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Contemporary Public Schools and the Life Process: Cultural and Ideological Dimensions of the Lived Experience

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ABSTRACT

The research is an analysis of the 'process of development' of a sample of sixteen subjects who attended 'public school' during the term of office of the present government.

The specific methodology of the study was that of the 'life-history', in which each subject produced a written account of their life. This was followed by a taped interview which allowed elaboration of issues raised and discussion of aspects of experience not previously covered. Questionnaires were sent to headmasters in order to (a) gauge the specific values of particular schools and (b) to triangulate, where possible, information provided by subjects on the nature of their schooling.

The research offers a contribution to sociological discussion at a number of levels:

(1) it provides information on the process of elite production and reproduction, and the role in this of 'institutions of influence' and the individual's mediation of the input from these sources;

(2) central sociological themes and concepts have been utilized, assessed and developed;

(3) aspects of public school life previously accorded limited or inaccurate attention have been subject to empirical and theoretical analysis. The interaction of class and gender, control and hierarchy, the continued

relevance of 'fagging' and the 'old boy' network and crucially the nature of sub-cultural affiliations are the principal examples;

(4) the nature of the sector's self presentation is outlined;

(5) this specific utilization of the life-history technique illuminates its value and potential as a sociological method.

Acknowledgements

My initial thanks go to the ex-pupils whose willingness to describe their life experiences formed the basis of the research. Similarly, I recognize the help of senior staff. For reasons of confidentiality both subjects and teachers must remain anonymous.

At the University of Hull, Mr C Creighton has throughout provided constructive appraisal and guidance. I also wish to acknowledge Mr M Shaw and Mr R Francis for comments made on an earlier paper on this theme.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

In contemporary class society, few arenas of social action can be of greater sociological interest than the 'public schools'. Although their historical identification with class inequality may be enough to induce attention, it is their present and evolving reality which really demands investigation. Two rather different problems for analysis can be distinguished. The first is the class contextualization of the sector, the appreciation that the institutions are both socially restrictive in intake and statistically linked with elite societal destinations. It is here at the structural and quantitative levels that the study of public schools is most immediately rewarded with 'significant' findings. However, whilst recognizing the importance of such work, the present research takes up the second of the problems. To study the ideology and priorities that the schools espouse, how these are mediated by the pupils themselves and with what consequences. As such, the interaction of class and culture within a given institutional context is the central focus of the investigation. Such an approach allows insight into the nature of the ideological and practical composition of schooling for these pupils, and into the impact that the knowledge and dispositions that individuals take into the setting have on the process. Furthermore, it assists in assessing the public claims of the sector and also permits

us to gain an understanding of the consequences of their experiences in the lives of those educated within the system.

The relationship between public schools and social reproduction is inevitably pivotal to a class contextualized analysis. However, the aim of the present study is not to establish statistical links between the sector and Oxbridge or elite occupations; this is merely the background. Instead, the impetus to the work lies in discovering what it is that is being produced and reproduced by the process in the contemporary era. To this end, the emphasis is laid on the study of daily practices both officially sanctioned and pupil organized. This provides the opportunity both to uncover dominant structures and processes within the specific school context and contribute to the development of theoretical concepts which have been integral to the research. For instance, the concept of 'sub-cultures' as a crucial aspect of class and school life, first developed to explore schooling experiences of the working class, was found to have a wider potential use and to be relevant in this particular setting too. Similarly, the interaction of class and gender, the mediation of experience and the impact of forms of capital on progression are all themes and concepts which facilitate understanding of contemporary public schools and their pupils and can, as a consequence, be given further theoretical development. Finally, the approach allows those actually involved to describe the

situation as it appeared to them and thus to move beyond simplistic accounts of the sector.

The present historical moment provides a particularly significant juncture at which to undertake such a programme. The ideological counter-offensive of the sector and its relationship with the growth of the political right are important contemporary features. The definition of the sector, by governmental power brokers, as not only worthy of support but as constituting 'the' expression of education, has served to secure its short term future and to shift the terms of the debate somewhat. In so doing, the sector has been ascribed a greater legitimacy. Moreover, the sector itself has in the last two decades expressed a pre-occupation with image, the essential purpose of which being to distance themselves from elitist public perceptions. The increasing academic emphasis and the partial inclusion of females - though influenced by very practical considerations - are the kind of aspects of schooling now deemed worthy of highlighting. The concern with image is perhaps most clearly expressed in the insistence on the terminology of 'independent sector' being employed over 'public schools'. (These two terms are used interchangeably in the following discussion.) Therefore,the continued class allegiance of the schools, their greater legitimacy (yet retention of distance from political control) and the presentation of themselves as having departed from traditional emphases, all combine to justify the present study.

The value of the work is further reinforced by the relative lack of empirical studies within the sociology of education. Walford (1986)[1] provides the main exception. This has left studies carried out in the 1960s as continuing sources of reference, problematic not only in view of the significant moves in content and presentation which have taken place since then, but also because of the inadequate theoretical perspective employed by these writers (Lambert 1966, 1968, Weinberg 1967, Wakeford 1969)[2]. It is one which considers the central force of school life, and the means by which it can best be analyzed, as being its organization as a 'total institution': Within this framework the relationship between class and elite education (incorporating the dimension of 'time') and the consequence of this interaction in terms of the reproduction of class relations could not be adequately tackled. While Walford's study obviously overcomes the first problem and certainly is more conscious of the importance of the class

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1 G Walford Life in Public Schools (Lewes: Falmer Press 1986)

2 R Lambert Introduction to G Kalton The Public Schools: A Factual Survey (London: Longmans 1966)
R Lambert New Wine in Old Bottles? (London: G Bell and Sons Ltd 1968)
I Weinberg The English Public Schools (New York: Atherton Press 1967)
J Wakeford The Cloistered Elite: A Sociological Analysis of the English Public Boarding School (London: Macmillan 1969)

composition of the schools, there is still a lack of an analysis of the way the formal messages of schooling interact with other formative influences, notably, class, culture and gender, which carry with them very specific input.

It is here that recent advances in the sociology of education take a central role, through assisting in uncovering the manner in which formal doctrines become, or influence the creation of, social realities. The stress upon 'active production' of life in the work of the 'post-reproduction' theorists as well as Bourdieu's work on cultural capital and the habitus as a mediating rather than determining force[3], opens the way to a truly class-contexted examination of public school life.

The life-history approach was used to meet the aim of combining awareness of structure with the active mediation of experience by participants. Given the opportunity to construct and produce (within guidelines) their personal stories, subjects were able to focus on what schooling meant for them. As such, evidence of personal priorities and emphases were revealed. Of major value, though, was the charting of life course progression. Through this, a picture of the values and practices that respondents were exposed to and/or involved in before schooling and how these

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3 see especially P Bourdieu Outline of a Theory of Practice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1977b)

were incorporated as part of the 'post-school self' could be given a full position in the analysis. The use of a follow up interview provided the opportunity both to concentrate on areas originally deemed important, but inevitably not necessarily covered by every respondent and, crucially, to follow up and develop those components of experience which formed the individual's pre-occupations. As such, the use of this approach offered both insight into personal realities and the opportunity, through a continual process of revision, incorporating all evidence, to develop propositions from the data. In this way, the necessity for potentially arbitrary post-analysis theorizing was largely avoided.

Elite Education and Occupational Achievement

Having advocated strongly the use of qualitative methods, this must not be taken to read as the rejection of quantitative procedures. In helping to define the nature of the discussion, statistical evidence has particular applicability. For instance the following, while not intended as directly comparable to the subjects of the present study, does both illustrate the socially exclusive nature of entry and suggest the probability that variations in experience and process are embedded in class and cultural

realities. Fox (1985)[4] employing Goldthorpe's (1980)[5] occupationally based classification, notes that 69.1% of her sample of parents of public school pupils were of social class I origin. This highest class, though, holds interesting differences within it in terms of perpetuation of privilege, so that although, as will be seen later, there is a large degree of homogeneity in the values expressed by parents, their 'family patterns' are certainly more heterogeneous. Of particular interest are the figures relating to self-recruitment within various spheres of the occupational elite. For example, while 44.2% of large proprietors and 40.2% of self-employed professionals originated in social class I, the figures for industrial managers and senior administrators were 18.7% and 20.0% respectively. Access for the lower social classes, as would be expected, was lower for the former two categories than for the latter. Therefore, as Heath (1981)[6] states, those occupations with the highest levels of autonomy and financial independence are the ones least accessible to those born outside the privileged strata.

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4 I Fox Private Schools and Public Issues (London: Macmillan 1985) pp28-30

5 J H Goldthorpe Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1980)

6 A Heath Social Mobility (Glasgow: William Collins and Sons Ltd 1981) p67

The statistical connection between public school attendance and recruitment to the 'top jobs' in British society is well established. Whitley (1974)[7] looked at the educational backgrounds of directors of major financial institutions. He found that around 80% of directors of clearing banks, merchant banks and discount houses attended fee paying schools, with the figure for insurance companies reaching 84%. Stanworth and Giddens (1974)[8] add a particular emphasis to this, highlighting how directors of public school (and Oxbridge) background are found in larger firms and are potentially, therefore, able to exert influence in a wider sphere.

Scott (1982)[9] deals with the issue in relation to recruitment to the political elite. In examining the education of Conservative Members of Parliament in 1979, he found 74.4% to have been public school educated. With regard to the top positions in the army, he states that in 1971 90% had had private schooling.

In the legal sphere, Griggs (1985)[10] carried out a

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7 R Whitley "The City and Industry: The Directors of Large Companies, their Characteristics and Connections" in P Stanworth and A Giddens (eds) Elites and Power in British Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1974) p70.

8 P Stanworth and A Giddens "An Economic Elite: A Demographic Profile of Company Chairmen" in P Stanworth and A Giddens (eds) 1974 op cit p82.

