestige order. But the main point stands that for the bulk of people—certainly the bulk of respondents—local and limited experiences are the decisive influences upon the shape of their images of society, and, for all respondents, these were of considerable importance. It was upon the basis of the respondents' participation

¹Op.cit., p.163

in education, employment, and in the family and neighbourhood, that they constructed their images of society. They tended not to see society as an entity, but had piecemeal views of sectors of it. Features of society outwith the social spheres in which they operated were blurred, and, often, regarded as irrelevant by them. Some youths and girls saw Sheffield as a microcosm of the larger society, distinguishing Sheffield as a whole from their particular area of residence. These tended to see themselves and their neighbours as belonging to the working class, and differentiated in terms of education, occupation, residence and attitudes towards life from the "high-ups" who lived in other parts of the city. There was some tendency for youths to base their images of society primarily upon work experience and to extrapolate from this to the wider society—a machine operator referred to the staff canteen/worker canteen dichotomy, which, he said, was confirmed in the practice of having annual staff dances and annual works dances. Girls, on the other hand, tended to use the criteria of home and neighbourhood, and to discriminate between classes by reference to size and age of house, whether the house was privately owned or rented, and so on. But these varying starting points merged into each other and led to similar appraisals in terms of the nature of the class structure.

Previous studies, as has been indicated, point to the fact that whilst individuals do have images of social class, they tend to be lacking in clarity. And it has been pointed out that this was

true of the respondents in the present study. It could be argued that young workers are likely to have less coherent images than are older ones. Aged only twenty years, and in the majority of cases not yet married and "settled down"; they could be regarded as still "testing out" the nature of society or as concentrating upon their temporary independence—freed from school and not yet tied down by a family. The need for an image of society, or for a formulation of it in adult terms, might be expected in such circumstances to be less pressing. The teenage years of young workers could then be regarded as a withdrawal from the constraints which society imposes upon adults, rather in the way that the behaviour of university students can be understood in terms of them operating outside of the predominating social class system. Willmott's suggestion that young workers pass through a "rebellious" phase in which parental and neighbourhood norms are repudiated during teenage years could be fitted into this analysis.¹ Of course, it would not be sensible to think in terms of young people having no image of society during this phase—by definition, some sort of picture or reference point is necessary for social action. All that is being suggested is that during the teenage years, it might be argued, the image is more restricted, and may be less in class terms than in terms of ad hoc criteria which suit teenagers in their work and non-work activities, criteria derived from their

¹Op.cit., p.171.

peers and, to some extent, perhaps, from the mass media. The nature of the influence of mass media upon the formation of images of society is, of course, a complex issue, which has received little attention in the literature. It might be thought that young people would be particularly susceptible to this influence, and that television, in particular, would extend horizons and suggest perspectives for incorporation into images of society which extend outside of class dimensions, stressing aspects of the mass society, or of national differences, rather than, or as well as, class differences within nations. But this is speculative, and the fact is that from the evidence of the present study the immediate environment and social interaction at work and in leisure and in the neighbourhood do seem to shape class models in young workers, in however vague a way. As was suggested above, respondents tend to extract from the mass media those aspects which are familiar and fit in with their everyday lives. Furthermore, even though most respondents had not yet settled down into married life, they did tend to expect to do so soon, and thought in such terms. The conclusion is, then, that by the age of twenty the young workers did have images of society akin to those of their elders, not based, at least not predominantly based, upon criteria associated with "withdrawal" during the teenage years, and derived from limited local experiences rather than from factors introduced by the mass media. If their images were blurred and partial, so, too as the evidence of other studies stresses, are those of their elders.

And, as will be seen, the images conform to the types already discerned in other studies, whilst suggesting certain modifications of them.

Three main models of social stratification may be identified as appearing in individuals' perceptions of society in industrial countries. Firstly there are those based on status and prestige and upon notions of a harmonious, functional society; middle class, and deferential or aspiring working class, people are associated in the research literature with such images. Prestige models may have three or more tiers. Secondly, there are dichotomous models, which posit two main classes with conflicting interests, and a struggle for power between them. The third model is less clear-cut than the other two, and derives to a considerable extent from post-war studies, especially those of affluent workers: it takes a variety of forms, but all of them stress the withdrawal or "privatisation" of the individual—who does not see society in terms of competitiveness or deference in regard to status, or in terms of conflict based in differential power. He retires from both of these races, as it were, and sees society as an arena for instrumental activity on behalf of himself and his family—unhampered by thoughts of working class allegiance, although prepared to associate himself with trade unions and to avail himself of their support for instrumental ends.

The images of society held by the young workers who are the subjects of this study displayed characteristics in accord with all three models—in particular the first two, as will be illustrated below. In addition, a fourth type of image may be discerned, which I have termed the egalitarian/pluralistic model. This is characterised by an emphasis upon the fundamental equality of men in terms of life and death, the need for food and shelter, and so on—difference in styles of life are recognised, but discounted as of minor significance. People are different in certain respects, but their differing styles of life may be viewed as matters of preference rather than on a hierarchical scale: however, basically all men are seen as being the same, all subject to life's hazards and fortunes. Emphasis by sociologists upon stratification has tended to obscure this dimension, which on the evidence of the present study is of considerable importance for some young workers in their perceptions of society and of their place in it.

One further aspect should be stressed: namely, the importance to the understanding of working class images of society of intra-class differences. The salience of these differences was referred to earlier, for the actions of many young workers in regard to employment, education and other aspects of life have reference to these differences, which they see as crucial. In the following discussion, I draw upon direct responses to questions upon social class, but also upon respondents' statements and actions, in regard to education and employment and to the range of other areas of life considered in the foregoing analysis.

The Status Hierarchy Image

This contains a minimum of three tiers of status, often expressed by respondents in terms of class differences in regard to styles of life—working class, middle class and upper class being the commonly stated ingredients of the model. Some respondents were more specific, however—a progress clerk, for example, argued that the three classes consisted of (a) "Managing Directors, who are upper class", (B) "us, who are down there" and (c) "a few others in between." Of the respondents for whom this model predominated, some were from middle class homes and others themselves aspired to rise in the social scale; but the bulk were "deferential". In however vague and unformulated a way, these respondents saw society as being divided in accordance with a status hierarchy. They accepted this as right and proper, maintaining that some people have the ability, the "know-how" and/or the manner which fitted them for high positions in society, and others have not. Some argued that a person with the appropriate qualities of determination and endeavour could acquire the attributes necessary for a higher status, and the path was then open for him to move up. A few respondents suggested more than three main tiers in the status hierarchy—a shop assistant referred to (a) working class, (b) middle class (c) upper class and (d) Royalty ("who are really on the top line"). And a steel worker thought that in Sheffield itself there were three classes, working, upper and upper middle—the latter living in "the posh suburbs"—whilst the upper class proper "don't live in Sheffield", the "really wealthy ones who own the steel firms,



and that". An apprentice joiner, with some ambivalence in regard to the deference to be attached to the upper class, suggested that there were five classes. Apart from upper and lower working class, and middle class, there was the "well to-do upper class" who could be subdivided into (a)"those who have a good job and who are good to know" and (b) "those who are twits and who think they are somebody". He deferred to those who were obviously worthy of their high status, but rejected those who by their airs and graces and assumed superiority forfeited any right to deference.

The descriptions of some respondents put emphasis upon the competitiveness of individuals—an apprentice printer said that society consists of (a) an "upper crust" (b)"middle, trying to be upper crust" and (c)"working, trying to be middle". His prediction was that "if this goes on, there will soon only be two classes". And a comptometer operator drew upon her experience at work to say, "the wife of a head of department is different from the wife of an ordinary member of our office—each level looks down on the level beneath it". There was, then, implied, and ⁱⁿ some cases explicit, criticism of status competition. But whilst it might be criticised, it was seen as being there, and as an explanation for other people's behaviour and a touchstone for one's own. A further element which was evident in some respondents is to be distinguished from both competitiveness and deference, although it is perhaps to be regarded as a special case of the latter. The fact that there were rich people who could enjoy "the good things of life"

—"real" luxury, "with never any worries" and "comfortable all round"—made life meaningful in that it showed what was possible. If everyone lived according to working class standards, in material terms, then the outlook would be poor indeed. Whilst one did not expect to attain the standards enjoyed by the upper class, at least one had a vicarious appreciation, albeit slight, of "real class". This approach extended to the wider society the attitude which Willmott discerned as characterising some of the working class people of the Dagenham housing estate, of whom he said, "those who were ahead of their neighbours were not so much to be envied as to be congratulated": for as one of Willmott's respondents said, "people seem to be only too pleased to think you've got something".¹ It was not a matter of hoping to emulate the well-to-do, but satisfaction that it was possible for there to be such good people. This view was clearly tinged in some cases by a pride in Britain—in the Royal Family, in its stately houses, Rolls Royce's, and all things associated with conspicuous wealth. The upper class, the top people in Britain, seemed to represent a symbol of the nation—factory workers, apprentices and shop assistants alike viewed them with satisfaction, or even pride.

But characteristically the respondents whose image of society was of the status/prestige hierarchy order did display signs of

¹The Evolution of a Community, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1963.

deference, which amounted to approbation of the superior ways and qualities of the "real upper class". Discussing the way in which upper class people might be distinguished from the lower class, one youth suggested that one criterion was "the way they mix with people. Them who's nobody is dead big-headed. The higher ones mix better, but the lower ones couldn't care less about nobody". In deferring to the upper class, he was vicariously associating himself with them, or at least with the values to which he deemed them to subscribe, and dissociating himself from the "ignorant", "common" people whose circumstances made it necessary for him to work beside. Indeed, more generally, deference may be seen as a form of vicarious identity. The association was frequently made between high status and superiority in regard to knowledge and moral standing, and a related efficiency and control in regard to the planning of one's life. A shop assistant who stressed his special knowledge by saying, "I have worked with all the different social scales and have come to know them well", distinguished the three strata by reference to such criteria. He said that there are (a) "white scarf workers who earn good money in the steelworks and then gamble it away" (b) "white-collar workers—these are foremen, etc., and office workers, who know how to look after their money", and (c) "the upper class—they have money and education, they know how to work and they know how to go about things—all sorts of things that ordinary people don't know the first thing about". Applause for the

upper class, or classes, turned to scorn for persons who were identified as shams, as not possessing the qualities necessary to superiority and appropriately demanding deference, but pretending to possess them. People who did not know their true position were thus castigated as "jumped up snobs" to be distinguished from "the really top people, who don't have to put on airs and graces, but behave naturally as high ups". The genuine article stood out as such. Again, evaluation was in terms of criteria of moral worth——combined with a belief that the sham or the upstart was in some sense disturbing the natural order, and that the consequences were likely to be unfortunate. Thus it was argued that "those who have always had money in the family are very pleasant people, but those who have made money suddenly become snobs. In my job on the 'buses, I've found that the new rich treat you like scum." The young workers whose image of society was of this status hierarchy type had no resentment against the rich, upper class, then,¹——but only against those who wrongly laid claims to superiority.

The present study does not provide much concrete evidence to explain the genesis of the status hierarchy image of society in certain young workers and not in others. Those who were of

¹They did not feel "deprived"——cf. W.G. Runciman, Relative Deprivation and Social Justice, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1966. Runciman argues that the tendency is for each stratum in society to assess its position by comparison with a reference group that is near to it in terms of income and wealth.

middle class background or who were aspiring to rise in the social scale were subject to home influences "to get on", or they encountered friends in leisure time or at work who encouraged them (either overtly or indirectly) to strive for a better job or to set their minds on settling down in a better neighbourhood than that of their parents. But the factors which make for the ^edeferential approach are less obvious. Evidence of other studies suggests the crucial importance of the work setting and/or the family and neighbourhood setting. One negative factor in regard to the work setting is that the individual who is deferential probably does not work in a large firm in which the separateness of workers and staff is emphasised. For such a setting would seem to be conducive to the formulation of the power/dichotomous image. So that employment in a small family firm, or in an office or small shop, might be associated with the deferential status hierarchy image: the evidence of the present study would lend some slight support to this. But the matter is more complicated than this, as Stacey has pointed out. Stacey argues that the work situation must be seen in conjunction with the local social system. In discussing the propensity to vote Conservative amongst working class people in Banbury, Stacey says, "My proposition was not simply that those working in a personal relationship with their employer were more likely to vote Conservative. It was postulated that there was, in Banbury at that time, a local traditional social system, which exhibited

some elements of Weber's traditional society. Notable among these was a tendency to total social status, so that social status tended to carry over from one part of the social system to another." One exemplification of this proposition was that "working class Conservative voters did tend to work for "traditional firms".¹ As Stacey points out, there are major problems in characterising firms with reference to the criterion of "traditional", and even greater problems of establishing the extent of their involvement in a local social system—and, indeed, of ascertaining the existence and nature of such a system. The ~~relevance~~ relevance of her analysis to the construction by individuals of images of society lies in the stress which it gives to the interplay between the employment setting and the local social system, and the extent to which status is total or disparate in varied spheres of activity. In more grand-scale terms, as we have seen, Parkin argues that typically the working class person in Britain would vote Conservative out of deference, since he would (by implication) be expected to hold a deferential status hierarchy image of society. Parkin argues that there are "certain institutional orders which occupy a key place in the social structure" and that the values surrounding these "exercise a dominant influence throughout society". In Parkin's analysis, the dominant institutions in Britain are the Established Church,

¹ Letter to New Society, 27 October, 1968, and cf. Margaret Stacey, Tradition and Change, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1960

the public schools and ancient universities, the élites of the military establishment, the press and the mass media, the monarchy and the aristocracy, and finally, and most importantly, "the institutional complex of private property and capitalist enterprise which dominates the economic sector." These institutions, "tend to be incompatible with, or at least basically hostile to the ideology of Socialism": and, conversely "there is a close affinity between the values surrounding these institutions and those implicit in Conservatism."¹ The deviant working class voter, then, is the Labour Party supporter rather than the Conservative Party supporter, who is subject to the massive influence of the very institutions which induce an attitude of deference, and, it may be inferred, a status hierarchy image of society. Those who do vote Labour—and who may on this analysis be presumed to have a dichotomous/conflict model of society—are insulated from the influence of these institutions. They are embedded in structural positions "which provide an alternative normative system from that of the dominant institutional orders of society"—specifically, they live in working class communities, notably housing estates, which are characterised by class homogeneity and which generate norms at variance with those postulated by the key institutions; and their place of work, especially if it is a large firm, produces a sense of identity

¹Op.cit., pp.279-280.

of interests of workers as opposed to employers, and gives rise to a scheme of values which are "at many points in opposition to the established order". Parkin's analysis is seductive, but seems to be over-simple, attaching a more direct and powerful influence to the "established institutions", overlooking differences of emphasis and spheres of influence within them, and supposing that individuals passively succumb to such influences, as it were, rather than reacting to them or interpreting them. Parkin is cited here because whilst it may be thought that he exaggerates the influence of what he regards as the key institutions, he does legitimately emphasise their salience for the understanding of working class political affiliation, and his work, I would argue, does draw attention to an important range of influences affecting the construction by the young workers in the present study of a status hierarchy image of society. Indeed, there was evidence in the comments that some made in regard to school and to work of a strong Protestant ethic, probably induced in the home or in Church or youth organisation, but reinforced by the school, which urged humility before social superiors, the duty of hard work, and the dangers and temptations associated with seeking to rise above one's status in life, especially in pursuit of money. This was one factor which led to the condemnation of "snobs" and "upstarts," whose worldly ambition had so far led them astray that they now aped their true superiors and scorned "those from whom they have come".