9 J Scott The Upper Classes: Property and Privilege in Britain (London: Macmillan 1982) pp163-168

10 C Griggs Private Education in Britain (Lewes: Falmer Press 1985) p47

similar investigation of the law lords again finding a similar pattern of public school attendance (followed by Oxbridge). Giddens (1979) sums up this widespread influence:

"In whichever sector of British society we happen to look, we find the same phenomenon: our institutions are dominated by people educated in the public schools."[11]

Prior to an outline of the content of each chapter, the term 'public school' will be defined. Given the inevitably arbitrary nature of this, the potential for debate is now considerable and while recognizing the reasoning behind Walford's (1986)[12] restriction of this to the Eton/Rugby group schools, here the broader classification of membership of the Headmasters' Conference (HMC) is employed. Although this has the practical advantage of allowing the sociologist a wider perspective, there are also certain scholarly imperatives which dictate this course. For instance, certain 'high status' schools would inevitably be excluded by a more restricted classification. Whatever the merits of identifying the Eton/Rugby group schools as the public school elite they are not the sole possessors of this position within the sector. Furthermore, given the reliance on personal mediation, interpretation and meaning, it would be hard to ignore the fact that those throughout the HMC

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[11] A Giddens "An Anatomy of the British Ruling Class" New Society Vol 50 No 887 4 October 1979 p8

[12] G Walford 1986 op cit pp9-10

(221 schools - Walford 1986)[13] perceive and define themselves as being at 'public school'. This is not to argue a general case of definition by self perception, just that in this instance, coupled with an objective factor viz, belonging to a body such as the HMC, the criterion is appropriate.

Between the introductory and concluding chapters, the first point of focus is the historical development of the sector. It is important to outline both the recurrent themes of relevance to public schools over time and the specific context and practices which are presently dominant. It is this contemporary period which takes precedence in the chapter with an examination of public school information dissemination being accorded some priority. An awareness of the work as an historically-located study becomes particularly intense at this point, for there is a real sense in which the subjects are specifically public school pupils of the 1980s, and while undoubtedly they retain much of the emphases of pupils of earlier periods,they are also developing in an institutional and societal context of some originality.

The literature review both serves to place my work within the development of the wider sociology of education and to unveil concepts which are utilized and revised in

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[13] G Walford 1986 op cit p8

later chapters. Within this, analysis is made of literature focussing both solely on the sector and on wider educational structures, theory and practice.

Detailed elaboration of the methodology employed then follows. Beginning with exposition and critique of 'classic' and recent work in the field of life-stories, attention shifts to the advantages and problems of the approach and a presentation of my own specific development of the technique, including attempts to minimize its disadvantages.

Both the actual schools and the subjects are then described in enough detail to facilitate an appreciation of the remaining chapters. It will become apparent that across both institutions and individuals there are points of marked differentiation as well as convergence. Schools ranging from 'household names' to ex-grammar and direct grant schools are represented, as are ex-pupils whose families know and expect nothing but public schools, alongside those whose involvement was based upon disaffection with state education and/or assistance with fees.

It is to the nature of home life and the relationship of this to the schools concerned that attention is then drawn, examining points of consistency and deviation among pupils and the ideological and physical connections between the two institutions. The foundations of the process, based on class and cultural specificity emerge from this. During

the chapter, an important re-definition of Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is presented in order to describe better what it is that is taken into the school situation across the range of pupils.

There are two distinct parts to the following chapter. The first deals with class perceptions within the schools, revealing their form at both institutional and personal levels. The nature and significance of sub-cultural forms is then discussed dealing with the core issues of the existence of genuine forms, the origins of those involved, levels of exclusion and distinction and their long term relevance.

The next chapter begins with an analysis of female participation, which looks at the class/gender interaction and experiences on the academic and cultural dimensions, revealing that a consistency across these is not the norm. Instead, the blend of ideology and pragmatism produced the basis of a more complex situation. The nature of, and responses to, control then follows, together with discussion of hierarchy, and hierarchically-organized practices. The question of how far observed compliance results from instrumentalism or from a genuine internalization of values rounds off the chapter, which also takes a brief and focussed look at classroom life.

In examining elements of non-academic, extra-curricular and out of school activities, insight is given into the extent to which the schools operate to become the central

organizing feature of life. Beyond this, the component parts of this chapter each provide important evidence on internal priorities and organization.

In producing a chapter on transition, personal and social consequences and attitudes to key social and educational issues, again both consistencies and individually mediated resultant forms are observed. For here, as throughout, it is an awareness of the power and impact of structural and institutional influence coupled with individual mediation that provides access to assessments and conclusions evolving from appropriately contextualized genuine experience.

CHAPTER 2: The Historical Development of Public Schools

In studying the public schools system of the late 1980s, the observer is faced with institutions having a specific reality in the context of their 'time', but it is also evident that they must be perceived as the product of history. For while emphases and control may have altered, historical roots and class identities have never been fundamentally challenged or displaced from the system, rather its longevity and associated traditions have become intrinsic elements of its existence. Therefore, in order to fully appreciate its contemporary nature an examination of the principal phases of its development is needed. The study, however, whilst an historically grounded one has its terms of reference firmly located in the 1980s and, as such, the bulk of the chapter will be concerned with that period. While changes internal to the schools obviously help to illustrate the climate I will go beyond these to establish a more complete framework. The upsurge of the new right as a political and moral force and its relationship to the sector will be presented. An appraisal of the material produced by the communications unit of the sector (Independent Schools Information Service - ISIS) then follows. In a critical look at its literature, the way in which the sector is hoping to portray itself and the dominant concerns of the moment will become apparent. In approaching the analysis of the contemporary situation from multiple angles a more

rounded depiction can be offered of the system at the heart of the study. As an historical overview of a 'sector' it is inevitable that not all school histories will match every element of the 'phases'. Therefore, while generalities are real enough, school variations will induce individual representations of practice, as will be seen later. An assessment of how far recurrent themes can be identified throughout history to their contemporary manifestation will be given.

Although it is widely accepted (Warner 1946, Rae 1981)[1] that Winchester in 1382 was the first public school to be founded, it was not until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that such schools exhibited the characteristic that was to provide the foundation of their reality and of their relationship to the structure of society which has remained a 'constant' to the present day, that is, their ingrained affinity with higher social classes (Warner 1946)[2]. The central reason for the change is that education came to be seen directly as a passage to desired places within the church and the state. As a consequence, the new rich of the era - namely traders and merchants - as well as nobles, abandoned home education in favour of the public schools. Therefore, from this early stage, it is clear that both the established and aspirant elite came to regard the sector as the most appropriate means for the preservation and/or establishment of prestige.

However, toward the end of the eighteenth century an interesting shift occurred in the purposes of those supporting the system, ie, what can be described as a move to attendance for cultural rather than merely practical reasons. As a generality, the classical education provided was not an essential avenue to success, inheritance often ensuring this without recourse to skills or knowledges

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1 R Warner English Public Schools (London: Collins 1946)p11
J Rae The Public School Revolution (London: Faber and Faber 1981) p20

2 R Warner 1946 op cit p15

acquired in the school. Rather, it was something more subtle that acted to bond individuals and classes within schools - status. In this was found a means of differentiation, an element of cultural exclusion by which classes, originally defined by the material, could mark out their distinctiveness and designate themselves as superior. As such, the dual factors of 'academic' and 'cultural' reasons for involvement with public schools, which have alternated and interacted ever since, were established. An appreciation of the role of both, and the latter in particular, is indispensable for understanding the true nature of the sector, its elitist impetus and its participants.

Although Ogilvie (1957)[3] may be accurate in saying that toward the beginning of the nineteenth century the actual 'type' of public school was emerging as a non-local boarding schools distinguished primarily by the social class and status of its pupils, internally the nature of the institutions had not reached its by now familiar composition. Indeed, it has been described as a period of boys' "self government" (Chandos 1984)[4]. It was a period where older boys were not only allowed a fairly free rein in

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3 V Ogilvie The English Public School (London: B T Batsford Ltd 1957) pp114-38

4 J Chandos Boys Together: British Public Schools 1800-1864 (London: Hutchinson 1984) p12

conducting their own pastimes, but also significantly they exercised a good deal of power within the formal school setting itself - 'strikes' being a far from unheard of occurrence at this time.

Now, how far this situation can be regarded as being different in 'form' from other times in history is really open to question as both the structures at the root of these behaviours and the reactions of pupils under conditions threatening the loss of their position have modern day counter-parts.

Chandos (1984) states that despite the "self government" apparent in the schools, it was still the headmaster who held "official" authority. Furthermore, the shift of power to pupils was not initially via rebellion but rather was a pragmatic delegation of authority by staff. So, despite practical differences, the basic structure of power, running from headmaster to staff and then selected pupils has a clear connection with that operating today.

The negative behaviour, outlined above, developed when what pupils regarded as their legitimate authority was undermined. As will be seen later disquiet concerning loss of (previously legitimate) authority has a contemporary reality, which finds expression by means more appropriate to the historical period.

As a consequence of the period of "self government" the middle and upper classes were not having their needs met by the public schools. As a result, parents withdrew pupils to

the extent that only Eton and Rugby numerically prospered. Therefore, the position of the schools in the 'market place', the development of some alternative schools (mainly denominational) and the changing moral tide of society as a whole ensured that changes were forthcoming.

The public schools, as well as society as a whole became more formalized, less brutal and characterized by the prominence of surveillance power (Foucault 1977)[5]. Such changes around the 1820s to 1840s became both associated with, and exemplified by, Arnold's reign at Rugby.

It was the production of "Christian gentlemen" which dominated the priorities of Arnold. His attention was, therefore, squarely focussed on the social dimension of life, for instance in the attempt to reduce the extent of arbitrary brutality which had dominated previously. Of course, it was not the physical aggression in itself he was against, but rather its use by other than those who held legitimate authority. In the employment of a system of praeposters and consequential differentiation of pupils - further emphasized by the greater privileges for sixth formers - clear indications of policy are demonstrated.

While Arnold could not be described as being influential in terms of curriculum, this is not to say he

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[5] M Foucault Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison trans A Sheridan (London: Allen Lane 1977)

was not interested in academia. In fact, as Ogilvie (1957)[6] suggests, it was one of three main aims of Arnold's programme. In full they were: religious and moral principle; gentlemanly conduct and intellectual quality. For Gardner (1973)[7] these expressed themselves in Arnold's singularly most important contribution, that is to establish the public school type and place the emphasis on 'character building'; something which was to maintain and develop its importance in subsequent generations.