In the above analysis, it has been suggested that the young workers who held a status hierarchy image of society were of two main types. Firstly, there were those who were from middle class homes or who aspired to rise in the social scale. And secondly there were those who saw ~~that~~^e status hierarchy as normal and "natural"—and even necessary—who deferred to those who were in superior statuses, and even regarded them as a symbol of the nation.

The argument, then, is that respondents bring to bear upon their own actions the image that they have of society, and behave with reference to their location in it, as they perceive it. Aspirations to rise in the social scale derive from a perception of the possibility of doing so. Whilst those young workers who defer to their superiors in the social scale do not aspire to rise ~~in~~ⁱⁿ it—because they consider it improper, or unnatural, to do so,^{and} because they consider that they do not have, and are incapable of acquiring, the qualities necessary in the higher status positions. In regard to employment, they see manual work as appropriate for them, and in regard to education, they see the secondary modern school as suitable for "ordinary" persons such as they. They do not expect anything other than this.

The dichotomous/power/class Image

The image of society held by many respondents approximated to this model—discussion above of attitudes towards employers and towards school, and specifically of political affiliation and self-assigned social class, indicated various facets of this. The dichotomy was seen by many as being quite clear-cut—"there's them that's working class and them that aren't"; and "at the top there's money, at the bottom there's no money". As was indicated above, respondents referred to the differing life styles and life chances of the two main social classes—"those with money don't mix with those who hav^en't any money. The social classes differ with regard to education, manners, money and upbringing".¹ Implicit in the comments of many respondents were criticisms of the upper class, as we have already seen. They were condemned for excesses in regard to food, drink and clothes, and laxity in regard to morals. Scorn was mixed with resentment and ridicule. A factory worker said that "the upper class are always going to parties, and doing things they can get away with. They have a car, and go to the grammar, and think themselves bigger than anyone else". They are insincere and pretentious, too—"you can hear them, people like those from Dore (a middle class suburb), putting it on in their voices". A bottle labeller said, "you know if you

¹One respondent excluded clergy and police from the class system, saying, "you can't fit them in—they're outcasts". The police, he said, "are there to do a job, and if they weren't there to keep the law there would be chaos".

see a girl in a car, all smartly dressed, that she thinks she's better than you". Various sentiments could be discerned in reaction to this supposed sense of superiority over the working class that the upper class enjoyed. Anger and hatred were evident in one youth, an unskilled labourer, who said, "I hate Royalty and all of the nobs". A bricklayer maintained that "It is the 'yes-men' who get to the top. The honest men are at the bottom. The majority at the top are robbers. If I lived next door to the Managing Director, I would feel at ease, but I know that he would not be pleased, and wouldn't treat me as an equal." By contrast with the unscrupulous upper class, "ordinary working people" were honest, hard working and down to earth: there was no nonsense about them, and they had no pretensions to be other than good, sound men and women. It was "the working class in factories and shops who keep the community going", one youth argued—and another maintained that the upper class "lived off the poor", so that "in Britain today, in my opinion, three-fifths of the population, the workers, are keeping the other two-fifths in idleness." Working class people who "went over to the other class" as a consequence of education or of obtaining substantial promotion at work were seen as traitors.

Not all respondents who had the dichotomous image of society were incensed by the attributes of the upper class. But what was common to them all was a sense of the differing interests of workers as opposed to bosses and "Them". The working man had to

use wile, and to pit his strength against "the system".

Experience at work is an important agent in the formulation by working class people of the dichotomous image of society. We saw above that in Parkins' analysis the work situation is one of the two influential factors, the other being homogeneity of neighbourhood. Popitz, et al., have suggested from their study of workers in the Ruhr steel industry, that large industrial enterprises are likely to induce such an image, because their organisation stresses the separateness of workers from staff and emphasises the distance between workers and bosses.¹ The consequence is a strong consciousness of membership of the working class and of the common interests of workers. Lockwood, summarising the evidence in regard to images of society held by the traditional working class suggests, further, that "it would seem that the tendency to adopt a power model of society is most evident among workers who have a high degree of job involvement and strong ties with their fellow workers."² There is evidence in the present study that the dichotomous model was held more generally amongst

¹ H. Popitz, et al., op.cit.,

² D. Lockwood, "Sources of Variation in Working Class Images of Society", op.cit. Lockwood adds that "in other kinds of work situations, where these factors are absent, or nearly so, the whole significance of the work place as a determinant of a dichotomous class ideology is correspondingly reduced." Of course, non-work factors could lead nonetheless to a dichotomous model—but the point is relevant to the discussion above of the influence of work situations upon the formulation of a status hierarchy model.

factory workers, especially those in large firms, and amongst those who were in the lower ranking jobs, Category 'C' for girls and semi- and unskilled occupations for youths—those who could see no chance of breaking the barrier between themselves and the upper class, that is. This is in accord with the importance attached to the work setting as a determinant of class images. But the importance of other factors should not be overlooked—the recognition by respondents of the significant differences in styles of life and, in particular, differences in regard to type and area of residence as between working class and upper class, is one factor to be stressed. One respondent, indeed, explicitly accorded prior importance to the non-work situation, in relationships between the two classes, arguing that "however close and friendly you might be with the bosses at work, outside there's always a big barrier between you". The experience of life in slum houses and on corporation estates clearly plays a part in the formation of a dichotomous view of society—we have already noted the importance attached to this by Parkin, and other studies have illustrated the way in which differences between the classes are emphasised by the superior class when the area in which they live is contiguous with a working class area.¹ Another influence of considerable importance is the school—it has been argued in various

¹ cf. Peter Collison, The Cutteslowe Walls; A Study in Social Class, Faber, London, 1963, and Michael Young and Peter Willmott, Family and Class in a London Suburb, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1960.

contexts above that attendance at secondary modern school tends to consolidate identity with the working class and to impart a sense of fundamental differences from others in society, who are seen as clustered together in one great dominating class.

J.B. Mays has made this point, saying that the structure of education tends to reinforce and perpetuate class divisions and to reproduce two main social groups with different cultures and life, classes who confront one another in mutual incomprehension and distaste.¹ Evidence has been cited above to support this general thesis.² Whatever the source or sources of this dichotomous image of society, however, the present study emphasises its pervasiveness amongst young workers, and the persistence of working class ideas, conceptions and ideologies.

This said, it is very important to note that strength of feeling in regard to their own position in society varied considerably amongst the respondents. Whilst some felt their position keenly,

¹ J.B. Mays, "Teen-Age Culture in Contemporary Britain and Europe", The Annals, 338, November, 1961, p.30.

² Mark Abrams has suggested that education might in the future be the basis of a class dichotomy in Britain rather than wealth—"I would say that there is growing within British society a cleavage between the educated and the non-educated which is much wider and much more important than the older differentiation between the rich and the poor". The point being made here is that a secondary modern education is one factor which in conjunction with others, and particularly by virtue of its consequences for occupation, induces an image of society in which the "have nots" are ranged against the "haves". cf. Mark Abrams, "The Young Voter", op.cit., p.21.

seeing themselves as exploited and "held down" by the "boss class", others were more philosophic about the matter, and thought that "there's no point in getting worked up about it". Some respondents were, indeed, sympathetic, in a sense, to the upper class, taking the view that their concern with their own welfare was a "natural" instinct—as one youth said, "they're a lot of sods, and they don't give a fig for the working man. But I expect I'd be like that if I were in their place". A consequence was that whilst there was an awareness of similarity of situation in regard to other workers, this did not manifest itself in a strong sense of social solidarity of an order that could give rise to militant action to overthrow the "oppressing class". Collective action to establish a completely new social order was not envisaged. The trades unions were seen as holding the line in the conflict with employers, and perhaps making a few modest advances—they were not seen as the vehicle for grand scale reform. The unity of workers, or their sharedness of interests, was seen not as a base for action, then, but as a source of comfort in a situation which nothing was likely to change substantially, in which wile, for example, in doing as little work as possible without the boss finding out, was a more appropriate strategy than all-out attack, and in which resignation to the likely continuance of their deprived position in society seemed to be the easiest policy to adopt. In fact, five main facets may be inferred from respondents' attitudes which help to account for the lack of class allegiance despite the recognition of class identity.

The first is the belief that the working class has not the power to overthrow the bosses or to reduce the influence of "Them"—or even to extract a significant concession. The upper classes, the bosses, "Them", all have the money and the organisational know-how which the ordinary working man does not have—"against them you don't stand a chance".

The second facet is that too much effort would be involved in opposing the upper class, specifically bosses at work, and with no guarantee of success. This view was especially apparent in youths who expressed scepticism about trades unions—one youth, for example, dismissed them as "talk shops". This can be seen as the obverse of the first point, stressing the lack of ability of working men to organise themselves. But it goes beyond this, and derives from an all-round lack of confidence and morale: these young workers have always been on the bottom rung, coming from the worst sorts of housing, entering the school for "left-overs", and then taking up occupations at the bottom of the ladder. Their experience suggested an inevitability: failure was endemic to them. Furthermore, their education and employment experience, and their experience at home and in their neighbourhood, was such as to emphasise the persistence of circumstances rather than to give rise to expectations of change in them. Especially is this so of youths and girls living in old, slum areas and working in the neighbourhood, like their fathers and mothers before them, and their grandparents before them. Rather than contemplating action

to amend the situation, then, the young workers tended to be reconciled to it, and to take the view that little could be done. Possibly as a rationalisation, they were inclined to scoff at the bosses, and at all upper class people, or to refer to them as beneath contempt. Unable to do anything positive in regard to them, they chose to ignore them, forget about them, and not incommode themselves by going to the effort of wasting time over such worthless and selfish people.

The third facet was that whilst little scope was apparent for joint action—or at least respondents did not conceive of there being much scope—and whilst large changes in fortunes seemed improbable, the individual could conduct minor skirmishes against the system—by means of "fiddles" on time sheets and piece-work claims, for example. The best policy therefore seemed to be for the individual to pursue his own interests in the expectation that his work mates, recognising that they were "all in the same boat", would not let him down by informing on him. Thefts from employers was the most extreme form of individual action—and it was seen as justified because it was merely to operate on a minor scale in accordance with a code which the bosses and the upper class practised on the grand scale: as one youth said, "the only difference between me and my gaffer is that I steal in farthings and he steals in fucking pounds". The gaffer "stole" by exploiting the working man and by extracting as much as he possibly could from his customers. The youth saw it as legitimate for him, in

his turn, to extract as much as he could from his employer. Whilst there are no accurate figures of the extent of stealing by employees, it is known to be substantial, and seen as a "problem" by many employers. Part of the explanation probably lies in the above analysis.

The fourth facet which inhibited the young workers in regard to the possibility of joint action with other members of the working class was the importance which they attached to "luck". This was held to be a major force in life—there was always the hope that something would "turn up", for "you never know your luck". This being so, to lay plans of any sort—whether individually or as a class or by participation in an association—seemed to be irrelevant. Your luck would determine what was to happen, irrespective of what action you took yourself. It was always possible, too, to hope for better luck for one's children—by good fortune they might manage to become upper class, and thereby provide vicarious satisfaction for their parents.

The fifth facet of respondents' attitudes which helps to explain their failure to become involved in action on a class basis, despite their perception of society in terms of the dichotomous conflict model, was their tendency to assert a superiority of the working class over the boss. The upper class might have the money and the power—but the working class person had his moral integrity: he exploited no one, he had no pretensions and no airs and graces. When the final reckoning came, then, the oppressed,

ordinary working man might win out after all. This could be regarded merely as a rationalisation, of course—but its importance is that it governs actions, or, put more appositely to the present discussion, it is a contributory factor to political inaction.

In terms of attitudes and actions, in regard to work particularly, but more generally in regard to non-work spheres also, the consequences of holding the class/dichotomy image of society took two main forms. A minority did tend towards a militant orientation, taking a keen interest in their trade unions, making a point of appraising themselves of the legal position of the working man, and taking an interest in political issues, especially those which had a clear bearing upon the welfare of the working man. Ironically, their rebellion against the order, of exploitation of workers by bosses, induced in them a greater degree of involvement in work and provided thereby some degree of satisfaction in it. But the second response was more general—the supremacy of the bosses and upper class was accepted as a fact: it was thought for a variety of reasons discussed above, that there was little or nothing to be done about the situation. The attitude was therefore one of "what's the use?" and of "getting by as best you can". Nothing much was expected from work. Some compensation might be sought in non-work activities. Some slight betterment at work might even be envisaged—a move up to chargehand, perhaps. But, essentially, the respondents' reaction to their predicament was one of

resignation. This conclusion is supported by the evidence of other studies of manual workers, in Britain and elsewhere. The research into factory workers' responses to their position in society, as they perceived it, which was conducted by Andrieux and Lignon in France, for example, shows that resignation is the predominating reaction—or what Bottomore has called "a dull and resentful acceptance of industrial work as an unescapable fate": even the minority of French workers who rebelled at the situation of the worker vis à vis the exploiting bosses did not conceive of any major change in the order.¹ And whilst Popitz, et al., in their study of German steel workers, found (as has been noted above) that there was strong consciousness of the common predicament of workers, they also reported that few of the workers saw the possibility of joint action to ameliorate the workers' position—they, too, accepted their lot as inevitable and sought satisfaction and entertainment outwith the context of work, which they tried to turn their backs on as much as possible.²

The Instrumental, Privatised Image.

The lack of involvement in work as such which characterises workers with a dichotomous image of society has been discerned

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A. Andrieux and I. Lignon, L'Ouvrier d'Aujourd'hui, 1960

T.B. Bottomore, Classes in Modern Society, Allen and Unwin London, 1967, p.67.

2

Op.cit., and see also F. Chinoy, Automobile Workers and the American Dream, Random House, New York, 1955.

by some sociologists as distinguishing certain workers who have an image of a different order: such workers see society as instrumental to the satisfaction of home-centred criteria, criteria which relate, that is, to the individual and his family rather than to broader collectiv^{ities} of class or status groups. This image has been posited as appertaining especially to affluent workers, whose affluence can be seen as a response to their views of society and of what it offers: theirs is a calculated decision to regard work as a means towards ends that are based on individual and family satisfactions, especially in regard to material standard of living but having reference also to education and future occupational achievement for their children (again measured in terms of the potential of the occupation as an instrument).

F. Zweig, for example, argued from his study of workers in four factories in England that a predominant disposition, especially amongst the more affluent workers, was to see society in terms of the opportunity for individual advancement rather than with the collective interests of persons in defined sectors of the social structure. Zweig sees this as evidence of a process of embourgeoisification—the assimilation of affluent workers into the middle class.¹ The workers concerned could then be viewed as having a status-hierarchy image of society. The work of the Cambridge research team refutes this analysis, however, arguing that there

¹The Worker in an Affluent Society, London, 1961.

is no such assimilation into the middle class. What may be occurring, rather, is the emergence of a new class, resultant upon the convergence in terms of normative behaviour of the "new" working class (affluent workers especially) and the "new" middle class, consisting of lower white-collar workers who are less individualistically orientated than is the case amongst middle class groups proper.¹ Specifically in regard to the image of society, Lockwood suggests that workers who are "privatised" tend to see themselves as members of "a vast income class which contains virtually the great mass of the population. This class may be called the working class or the middle class." Whatever it is called, it is a collection of "ordinary people", who "work for a living" and "those who belong to it include the majority of manual and non-manual employees". Persons who see themselves as members of this vast class operate the criterion that members of it are neither so rich nor so poor as to lead a style of life of an extreme order gauged by material factors.² Lockwood ^op_Aints out that this image is at variance with the actual position that obtains in regard to the distribution of wealth and income in Britain, and also emphasises that the actual amount of social interaction between persons at various levels who are held to belong to this vast class is slight. The important thing is not

¹ John H. Goldthorpe and David Lockwood, "Affluence and the British Class Structure", The Sociological Review, Vol.11, 1963.

² "Sources of Variations in Working Class Images of Society", op.cit., p.260

the objective position, but the image that workers have of it, however. Lockwood suggests the concept of "pecuniary ideology" in regard to this image. Before going on to sketch in the nature of this image it should be said that whilst one may infer that a good deal of the inspiration for it derives from the Cambridge study of affluent workers, Lockwood himself insists that there is "no suggestion that the pecuniary model of society is to be thought of as a direct product of working class affluence. The pecuniary model is an outcome of the social rather than the economic situation of the privatised worker; and he is only able to hold such a theory of society in so far as his social environment supports such an interpretation".¹ What, then, is the nature of the pecuniary model of society? Lockwood writes, "the social environment of the privatised worker is conducive to the development of what may be called a 'pecuniary' model of society. The essential feature of this ideology is that class divisions are seen mainly in terms of differences in incomes and material possessions. Naturally there will be few individuals who think of class divisions in purely pecuniary terms. But the social consciousness of many individuals in the new working class may be closer to this pecuniary model of society than to either (the status hierarchy or the dichotomous power model). Basically, the pecuniary model of society is an ideological reflection of work attachments that

¹Op.cit., p.262.

are instrumental and of community relationships that are privatised. It is a model which is only possible when social relationships that might provide prototypical experiences for the construction of ideas of conflicting power classes or of hierarchically interdependent status groups, are either absent or devoid of their significance".¹ Lockwood suggests that whilst these workers see work as a necessary evil, their work situation is not such as to engender sentiments of class cohesion—unlike those with a proletarian dichotomous image, their work place emphasises separateness from others—perhaps as a lone operator on a particular section of an assembly line. This individuation is reinforced in out-of-work hours through living not in a community dominated by a particular occupation, which emphasises identity of interest, but on housing estates, whether council or low-cost private, whose populations are occupationally heterogeneous, and which are characterised by depersonalisation of social relations, since they are lacking in foci for interaction (for example, pubs, cinema, clubs).

Lockwood's analysis, and that implicit in the work of the Cambridge team more generally, raises certain questions which it would require further research to resolve. It may be noted, for example, that the turgid housing estates which Lockwood sees as inducing or reinforcing a privatised orientation are conceived by Parkin as conducive to the growth of working class solidarity and,

¹Op.cit., p.256.

specifically, Labour Party affiliation.¹ As has been noted, the research of the Cambridge team showed a continued tendency of affluent workers to vote Labour—the point at issue here is the criteria by which they decided to do so. Parkin implies by reference to a class dichotomous image of society, Lockwood by reference to the pecuniary image. Possibly a resolution of these apparently contradictory views is to be found by reference to a mediating local social system, as posited by Stacey and discussed above. The problem points to the need for further research. One excellent detailed attempt at isolating the influence of work as an influence upon the preservation of certain ideological norms is that of Cannon. The composers he studied maintained an ethos of Labour voting and working class identification, despite the fact that their norms in regard to home life, children's education, and other domestic matters were of a middle class order. Cannon

¹cf. "Although this ideal-type construct is based largely on studies of communities of several generations standing, such as Bethnal Green, Ashton, Ship Street and so on, the comparatively newer working class estates like Dagenham and Watling, and the post-war towns may be included equally in the model, in so far as they appear to duplicate over time the same social patterns as those laid down in older communities. Again, although the common image of the traditional working class community is one which envisages a fairly undifferentiated industrial base.....it is probably now more likely to be the case that working class neighbourhoods will exhibit a more diversified occupational structure.....It is necessary to make this point to avoid slipping into the assumption that because the traditional, single occupation community may be gradually disappearing, the homogeneous working class community must be disappearing too". F. Parkin, op.cit., p.283.

concludes that the normative element in regard to social class affiliation is "not unitary, but involves a number of dimensions which may not hang together." In regard to work, then, Cannon argues that "certain functional factors involved in the work situation, such as the need for mutual aid assisted by the ease of communication in the working group, have fostered the development of a feeling of community in the occupation"—and that "this community influences its members to conform to an ideological ethoswhich itself developed under certain circumstances". Cannon goes on to argue the need for a development of typologies of occupations, as a basis for further studies of stratification, and maintains that in the formulation of such typologies "the nature and influence of the working groups are likely to be prominent factors".¹

Another general issue which should be raised here is the intensity of the pecuniary image—is it long-term, or is it superficial and temporary? This question is central to the charge made by Blackburn ^{that} Goldthorpe, in his study of car assembly workers, was misled by the fact that he conducted his interviews at a time of prosperity and calm in the work place, when the workers' expectations of employers in regard to reciprocity and interdependence were being met. In consequence the instrumental nature of involvement at work was exaggerated—"Goldthorpe clearly over estimated

¹I.C. Cannon, "Ideology, and Occupational Community: A Study of Compositors", Sociology, Vol.1, No.2, May, 1967, pp.166-185.

the stability of both the company's operations and the workers' consciousness in an inescapably capitalist environment". Blackburn argues that the severe conflict between the workers and their employers that occurred some time after Goldthorpe's interviews and which culminated in militant strike action, were proof that, fundamentally, the workers recognised their shared interests in opposition to the exploiting employers—and that this basic conflict was thrown into relief by the introduction of a four day week in consequence of governmental policy introduced to cope with a recession, which meant a reduction in the workers' wages of 20 per cent—whilst the firm sought at the same time to maintain its level of profits. Blackburn argues, too, that, "even though workers may be prepared to repress their desire for pleasant and creative work this does not mean that such desires have gone for ever."¹ Bottomore, too, has argued that "the picture of working class apathy and lack of enthusiasm for collective ends" which various studies suggest "has to be seen.....as a portrait taken at one time and not as the final episode of a serial film". He refers to several influences at work in Western industrial societies "which sustain the ideological controversies over the future form of society, and which lend support, in particular, to the socialist doctrines of the working class". Amongst these influences are the evident need for public vigilance over private

¹ Robin Blackburn, "The Unequal Society", in (eds.), Robin Blackburn and Alexander Cockburn, The Incompatibles, Penguin Books in association with New Left Review, 1967.

and State sectors of the economy and in regard to public amenities, to ensure that benefits to the individual are not eroded.¹

It is not the intention here to attempt to adjudicate on these issues, but simply to draw attention to a difficult problem. Namely, that attitudes and stated dispositions of respondents ascertained at a time of industrial equanimity may grossly mislead as to the "real" nature of affairs. It could be, then, that the pecuniary image of society, based as it would seem to be mainly upon the study of affluent workers as a time of relative prosperity, represents a short-term gloss, underneath which the dichotomous image persists. The pecuniary image would be no less important in terms of the behaviour to which it gives rise in the short run, of course. But this leads to another question, as to whether the pecuniary image is to be regarded as a model of the same order as the class/dichotomous and status-hierarchy models—whether it does represent a construct of society or whether it is, rather, a category of reaction to the workers' predicament, as seen by them basically in the context of the dichotomous/class image. The importance of this distinction lies in the amount of scope which workers see society as affording them. The instrumental approach directed towards privatised criteria could then be regarded merely as representing a strategy for "making the best of a bad job", as it were—that is, given the dichotomous/class

¹Classes in Modern Society, op.cit., p.71 et seq.

image of society, one possible ~~r~~^eaction is to apply such criteria of satisfaction as are susceptible to application, rather than sit back and suffer in a mood of cynicism and despair.

Or the position could be viewed in terms of the worker settling for what he can get in preference to making the effort to join with his fellows in a fight against the bosses—since the outcome of the fight is dubious, and the availability of attractive consumer goods that are within reach is obvious. The worker is then electing for one style of life amongst a limited range open to him. But this interpretation is of a somewhat negative order—the scope for individual satisfaction would be relatively small, because the upper class, the employers, would always be controlling the overall situation. If, however, the pecuniary image is an image in its own right, then the scope for upward mobility measured by reference to income and material ~~pos~~^sessions, would be seen as being much greater within this "vast class"—it would not actually be, as data on the distribution of income and analysis of processes of allocation to positions for acquiring income indicate. But it would be thought to be so, which is the important point. The issue arises as to whether such an image would be visible if there were too many recruits to it—could it be sustained in the face of the disparity between belief about the social structure and its actuality? For how long could the delusion persist? And if the disparity did become recognised, would there be a reversion to either the dichotomous image or to the status

hierarchy image?—both of which do appear to be viable for certain persons, because individuals' actions can be attuned to them—they do work, as it were. On the other hand, the pecuniary image could possibly take on a momentum of its own and through recruitment (consequent upon larger numbers of people being placed in situations at work and at home which are conducive to its formulation), and through associational pressure (for the image accommodates a co-operation with others toward instrumental ends) bring about a greater actual approximation to the image than presently obtains. But this is to stray beyond the scope of the present data upon young workers, and to enter the realm in which theory becomes speculation.

In returning to the young workers' images of society, it is appropriate to reiterate that, in considering images, we are making use of ideal types. Lockwood emphasises this, and makes no greater claim than that his formulation may be complementary to the other two models—"a purely pecuniary ideology is, of course, just as much of a limiting case as a purely class or purely status model of society. But it may be that it is at least as relevant as the other two in understanding the social and political outlook of the increasingly large section of the working class that is emerging from traditionalism".¹ On this basis, it is pertinent to seek for signs of the pecuniary image

¹Op.cit., p.262.

amongst the young workers. The first point to be emphasised is that the bulk of the respondents, so far from being part of what is declared to be an increasingly large section of the working class emerging from traditionalism, were very much embedded in traditional ways and traditional thinking—at least by reference to a range of criteria including attitudes to education, work, family life, leisure, the younger generation and so on. This said, there were a few respondents for whom Lockwood's² formulation might be said to obtain to some degree. Some of those respondents who were keen to get on, for example, saw jobs as a vehicle towards acquiring a higher wage, which would enable them to enjoy a better material standard of living. They were not particularly concerned about a middle class style of life in other than material terms. And the confidence that a few had in declaring that, nowadays, it is possible for a person to get on—"it's up to you", as one youth said, "the sky's the limit if you are prepared to work"—is also suggestive of the pecuniary image. Certainly, too, there was evidence, amongst some married respondents, of a privatised orientation and of family-centredness. However, most of these respondents viewed themselves as rising in the scale in accordance with a status hierarchy image of society. And, of course, what may be taken as evidence of family-centredness in the context of images of society may merely represent an expectable pre-occupation with the home in the early years of marriage, which cuts across social classes and images of them—

and which may be amended after an initial phase. One further example of the possible relevance of Lockwood's analysis to a minority of respondents was their affirmation that there is "no such thing as class nowadays"—the one "vast class" (disregarding the two extremes of ultra-rich and ultra-poor) could be viewed as amounting to no class at all, and it may be that the image of society which these respondents, or some of them, had was of this order. However, it remains the case that only a handful or so of the respondents could be said to hold images of society approximating to that described by Lockwood: they were not in the right sort of job for that, and nor were they from the right sort of family and neighbourhood backgrounds. Possibly the work and domestic experiences of some of them would in subsequent years, as they became older and, perhaps, moved to jobs in new industries in other parts of the country, induce in them such an image.

There is one further aspect which must be referred to in this context, although it can be dealt with quickly. It is pertinent here to draw attention to the argument that the young worker today is particularly susceptible to withdrawal from society, to dissociate himself from collective interests and involvements, and to concern himself with his private life and pleasures. This thesis clearly has some affinity to the pecuniary ideology as propounded by Lockwood. Its alleged strength among young workers is declared to be the outcome of various factors, but there are two main ones. Firstly, the young worker is able to enjoy the

benefits of the Welfare state (elements of which are apparent in all western industrial societies) without having had to fight for them, and without, therefore, realising that they are the outcome of struggles between interest groups. Young workers take their rights for granted, the argument goes, and do not appreciate that there are accompanying duties which they are failing to fulfil. Secondly, the ready availability of mass consumption goods and the fact of the mass media has introduced opportunities for filling the time that participation in the workers' fight for rights previously occupied—as J.P. Mayer has put the argument, "the young worker estranges himself from state, party and trade unions and, being lost, seeks to satisfy himself in private worlds of facile pleasure, the film world providing one of his chief substitutes for reality."¹ Furthermore, the mass goods and mass media can be said to cut across class boundaries and thereby to induce in the young worker a definition of society in terms of teenagers' interests as opposed to those of adults. Such an analysis is, then, positing the existence of a youth culture to which young workers subscribe, or by reference to which their behaviour is governed. Arguments mounted in support of this analysis tend to have heavy moralistic overtones.

It is not proposed to repeat here the arguments given above to the effect that the young workers of the present enquiry were not

¹ Preface to Karl Bednarik, The Young Worker of Today: A New Type, Faber and Faber, London, 1955.

participants in a youth culture in other than a very weak sense of the term. The evidence of this study is that there is a conformity by young workers to the norms and values of their parents and their locale. Despite certain resemblances of the ingredients of their outlook upon society to those of the "pecuniary" image of society, then, it would seem that young workers do not provide support for the argument that subscribers to such an image are emerging in large numbers.