His influence based on the above principles was fairly widespread with, amongst others, former pupils of Arnold re-organizing schools along similar lines. Eton was perhaps the most obvious exception, then as now representing an institution so embedded in the mentality of the elite as a symbol of social significance as to ensure its success regardless of internal inadequacies.

Whilst these developments in themselves were perhaps not the most historically significant of any period, they did have two consequences crucial to a sector in crisis. Firstly, there was a far greater degree of financial security as a direct result of increased numbers, and secondly, political attack was deflected away from them since legitimation of a less barbaric system was appreciably easier.

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6 V Ogilvie 1957 op cit p145
7 B R Gardner The Public Schools: An Historical Survey (London: Hamish Hamilton 1973) p102

By the 1850s the public school ethos was developing beyond Arnold's piety. Bamford (1975)[8] claims that by the end of the century, on all major variables, his influence was peripheral. Indeed a growing moral conservatism, conformity rather than individualism and anti-intellectualism were becoming dominant. Sanderson (1983) claims that central to the changes was the strong emphasis given to the secular requirements of industrial society. He states:

"they aimed to produce the physically fit qualities necessary for the army, empire and the city on which the strength of Britain depended".[9]

Again, the newly rich businessmen of the era were impressed by such changes and expansion of the sector followed. The point is, therefore, as Sanderson makes clear, that this expansion was induced primarily by parental demand, not simply a response to the market producing more career openings[10]. Actually between 1851 and 1871 the converse was true, with a distinct lack of opportunities within the professions - the Empire serving as a useful outlet for the public school surplus.

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8 T M Bamford "Thomas Arnold and the Victorian Idea of a Public School" in B Simon and I Bradley (eds) The Victorian Public School (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan 1975) p70

9 M Sanderson Education, Economic Change and Society in England 1780-1870 (London: Macmillan 1983) p38

10 ibid p39

Therefore, the public schools cannot be seen to have been meeting the needs of capitalism in a deterministic manner. Rather, their degree of relative autonomy, the primacy of their "selfish" interests and those of individuals aiming to secure personal advantage, may due to the voluntarism of actors and institutions, working within the confines of their own logic, serve to foster elements of contradiction. This disjuncture being further illustrated by Wiener (1981):

"The public schools nurtured the future elites political, not economic, abilities, and a desire to maintain stability and order far outweighed the desire to maximise individual or national wealth."[11]

Therefore, it was by no means inevitable that the practices of the schools should be compatible with both class needs and those of the capitalist structure, at the same point in time. The relationship being a dynamic one subject to the impact of intervening influences.

It was, then, the Victorian era which produced the vital foundations for the way public schools would be (and be seen to be) organized at least until the mid twentieth century.

Above all else it was probably the emphasis on sport and athleticism that exemplified 'muscular Christianity'.

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[11] M J Wiener English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit 1850-1980 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1981) p21

Such principles, the propaganda of proponents suggested, were meant to induce the dominance of the general interest over selfishness, but, as Simon (1975)[12] points out, in practice the stress on physical prowess produced the opposite. Therefore, while it is certain that the conformity and loyalty supported then (and since) were real enough, the actual mechanisms by which the schools were aiming to cement these were also providing the thrust for personal quest. This of course, should not be regarded with too much surprise when the nature of pupil interactions with society are taken into account. For loyalty and conformity were very much centred on school, class and images of nation, whereas in dealing with the British working class and victims of imperialism, these characteristics were replaced by the principle of natural inequality and the consequence of individual success at the expense of others was pivotal.

Mangan (1975)[13] traces the development of athleticism at Marlborough College and describes the following claims that were advanced in support of it: that it fosters both active and passive courage; it develops self abrogation - a claim based solely on the idea that it provides the potential for denial of rich foods; it fosters patriotism -

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12 B Simon Introduction to B Simon and I Bradley (eds) 1975 op cit p8

13 J A Mangan "Athleticism: A Case Study of the Evolution of an Educational Ideology" in B Simon and I Bradley (eds) 1975 op cit pp147-167

via the common hopes, sympathies and aspirations of house teams and it provides a love of action while playing down hero worship.

He identifies two core contributions to the momentum of its development. Firstly, the trend to anti-intellectualism, which embraced the idea that while the "gifted" were often self interested and morbid, the "ordinary" possessed a more valuable calmness and clarity of judgement. Second, was the growth of British imperialism and the association of the playing fields with the battlefields. Indeed, Mangan (1986)[14] has gone on to show how imperialists world-wide operated with a "moral mission" to produce copies of gentlemen based on the principles of muscular Christianity; a point confirmed by Sherington (1987)[15].

This military connection is further discussed by Best (1975)[16], highlighting the correspondence between desired characteristics in recruits and Victorian public school values, for example, physical strength, leadership and loyalty. Vance (1975)[17], similarly, notes the associated change in the concept of "manliness" during this period, from one based in religion to one

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14 J A Mangan <u>The Games, Ethics and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal</u> (New York: Viking 1986)

15 G Sherington "Review of 'The Games, Ethics and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal'" <u>History of Education Quarterly</u> Vol 27 No 1 Spring 1987 pp101-102

16 G Best "Militarism and the Victorian Public School" in B Simon and I Bradley (eds) 1975 <u>op cit</u> pp129-146

17 N Vance "The Idea of Manliness" in B Simon and I Bradley (eds) 1975 <u>op cit</u> pp115-128

centring on physical characteristics. Also in the realm of sport, Dunning[18] has noted how the type of football played related to the type of school system at the time, and in turn to dominant societal norms. This era was characterised by the introduction of laws of the game which were designed to introduce an element of control while allowing physical contact and "manliness" to continue.

Similarly characteristic of the era was the lack of advancement in science within the schools. Meadows and Brock (1975)[19] highlight two major reasons for this. Firstly, there was a lack of pressure for its introduction from parents, both due to its inferior status to the classics and to its lack of use in later careers. Secondly, its advocates focussed on intellectual benefits yet in an atmosphere of anti-intellectualism the assumed importance for character and morality of the classics was sure to dominate. Furthermore, as Roderick and Stephens (1978)[20] state, although the Clarendon Commission attacked the major public schools for the lack of science, this was accompanied by praise for the emphasis they placed on character building and manliness.

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18 E Dunning "The Origins of Modern Football and the Public School Ethos" in B Simon and I Bradley (eds) 1975 op cit pp168-186

19 A Meadows and W Brock "Topics Fit For a Gentleman: the Problem of Science in the Public School Curriculum" in B Simon and I Bradley (eds) 1975 op cit pp112-114

20 G Roderick and M Stephens Education and Industry in the Nineteenth Century (London: Longmans 1978) p36

So, the public school in the Victorian period held character building at its core, not just for the established upper class but for the rising bourgeoisie as well. In doing so, the abilities of the latter were channelled into activities positively orientated to the prevailing structure, and "synthetic gentlemen"[21] (Wilkinson 1964) were produced. Moreover, Rubinstein (1986)[22] has gone further to argue public schools drew from a wider social range than is usually acknowledged. In terms of pedagogic priority though, the form was set, as J R de S Honey (1975)[23] states, and by the end of the century it was the process and style of education which was more important than the content.

The major changes of this period were not repeated in the twenty years prior to World War One, which was rather a time of consolidation, in which there was a reinforcement of already established characteristics such as fagging and uniform dress.

The inter-war period was not only marked by continuity but also by added prosperity. Interestingly, as highlighted by Gardner (1973)[24], this new success did not just historically follow on from the war but was actually inseparable from it.

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21 R Wilkinson The Prefects (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1964) p4

22 D Rubinstein "Education and the Social Origin of British Elites 1880-1970" Past and Present Vol 112 1986 pp163-167

23 De S Honey "Tom Brown's Universe: the Nature and Limits of the Victorian School Community" in B Simon and I Bradley 1975 op cit pp22-23

24 B R Gardner 1973 op cit p215

The reason for this was that the victory had become linked in the minds of the middle class with the products of the public school system. As such, this 'publicity coup' ensured that not only did the ex-pupils themselves wish to send their sons to the schools, but also a significant number of the new rich. Accompanying these developments and re-affirmations of class support, demographic factors were operating in the sector's favour with a full million more males living in Britain in 1921 than had done in 1911.

The period of prosperity failed to continue in its untroubled form past the mid 1930s. The public schools were negatively affected by the economic crisis which Britain was in the midst of. As such, the sector's nature as dependent upon, and influenced by, wider societal activity is again re-affirmed. However, while the period did actually result in the closure of some schools, the high status institutions were affected to a much lesser degree.

While I have presented the inter-war period as generally one in which the schools were operating from a position of strength, it was also a time in which both criticism and competition were beginning to emerge. Worsley (1940)[25] argued that the schools failed to adjust themselves adequately to the changing nature of inter-war Britain, and earlier, Bryant (1917)[26] had drawn attention to the

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[25] T Worsley Barbarians and Philistines: Democracy and the Public Schools (London: Robert Hale Ltd 1940) pp131-148

[26] V S Bryant The Public School System (London: Longmans, Green and Co Ltd 1917) pp41-59

restricted nature of the curriculum - especially science. Also, the call for reform of athletic dominance was beginning (Waugh 1922)[27].

Competition was present in the form of 'progressive' fee paying schools, these being often both co-educational and freer in discipline. The state sector was showing the first signs of serious competition, with a further problem for the poorer public schools being that the state was providing a pension for teachers - something they could not afford. As early as 1917 their isolation had been somewhat reduced by their entrance into the public examination system.

Despite these undercurrents, the majority of those within the system remained avowedly Conservative, as can be seen from the following writer's position, which is characteristic of that period. Darwin (1929)[28] stated that public schools could take great credit, for despite leaving pupils "disgracefully ignorant" on academic matters, they inculcate a straightforward manliness with habits of obedience, command and courage. Such an assessment from the heart of the sector provides ample illustration of the state of public school life to that time.

Before approaching the following historical era I will clarify the nature of what is to come as there are slight

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27 A Waugh A Public School Life (London: Collins 1922)
28 B Darwin The English Public School (London: Longmans, Green and Co Ltd 1929) p21

variations from the preceding discussion. Firstly, while again basing judgements on a survey of relevant literature, for the contemporary period I am also able to draw on evidence provided from questionnaires and comments of headmasters and senior staff and the additional contribution of ex-pupils where appropriate. These should be viewed as forming complementary input. Secondly, issues raised in Chapter 3, during the critique of specific sociological literature on public schools, will obviously be of relevance to an appreciation of the historical period in which they are located, and therefore, can be regarded as germane, at least in part, to the emphases here.

The post-war changes in public schools are generally viewed as originating in wider societal changes of the 1960s. Although, as will be seen, that period was of central importance, these events acted on a foundation of developments which had been occurring both within and beyond the private sector since 1945.

The optimism characteristic of the late 1940s, borne out by what Robinson (1971)[29] describes as the "war-time consciousness of inter-class solidarity", gave a stress to educational reform, a stress not directed toward abolition of public schools, but rather toward greater access for working class children and in general terms a closer

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[29] G Robinson Private Schools and Public Policy (Loughborough: Loughborough University of Technology 1971) p83

connection between the state and private sectors. Indeed, it was this path that was favoured by the Board of Education's Committee on Public Schools (1944). The tone of the report was far from over critical of the sector despite addressing the most pertinent issues. For instance, they stated:

"there is undoubtedly a very widespread belief that the public schools originate in, and still tend to increase, the cleavage between social classes, and particularly between rich and poor - which is deplored by all men of goodwill and not least by the governing bodies of the public schools themselves".[30]

So, while having gone some way toward an adequate appraisal, the Committee's rather naive and generous interpretation of the motives of those within the system contributed to proposals to open up access across classes and the sexes, with the expressed intention of removing the schools' social exclusivity and accompanying advantage for pupils, rather than recommendations for more fundamental re-organization. However, even in the midst of these restrained statements they recognized that the problem of ex-public school pupils' domination of elite occupational positions went beyond the educational domain to areas out of their sphere of influence.

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[30] Board of Education Committee on Public Schools, Report 1944 pp53-55 in W L Guttsman (ed) The English Ruling Class (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson) p221

Further to this, the 1944 Education Act saw the inclusion of the compulsory registering and inspection of schools in the independent sector. In practical terms, though, as Glennerster and Wilson(1970)[31] highlight, registration was generally only refused on the grounds of building standards, and only excessive educational inadequacy was punished. In fact, the major consequence of the legislation was to give the private sector a legitimate status within the system rather than to control their activities in any direct way. This legitimacy still finds political expression during the contemporary period:

"We do not have two systems of education in England and Wales but one ... enshrined in the Education Act of 1944 ... it is one system with two sectors, the maintained sector and the independent sector".[32]

Moreover, as Simon (1985)[33] has argued, by the time of the Conservative Government of the 1950s, the emphasis had largely shifted away from perspectives on educational reform to practical day to day concerns which reinforced a

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31 H Glennerster and G Wilson Paying for Private Education (London: Allen Lane Penguin Press 1970) pp11-12

32 Baroness Young "Debate on the Assistance Given by Independent Schools to State Schools in Britain" House of Lords 11 August 1984 (Hansard: House of Lords) p1204 cited in D Johnson Private Schools and State Schools: Two Systems or One? (Milton Keynes: Open University Press 1987)

33 B Simon "The Tory Government and Education 1951-60: Background to Breakout" History of Education Vol 14 No 4 1985 pp283-297

structure located in the ideological boundaries of the inter-war period, rather than raising questions.

The influence of other societal institutions on the pattern of public school development is well illustrated in relation to what will be seen later to be a central change in the modern private sector - namely academic emphasis. Although in certain parts of the private sector the stress on academia has long and significant roots (Heward 1984, 1988)[34], it was the expansion of the universities and increased competition for places which induced such a policy change at the general level (Dancy 1963)[35]. However, as a reading of Snow (1959)[36] indicates, the change was a slow one which had not relegated 'expressive' elements of school life to the level of grammar schools by this time, and while wider extra-curricular activities such as drama and music were now incorporated they had not reached the status of traditional pursuits.

The 1950s and early 1960s also saw the Headmasters' Conference suggest changing the nature of the common entrance examination so as not to exclude grammar school boys; the rise of the salaried middle class, both generally

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34 C Heward "Case Study of a Public School 1930 - 1950" in G Walford (ed) British Public Schools: Policy and Practice (Lewes: Falmer Press 1984) pp137-162
C Heward Making a Man of Him: Parents and their Sons' Education at an English Public School 1929-1950 (London: Routledge 1988)

35 J Dancy The Public Schools and the Future (London: Faber and Faber 1963) pp39-60

36 G Snow The Public School in the New Age (London: Geoffrey Bles 1959) pp23-44

and numerically as patrons of the schools, as well as the spur to the sector of the industrial fund for the advancement of science, supplying cash for modernization in this field. Therefore, as Weinberg (1967)[37] stated there was little actual change yet important signs were present, with the changes that had occurred being restricted to the academic area - the expressive mode revealing less genuine movement (Lambert 1966)[38]. In an article in the early 1960s Wakeford (1964a)[39] confirmed that for some schools the academic emphasis was indeed increasing and he actually pointed to some schools who were trying out new "freedoms" for pupils. Having highlighted these minor shifts though, he was still keen to stress that public schools continued to exist on two fundamental principles - education within a hierarchy and education by restraint. He went on (Wakeford 1964b) to cite statistical evidence to show how any academic advance that was underway had not reached traditionally orientated elite schools. Referring specifically to Charterhouse, Eton and Harrow he stated:

"Perhaps partly because of their emphasis on a social rather than educational method of selection and partly because of their old boys' assured status in society independent of academic achievement, their overall emphasis is not primarily academic. They are also the most expensive

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37 I Weinberg 1967 _op cit_ pp53-74
38 R Lambert 1966 _op cit_ ppxi-xxxii
39 J Wakeford "The School as a Community" _Where_ February 1964a pp3-6

schools."[40]

However, it was the political and especially the social conditions of the mid 1960s onwards that was to influence both the speed, and to some extent the direction of changes.

The political threat of the period began with the Wilson Government's manifesto commitment to the integration of public schools into the state sector, and reached probably its most potent form to date with the abolition of the direct grant system (although in practice this served to produce 119 new independent schools). While in the end the advent of the 'great debate' shifted attention away from the public schools, the threat had had some important consequences for the organization of the independent sector.

The question of their public image and legitimacy now came to the fore and 1972 saw the founding of the Independent Schools Information Service (ISIS) whose express purpose was to furnish political supporters with information and to answer the attack of opponents. The importance of this political reaction was the realization of the need to justify their existence - a need which provided another spur to the move to academic prominence and the partial liberalization of internal organization.

The social and cultural changes of the era are, of course, well known, therefore only the most directly

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[40] J Wakeford "Which Public Schools Get the Best 'A' Levels" Where February 1964b p9

relevant need to be touched on here. The revolt against authority of all kinds, the quest for individuality and self expression and the apparent classlessness of popular culture all found their way into the public school, and as Rae (1981)[41] states, tended fairly quickly to produce modifications, though not rejection, of the old compulsions which were the targets of rebellion.

Therefore, this combination of factors had the effect of inducing a number of important changes in public schools which are, of course, of central significance to their contemporary nature.

The dominance of academic study in contemporary public schools is probably the change which best characterizes the overall shift, as the factors which influenced this are, to a large extent, factors underlying the process of change as a whole. Its importance is underlined by the questionnaire data in which all respondents were either of the view that academia had always been the most important element of schooling or had increased in importance over the last twenty years. Only one headmaster gave 'character development' equal standing.

It has already been noted that increased competition for university places played its role, but also of importance were the changing entry requirements, especially

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[41] J Rae 1981 op cit pp91-162

of the elite Oxbridge colleges. For example, the 'closed' awards tying places to particular public schools began to disappear. However, research evidence tends to suggest that this process may not be as complete as apologists for the sector would, and do, like to present, especially at the lower end of the scale. For instance, one subject described an "understanding" which existed between her headmaster and a higher education college Principal to take its ex-pupils regardless of qualifications and further the headmaster would encourage attendance even where grades were sufficient for university. Notwithstanding that, the general move toward objective rationalization was recognizable and accompanied by similar moves outside the university sector, for example in the professions. Therefore, if the aim of the schools was to fill elite positions they needed to furnish their pupils with the means of achieving this - and increasingly this signalled academic qualifications and their necessity for not only satisfying present customers but also attracting new ones.

Alongside these 'structural' factors, there was a need for legitimization which had been exposed by the political attack of the previous decades, and as Salter and Tapper (1981)[42] state, the academic ethos satisfied this requirement perfectly, for the following reasons:

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[42] B Salter and T Tapper Education, Politics and the State: the Theory and Practice of Educational Change (London: Grant McIntyre 1981) pp174-176

(a) it was established in the state (grammar) sector and, therefore, had much support;

(b) the meritocratic principles provided an effective disguise for the reproduction process;

(c) this ethos was not totally alien to previous public school practice;

(d) it was something needed in present day society and fostered by the new right, and

(e) it held broad political appeal.

Going hand in hand with this movement was the acceptance of a plurality of legitimate subjects to be taught, with classics no longer holding the position of being the single high status knowledge. Questionnaire respondents confirmed this trend, often stressing no subject superiority and being as likely to stress the importance of "technology" as English or Maths, without mention of classics. This shift was a move fostered by the same structural, institutional, financial and political factors as influenced the move away from character building as central.

Symptomatic of the post-war changes is the gradual move toward co-education. The degree of change is still highly variable, with many of the schools having adopted the change still restricting the intake to the sixth form level. It seems fairly well accepted that a major reason for this introduction was initially financial (Walford 1986, Rae

1981)[43], although as Rae also points out, the move served as something of an insurance against a political "fascist backlash"[44] following the liberal atmosphere of the late 1960s and early 1970s. So, although it could be argued that the process was a consequence of the general mood of the era toward sexual equality, taking into account the underlying nature of the public school it seems highly unlikely that the desire for social justice would have been a strong enough force in itself to motivate change. Although, it may certainly prove to have been of partial and indirect relevance - by facilitating potential parental support for such moves.