The Equalitarian/pluralistic Image

Whilst the three "standard" images of society have been shown to apply in regard to many of the young workers in the present study, they are not exhaustive. There remain two more formulations, of which the first to be discussed is the equalitarian/pluralistic image. It should be noted that the concern here is not with description, nor with quantification, but with an ideal typical analysis, the objective being to discern those features in respondents' images of society which are salient in their attitudes towards ^{and} behaviour in regard to work especially, though not exclusively.

The essential feature of the equalitarian/pluralistic image of society is the insistence upon difference, rather than superiority or inferiority, in regard to the crucial dimensions of life in society. The latter are defined not by reference to material wealth and to individual talents, but to moral worth—all men

being equally regarded as having virtues and vices regardless of other attributes such as those associated with social class, and all men being subject to the inexorable imperatives associated with life, such as the need for food, shelter, sexual life and so on. Sociologists have been so preoccupied with stratification in modern industrial societies that they tend to equate the class structure with society and to presume that images of society necessarily give pre-eminence to the class and status. This is a false assumption. The differences between persons are not denied—outward differences are obvious enough—but they are regarded as being of minor and transitory importance, and as occurring within a wider setting of fundamental equality. A status hierarchy is seen, in terms of income and expenditure, but these dimensions are not thought to be fundamental. Put somewhat crudely, the outward differences in styles of life are discounted as minor—and the inward springs of morality are held to be common to all men, regardless of displayed differences. Whilst in regard to life chances, all men are deemed to be equally placed, all subject to laws of nature in regard to life and death, (class differentials in mortality, in incidence of disease, etc., were not known to respondents—and, in any case, the point is not that some men live longer than others, but that all men die, and no one knows "when his turn will be").

This was the core of the approach. There were differences in emphasis, however. Whilst some respondents merely referred to

difference in styles of life, others indicated that they thought that the behaviour of bosses and upper class people was not just different, but odd, too. However, it was up to them, and if that is how they choose to "carry on" so be it—it did not really matter much. There were suggestions, too, that middle and upper class persons are misled—that they have pretensions from which working class people were free. Thus, a cutlery warehouse worker said that "everyone is equal, but those who get on better than others at work sometimes find this goes to their heads, and they become a bit snobbish". There was, too, a suggestion in the remarks of some respondents that this basic equality ought to be translated into social benefit terms—so that "the really poor" could benefit from the wealth of "the really rich"—but this was to eliminate suffering as a moral rather than as a political imperative. The basic fact, too, was that "there's good and bad in all classes". Several respondents whose work brought them into contact with middle class people—painters and decorators and shop assistants, for example,—made this point: "When you come to look at it, there are plenty of decent people in the so-called upper class and plenty of rotten people who are workers. Lots of upper class people I've met through my work are very sociable, and treat you as equals."

The emphasis upon difference rather than superiority or inferiority was often of a matter-of-fact kind, and betrayed a failure to think beyond very narrow confines. Thus, respondents referred

to the secondary modern school as being a "school for the working class": without any evaluation as to why this type of school is predominantly associated with the working class, there was the acceptance that that was the case. This outlook was evident, too, as we have seen, in regard to such matters as raising the school leaving age—"what is the point for working class people?"—and to type of employment, semi-or unskilled occupations being regarded unquestioningly as associated with the working class. Likewise, a grammar school was labelled as being "for the upper class" and it was expected of children attending grammar schools that they would go "into bosses' jobs". It was all seen as being obvious and straight-forward. There was the normal working class way of life: and alongside it there were people with a different way of life. There was no issue, in the view of these respondents, as to a hierarchy.

There are two special aspects to this equalitarian/pluralistic image of society. In the first place, there is some logic in, or evidence to support, the contention or the view that all men are equal in some fundamental sense. And whether it results from religious commitment, or is associated with a particular sort of philosophical outlook (some respondents enjoyed a tranquility which their repudiation of any such thing as a "rat-race" permitted them), or perhaps arises in consequence of a process of rationalising a situation which seems intransigent for the working class person—the emphasis upon superficial difference and fundamental similarity

represents a "reasonable" outlook in these terms. But to hold this image does mean that certain dimensions which are important to many people, including many working class people, are ignored. The gross disparities in wealth, educational opportunity and occupational experience are not easily to be dismissed as irrelevant in the appraisal of the nature of society, for example, and nor are the questions of the nature and seats of power. That these factors are overlooked (or at least accorded a minimal importance) is to be understood in terms of the very limited experience of many respondents. And this is the second aspect to be noted. Their homes and neighbourhoods, and their schools, have not awakened them to issues such as the distribution of political and economic power in their own city, never mind in the nation at large. Their life experiences have occurred within a fairly homogeneous working class setting and their relationships with members of other classes have been of a functional order—sufficient to emphasise difference in behaviour, appearance and so on, but not necessarily sufficient to arouse antagonism towards "Them": incomprehension in regard to "Them" is just as much a possibility as antipathy, and this indeed would seem to underlie the persistence of this sense of difference. So that two components have been identified—one based upon the positive selection of criteria which are derived from notions as to the nature of existence, and which could be said to relate to man's place in the universe and the nature of man. And the other, which may interplay with this,

deriving from a lack of knowledge about, and interest in, the workings of society in terms of the distribution of power and wealth.

It is perhaps implied in the above account that there prevailed amongst respondents who had the equalitarian/pluralistic image of society a somewhat "negative" approach to life—differences were accepted and there was a certain fatalism in regard to the nature of life. Indeed, this image is not conducive to the formulation of notions of solidarity and class interest. In terms of individual's behaviour in regard to work, the image tends to be associated with a "take life as it comes" approach—in which application to work is not seen as necessary although it is up to the individual to please himself. There were, however, some respondents who were more positive in regard to work—without any pretensions to a middle class way of life, they sought to "get on" at work with the aim of securing a good comfortable home, and they hoped, too, to find their work amenable, and to be able to enjoy their leisure time. They were prepared to put in effort towards these ends, rather than just sitting back and seeing what happened to them. They did not see themselves as belonging to any class. They looked upon themselves as individuals, and took the view that the individual—any individual—is able to make his own way in modern society: there might have been barriers in the past, but this was no longer so. People, nowadays, could choose for themselves what

they wanted to do; no one choice was superior to that of another, and it was entirely a matter for the individual to decide. Those who were of this latter outlook, it will be appreciated, had something in common with persons who held the "pecuniary" model of society.

Intra-Working Class Differences

Previous analyses of working class images of society and/or of the class structure have given insufficient stress to the importance attached by many individuals to differences within the working class. And yet, in terms of factors affecting their behaviour, such intra-class differences as they perceive are for many individuals crucial. Furthermore, they are often seen with considerably more clarity, and regarded with a much greater degree of involvement, than are differences between the working class and the middle and upper classes. For the latter are remote and seen as being of a different order from the working class. In regard to certain aspects of life, a hierarchical or dichotomous image might assume special importance—as when considering political matters, or in regard to trade union participation, for example. But for the mass of everyday actions—in regard to many aspects of work, of the education of oneself or one's children, of leisure activities or choice of neighbourhood and house, for example—it is intra-working class differences which are decisive. The middle and/or upper classes are known to be there, if the occasion arises for thinking about them: but not much is known about them, and there

is little contact with them. Whereas differences within the working class are well known and do impinge upon one's own life, at work and in the non-work setting. It is within the working class that one is operating, as it were, and it is by reference to differences within it, often, that aspirations are set and achievements measured. Irrespective of whether their dominant image of society was of a dichotomous or a status hierarchical order, such differences were important to many respondents.

The working class was seen as containing within it a hierarchy of either two or three tiers. The two tier hierarchy posits (a) the respectable, "solid" working class, who are superior to (b) the rough "uncouth" class. The three tiered image adds to this a third layer, the "top working" class people. These are seen as being of two main orders. There are the skilled men, who are "the cream of the working class", established as artisans in their own right. Or there are the ambitious—those "who are dead keen to get on" and who "like to think of themselves as being a bit better" —"even though they're working class really, and live in council houses like everyone else, and work with their hands." It should be emphasised that, with many respondents, there was a very strong sense of superiority over the "low" working class, or the "roughs", and a much greater concern with them than with any supposed deprivation that might have been felt in regard to bosses, or other members of the middle and upper classes. . . The "roughs" were

despised by some of the respectable working class as being feckless and unconcerned about basic matters of personal and domestic hygiene, and irresponsible in regard to the upbringing of their children. They were deemed to be lacking in moral calibre——

"They get the money alright nowadays, but they don't seem to want to rise above their grandparents": they are, that is, insufficiently motivated to heave themselves out of their squalor, even though the opportunity is there for them. Their grandparents could be excused the conditions in which they lived, for times were bad in their day. But there is no excuse now——"People who want to spend all their time and money in pubs are a disgrace to themselves, and there's no excuse for it.

Viewed from another angle, persons who are in this lower sector of the working class tend to adopt one of two approaches. Either they recognise the differences between them and their kind and the respectable working class, but deride the latter, just as the respectable working class may dismiss with a laugh, or with contempt, the alleged airs and graces of the middle class. Or, whilst recognising their membership of the lower working class, they respect the superiority of the solid working class and regard themselves as properly belonging to it, but——through ill-luck or misfortune——are unable to maintain the outward appearances which would confirm their true status.

The differences were made most of, however, by those who saw themselves as superior. There were two main foci of reference——

firstly occupation and/or attitudes towards work and, secondly, type of house and neighbourhood. In regard to occupation, it was pointed out early on that great importance was attached by some respondents to obtaining a skilled or non-manual job: whilst semi-skilled jobs were seen as being superior to unskilled, not just in terms of work done or of financial reward but also in general status terms. The threefold hierarchy of girls' jobs has already been discussed in various contexts. For some respondents, indeed, even finer gradations of occupation were made, such that a girl who was prepared to work in a multiple stores, for example, "wouldn't be seen dead in a local greengrocers'." However, the main gradations for girls were in terms of the three major occupations: thus a Co-operative stores assistant remarked that "factory workers are more common than what we are". With youths, the superiority of apprentices over the mass of workers was stressed—and it was a superiority which was held to extend outwith the work setting, which manifested itself in terms of possessions, appearance and leisure pursuits, and which demanded respect. As one apprentice said, "an engineer earns £12 a week, which puts him in the higher bracket of the working classes—it enables him to buy a car and to get decent clothes" (the respondent had in mind the rewards at his own age, that is twenty years—to be able to run a car at that age was, he thought, an indication of the rightful superiority of the skilled man). Although the latter respondent was satisfied, however, many apprentices, as we have seen,

were not. They complained that their superiority was not rewarded by employers with higher wages and better conditions, and that society did not accord them the respect or status which their skills and their importance functionally called for. On the contrary, they were now subject to the sneers rather than the admiration of semi-skilled and unskilled workers, people "obviously" inferior, who received higher wages than they. Some of these apprentices felt acutely this disparity between the status which ought to be accorded them, and the treatment which they actually received. But they remained convinced of their superiority over the common run of ordinary workers. Hence the support that some of them gave to their trade unions, which sought to maintain wage differentials as a mark of the superiority of one occupation over another—but hence, too, the ambivalence of some towards the trade union movement as a whole, which they saw as a willing vehicle in the improvement of the rewards of the semi- and unskilled and the lazy worker. For the view was that along with skill there tends to go a serious and dutiful approach to work and life in general—work attributes spilling over into, or being complementary to, non-work dispositions. Corresponding to the rectitude of the skilled man, then, was the irresponsibility and unreliability of the worker who is not skilled—who is concerned only for himself, and denies any special obligations to his employers or to his fellow workers.

Some of the respondents in semi-skilled and unskilled jobs were envious of persons in the skilled sector of the working class, rather than denunciatory of them. These were youths who saw themselves, at the age of twenty, "trapped" for good: they had never had any aspirations for, or hope of, a middle class career—it had seemed outside of their grasp, and hence irrelevant to them. But they did perceive the possibility of acquiring a skill, and thus of enjoying the benefits of membership of the upper sector of the working class. They knew, now, that this apparently limited, but in fact substantially different horizon was closed to them: it was no longer a possibility, and they had to reconcile themselves to the fact. Some of them did so, or attempted to do so, by resort to a pattern of leisure activities which gave rise to the opinion in upper working class people, that the lower working class were lacking in self-control, and had not the will or the capacity to plan their lives according to a "sensible" scheme of values, in which tomorrow was thought of as well as today.

The second important indicator of intra-class differences was type and area of residence. Whilst, as has been seen, there was some tendency to see occupation as being related to non-work aspects, some respondents did not posit a necessary connection between, for example, skilled occupation and respectability of home or neighbourhood. Skilled men could then be found amongst the "roughs", and more commonly, unskilled and semi-skilled could be perfectly

"respectable" in regard to important indices associated with home and neighbourhood. Again, the strength of feeling of superiority deriving from association with a particular type of house and neighbourhood should be stressed. There were several examples amongst respondents of the presumed superiority of corporation housing estate dwellers over residents of small, terraced, privately rented back-to-backs in the industrial areas (and a few respondents accorded superiority to the latter over the former). Within terraced neighbourhoods and within estates, too, there was felt superiority over persons living in one area—or one street even—rather than another. This sense of difference was of recurring importance in regard to matters of education and employment, serving as a reference point: so that those who felt superior were concerned not to fall to the low standards that could be observed in others. Emotion amounting to anguish was expressed by one respondent at the fact that "the Council" had moved into the house next door to him "a right low family", who had turned their house into a "pig sty" and who "lowered the tone of the whole street". They were dirty and noisy, they went to the "boozer" every night, and their "kids" were "filthy dirty and left to roam the streets". A factory girl referred to the "big difference" that it made to the family's pride when they moved from an old terraced house in an industrial area to a house on an inter-war council estate. (She referred especially to her father, saying, "My dad's attitude changed completely—he thinks we are higher up

now." A practical manifestation of this was his new preparedness to do jobs about the house—previously "he just let things go"). Some of the respondents who lived on post-war housing estates regarded themselves as being superior to persons who lived on inter-war housing estates—they inferred a special quality in themselves deriving from the newness of the houses and the greater spaciousness in regard to layout. Thus, one semi-skilled youth, the son of a crane driver, whose home was very untidy and already deteriorating appreciably through lack of care over the few years during which it had been occupied, nevertheless rated himself as being "superior working class" explicitly because he "lived in a good area, a post-war estate."

A combination of factors, of which occupation, home and neighbourhood, were most important, resulted in the formulation of an image of society in which intra-working class differences were of considerable importance then. Particularly, the lower working class were subject to the disparagement of the upper or solid working class, who condemned the former for their sloth, incontinence and unconcern about "deceit", appearances and behaviour. The scorn was tinged in many cases by a resentment that, with the Welfare State, such people "get away with it"—"all these family ~~allowances~~ allowances, and that: it isn't right. It encourages them to have children and then let other people look after them". Whilst virtue, like skill, goes unrewarded.

Images and Action

In the above analysis, the attempt has been made to sketch the salient features of the various types of images of society which the young workers formulated. These images derive from and are reinforced by experiences in the home and neighbourhood, and at work. They are also affected or shaped to some extent by experiences at school—which may complement or run counter to home and work experience: this is a facet affecting images of society which has not yet received sufficient attention: and nor has a fourth factor which may be presumed to have some influence, although the present study suggests that so far as these young workers are concerned it was minimal—namely, the influence of mass media.

There are caveats to enter in regard to the nature and meaning of the images of society held by young workers. They were, for many, vague and blurred. It is characteristic of the respondents, too, that they may shift gear, as it were, from one situation to another—when considering national politics, for example, they may assign emphasis to the discerned dichotomy between workers and "the boss" class: but in terms of their own limited aspirations, a status hierarchy within the working class may be uppermost in their minds, and they are less preoccupied with presumed exploitation by the bosses than with the maintenance of differentials,

and the keeping of a distance actually and metaphorically between themselves and the low "rough" working class.

Whilst the images might appear to be inconsistent, vague and blurred, it is submitted that they are nonetheless reference points for action. Implicitly, and in some cases and at some times explicitly, decisions and actions are taken by reference to the values and attitudes associated with the particular image held by an individual. He defines his own position in the light of the picture, or glimpse, that he has of society, or that he constructs in confrontation with it. The majority of young workers adhere to their particular images of society, and their attitudes and their behaviour are orientated in accordance with them. Hence, the majority resign themselves to their work or accept it. But some perceive the possibility of rising to a higher position. A minority, however, re-formulate the image which they hold of society in consequence of some experience at school, at work or in the non-work sphere—the complex of factors which shapes their orientation to society then undergoes change, and where previously they strove to rise in the social scale now they may accept their lot, or viceversa. It is with these matters that we are concerned in the concluding Chapter.

C H A P T E R XX
THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRUCTURE,
IMAGES OF SOCIETY AND THE ADJUSTMENT TO EMPLOYMENT

It was argued earlier that grand-scale connections could be established between the socio-economic backgrounds of individuals, their educational experience, and the level of employment that they entered. The social class system, operating in concert with the educational system, can be viewed as allocating individuals to a particular stratum within the occupational hierarchy. One important facet of this is that working class children for the most part undergo a secondary modern type education as a prelude to entering manual employment. Within the working class, however, differing types of social background may be discerned, whilst secondary modern schools differ in regard to their amenities and their orientations: furthermore, the range of manual employment is fairly wide, including skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled occupations for youths (and indeed, some non-manual jobs). For girls, there is a hierarchy of occupations which descends from

office work and comparable occupations through shop assistant to factory and warehouse work. The present study of young workers from secondary modern schools has demonstrated certain relationships between the home and social background, individual ability, education, and type of employment entered. These various factors were shown to have a continuing influence upon subsequent employment history. A concern throughout this study has been to set attitudes, behaviour and processes in regard to work within a wider context of non-work involvements—at home and in leisure time, especially—and to discern the interplay between these various facets of the young worker's life. Further to this, the salience of the young worker's perception of society and of his place in it has been discussed with special reference to social class affiliation, and in the last Chapter it was suggested that the respondents held images of society, formulated more or less clearly, which served as a reference point for them, specifically in regard to their attitudes towards work and to actions which they took in regard to it.

The approach in this study is an exploratory one: various hypotheses have been suggested, and tentative conclusions arrived at. In this final Chapter, I propose to attempt to draw together various strands and themes in the foregoing discussion, by arguing that images of society represent the key mediating factor between the individual and the society in which he lives and acts and that it is by reference to a particular image that the meaning

that a social situation has for the individual may be understood. Put somewhat differently, the thesis is that a situation has meaning for the individual by virtue of the fact that he has an image of society as a basis for interpreting that situation. I should stress that the ensuing discussion is largely of a speculative order. For, whilst it springs from the detailed analysis of the experiences and attitudes of the young workers, the fact is that it raises dimensions which the data presently available are unable to test with thoroughness.

The individual's perception of society and of his place in it is dependent upon a range of factors which interplay in a complex manner. As Ossowski has argued, "different images of the same (social) structure do not merely express different propensities: they represent a stock of different experiences and observations resulting from differing practical interests".¹ Furthermore, the individual is not passive in the face of society; as Bott says, "the individual himself is an active agent. He does not simply internalize the norms of classes that have an independent external existence"; the individual "projects his conceptualizations back on society at large":² he thus, of course helps to shape the social situation to which other members of society respond. However, society by definition imposes certain constraints upon the individual in regard to the nature of the experience which he

¹ Stanislaw Ossowski, Class Structure in the Social Consciousness, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1963, p.7.

² Family and Social Network, op.cit., p.167.

undergoes and which he interprets and reacts to. Society—
and more particularly that sector or those sectors of it in which
the individual is located, especially in social class terms—sets
boundaries upon the types of images that an individual may reason-
ably formulate, because the image has to be workable—it is by
reference to it, or in the light of it, that the individual adopts
attitudes and takes action

The individual's image of society is the ^uoutcome of a range of
influences, some of which play upon him from early childhood. The
most important of these, prior to the entry to employment¹ may be
categorised as follows (a) home and neighbourhood influences
(b) the school (c) contacts with peers (d) mass media. In the
present study, the mass media appears to have operated mainly to
under-pin the other influences, but they are to be distinguished
from them analytically, and conceivably could exercise an important
influence in their own right.

These various influences interplay with each other, then: there
may be ■ apparent conflicts between them—between the norms and
values upheld in the neighbourhood and those upheld at home or at
school for example. The power of the constituent influences,

¹ Bott's analysis would seem to overlook, or at least to under-
estimate, the importance of education in the construction of
images of society—and, whilst she indicates that "modifi-
cation and revisions are constantly being made", she would
seem to give insufficient stress to the importance of pre-
employment or pre-adult experiences generally.

which include the personality and other qualities of the individual, will then determine the direction in which the inconsistencies are resolved. There is a gradual moulding of the image that the young person has of society and of his place in it, then, and this is subject to confirmation and to amendment as he encounters new situations and undergoes new experiences.

The image is explicitly or implicitly referred to when decisions are made ^{as} to what level of work and type of occupation to aim at. With regard to the majority of the respondents in the present study, as has been seen, the weight of influences at home, in the neighbourhood and at school operates to stress their inferiority: whether they see society in terms of a class-dichotomous model or a status-hierarchy model, they locate themselves in the lower sector. A few did perceive society, or aspects of it, with reference to what approximates to a pecuniary model, however. But these were a minority and even those who formulated a pluralistic/equalitarian model saw themselves in economic terms to be in an inferior position—the point in regard to these is that they regarded this dimension as fundamentally unimportant: their experience did not induce ⁱⁿ them ambitions in regard to work or to life more generally. The bulk of respondents, then, saw themselves as acting mainly within the working class sector of society. It has been argued, furthermore, that the influences of home and neighbourhood, and particularly of school, through the practice of streaming, result in images of society which have very fine

differentiations within them. The 'A' stream child for example, especially if his parents are actively interested in his welfare, will probably regard a skilled job as being superior to an unskilled or semi-skilled job, and will seek to obtain such employment; whereas a 'C' stream child may see a labourer's job as the appropriate level for him.

An individual's perception of what it is possible for him to do—specifically in regard to work, but in regard to other matters, too—thus proceeds from the image of society which he brings to bear upon a situation. However, not all who perceive possibility are motivated to achieve the possible. Their inclination to do so depends upon personal qualities (whether inherent or the product of environmental experience) and upon the values attached, by virtue of their experience in the various social settings referred to, to the achievement^e of particular ends. Thus, a youth may see the possibility of obtaining a job as an apprentice, and of being able subsequently to gain promotion to a higher level. But he may dismiss this course of action as requiring too much effort, or as leading only to transitory or illusory monetary gains, (vide those with a pluralistic/equalitarian image of society). The further point may be made here that, whilst respondents tend to have images which incorporate social class dimensions and are orientated especially towards work, they may also be orientated primarily towards non-work facets of life

such as leisure pursuits or domestic matters.¹ And, indeed, an image of a different order may be applied, tacitly, to non-work facets of life—thus giving rise to apparent inconsistencies^{enc}, as, for example, when a married girl argues in terms of a dichotomous image in regard to work, but dismisses this as unimportant when compared with her domestic activities, in which she applies a status-hierarchy model and measures her position vis-à-vis others by reference to the fact that she and her husband are buying their house, are living in a residential suburb rather than in the terraced interior of the city, and "have nothing on H.P." As another example, a youth may be a supporter of the Labour Party, because he sees it as being "on the side of the workers against the bosses" (that is, applying a dichotomous model) and yet strongly opposed to the trade union movement because it "gets high wages for the unskilled and does nothing for the skilled man" (that is, status-hierarchy model).

The salient pre-work influences thus lead to the formulation of one of a limited range of images of society. Broad associations between pre-work influences on the formation of a particular sort of image have been suggested in regard to the dichotomous and status-hierarchy models especially. Unfortunately whilst the pluralistic/equalitarian model and to some extent the pecuniary could be discerned in the respondents, there is little evidence

¹ See the discussion of leisure, above, and the analysis of the interplay between work and non-work factors.

available from the present study to explain in detail why one of these four models is formulated by one individual rather than another.

It has been suggested, however, that regardless of differences in perceptions of society and of what is possible in it, given the individual's own location, the actions of young workers will tend to be similar because the objective scope open to them in terms of jobs available, is limited: different images may be associated with similar actions, then. Nonetheless, the meaning to the individual of the same action will be of a different order, in accordance with the different images of society which he holds.

The entry to work itself, and subsequent experience in it, constitutes a major influence, which may sustain or reinforce the previously held image, or may result in its re-formulation. The work situation, as has been noted, plays a major part in shaping or reshaping an individual's image of society. As young workers move through their first five years in employment, they undergo experiences in regard to work itself, and to trade union activity; they may participate in further educational training programmes. And many of them, as we have seen, change jobs and occupations, some moving to other parts of the city, or of the country, or overseas. Contemporaneously with new experiences at work there are further shifts in the non-work position—in regard to status in the family, and the leisure opportunities which are opened up, for example. The fact of having more money to spend in itself

affords new possibilities. Important developments occur in regard to relationships with the opposite sex, furthermore, resulting in engagement, marriage, starting a family, and setting up home. The contention here is that all of these experiences are interpreted, and actions taken, by reference to an image of society and of the individual's place in it—but that the individual not only acts in accordance with the image that he holds but also responds to the new situations encountered and new experiences undergone. This usually results in the consolidation (and enlargement) of the image previously held, because the individual's image of society, and of his location in it, is likely to lead him to actions and experiences which are in harmony with it. However, experience at work may trigger off the formulation of a different sort of image from that previously held. The individual as he approaches adulthood perceives society and defines his situation in it by reference to a wider range of factors, and of combinations of them: however, the extended range may still be narrow, limited as it is by pre-work influences, and set in the convention of a particular locality—as, for example, with a steel worker who is brought up in a terraced house next door to the factory, attends a slum school around the corner, spends his leisure time in the local public house, marries a girl from across the road, and goes to live with his in-laws.

The theory that I am advancing here may be summarised as follows. Pre-work influences result in the formulation by the

individual of one of a range of images of society, and he perceives his position by reference to this image. The range of possible images is limited, because they must be viable—to permit of meaningful action: they have, that is, to relate to "objective" opportunities, especially in terms of the occupational structure. The image that the individual holds may be blurred and vague—but his actions are made, and his attitudes formed, by reference to it, or to the crucial sectors of it relevant to a particular sphere of activity—such as deciding on what level of employment is both available and worth trying to attain. The previously constructed image is normally consolidated by the entry to employment and by subsequent experience directly or indirectly related to work, or unrelated to it. Experience at work, including "success" in consequence of effort or "luck", and including "failure", too, may lead the individual to re-appraise his location in the social structure as he perceives it—he may see himself as having risen in a status-hierarchy scale, for example. Or experience at work and/or in the non-work sphere may cause an individual to shift from one model of society to another—a point which will be taken up again below. But, in any case, the individual's attitudes towards and actions in regard to work and to other areas of life are shaped by reference to the image of society which he holds at a given time.

The foregoing analysis of respondents' home and social backgrounds, their school and work experiences, and their attitudes

and behaviour in regard to education, employment, political affairs, trades unions, and leisure activities suggests that there are certain constellations in regard to these various facets, and to the nature of the image which an individual holds. The image, it has been emphasised, must be viable, and compatible with the actual opportunities open to the individual. Broadly, associations have been intimated between a working class background—whether "solid" or "rough"—and (a) the dichotomous class and power model, (b) the status-hierarchy model, viewed deferentially and (c) the plural/equalitarian model. Whichever model was held by a person of such a background, the outcome tended to be inaction—through deference, acceptance, or resignation. There were modest hopes or expectations of upward mobility within the working class and possibly somewhat more ambitious hopes for their children. Associations have further been implied between an aspiring or "upper" working class young person and the status-hierarchy model: respondents who were ambitious saw society as offering avenues for the fulfilment of their ambition. Similarly, it has been indicated that a middle class background is conducive to the formulation of a status-hierarchy image of society, in which there is still scope to rise. (The applicability of the pecuniary image of society was subject to various reservations, and need not concern us at this point). The bulk of the respondents fitted into this rather crude scheme. But there were some who did not do so—who held images of society which were at

variance with that which their pre-work experience might be expected to induce in them, and who, in acting in accordance with these seemingly "aberrant" images were further widening the gap between themselves and their peers, who had been subject to similar pre-work influences. There were, in short, respondents from solid and "rough" working class homes whose image of society took the form of a status-hierarchy, but whose orientation to it was in terms of aspirations rather than deference. It was noted early in the analysis of factors associated with entry into certain levels of occupations, that there were "deviant" cases, and attempts were made to account for these. The suggestion now is that an essential component of such deviance is the formulation of an image of society which suggests possibilities of actions which others of a similar background and experience do not perceive.