The lack of any serious ideological shift is demonstrated in statements made by senior staff. For instance, one headmaster clearly stated the single reason for female inclusion was "to add to numbers" and at another school a senior head of house, referring to a policy of sixth form inclusion only, stated unequivocally "we have no need of them in the first three years". Similar perspectives were reported widely by subjects to exist across the range of schools, many of these pupils - by virtue of holding senior positions of authority - having access to knowledge

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43 G Walford 1986 op cit pp148-149
J Rae 1981 op cit pp148-149
44 J Rae 1981 op cit p132

of values and practices of staff as expressed in daily interactions.

This lack of serious consideration of the issues involved is demonstrated in the recent writings of J Rae (1987) - an important figure in the contemporary independent sector. He states:

"The girls themselves cared little about the motives."

Of course, in saying this he is glossing over the social and cultural realities which face females in male dominated schools, and while such concerns may not be regularly articulated, this does not diminish the actuality of different and often lower status experiences of schooling. He goes on to say:

"My impression is that the more mature girls adopt an attitude of amused detachment as though they are studying at a foreign university."[45]

This acknowledging by implication that the schools are unwilling to change their fundamental assumptions about the nature of gender expectations and that their definition of a successful female participant will be one who does not challenge this view, or develop any serious interest in establishing a (culturally) complete involvement with the system, or potentially threaten established power relations.

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[45] J Rae Letters From School (London: Collins 1987) pp 155, 159

An area of change to be dealt with in more detail later is the nature of teaching staff, and the way in which its composition and relation to the school is being affected by, and may in turn affect, other developments (Walford 1984, 1986)[46]. Essentially, Walford claims we are seeing a greater convergence between the teachers of the state and private sectors.

Important changes have been witnessed in certain general organizational features of the schools. Up to the late 1960s writers (eg Weinberg 1967)[47] were still describing a clear division between parents and school life, although Weinberg did recognize the potential for a clash between them if the situation was to continue. However, with the recent increase in day pupils and a greater tolerance of home visits for boarders the possible crisis has largely been averted and the potential for a transactional influence on the pupil between family and school increases to a level well beyond previous eras.

Alongside the now greater potential for external influences coming in the form of family involvement, the explosion of post-war popular culture is another source of interest, though in the light of evidence from the study, I would suggest that rarely does it achieve genuinely

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46 G Walford "The Changing Professionalism of Public School Teachers" in G Walford (ed) 1984 op cit pp113-115
G Walford 1986 op cit pp85-113

47 I Weinberg 1967 op cit pp 176-177

significant levels of influence in comparison with class and/or school located activity.

Within the school itself, the alterations in non-academic life can probably best be summed up as a lessening of compulsion which is related to certain activities rather than adopted as an overall principle. For example, religious services have tended to reduce in number, while involvement in the combined cadet force has, in a large number of schools, been timetabled against either the Duke of Edinburgh Award or some form of community service - though often remaining compulsory for an initial period. A greater variety of extra-curricular activity (though a continued emphasis on traditionally high status activity) and the reduction and/or re-defining of 'fagging' also represents the trend well. Although D Rae (1983)[48] has argued that 'bullying' as a specific reality has not in any way diminished.

The logical corollary of these developments has been a growing stress on individualism. Indeed, it is difficult to envisage how the academic ethos could have developed otherwise. The differing forms of its manifestation are considered in later chapters.

The question of the decline of corporal punishment is particularly interesting since it displays well the degree of consciousness in the sector during the 1970s of their

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[48] D Rae A World Apart (Guildford: Lutterworth 1983) p27

public image. For as Rae (1981)[49] states among those parents actually involved in the sector there was little or no demand for the change, rather the emphasis on projecting a favourable image to society at large was at the root of such moves.

Changes in discipline provide an especially useful example of inter-generational shifts in policy, for while the above developments are well documented, nearly one quarter of questionnaire respondents stated that after a brief period of liberalism they are now returning to a more traditional policy - the influence of the political and moral tide of the 1980s showing through. Pupil attitudes provide even clearer evidence on the importance of the 1980s context, with over 80% of Headmasters/senior staff stating that following a period of radicalization in the late 1960s pupils were now largely 'Conservative' and 'work orientated'.

These, then, can be seen as the major post-war changes. As has been shown historical forces constantly operate to alter and refine certain policies and ensure their co-existence alongside more secure ones originating in different eras. It is important to state that such alterations are involved in a continuous process, responding and interacting with conditions prevalent in the wider society alongside the specific needs of the individual

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[49] J Rae 1981 op cit p118

institution. In discussing such developments, though, it is equally vital not to present them as evidence of a fundamental shift in relation to the role and location of the schools in class society. This has remained remarkably static. Alterations of content, inevitably devoid of an ideological re-appraisal, merely represent a re-alignment regarded as most appropriate for supporting the interests of school, sector and class.

The New Right

In a discussion of the 'new right', we are dealing with a movement which aims to extend its impact beyond the public domain into the personal. Though the effects of economic policy have been widely felt, it is the accompanying moral dimension that has enabled this political force to develop so extensively. The new right has its most powerful political manifestation in Britain in the form of the Thatcher Government and, as such, that will form the base for this presentation.

For Riddell (1985)[50], it is the moral dimension to Thatcherism that marks its distinctiveness. Rather than concentrating solely on the political he is concerned to stress her personal influence and as such accentuates the

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[50] P Riddell The Thatcher Government (Updated Edition) (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd 1985) pp5-10

importance of the structure of activity as much as the content. In doing so, for example, the fundamental nature of leadership and organization become regarded as serious concerns for discussion. He goes on to describe the themes which, by definition of most regular inclusion in Thatcher's speeches and interviews, represent the character of espoused concerns for the new right as a whole. These include the shifting of responsibility onto the individual and the family unit, hard work, patriotism, freedom, duty, self respect, initiative and independence. All these are located firmly in the socio-cultural experiences of individuals and thereby serve to re-define the core concerns of policy.

Bosanquet (1983)[51] complements this list with further themes which demonstrate the sphere within which ideological elaborations and policy developments occur. These are the belief in the natural tendency to order, the vital role of the entrepreneur and probably most crucial of all, the acceptance of the inevitability of inequality as an acceptable consequence of narrowly defined freedom.

Beyond the Conservative Party, the new right was finding favour with all manner of pressure groups, who recognized it as the most likely vehicle for the achievement of their goals. The issues concerned have something of

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[51] N Bosanquet After the New Right (London: Heinemann 1983) pp8-14

a familiar tone to them now and included those raised by proponents of tax cutting, supporters of private industry and opponents of public sector dominance.

Kavanagh (1987)[52] has clarified the constituent elements of the new right, differentiating two potentially contradictory groups. Firstly, the libertarians, who believe in personal choice as absolute and secondly, the authoritarians, whose priorities rest with anti-permissiveness and automatic respect for authority. The affinity with public school life is especially clear in this light and will be discussed later.

Interestingly, the new right has throughout its period of advance been accompanied by attempts at legitimation from academic quarters. Professed allegiance to economic theorists is well known, but in journals such as the Salisbury Review this is extended to moral and cultural issues. For instance, J North (1987) presents the following assessment of gender relations:

"The mere fact that women have been encouraged to take up certain roles and life styles and have been absent from others does not show that they have been oppressed in the process ... men and women express their human nature through the realities of their embodiment and, as a result, their 'negotiating positions' within society are bound to be

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[52] D Kavanagh "The Rise of Thatcherism" <u>Social Studies Review</u> Vol 3 No 2 1987 pp48-53

different. It is not surprising or unjust if certain characteristics (biological or psychological) fit one more sex more naturally than the other." She continues "In the real world, freedom and constraint go hand in hand ... without restrictions and channels of accepted behaviour, such as those granted to us through gender characteristics and distinctions we could not act at all ... Far from conceptions of gender being obstacles to our self expression, I believe that it is only through maintaining them in existence and in adapting ourselves to their demands that we are able to realize our true human nature as embodied persons."[53]

Therefore, we are presented with a philosophical justification of a political perspective calling on those pillars of new right ideology - assumed biological bases of behaviour and a 'new realism'.

De Candole (1988) can be seen to be within the same ideological framework in his discussion of educational practice:

"Teaching was always a modest profession; yet in all this one is impressed most of all by the overwhelming arrogance of the contemporary pedagogue - his attempt to transform society and to turn schools into nurseries for the 'new man'. When the teacher believes the world can be

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[53] J North "The Politics of Gender" The Salisbury Review Vol 6 No 1 1987 pp24-25

saved by his teaching it is little wonder that he loses sight of the more prosaic skills in the classroom."[54]

Underlying this, therefore, he is alluding to equally significant components of the new right populism - 'political' interference in the classroom and to a return to educational basics and traditional teaching methods.

By the time of Thatcher's second election victory, critics who had always recognized the dangers of this ideology were now seeing it transferred to something of a long term reality. Gamble (1983)[55] argued that Thatcher had established a new consensus on beating the recession and was setting the agenda not only for supporters but for opponents as well. This shifting of the terms of the political debate was exemplified by concerted policies designed to disable bastions of labour identity - council housing and trade unions being two of the most visible examples.

For Benn (1985)[56] discussion of Thatcherism is a distraction as for him the focus on the individual serves to diminish the potential for adequate Socialist analysis located uncompromisingly in conceptions of the decay of

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54 J De Candole "Teaching Ignorance" The Salisbury Review Vol 7 No 2 1988 p65

55 A Gamble "Thatcher: The Second Coming" Marxism Today Vol 27 No 7 July 1983 pp7-14

56 T Benn "Who Dares Wins" Marxism Today Vol 29 No 1 Jan 1985 pp12-15

capitalism in Britain. It is here, he argues, that the reasons for the loss of post-war advances for the working class, gays and women are to be found.

Hall (1985)[57] does not, though, regard the term Thatcherism as an over-personalization, but rather feels it can be used to describe the nature of a very specific political form at a particular point in history. Its distinctiveness, he argues, is demonstrated both in the combination of the politically old and new and in the fact that this period was seeing an extent of political involvement by right wing groups unprecedented in recent history. The public schools were no exception.