In such deviant cases, then, there are crucial "intervening" factors which orientate an individual towards a course of action and towards the adoption of attitudes that are at variance, with the pattern normally obtaining. Factors which may intervene in this way take various forms: they may intervene at any time in the pre-work stage or after work has been entered; special ability in terms of intelligence, application or conscientiousness, for example, may be seized upon by the school and encouraged, and as a result a child from a "rough" working class home may do exceptionally well at school and be placed in the 'A' stream, and later be persuaded to enter skilled or even non-manual work. The benefits

which hard work may confer, and the opportunities opened up in consequence of application in employment and further education, are stressed for such a child, who may come to see society in terms of a status-hierarchy offering opportunity for those who aspire to rise, rather than seeing it as a hierarchy for lower class people to defer to, or a dichotomy, in which the lower class person resignedly accepts his inevitable lowliness. An exceptionally bright youth from a working class background might be channelled by head master and Youth Employment Officer into non-manual work in which middle class outlooks prevail, and to which the youth himself becomes attuned. Particular qualities of personality provide another example of an intervening factor. One respondent for example, from a solid working class home, was a vivacious and intelligent girl: these qualities were combined with good looks. The girl came into contact in her leisure time with students, postgraduates as well as undergraduates, and with young business executives. In consequence of this, and as a result of the lively interest that she took in a range of hobbies and in current affairs, she saw society in status-hierarchy terms, and envisaged every possibility, through marriage, of a substantial rise in her position in the hierarchy. A further intervening factor is contact with peers—whether at work or in non-work activities, for example at youth club—who are from a different background and who open up new horizons. Examples have been given above of girls from solid working class backgrounds who enter office work and

meet girls from a middle class background: friendship may lead to new aspirations which are associated with the recognition of possibilities which the previous image of society did not encompass. Engagement or marriage may result in a youth assuming a new image of society, as with one respondent whose wife's encouragement led him towards an ambitious approach to work: where previously he had been feckless and saw "no point in trying" he now saw the possibility of substantial promotion, and argued that a man can progress if he makes the effort. A more straightforward case is that of a youth whose performance at work so impressed his employer that he receives early promotion and actually crosses the barrier between "works" and "staff" or comes to envisage the possibility of doing so. A final example relates to a youth who had had a series of semi-skilled and unskilled jobs on leaving school, and some unemployment. He had then served some time in prison, having been found guilty of theft, and this, at least in his view, had "completely changed his attitude". Previously he had seen no hope of getting on. Now his horizons had been widened, new opportunities suggested to him, and a new attitude induced through discussion with the Probation Officer. His approach to work was now enthusiastic, and he perceived the possibility of rising occupationally and socially. In all of these examples, the intervening factor was of sufficient strength to overcome influences which had previously operated in another direction. Essential to the process is the amendment of a young

person's perception of what is possible and/or of the evaluation which he places upon the fulfilment of possibility. A working class youth whose contact with middle class friends, at Boy Scouts or Church for example, induces in him a new image of society, which suggests the possibility of rising in the occupational and social scale, may insulate himself from home and neighbours towards this end—determinedly ignoring jeers or indifference at home, and gaining sustenance from his contacts with friends. The new image may, indeed, lead to a reappraisal of his home and neighbourhood background such that acceptance is transformed into revulsion. This was the case with the youth cited above, whose outlook changed in consequence of meeting the girl whom he subsequently married. The meaning which his home life had for him was of a different order when he assessed ^{it} by reference to his new perception of what was possible. Finally, whilst such evidence as there was in the present study offered sparse evidence of this, the potential influence of mass media in broadening horizons—through television, newspapers and magazines would seem to be considerable. Indeed, those respondents who proposed to emigrate could be viewed as having adopted an image which had reference to a wider society than Britain alone. Whilst they saw little or only limited scope here, possibilities overseas for persons such as they appeared to afford considerable opportunity, occupationally and socially.

"Deviant" cases such as those just discussed are to be distinguished from cases in which the home influence is of a different

order from that which might be inferred from outward indices merely. Misfortune such as ill-health or bereavement might result in the downward mobility of a family in terms of residence and general material standards of living, for example. But the values which inform the home, and to which the children are exposed, may be sustained from former times—and produce in a child from a "solid" working class home an image of society in status-hierarchy, aspirational terms, rather than one in dichotomous/class or status-hierarchy deference terms.

The argument above has been in terms of the adoption by an individual who is actually or potentially upwardly mobile of a new image of society which is consistent with or appropriate to this social and occupational movement. The argument is applicable to the converse situation, in which a youth from a middle class home has to accommodate himself to a lower level job than he aspired to in consequence of influences in the home. The intervening factor could be, for example, lack of ability for non-manual employment, ill-health or misfortune in the home. The erosion of a status-hierarchy image is unlikely to be rapid in the child from a middle class home, however, because there are so many powerful influences—family, friends, youth organisations—to sustain it. It may give way in time to another image, however. This circumstance will be returned to in the consideration of problems of adjustment.

Apart from actual and potential mobility across the working class-middle class boundary, there was movement within the working class. It is the contention here that some of these changes were made by reference to an image of intra-working class differences. Furthermore, apparent inconsistencies—as for example a youth from a "rough" working class home achieving an apprenticeship, or a youth from an aspirant upper working class home settling down in labouring work, are to be explained in terms of intervening factors—in the first case, for example, through encouragement at school, in the second through what the parents called "getting into bad company"—that is, adopting attitudes and orientations of peers from a different background. The intervening factors, then, result in a different perception of the working class component of society, and of the individual's place in it.

Whilst some respondents may change their images of society substantially, however, the substantive point here is that the bulk of young workers do not do so. Their pre-work experiences are consolidated rather than contradicted by their experiences at work—work fits the image which they bring to bear upon it, although it also contributes, or makes for fresh dimensions, to it, as new situations are encountered. The point is that the new situation is capable of interpretation by reference to criteria implicit in the previously existing image—in part because broad aspects of the work situation (for example the boss-employee relationships) have already been pervasive in children's

experience through contact with relations and other young people already at work, and through observation of workmen in the neighbourhood: their expectations in regard to work thus accommodates or modulates what they find there. It is important to emphasise at this point, too, that despite the important differences within the working class to which some stress has been given, the similarities in regard to the young workers are many: the bulk see themselves as belonging to the working class, the youths envisage doing manual work until retirement and most of the girls expect to marry working class men.

The process of adjustment to employment can be seen in terms of this "fit" between the image of society, held by the school leaver, and the new situations with which he is confronted on becoming a worker. The argument here is that adjustment to employment must be viewed in the more general context of adjustment to adult society. This involves interpreting and taking up positions in regard to many facets of society, including political affairs, the younger generation, matters of education, and marriage. The attempt has been made in the foregoing analysis to show constellations of attitudes in regard to such matters. Adjustment can be seen as the process of making some sort of sense out of these various facets of life, which revolve about home and work. There is a two-way process in which the individual brings his image to bear upon the situations which he encounters and "fills out" the image in the light of these situations. It was indicated

earlier that the transition from school to work, as assessed at the end of the first year in employment, was smooth.¹ It was argued that this was because the expectations which the respondents brought with them to work were, by and large, in accord with what they found there. Home and background, and school—indeed the range of pre-work experiences—had led respondents to expect little satisfaction from work. Put more generally, they had been induced to construct images of society and of their place in it which were in fact confirmed by the situations which they found at work. Inconsistencies between expectations and actual experiences were soon ironed out, by job changing in some cases, in others by acceptance of or resignation to a level of work somewhat lower than that which had been hoped for. There was little evidence of problems of adjustment during the subsequent five years in employment. There were, of course, new situations to be coped with, important amongst them for some being marriage ~~and~~ or engagement. Such non-work facets of life, it has been shown, often had repercussions in regard to work. Some did, indeed, regret at the age of eighteen or nineteen years that they had not taken an apprenticeship or continued their further education—they perceived with greater clarity then, and saw that they were now firmly lodged at a particular level in society. They now had to reconcile themselves to this fact.

¹See above and see also Home, School and Work, op.cit., Chapter 9, pp.195 et seq.

But, essentially, the respondents had adjusted to employment and to adult life by the age of twenty, in the sense that their images of society and of their place in it were in accord with the "objective" facts of life—in terms of job opportunities, wages, hours to be worked, house purchase and so on. Job changing is for the most part to be seen not as a sign of lack of adjustment—that is, of the inability to settle down—but rather the reverse. Job changing represents an accommodation to the facts of working class existence: it is a relief from boredom, makes for a change, and is in any case not all that important a matter.

The concern with settling down—and the fact that many respondents were already married or intended soon to marry—can be seen as further evidence of adjustment, of a reconciliation of images of society with the objective situation. Marriage or intended marriage to someone from a similar social background and with similar work experiences consolidated aspirations and expectations. Some respondents saw the possibility of their children rising somewhat in the social scale, and a few themselves hoped for some upward mobility. But whether resigned or hopeful, most accommodated to their position in society as they saw it. They tended, as we have seen, to share the attitudes of their parents and elders and to conform to their norms and values. There was no evidence to suggest a powerful youth culture exerting an influence to reshape conventional images of society, or to inspire alternative possibilities in regard to goals to be aspired to in work or leisure.

There were some respondents who did experience substantial problems of adjustment during their first few years at work. This lack of adjustment can be seen as resulting from a lack of "fit" between the individual's image of society and his "objective" life chances. The example was referred to above of a youth from a middle class home who was able to get employment only in a low-level manual job. Such persons have difficulty in resolving the discrepancies between their ideas and the circumstances with which they have to cope. Resignation, acceptance, resentment may result, or the hope of "something better turning up" may survive. A different image of society may be formulated or a different appreciation of the individual's location within the image that he originally had will emerge, as the individual reconciles himself to the possibilities actually open to him not only at work, but in the broader social setting. For such persons, for example, the problems of adjustment to adult life are likely to be prolonged. There will be special problems when marriage and the setting up of a home are contemplated. Parental sustenance for old values will be lacking or less powerful on marriage. Whilst the life style which is possible given the level and type of employment will be at variance with that accustomed to.

The present analysis is at variance with previous studies of the adjustment to employment in suggesting that the problems of transition, for the majority of young workers, are slight. It has commonly been argued that the adjustment involves a "shock"

because the work situation is radically different from the school situation. Miller and Form have put forward this argument most clearly. Briefly they suggest that the ethos of the school is such as to favour certain values which are in conflict with those that obtain at work, and further, that the situation of the older child at school is radically different from his position as a young worker—from being senior, with some authority, he becomes junior and a minor figure. Other differences are suggested. However, the values and situations that Miller and Form cite are selective, and do not obtain widely, at least in the British setting. The evidence of the earlier study of the Sheffield young workers, which is confirmed by the follow-up, is that school was resented by many because of its authoritarianism, for example, whilst work was welcomed because of the freedoms which it conferred.¹ In so far as school made an impact, it tended to be supportive of expectations of boredom and inferiority of position at work, which was subsequently confirmed by work experience. The Miller and Form analysis² is faulty also, I suggest, because it isolates school influences from the range of other pre-work influences, and discounts the fact that the child may interpret experience at school rather than assuming values to which he is exposed there unquestioningly. It also disregards the extent to which the social

¹For a detailed discussion, see Home, School and Work, op.cit., Chapter 9.

²D.C. Miller and W.H. Form, Industrial Sociology, Harper, New York, 1951, op.cit.

background of the pupils permeates the school and affects the norms and values that are extant there.

It is convenient at this point to refer to the approach of de Maupeou,¹ and to distinguish it from the present analysis. As I understand her argument, de Maupeou suggests that young workers formulate conceptions as to the nature of industrial society, which lead them to certain expectations in regard to the actual work that they enter. If these expectations are not confirmed at work, then dissatisfaction will result, and the adjustment to employment will be difficult. The conceptions of industrial society which de Maupeou has in mind appear to have reference to changing processes and consequent changes in social relationships at work and outwith it, associated with grand scale technological change. It is not clear to the present author how young people arrive at such a formulation. But in any case, this approach seems to over-stress the work situation at the expense of other aspects of the young workers' life, and does not give sufficient regard to the accommodation which, the present study suggests, the young worker will make to his society. de Maupeou's argument thus implies greater and more widespread maladjustment than in fact seems to occur.

¹ Nicole de Maupeou, "Niveau d'Aspiration, Statut Professionnel et Revenu", Sociologie du Travail, Vol4, 1962, and "Le Jeune Ouvrier dans l'Industrie—Une Situation de Minorité", Sociologie du Travail, Vol2, 1960.

The present study has indicated the persistence of "traditional" images which are in line with actual opportunities—the majority of working class children do necessarily enter manual occupations. Society does produce young people whose images are such that they accommodate themselves to the social structure and to the segments in it that they are to occupy. Changes in society—whether in consequence of technological, demographic, or some other factor, and whether grand-scale or relatively slight—can be "manned" as it were by changes in educational policy which enable and persuade a higher proportion of children to undergo further or higher education—one element of the pre-work influences upon the formulation of images of society is thereby strengthened, whilst the fact that more opportunities in terms of occupation and concomitant social status are available will be perceived, and images of society will be amended correspondingly. Other agencies which mediate between society and the individual—for example the Youth Employment Service—could be strengthened towards the same end. I am not here suggesting a crude manipulation by official or governmental policies, and a direct response by individuals, but merely

indicating that a new social situation will in due course, through complex processes, permeate the factors which influence the formation of images of society, in such a way that the images of individuals will be amended so as to conform with the actual "objective" situation.¹ In a very limited way there were signs of this with the present respondents——some of whom perceived the possibility of rising in the social scale compared with their parents, whilst others, in referring to "better opportunities" for "*young* people nowadays", expressed modest aspirations for their own children and saw education as a vehicle towards this end.

The present theory does not imply a functionalist approach to social structure and social change. It is not suggested that individuals respond in an automatic way to the "needs" of society. On the contrary, the theory takes cognisance of conflict and competition in society, and seeks to explain how individuals accommodate themselves to these phenomena. The image which is held of society, since it is shaped and tested by reference to

¹Alex Inkeles has suggested that "the standard institutional environments of modern society induce standard patterns of response, despite the counteracting randomizing effects of persisting traditional patterns of culture". I make no comment on his main point, which would seem to be in conformity with the "convergence" theory of stratification and hence subject to the many arguments against this theory. Its relevance here is in regard to the notion of the inducement of patterns of response to the constraints of industrial society, which is akin, I think, to the argument that images will emerge appropriate to actual or objective changes in society.

experiences in it, is capable of change; and so is the individual's response to his location in society. Circumstances might arise, for example, in which the individual with a class/dichotomy image of society may adopt a militant stance rather than a resigned one—if for example, his work or domestic (e.g, Housing) conditions deteriorate relative to others with whom he compares himself. Or there may, following the Blackburn criticism of Goldthorpe's analysis already instanced, be a shift from a pecuniary model to a dichotomous model in consequence of a change in working conditions or, more generally, because of widespread economic depression and unemployment. Pre-eminence is not afforded to society or to any supposed "needs" which society may have. The argument, simply, is that there is an interplay between the individual and the social structure such that the individual formulates an image of society and his place in it and acts in accordance with this interpretation: the image is capable of attunement to shifts in emphasis within society in terms of the distribution of power, prestige and, specifically, of occupational opportunities. At the same time, the individual—because he interprets his experience rather than being merely a passive agent—may himself contribute, through allying himself with others whom he deems to be located in a similar position and to have similar aims and interests, to the change which is intrinsic to society, thereby affecting in some measure the direction which such change takes.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The occupational structure of Sheffield is such that the majority of secondary modern school leavers enter manual employment, and the occupational history of the respondents exemplified this fact. In regard to youths' occupations, however, there are important distinctions to be made between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled work; and, for girls, there are three main categories of employment - office work (with which may be classified nursing and hairdressing), shop assistant and factory work. The research has shown that certain expected relationships between level of job entered and a range of factors affecting aspirations and competence do, indeed, obtain. The most important of these factors were seen to be parental occupations, size and structure of the family, neighbourhood background and the orientation of the school attended. A close relationship between measured intelligence and occupational attainment and experience was also established. The first five years in employment consolidated these relationships. Deviations from expected patterns were accounted for by reference to particular attributes of individual respondents and/or their family and social environments.