Indeed, such analysis remains at the forefront of sociological and political discussion, although the nature of 'Thatcherism' or the British new right, has yet to inspire theoretical agreement amongst opponents and commentators.[58] Furthermore, Tuckman (1989) concludes:

"there is still a long way to go before there is an adequate intellectual response from the left".[59]

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57 S Hall "Faith Hope or Clarity" Marxism Today Vol 29 No 1 Jan 1985 pp15-19

58 The following being the principal recent contributions.
A Gamble The Free Economy and the Strong State: the Politics of Thatcherism (London: Macmillan 1988)
S Hall The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left (London: Verso 1988)
B Jessop, K Bonnett, S Bromley, T Ling Thatcherism: a Tale of Two Nations (Oxford: Polity Press 1989)
P Hirst After Thatcher (London: Collins 1989)

59 A Tuckman "Thatcherism" Sociology Vol 23 No 3 1989 p446

The New Right and Public Schools: Ideological and Practical Connections

In order to adequately grasp the nature of the relationship between the political ideology of the new right and the character of public schools, the connection has to be acknowledged on two levels. Firstly, that of fundamental ideological affinity whereby dimensions internal and integral to both bodies parallel each other simply as a consequence of their independent realities. Secondly, a more physical interaction borne of a recognition of their 'likeness' and a perception of the potential for a mutually advantageous liaison. As such, both emerge as relevant to the analysis.

Salter and Tapper (1985)[60] state that, at a general level, beyond any specific institutional context, Thatcher (as leader of the Conservative Party) needed the intellectual networks of the right as much as they needed her to articulate and activate their views, and between 1975 and 1979 a set of policy groups reflecting main areas of interest were established which worked to integrate the party with the intellectuals. Specifically in the educational arena it was the Black Papers which were the main channel for assimilating and integrating new right

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60 B Salter and T Tapper Power and Policy in Education: The Case of Independent Schooling (Lewes: Falmer Press 1985) pp166-180

ideology, embracing the explicit intention of re-defining consensus away from the liberal hegemony. As J Rae (1989) has recently stated:

"The theme of all the Black Papers was to question every assumption on which progressive education and comprehensive schooling was based. The virtues of the grammar school, of traditional methods of teaching, and of the independent school were forcefully argued."[61]

Now, the independent sector were not merely observers of this process, but rather were taking a direct role in offering explicit input both to the Black Papers and to the development of the closely connected, "National Council for Educational Standards". As such as Salter and Tapper (1985) argue:

"In clearly allying themselves with the right's ideological counter attack in education, the private schools were deliberately helping to sponsor ideas and values which presumably they saw to be politically advantageous."[62]

Confirmation of this judgement is provided by looking at the principle features of the Black Papers; respect for authority, discipline, 'traditional' values relating to family and moral issues and the acceptance of inequality as the foundation of the social order were all highly

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[61] J Rae Too Little, Too Late? The Challenges That Still Face British Education (London: Collins 1989) p29
[62] B Salter and T Tapper 1985 op cit p175

regarded. Furthermore, it was indeed the public schools that were held up as the practical embodiment of these and the standard to which all education should be directed.

Pring (1986)[63] is keen to establish the context for government support for the sector in understanding specific educational policy shifts. Both in recognition of the role of the assisted places scheme and the increasing stress on the ability to pay in the state sector, it is argued that there has been a marked movement toward increasing the appeal of the public school, a trend located within a pattern of reduced public expenditure and the promotion of notions of individual responsibility.

Walford (1987)[64] approaches this relationship from an interesting and slightly different angle. He describes how, since 1979, the government has given significant support, financial as well as ideological to independent schools. Regulations relating to charitable status and the aforementioned assisted places scheme are examples of the way in which the sector has become more dependent rather than independent over the Thatcher decade. Therefore, while the image makers may have embraced the term independent, the reality runs counter to this to some degree.

Beyond questions of specific policies the nature of the

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63 R Pring "Privatisation of Education" in R Rogers (ed) Education and Social Class (Lewes: Falmer Press 1986)
64 G Walford "How Dependent is the Independent Sector?" Oxford Review of Education Vol 13 No 2 1987 pp275-296

underlying affinity is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in relation to the two component groups of the new right discussed by Kavanagh (1987)[65] and outlined earlier, namely - the Libertarians and the Authoritarians. This is because there is a clear comparison to be made with the principal dimensions inherent in public school practice. Here, I am not referring to the existence of two genuine groups as an actuality, but rather the two underlying themes of school life which influence both policy and attitudinal orientation in relation to the commitment to elite production and reproduction. In the institutional context these forms may find their corresponding elements in:

a) the endeavour to foster the development of an expectation of exercising power and expressing individual choice and freedom, whilst combining this with

b) an absolute devotion to discipline and control as exhibited through hierarchy. And just as the relationship has an uneasy feel to it in the new right so too it provides the potential for complications in school life.

The electoral success of the Conservative Party and their instigation and operationalization of ideological reversals has certainly served to put the sector in a position of strength. Being presented as 'the' mode of

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[65] D Kavanagh 1987 op cit

educational practice has provided them with a legitimation and status which ensures continued interaction between the two as long as they are both in a position to assist in meeting the ideological and practical needs of the other.

Indeed, the relationship can be seen to have remained solid to date, still working within the same world view, by reference to the following quote from the ex-Secretary of State for Education, K Baker:

"One of the freedoms enjoyed by the independent sector is freedom from political diktat by those who seek to use education for the purpose of social engineering. This distinction between the independent and parts of the maintained sector is thrown into much sharper relief with the arrival of a new generation of inner city politicians determined to impose on teachers and pupils political rather than educational priorities. This freedom from local authority diktat is one which I want to extend to head teachers, parents and pupils in the maintained sector as well."[66]

This quotation perhaps uncovers the crucial component of the relationship, ie, that in accompanying matters of content this political force is not only directing attention away from the elitist, class orientated aims and practices of the system, but is actually attempting to identify the

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[66] K Baker 1987 cited on ISIS Independent Schools and the Conservative Party (nd)

schools as the very essence of apolitical education - facilitating legitimized social and cultural reproduction and thereby satisfying school, party and class interests.

Concerns and Emphases of Self Presentation and Promotion in the Contemporary Private Sector

In turning to the material that is explicitly produced by ISIS with the aim of fostering what is presently perceived to be the most desirable picture of itself, it will become apparent how a sector historically grounded in conceptions of elitism and class alliance now regards its most profitable modes of representation. In taking a critical look at the statements on politics, class, internal practices and external connections, the historical survey will be provided with critical input going beyond an appreciation of general trends to concrete displays of priorities and concerns specific to the socio-political context.

Following the discussions of the previous subsection, an important starting point here is the sector's continuing emphasis on to the need for political legitimacy. Indeed, despite the identification of the sector's current strong position in this respect, their concern regarding future potential problems is evident. This is apparent on the ISIS Association membership form where D Woodhead - its national director states:

"We must not be complacent. The threat to our schools may be more covert, but it is still there." He is equally clear of the task for the sector: "that means creating a new political consensus in which independent schools are free from the threats of abolition or measures which would restrict access to them ... to do this, the ISIS Association needs more members and more funds. It needs more supporters of independent education of all political persuasions to help to secure a stable future for independent schools"[67] (his emphasis).

Indeed, to this end, ISIS has prepared a leaflet[68] in which points for 'essential action' are presented. These include pressuring candidates and MPs via the press and generally "cultivating ... local press and broadcasting media immediately". These and other tactics are regarded as groundwork to be intensified during a run up to a general election. It is against such a perception and programme of activities that other publications can now be analyzed - recognizing not only the overall partisan nature of protestations but also the specific purpose underlying their actual construction and content.

The theme of the class composition of schools is one which must inevitably receive full analysis and it is

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67 David Woodhead ISIS membership form (nd)
68 ISIS How to Rally Support for Independent Schools (nd)

certainly a recurring point of discussion in the ISIS publications. Interestingly, though, there is an explicit playing down throughout of the inexorable connections that the schools had, and continue to have, with certain social classes. Rather, certainly influenced by the quest for political legitimacy and the ever present desire to attract the new rich, there is a denial of absolute exclusivity. They state:

"It used to be thought that only rich and privately educated people sent their children to independent schools. Parents from other backgrounds feared that their childen would feel out of place. This is certainly not true today."[69]

Such an assessment immediately raises two problems. Firstly, the inference, it appears, is intended to be that people of diverse social backgrounds attend public schools in fairly equal numbers. This is not the case, as those first generation pupils who are accepted (due, in no small measure, to perpetual 'survival' needs of the institution) are in the vast majority of cases of at least middle class standing (see later this chapter). Secondly, it suggests that first generation pupils belong to, and identify with, the school in the same way and to the same extent as

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[69] ISIS Independent Schools: Would they be Right for My Child? ISIS Information Document No 16 (revised) 1987

'traditional' pupils. The evidence presented in Chapter 7 serves to question this assumption.

A complementary position is displayed in a further booklet, though this also inadvertently displays something of other primary yet veiled perspectives. It states:

"Parents of children at our schools have often given up expensive holidays and cars, taken in lodgers or sold houses and bought cheaper ones. They believe it is worth spending the money on a good education for their children."[70]

So, here the reader is presented with a carefully prepared statement in which the feature that unifies potential and actual parents is distanced from class and financial considerations and instead located within classless conception of deep concern for the child's welfare to the point of self sacrifice. However, when a practical dimension is added to the presentation the representative nature of such practices among public school families does appear somewhat dubious. Since fees are currently often in excess of £6,000 pa and since a family may have more than one child at school, a strong financial basis would seem to be required which would leave any of the above ineffectual and peripheral.

Perhaps a more genuine expectation of family organization is displayed in another quotation from the

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[70] ISIS Plan Early ISIS Document No 14 (revised) 1987b p4

same booklet:

"Many families find that they can afford to pay fees out of the mother's earned income."[71]

This statement assumes that the female income is not required for meeting the general financial needs of the family. Furthermore, it presents a particular image of being female - as inevitably making insignificant, rather than central, contributions to family income - which has its parallels in the pattern of gender expectations expressed in day to day life in public schools (see Chapter 7).