Although the work situation varies considerably from one occupation to another, certain generalisations in regard to attitudes to work are possible. Specifically in regard to relationships with "bosses", it was seen that most respondents had only slight contact, other than in connection with receiving orders. The approach that prevailed amongst respondents was that there is bound to be some opposition of interests between employee and boss: patterns of authority were accepted as inevitable - but the young workers did expect consistency in regard to these patterns such that

explicit and implicit "rules of the game" were adhered to. There were, that is, tacitly accepted codes of behaviour at work - and these codes were derived from an amalgam of the constraints of the work setting (by reference, that is, to technological matters, size and other organisational features), and influences derived from factors external to the work place, but imported into it. The code which obtains between foreman and factory bench worker, for example, has reference to the working class background and values which both share, as well as to the exigencies of the production process. And in non-manual work (e.g. office work) the code tends to be dominated by values which characterise the middle class background of the workers who predominate in such occupations. There was some evidence to suggest that whereas the appraisal of employers one year after leaving school was made in personal terms, by the time respondents had reached the age of twenty they thought in terms of the "working class" being opposed to the "boss class". One facet of this tendency to regard bosses as being necessarily in opposition to workers was the reluctance of the respondents to seek advice at work, or even information, about job prospects or plans.

Less than one third of both youths and girls spent any leisure time with workmates - some had no workmates of the appropriate age, whilst others resided at some distance from workmates. But the main reason for lack of involvement was the wish to keep leisure separate from work. As to relationships in the work setting, the main conclusion is that age differences were of less importance for youths than for girls - with girls, there are clearcut differences in interest and activities in non-work matters which separate old from middle-aged, and middle-aged from young. Associated with such age differences are other differences in regard to marital status and stage in the domestic cycle. Relationships of women

at work would seem, indeed, to be dependent not so much upon work attributes (e.g. level of skill) as upon features such as appearance, occupational status of husband and ability to attract boy friends, which are extraneous to the work setting. This is a reflection of the widespread attitude amongst girls that work is of subsidiary importance for a woman.

Youths on the whole received higher wages than girls, although there was some overlap: 62/84 youths received over £10 gross per week, whereas all except 6 of the 66 girls at work received under £10. Most of the higher wages were earned by semi- and unskilled youths, but there were appreciable variations in earnings within occupations. Most respondents regarded their wages as reasonable - their main criteria in this estimation being the effort involved in a job and the amount which peers were known or thought to earn. Apprentices did tend to be dissatisfied with their wages, however, - they thought that employers were getting cheap labour out of them, and also considered that their wages compared unfavourably with those of non-skilled workers, and that this represented a detraction from their status.

Certain categories of job satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) were discerned - intrinsic satisfactions deriving from work itself, including the tasks performed and pride in workmanship; extra-intrinsic satisfactions based on the work situation but incidental to the tasks as such - canteen facilities, for example; extrinsic factors such as time spent in getting to work and concomitant implications for leisure; and, finally, indirect extrinsic satisfactions including security of tenure and social prestige. The ingredients of satisfaction were of the same order as those which obtained when respondents first entered employment - but there was a toning

down in regard to what it was thought could reasonably be expected from work; in addition, wages assumed more importance for respondents who were married or engaged.

Over all, the impact of trades unions was slight. 33 youths and 15 girls were paying members but some of these were reluctant or uninterested unionists. One quarter of the youths (23/86) and less than one fifth of the girls (15/84) were positive in their support of unions, whilst 9 youths and 7 girls were strongly opposed to them (the remaining respondents were uninterested or equivocal). The material benefits conferred by unions were the main reason given for support, but a few respondents took a broader view, and saw the unions as a buffer between powerful employers and invidiously weak workers. Those who were opposed to unions fell into two main categories - respondents who stressed independence and who aspired to rise occupationally and socially, and saw unions as the resort of the unambitious and incapable; and respondents who regarded work an unavoidable imposition, but who tried to minimise their involvement in it. Unions, for the latter, were a facet of the work situation and, as such, to be avoided as much as any other facet.

The respondents' experience of industrial training and further education confirmed the findings of previous research in this field. Apart from apprentices, few respondents had undergone long-term training, and one-third of the apprentices (10/29) considered that their training had been unsatisfactory. Over one-half of the youths (49) and over one quarter of the girls (28) had attended further education classes at some time during the course of their first five years in employment, but there was a high rate of drop-out. By the time of Interview No. 4 the majority of those who were attending classes (25 youths and 9 girls) had been doing so

for a period of years, however. Apprentices predominated amongst youths attending classes (although 10/29 apprentices were not attending classes, and 2 of these had never done so): girl attenders were mainly office workers. There was much criticism of the content of courses, and their alleged irrelevance to practical work. The attitude of respondents who were not attending classes was that further education was not necessary in their occupations - there was no appreciation of the possibility that attendance at classes might equip a young worker to move to a "better" job. More generally, it was concluded that this lack of stimulus from further education results in young workers missing a "last chance" - at the age of eighteen or so - of changing to more skilled or demanding employment, or preparing to do so. The inability of the Youth Employment Service to conduct an adequate "follow-up" counselling service compounds this situation.

The follow-up study confirms the picture established in the earlier research of a high rate of job turnover. Of the 86 youths, just over one quarter (24) were in the same job at the time of Interview No. 4, five years after leaving school, that they had entered on just starting work. Rather more than one quarter of the girls remained in the same job (26 out of 84), although 5 of these had stopped work on assuming housewives' duties. Sixty per cent of both youths and girls had a maximum of two jobs. But of the remainder, one half (19/35 youths and 13/26 girls) had four or more jobs. The average number of jobs held was 2.7 for youths and 2.4 for girls. The average number of occupations was just over 2.0 for youths and 1.6 for girls. There was a clear tendency for youths who were in skilled and non-manual employment at the time of Interview No. 4 to have had fewer job and occupation changes than semi-

and unskilled workers. The pattern in regard to girls, whilst less distinct, was similar, girls in 'A' type work (office jobs, etc.) showing a relatively low rate of changing and girls in Category 'C' (factory and warehouse, etc.) a high rate. Of the 19 youths who had left apprenticeships at some stage during their first five years in employment, only one could be said to have moved to advantage in terms of occupational level and prospects. The ostensible or stated reasons for job changing must be seen as surface indicators of deep-seated attitudes towards work - whilst changes were made by some respondents with a view to occupational advancement, most are best understood by reference to the view that work has to be done but is not likely to be a prime source of satisfaction; a change of job is not of great significance, accordingly. There was no clear-cut peak for job-changing: the pattern for youths' changes, indeed, showed a remarkable consistency in the number of job changes each year, apart from a distinct drop in the fifth year. The pattern for girls was less uniform, but was not suggestive of any "crisis" stage. There were indications from stated plans for the future that many more job changes were likely to occur. All of the methods used in obtaining first jobs had a high "failure rate" as measured by subsequent job changes - in particular, placement by the Youth Employment Service was unsuccessful - only 2 of the 31 youths and 5 of the 16 girls originally placed by the Service remained in their first jobs. This is to be attributed to deficiencies in the Service, but also to the fact that many young workers who receive the Service's help are relatively unattractive to employers. The Service played little part in assisting young workers subsequent to their leaving school.

The conclusion was reached that the "floundering theory" of job changing

is inadequate, because it over-stresses the problems of adjustment to work. The "trial work" theory, too, is at fault in over-estimating the extent to which changes are made by reference to planned improvement. Both of these theories place too much and too exclusive stress upon the isolated work setting. The argument in the present study is that changes are to be explained by reference to the broader social and family context. Non-work factors play an important part in determining the timing and direction of job changes (or in influencing the decision not to change). Marriage and anticipated marriage were isolated as important influences in this connection.

The marriage patterns obtaining for the respondents fit in with the general trends which have been established for contemporary Britain - a high proportion of the girls were married by the time of Interview No. 4, that is, at or before the age of twenty (31/84), and a much smaller but nevertheless substantial proportion of the youths (11/86). In addition, 25 girls and 13 youths were engaged to be married. Spouses and intended spouses tended to be of the same social background and occupational level, and marriage therefore consolidated respondents at the level of society in which they had grown up. Early marriage and engagement represented an acceptance of parental norms and values rather than a repudiation of them - the wish was to settle down. However, there was some moderate degree of upward social mobility evident in a few of the marriages, where a conscious effort was being made to improve somewhat by reference to type and area of residence, and, in anticipation, to size of family and preferred education for children.

The majority of respondents had no regrets that they had left school at the age of fifteen, and could see no benefits which might have accrued

to them personally by having stayed on beyond that age. However, there was more sympathy for the principle of raising the leaving age than was evident when the respondents first left school. The feeling was that children could benefit from an extra year in terms of personal maturity, and that their job chances would be enhanced. But the principle of individual freedom to choose to stay on, rather than being compelled to do so, was enunciated strongly. In addition, the point was firmly stressed that for some children an extra year would be unfruitful; the influence of such children, if they were required to stay on, would be deleterious to other, more receptive and compliant boys and girls at school.

In regard to leisure, the public house was seen to feature very largely for youths, and appreciably, too, for girls. The cinema declined in importance markedly for youths and girls, and dancing increased in importance for youths but declined for girls. The leisure activities of a high proportion of respondents was dominated by companionship with the opposite sex - apart from the 11 married and 13 engaged youths, 9 were 'going steady': and apart from the 31 married and 25 engaged girls, 8 were 'going steady'. A four-stage cycle was suggested, whereby leisure activities are to be understood in terms of relationships with a member of members of the opposite sex. In stage one, the object is to find a boy or girl friend, perhaps to have several at the same time or in succession: the cinema and dance halls are important "hunting grounds", as well as local streets. In the second stage, when a regular girl or boy friend has been found, the pattern of leisure activities may change - in this and subsequent stages, courting is a full time concern in leisure hours, and the couple spend most of their time together. The cinema and dancing are still popular, and there is intensive involvement in these activities,

girls and boys going out together every night and at weekends. In the third stage, marked by engagement but perhaps prior to it, there is a falling-off in dancing and cinema attendance - the couple know each other well enough not to require company or "turned-on" activity, and visit each others' houses more - and thoughts are turning towards marriage, so that there is an incentive to save. By withdrawing from the whirl of teenage leisure activities at this time young couples emphasise to themselves and others their separateness from the ordinary run of young people who are not yet betrothed. In the fourth stage of the cycle, with marriage, there is perhaps financial stringency, or the wish to save more, the home to decorate, and a child to be cared for. But there is also the possibility of husbands and wives starting to go their own ways in leisure time - the husbands to the "pub", and wives to bingo with other married girls.

By and large, the younger generation was held by the respondents to be moulded in the same cast as themselves, with the same problems to confront: teenage youths and girls were thought to be turning out much the same as the respondents had been before them. Young workers might be going through a phase of irresponsibility - but would grow out of it, even if, possibly, young people have it easier nowadays than when the respondents were younger. Views on the younger generation reflected, indeed, the rapid assimilation by respondents of "adult" attitudes and stances. The various theories relating to a "youth culture" were explored, and it was concluded that these were not helpful to the understanding of the young workers in the present study - who were not characterised by membership of a youth culture in anything other than a weak sense, which amounts to little more than a label for particular leisure interests and particular fashions in dress and appearance. So

far from participating in a youth culture in opposition to adult values, the respondents, at least by the age of eighteen or nineteen, conformed with those adult values, and their activities in regard to such matters as marriage and leisure pursuits exemplified this fact.

In terms of social class affiliation, the largest proportions of youths (45/86) and girls (35/84) assigned themselves to the working class. 25 youths and 23 girls considered that they were middle class. Of the latter, some could be regarded as "middle" class aspirants, some were in non-manual, skilled or Category 'A' type jobs, and some were from middle-class homes, assessed by parental occupation. But there was an important category of 15 youths and 7 girls who termed themselves middle class mainly in order to differentiate themselves from the "common", "lower" element of the working class - "working class" to them meant "rough" people whose standards in regard to cleanliness, manners, bringing up children and morality they deplored and repudiated. There was, indeed, a strength of feeling amongst many of the self-assigned working class respondents in regard to differences within that class, such that they were keen to disassociate themselves from the "lower element". In terms of skill, general ability, moral attitudes and behaviour, these respondents regarded themselves as superior to the "roughs". They had no wish to rise to the middle class, but were concerned not to fall to the lower levels of the working class. This concern governed attitudes and behaviour in regard to marriage, residence preference, leisure involvement and occupation.

There was markedly stronger support for the Labour Party amongst youths and girls than for the Conservative Party. Labour was seen as being the Party for the workers. However, there was considerable cynicism about and impatience with politicians, and the majority of respondents, even if they gave nominal support to a Party, had little interest in or knowledge

about politics, and were unacquainted with the ways in which political issues related to their own lives.

In the final Section of the study, an attempt was made, albeit in a tentative and speculative manner, to explore the salience of "images of society" in the process of adjustment to employment. It was suggested that the image that predominated was of a dichotomous order, although a status-hierarchy image obtained for certain young workers who were of middle class background, or who aspired to be upwardly mobile. There were traces of a "privatised" image, too, in regard to certain of the married or engaged couples, who viewed society in an instrumental way. In addition, it was suggested that an "egalitarian/pluralistic" image, which emphasises differences, rather than superiority or inferiority, helps to explain the behaviour of certain respondents, specifically in regard to educational and occupational matters. Perceived intra-working class differences were also significant in determining the attitudes and actions of many respondents in regard to work and non-work matters. The argument was developed that work experience tends to consolidate the image of society formulated by respondents in consequence of home, school and social background experiences: hence the easy accommodation of young workers to the employment situation, which is in conformity with their expectations and orientations - susceptible, that is to comprehension. Work experience may, however, result in an amendment or reformulation of the image held of society, actual opportunities in regard to occupation being of a different order from what was anticipated - the chance for upward mobility may occur, for example, or the fact of downward mobility may have to be accommodated. It should be said, however, that the pertinence of the concept of images of society to the process of adjustment

to employment remains to be assessed by further research: the present study is merely suggestive in this regard, and no stronger claim than this could be made.