Discussion of the assisted places scheme[72] is a further means by which ISIS attempts to display a 'modern' image, free from class bias, selecting figures to demonstrate how the unemployed and single parent families benefit from the scheme. The very mention of these groups illuminates the seriousness with which the schools regard image creation. For I doubt if many observers, even within the sector, would sincerely suggest that concern for the welfare of these groups was, or indeed is, integral to the public school raison d'etre.

The logical corollary of minimizing the emphasis on the class identity of the sector would be to underplay the significance of the elite core of schools as represented by

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71 ibid p4
72 ISIS Assisted Places Scheme (nd)

the Headmasters Conference (HMC). This is again consistently what is found in the literature. For instance, in talking of the political threat from the Labour Party, they present a situation in which those schools that help the disadvantaged would be treated in the same way as 'famous' schools.[73]

In presenting this 'red herring' they are glossing over the fact that in Labour Party publications (1980, 1981)[74] it is made clear that private schools for the handicapped would not be abolished. Focussing on such 'side issues' would appear to be an attempt to shift attention away from those institutions committed to providing high cost education for a class based minority for no other purpose than to secure their continued advantage.

Emphasis on peripheral constituent parts of the sector is developed regularly. For instance, in discussing 'specialist' schools[75] the issue of handicap is again raised. The possible loss of 'choir schools' is presented as a cultural catastrophe with G Peacocke, Chair of the Choir Schools Association 1980 arguing:

"to dismantle our schools is to imperil, if not destroy, yet another noble strain of this nation's life".[76]

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73 ISIS Independent Schools and the Labour Party (nd)
74 Labour Party Private Schools: a Discussion Document (London: Labour Party 1980)
Labour Party A Plan for Private Schools (London: TUC/Labour Party Liaison Committee 1981)
75 ISIS Specialist Schools (nd)
76 ISIS Choir Schools (nd)

And while their role in 'supporting religious freedom'[77] is given a similar airing, it is perhaps the discussion of the merits of boarding schools[78] which most clearly exemplifies the selectivity of discussion. For despite being one of the most important features of traditional patterns of public school education, relating closely to the elite schools and their role in the formation of occupational and social elites, in giving examples of 'pupils who benefit' from boarding no mention is made of the sons of traditional families (though the army is represented) but rather the reader is told of a dyslexic girl who benefits from extra classes and a 'shy' girl from a remote area who gained friends.

Moving on to descriptions of internal practices and consequences, problematic perspectives are again advanced. In ISIS Document No 16 we find confirmation of Rae's (1981) assessment that disciplinary changes were made with public image firmly in mind. This is so much the case here as to represent a significant distancing from their past. It states:

"Tom Brown's Schooldays are dead and gone. Independent schools have completely changed in the last 25 years"[79] (my emphasis).

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77 ISIS Independent Schools and Religious Education (nd)
78 ISIS Boarding Schools (nd)
79 ISIS 1987 op cit

Therefore, this extends beyond minor shifts of presentation to a removal of all the associations with harsh images that have traditionally accompanied perceptions of public school life.

As for the consequence of this education, a separate publication provides a very specific account:

"Independent schools have for generations provided a sound education for boys and girls and have been helping to produce well educated self disciplined and motivated people who have made a positive contribution to the nation's welfare."[80]

However, there is no mention of the fact that 'for generations' the standard of academic education was, by general agreement, consistently poor, or the undeniable truth that while females have been catered for by the system, the elite schools have been, and in many cases continue to be, either exclusively male or male dominated - both numerically and ideologically. No mention is made of the social inadequacies that are often exhibited by products of the system (see Chapter 9) and how far, as a generality, they can be regarded to have made "positive contributions to the nation's welfare" must surely relate to the personal consequences and interpretations of reality as influenced by class location and/or a political assessment of it.

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[80] ISIS What is ISIS? 1987c p2

The literature[81] also makes the most of concepts for which the new right has made a determined claim. By reference to various carefully selected international declarations - such as the UNESCO covenant against discrimination in education - they proffer the feeling that abolition would constitute an attack on fundamental human rights, be unacceptable in a democratic nation and contradict the basic right of individuals to spend post-tax income as they wish. Now, the problem here, as with the new right philosophy more generally, is that such abstract principles of democracy, human rights and freedom are always provided with but one (essentially simplistic) possible interpretation without reference to the consequence of such an operationalization for those negatively affected. As such, the inevitable result is that concepts which should, it can be logically argued, accompany the above, such as social justice and equality and access to these irrespective of ability to pay, remain absent from the presentation.

Concerning views on, and relationship with, the state sector an impression is given of a fundamental belief in genuine partnership and a generalized lack of critical feelings and comments.[82] The research findings, as demonstrated in Chapter 6, offer an illuminating rebuttal to

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[81] ISIS Speaker's Notes (nd)
[82] ibid

this based on recognized attitudes articulated on a day to day level.

The issue of charitable status of public schools is one which inevitably has become subject to the attentions of the sector's image makers. For not only does it immediately stand out as an obvious point of attack for opponents, but it provides much prized financial entitlements (which amounted to £30 m in 1986) from the state which the sector is anxious to protect.[83] The following represents a summary of the legitimations used to support the validity of the status quo in this respect.

Their case rests largely on the intrinsic value of education. They state:

"Education has been considered charitable for four centuries. The provision of education benefits the whole community and is, therefore, worthy of charitable status."[84]

In this assessment, though, there is no differentiation between education accessible to all and that restricted to those able and willing to pay. As such the assumption must be that the benefits alluded to derive from the practices engaged in by ex-public school pupils in society's positions of power. As stated earlier, in a related context, such a conception rests on a framework of political and moral judgements and the degree to which such practices can be

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83 ISIS Independent Schools and Charitable Status (nd)
84 ibid

regarded as beneficial - an assessment relating to the degree of class correlation involved. Similarly, not discussed is which group of people is supposed to constitute the 'community' spoken of. The use of the term appears to owe more to the adoption of an 'in word' used to offer a more integrated cross class image than to any serious consideration of its appropriateness. Furthermore, it is argued that by removing charitable status, schools would become more expensive and, therefore, more exclusive. Taking into account the historical nature of the sector, the degree of genuine concern underlying such a statement must be open to debate.

Finally, I turn to the 'myths' that the sector is eager to dispel.[85] Perhaps the two most illuminating are the following.

a) 'That the schools are socially divisive'. Their argument is that the schools reflect rather than instigate inequality and that "the children attending independent schools come from all social and economic backgrounds."[86] However, I will argue that the schools are inextricably linked with class inequality, and to present them as either a cause or a function of class structure is to trivialize the relationship. Also, as demonstrated, the ideological foundations of the sector accept inequality as actually

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85 ISIS Myths About Independent Schools (nd)
86 ibid

both desirable and inevitable. As for the range of backgrounds at public schools, the concentration of middle and upper class children is statistically clear with any working class representation being little more than a token. Indeed Halsey, Heath and Ridge (1980)[87] state:

"The public schools are remarkable in their social homogeneity."

They describe a situation in which 70% of public school pupils were drawn from the 'service' classes (only 13.7% of the sample) and there seems no reason to suggest any recent radical alteration to this.

b) 'That there is no longer an old boy network' - again a claim which is severely dented by the contemporary evidence (see Chapter 9).

During the course of this chapter the development of the sector has been traced through an identification and description of its major identifiable periods and accompanying practices that dominated these. In approaching the contemporary situation, the examination of the relevance of the 'new right' and the assessment of the very considered, organized and specific approach to self presentation adopted by ISIS were given central emphasis. Through an appreciation of the thinking and priorities of the sector (and essentially the concern to play down the

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[87] A Halsey A Heath and J Ridge 1980 op cit p51

elitist image without actually altering their foundations and values) later discussions of research findings across a range of issues can be fully utilized.

In stressing the historical reality of the sector, I have been keen to identify contemporary realities, despite at times their quite specific nature, as the most recent extension of an ongoing process, both as affected by prevailing conditions and as requiring understanding in relation to underlying structural imperatives originating in their specific position in the stratification system. This recognition is made all the more appropriate by the identification of recurrent themes, which despite manifesting themselves with differing contents, have been of constant significance through history. It is certainly a dynamic system that is being addressed but not one divorced from inter-generational patterns.

The position of the sector in the market place dictating an over-riding concern with survival, an entry inevitably dominated by the wealthier classes and a reliance on assimilating the new rich of each era, all represent examples of consistent themes. Others include the inter-relationship with other institutions, such as the universities, the influence of parents (whether direct or indirect), the recognition by clientele of the schools as a means of preservation and acquisition of elite status and the accompanying vital role of 'culture' as a part of the process of identification, differentiation and elitism.

Beyond this is found the potential for internal conflict during periods of restructuring of content - largely a result of established dominant groups fearing a loss of power; the reaction to, and interaction with, changing moral norms of society and, finally, the inherent need to legitimize their existence in the face of potential political threats. Such a list of continuities offering clear justification for recognition of the historical dimension to a study inevitably drawn toward contemporary evidence.

CHAPTER 3 - Recent Contributions to the Sociology of Education

This literature review will be presented in two separate parts. The first will focus upon developments in the sociology of education (and cultural analysis) which, while not generally dealing with public schools in any direct way, serve to provide the theoretical context within which the investigation was developed. Solely theoretical work is complemented by relevant empirical studies - largely qualitative in method. With no studies of directly comparable technique and subject matter being available for discussion, ethnographic and working class studies have proved to be the most lucrative source of insights.

The studies will be considered in the following order, recognizing that the categories are imposed ones and not necessarily without common themes. The Manchester studies of the 1960s[1] will be analyzed at the outset as these marked the genesis of a new era of school studies, with the 'new sociology'[2] of Young and others being covered immediately afterwards. The neo-Marxist input to the field, in the

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1 C Lacey Hightown Grammar (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1970)
D Hargreaves Social Relations in a Secondary School (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1967)

2 M F D Young (ed) Knowledge and Control (London: Collier-Macmillan 1971b) G Whitty and M F D Young (eds) Explorations in the Politics of School Knowledge (Driffield: Nafferton Books 1976)

following period, is best exemplified by Althusser[3] and Bowles and Gintis[4]. The bulk of the section will concentrate upon what can loosely be described as the 'post-reproduction' theorists, a broad classification within which I have chosen to include not only Willis[5], the American 'resistance' theorists and such writers as Connell[6] and McLaren[7], but also Bourdieu[8], for reasons which will become clear later. A recent study by Aggleton[9], making use of Bourdieu's concepts, will be covered immediately following the discussion of Bourdieu. A brief discussion of political socialization and an examination of social closure as a concept, and work relevant to it, will complete the wider literature review.