A P P E N D I X 'A'

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A. Employment

- A.1. What is your present job? (Make note if married woman is working part-time, or not working).
- A.2. Are you in the same job that you took when you left school? (i.e. with the same employer?). If not, When did you start your present job? How did you get your present job? (i.e. method). (For married women not working or working part-time, take details of last full-time job, and ask whether it was the same job entered when they left school).
- A.3. Is this (the present) job the one you wanted when you left school? If not, What job did you want when you left school? Why the discrepancy? Any regrets?
- A.4. Details of other full-time jobs held since leaving school. For each, list occupation, skill and status (e.g. apprentice, trainee). Weeks/months/years (as accurate as possible) in job. Reason for leaving. (If details not available for each job, get as much information as possible, and establish total number of jobs since leaving school, including present).
- A.5. Have you been unemployed at all since leaving school? (Get details of number of times, duration, and reasons).
- A.6. Have you had any contact with the Youth Employment Service since leaving school? (Get details). Has the Service helped you in any way? Could it have helped more? In what ways? Have you had any contact with the Ministry of Labour?(Substitute "Labour Exchange" or "Employment Exchange" if necessary). (Get details). Have they helped you in any way? Could they have helped more? In what ways?

B. Present Job

- B.1. What do you like/dislike (ask both) about your present job?
- B.2. Could you give a brief account of what you have to do? (Prompt for; number of people employed; number in work group; responsibilities of respondent (e.g. foreman?); extent of knowledge of own job in relation to rest of organisation).
- B.2a. Would you say that your job is skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled?
- B.3. What do you think of the way things are run where you work?
- B.4. What are the conditions like? Are there things that you think need improving?
- B.5. Is there anyone at work whom you would or could talk to in confidence if you had a complaint? Who? What is his position?
- B.6. Or anyone you could or would turn to for advice? Who? What is his position?
- B.7. Is there anyone, apart from at work, who you would or could ask for advice?
- B.8. Suppose you were offered another job, is there anybody you would talk to about it before deciding? (If a member of family is mentioned, ask if there is anyone else. If a member of family is not mentioned, ask if they would discuss it with anyone at home).
- B.9. What are the people like at work?
- B.10. What do you think of the younger workers? (i.e. 15-16 year-olds, recent school-leavers).
- B.11. Who is in charge of the firm/shop/office? (i.e. the whole place). When do you see him? What is he like?
- B.12. Who usually tells you what to do at work? What is he like?
- B.13. Can a young person get to the top in your firm/occupation? If not, do you think he should be able to? (Interviewer— is this a really important issue for the respondent?). What stands in the way? What would make it possible for him to?
- B.14. Is there a Trade Union in the firm/shop/works? If yes, what is it called? Have you joined? When? Who asked you to join? Is everybody in it? What does it cost? Have you attended any meetings? How many? When was the last? What happened?

- B.15. If not a member, Have you ever been a member? Which Union? Why did you leave?
- B.16. What do you think about Trade Unions?
- B.17. Do you work a five day week? (If not get details). Do you do shift work? (Get details).
- B.18. How many hours do you work each week (basic)? Do you do regular overtime? How many hours a week? (Seasonal variations?).
- B.19. What is your pay like? On average, what is (a) gross wage, (b) take-home pay (i.e. after deductions). (Include payment for overtime, bonus, etc., but state where this is included).
- B.20. Are you satisfied with the pay you get? (Why? Why not?).
- B.21. Have you any other regular source of income (e.g. part-time outside job, odd jobs, pension). (N.B. Wife's/husband's income is dealt with later).

C. Prospects and Plans

- C.1. Do you want to stay in your present job? (Would he like to change job and/or occupation?).
- C.2. If "yes" to occupation, What occupation would you like to have? Suppose it involved several months or more training—what then?
- C.3. If "yes" to occupation, Suppose it meant moving away from Sheffield—what then?
- C.4. Are you actually planning to change jobs?
- C.5. Have you applied for any jobs during the last year? What ones? During the last three years? What ones?
- C.6. Have you thought of doing so during the last year? Why and What? During the last three years? Why and what?
- C.7. Have you any plans for the future so far as work is concerned?
- C.8. What job do you expect to be doing in ten years' time?
- C.9. Under what circumstances would you consider leaving Sheffield to work?
- C.10. If none, Suppose that you were unemployed for a long time, would you move then?
- C.11. Do you think that if you moved away from Sheffield you would have better opportunities at work? What sort of opportunities?

D. Education

- D.1. Do you ever wish you were back at school? If yes, Why?
If no, Any special reasons?
- D.2. What is your best memory of school? And your worst?
- D.3. Are you glad or sorry that you left school when you did?
- D.4. What do you think of the plan for raising the leaving age to 16?
- D.5. Could school have done more to prepare you for your present job? What?
- D.6. Or for work in general?
- D.7. Or for life in general?
- D.8. Can you remember what they said to you at school about work? Were they right or wrong?
- D.9. (Ask all respondents) At what age would you like your children to leave school?
- D.10. What sort of school would you like them to go to?
- D.11. Have you any plans for their education? Have you given it much thought?
- D.12. What job would you like your children to do when they grow up? (If one which requires education/training—e.g. "school teacher"—ask, How would you set about getting that sort of job?).
- D.13. Did you serve an apprenticeship? Is it now completed?
Or, When will it be completed? Or, Why did you give it up?
- D.14. For Apprentices. Has your apprenticeship been unsatisfactory in any way? Have you learnt as much as you think you ought? If not, Whose fault is it? Your own?
- D.15. For non-apprentices. Have you received much training for your present job? (Get details of amount and duration).
- D.16. Did you go to Night School last winter? Day School last winter? If "yes", Is what you learnt of use at work?
- D.17. Have you been awarded any Certificates since starting work? Do you hope to get any in the future? Do you wish you had some?
- D.18. Did you ever go to night school? If "yes", When did you last go? Why did you stop?
- D.19. What is your firm's attitude to further education and training?

- D.20. Is it necessary in your job? If "no", Why not?
- D.21. Have you received training for an occupation other than your present one? If "yes", Do you think that you will use it ever?

E. Households

(a) Parents (for all respondents)

- E.1. How many people live at your parents' home? Who are they? Mother—occupation (part-time?). Father—occupation. Brothers and sisters at work—age: occupation. Brothers and sisters at school or below school age—age. Others—lodger, other relations, respondent's wife/husband. That is, altogether there are (x) living at your parents' house?
- E.2. What do your parents think of your job? Would they like you to change? To what?
- E.3. Do you think that they would have preferred you to do some other sort of job?

(b) Own Household (for respondents not living with parents)

- E.4. House/Flat? Rented or buying: living with in-laws?
- E.5. How many rooms do you have exclusive use of?
- E.6. How much do you pay for your house/rooms each week?
- E.7. How long have you been living at your present address? Why did you come to live here in this part? (i.e. of the city).
- E.8. How far away do your parents live? Do you wish you were closer? Or further away?
- E.9. What do you like most/least about this neighbourhood?
- E.10. How do you get on with the people in the area?
- E.11. Would you like to move to another sort of house?
- E.12. Or to another area of Sheffield? Where? Why?
- E.13. Is your house much different from your parents'? In what ways? (e.g., furniture, district).
- E.14. Interviewer's comments on (a) home (b) neighbourhood.

For all married respondents

- E.15. What is your wife's/husband's occupation? (specify status and degree of skill).
- E.16. How long has he/she been in present job?

- E.17. What job did he/she do before the present one?
- E.18. Does he/she plan to stay in this job?
- E.19. What do you think of your wife's/husband's job?
- E.20. What does he/she think of yours? Would he/she like you to change jobs?
- E.21. What age did he/she leave school?
- E.22. Does he/she come from Sheffield?
- E.23. If not, Where did he/she live before? When did he/she move here? Why did he/she move here?
- E.24. What was his/her father's occupation?
- E.25. How (where) did you meet your wife?
- E.26. When were you married?
- E.27. Have you any children? How old are they? Would you like to have (more) children? How many?

F. Leisure

- F.1. How do you spend your spare time nowadays?
- F.2. Do you see anything of your old school friends?
- F.3. Have you a special school friend whom you still go out with or visit regularly?
- F.4. Do you spend much leisure time with your parents, brothers or sisters? What sort of activities?
- F.5. Do you mix with the same people in and out of work? If "no", Why not?
- F.6. Who is your best friend now? What is his or her occupation?
- F.7. Have you a boy/girl friend? How long have you been going out with him/her? Occupation? If opposite sex, Would you say that you were going steady? Are you engaged? Intended date of marriage?

For married respondents

- F.8. What leisure activities do you share with your wife/husband? What activities do you keep separate? Would you say that you (men respondents)/your husband(girl respondents) helps much with work about the house?
- F.9. How often do you see your parents? How often do you see your wife's/husband's parents?

For all respondents

- F.10. When did you last go to the cinema? How often do you go on average? (i.e., number of times a week).
- F.11. When did you last go to a dance? How often do you go on average?
- F.12. What other places of entertainment do you go to? Public Houses? Frequency?
- F.13. When did you last go to Church? How often?
- F.14. Do you belong to a Club/Association? Frequency? Activity? Status of respondent? (e.g., Scoutmaster, Club Secretary).
- F.15. Do you spend much time watching television? What is your favourite programme? What is your second favourite? What programme do you least like? Do you see it often?

G. Expenditure

- G.1. About how much do you pay each week in Housekeeping/Board?
- G.2. How much is left for your own spending money?
- G.3. What does most of it go on?
- G.4. Do you save regularly? What for? (Short term—e.g., for holidays or clothes; or long term—e.g., for marriage, house purchase).
- G.5. Do your savings come out of your Housekeeping/Board, or out of your "spending" money?
- G.6. For married respondents. About how much spending money does your wife/husband have each week?

H. General

- H.1. Should men and women doing the same job get the same pay? Why or why not?
- H.2. Are there any things apart from not having ability that can hold a person up in life? (Assess what the phrase "hold up in life" means to respondents).
- H.3. If I asked you to imagine a man who had succeeded in life, what sort of work would you see him in, and in what sort of area would he live? (Area= district of Sheffield, or another city or region, according to what respondents think).
- H.4. Could you say what redundancy is?
- H.5. And automation?

- H.6. Do you think that there is such a thing as social class?
(Prompt Upper, Middle, Working).
- H.7. Which class do you belong to?
- H.8. Which would you like to belong to? Seriously?
- H.9. Some people say that you can't lump all workers together into one class. What do you think? How would you divide them?
- H.10. How do you tell which social class a person belongs to? Have you any friends or contacts with people whom you would put in a different social class?
- H.11. Do you think it is right that a person born in a working class community should try to move into another social class?
- H.12. Would you mind telling me which Party you would vote for in the General Election?
- H.13. What is the difference between a "Mod" and a "Rocker"?
- H.14. What do think of the younger generation? (i.e., people leaving school now).
- H.15. Could you tell me what a Comprehensive school is?
- H.16. If you had to decide on one aspect, which is the most important part of life—work, leisure or family life? What would come next in importance?
- H.17. What do you think of Sheffield as a place to live in? Has it got a future?
- H.18. What will it be like in 50 years?
- H.19. Is there anything that you would like to ask me?
- I. Parents' Comments.
- J. Interviewer's Comments.

A P P E N D I X 'B'
POSTAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MAIN SAMPLE
RESPONDENTS WHO WERE NOT INTERVIEWED

Ref. No. _____

1. (a) What is your present occupation?
(b) Did you serve an apprenticeship for this work?
2. When did you start your present job?
 Month Year
3. What jobs have you had since leaving school?
 Occupation Years and months
 in job

Job 1.
Job 2.
Job 3.
Job 4.
Job 5.
etc.
4. Why did you leave your jobs?

Job 1.
Job 2.
Job 3.
Job 4.
Job 5.
etc.
5. Have you been unemployed at all since starting your first job?
When?
For how long were you unemployed?
6. Are you a member of a Trade Union?
If yes. Do you attend Union meetings regularly?
7. What are your basic hours at work each week?
Do you do shift work?
Do you do regular overtime?
8. What is your weekly take-home wage on average?
9. Do you want to stay in your present job?

10. Are you actually planning to change jobs?
11. Have you applied for any jobs?
 - (a) during the last year?
 - (b) during the last three years?
12. Have you any plans for the future as far as work is concerned?
13. What job do you expect to be doing in 10 years time?
14. Do you ever wish you were back at school? Why, or why not?
15. Are you glad or sorry that you left school at the age of fifteen?
16. What do you think of the plan to raise the school-leaving age to 16?
17. Could school have done more to prepare you
 - (a) for your present job? What?
 - (b) for work in general? What?
 - (c) for life in general? What?
18. If or when you have children,
 - (a) What sort of school would you like them to go to?
 - (b) At what age would you like them to leave school?
 - (c) What sort of job would you like them to have?
19. Are you engaged to be married?
20. Are you "going steady" with someone of the opposite sex?
21. Are you married? Please give date of marriage.
22. If yes, What is your wife's/husband's occupation?
How many children have you?
23. About how much do you pay each week in board?
24. How much is left for your own spending money?
25. Do you save regularly?
If yes. What for? (e.g.house purchase, holidays).
26. (a) Which social class do you belong to?
(b) Which social class would you like to belong to?
27. Which Political Party would you vote for in a General Election?
28. Have you any comments that you would like to make about school or work in Britain today?

A P P E N D I X 'C'
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR POSTAL SAMPLE

Ref. No. _____

1. What is your present occupation?
2. Did you serve an apprenticeship for this work?
Or did you have any other sort of training?
Please give details
3. Is your work skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled?
4. What do you like about your job?
What do you dislike about it?
What jobs have you had since leaving school?

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Time in Job [years and months]</u>
Job 1.	
Job 2.	
Job 3.	
Job 4.	
etc.	
5. Do you want to stay in your present job?
6. Have you applied for any other job during the past year?
7. Have you any plans for the future so far as work is concerned?
8. What job do you expect to be doing in 10 years time?
9. Are you glad or sorry that you left school when you were 15?
10. What do you think of the plan to raise the school-leaving age to 16?
11. If or when you have children, what sort of school would you like them to go to?
12. What sort of job would you like them to have?
13. Are you married?
If yes. What is your wife's/husband's occupation?
14. How many children have you?
15. Are you engaged to be married?
What is your fiance's occupation?

16. Are you "going steady" with someone of the opposite sex?
What is his/her occupation?
17. What is your father's occupation?
How many brothers have you? Please give ages.
How many sisters have you? Please give ages.
18. Which social class do you belong to?
19. Which social class would you like to belong to?
20. Which Political Party would you vote for in a General Election?
21. Have you any comments that you would like to make about school or work in Britain today?

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