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3 L Althusser "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in B Cosin (ed) Education: Structure and Society (Harmondsworth: Penguin 1972)

4 S Bowles and H Gintis Schooling in Capitalist America (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1976)
S Bowles and H Gintis "Contradiction and Reproduction in Educational Theory" in R Dale et al (eds) Education and the State: Schooling and the National Interest (Lewes: Falmer Press 1981)

5 Based around P Willis Learning to Labour (Farnborough: Saxon House 1977)

6 R W Connell et al "Class and Gender Dynamics in a Ruling Class School" Interchange Vol 12 Nos 2-3 1981 pp102-117
R W Connell et al Making the Difference (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin 1982)

7 P McLaren Schooling as a Ritual Performance: Towards a Political Economy of Educational Symbols and Gestures (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1986)

8 Concepts and themes which evolved across a range of works, individually referenced later

9 P Aggleton Rebels Without a Cause: Middle Class Youth and the Transition from School to Work (Lewes: Falmer Press 1987)

The review will go on to deal with sociological literature specifically concerned with public schools. This will begin with an assessment of the work carried out in the 1960s and concentrate on that which has recently been produced focussing on, or of significance to, the 1980s. Matters of theory and empirical content are both the subject of appraisal.

Lacey[10] was essentially concerned with the process of sub-cultural formation, relating this to stratification within the school itself. He argued that the central processes involved were those of differentiation and polarization - these gradually developing as pupils moved through the school. The result was the establishment of two opposed, and strictly defined, sub-cultures, such patterns being strongly associated with class differentiation. Sub-cultural formation was regarded as a consequence of the degree of identification with, or rejection of, a system conferring either high or low status on an individual, with this becoming reinforced by teacher responses dependent on different forms of behaviour.

For Lacey, the process of differentiation of pupils was one clearly affected by social class. By this he was not referring to any explicit bias against the working class child in the school environment, rather he emphasized what he described as "class linked handicaps ... taken into the classroom situation"[11]. As such he was alluding to differences in accent, failure to do homework and being disturbed by the attitudes of teachers. He summed up the problems as he saw it, by arguing that the differentiation

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[10] C Lacey 1970 op cit
[11] C Lacey 1970 op cit p80

toward anti-school culture is a consequence of working class pupils being more difficult to teach and less easily controlled than the middle class children.

While recognizing the relevance of class for understanding the nature of relationships between staff and pupils and in centring the origin of the anti-school culture on a reaction against failure, and in turn, on inadequacies of resources in working class homes, issues relating to the structure and influence of wider society were beyond the terms of reference of the study (Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies 1981)[12]. The latter critics argue that the notion of culture was inadequately dealt with, working class attitudes and behaviours being viewed as some kind of deviance from the rational ideal, this being explained as a part of the overall 'failure'. They claim that Lacey's style ignores the question of whether there is anything intrinsically problematic about the existence of a 'working class'[13] and how the structural position occupied within the hierarchy relates to the attitudes of parents and pupils in any 'real' sense.

A further difficulty of the study lies in the usefulness of the conceptual split between pro- and anti-school

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[12] Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (Education Group) Unpopular Education: Schooling and Social Democracy in England Since 1944 (London: Hutchinson 1981) pp134-135

[13] ibid p141

groups. Hammersley and Turner (1984)[14], in looking at Lacey's own data, describe the often instrumental motivation found to lie behind conformity and the employment by pupils of a 'balancing act' displaying different behaviour across differing situations. Also, the importance of long and short term 'pay offs' in deviant activity rather than inevitable attachment to alternative cultures was noted. The inadequacy of such a simple classification will similarly become apparent in the public school context.

Lacey's study, therefore, can be seen to suffer from a number of deep rooted problems. However, this does not mean it is without strengths. These include a recognition that the relationship between home and school, albeit in a theoretically different manner than previously, must remain central to the sociology of education, and an appreciation that processes within particular institutions including, for instance, pupil attitudes as they relate to class based friendship patterns remain crucial.

Hargreaves (1967)[15] was also concerned with analyzing the internal processes of school life, though his study was of a secondary modern school. It was to the informal processes that he paid most attention, looking at day to day

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14 M Hammersley and J Turner "Conformist Pupils" in M Hammersley and P Woods (ed) Life in Schools: The Sociology of Pupil Culture (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1984)

15 D Hargreaves 1967 op cit esp pp68-82 and 140-158

interactions in order to understand the dynamics of social relationships.

In studying patterns associated with streaming he found that the higher the stream of the pupil, the greater was the commitment to, and satisfaction with, the school and the greater the level of conformity to the expectations of teachers. Essentially, high status was related to conformity to official norms in the highest stream while being the consequence of a negative disposition to the school in the lower streams.

Hargreaves goes on to demonstrate how these various sections of pupils viewed each other. To a large extent, he states, there is a strong connection between the values of a specific form and its members' perceptions of other forms, most especially when the forms at the extremes of the spectrum were discussing each other. Pupils' views, though, were based on stereotypes rather than personal interaction and there was "a mutual fear and distrust"[16] between different forms.

Analysis of this is given in terms of reference group theory. As the pupils of the 'A' stream were seen to evaluate both themselves and one another in terms of conformity to the dominant values, they did not aspire towards membership of the 'D' stream. In a similar manner, the 'D' stream did not associate themselves with the

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16 D Hargreaves 1967 op cit p73

dominant values and, therefore, had no desire or incentive to attempt to achieve 'A' stream status. The informal processes at work in the lower streams were, as a consequence, working against one of the underlying accepted assumptions of the staff, that is, that the lower status pupils saw promotion as a desirable goal. Indeed, some pupils lowered the quality of their performance in examinations for fear of advancement up the academic hierarchy, demonstrating the irrelevance of the theoretical 'promotion system' for them, and thereby, uncovering the crucial element of the study.

Although primarily concerned with the internal processes of school life, some attention is given to out of school activity, and while the substantive content of this element of the study is not of particular importance, the appreciation underlying it is worthy of mention. Hargreaves states that to separate school life from processes in the pupil's existence outside can only be arbitrary. Furthermore, while recognizing that what the pupil brings with him to the school may influence behaviour, he states that this is essentially a two-way process, with new learned values not being of restricted applicability to school life, but being taken back into the outside world to influence behaviours in other contexts as well.

The critique of Lacey is highly relevant in most dimensions to Hargreaves, though it is important to point out that with regard to sub-cultures, despite identifying

two polar extremes, Hargreaves did recognize activity between these for which classification was problematic.

It is the failure to provide a full context for the study which is again the single biggest difficulty. This is not only important in itself but also because it reduces the effectiveness of the positive elements of the study. For example, the transactional pattern of influence between elements both internal and external to the school can only be understood if the social and economic situation of participants is fully appreciated, a failure to do so leading to an inability to understand the true 'meaning' of actions. This is not to say that Hargreaves was unaware of class or even the importance of external influences, rather, it was their relationships to the dynamics of British society that was missing. In re-establishing this link potential understanding of other concepts discussed - such as commitment to school - are provided with a valuable extra dimension.

Young and the 'New Sociology'

While more recent writings of Young and his associates (Whitty and Young (eds) 1976)[17] have attempted to deal to a greater extent with the macro concerns of educational change, it is their earlier work (Young (ed) 1971b)[18] that

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[17] G Whitty and M F D Young 1976 op cit
[18] M F D Young 1971b op cit

will form the basis of this review. While perhaps peripheral to my own work in its focus on the formal content of schooling, it does bring onto the agenda ideas which can only benefit the study of institutions so specific in their orientations as British public schools. The following represents the three foundations of the perspective.

Firstly, there is a recognition that knowledge is a socially constructed element of schooling. As such, neither knowledge, nor what it means to be educated, transcend a particular time or place, but both are dynamic elements of life. Therefore, there is a need to see how the curriculum results from the pressure exerted by vested interests, such as the middle class, and how this, in turn, helps to explain class variation in academic performance.

Secondly, comes the belief in the essential relativism of the notions of truth and validity. This is particularly important, Young states (Young 1971a)[19], in relation to science and rationality. Contemporary ideas of these are no more than dogmas which can, theoretically, be replaced by different systems of thought.

Finally, there is the discussion of educational failure in relation to the nature of knowledge. For Esland (1971)[20]

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[19] M F D Young "An Approach to the Study of Curricular and Socially Organized Knowledge" 1971a in M F D Young (ed) 1971b op cit pp32-35

[20] G Esland "Teaching and Learning as the Organization of Knowledge" in MFD Young (ed) 1971b op cit pp70-115

argues that unexamined ideas concerning intelligence as an objective entity lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, citing Lacey's (1970) 'good pupils' as an example in this respect. Therefore, the basis of this argument is that if the definitions of pupil talent and ability were changed, a fundamentally different structure of achievement would emerge. In this light, Keddie (1971)[21] describes the alternative yet equal approaches to knowledge of, firstly, 'A' streamer's ability to cope with abstract material and secondly, 'C' streamer's use of practical information. The definition of valued knowledge being the source of differentiation.

This position, though, raises a problem in the definition of equal forms of knowledge. What it fails to take into account is that they cannot be described as fundamentally equal, in abstract philosophical terms, when they are socially constructed and, furthermore, produced in environments in which there are very different distributions of financial, cultural and social resources, the nature of which relate strongly to the inherent characteristics and processes of society at large. As such, while at a certain level the idea of an abstract definition of knowledge is relevant, without understanding the structural and cultural arena as a whole, in which forms of knowledge are developed, the situation will only be partially explained by the

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[21] N Keddie "Classroom Knowledge" in M F D Young (ed) 1971b <u>op cit</u>

approach in question.

Beyond this specific difficulty, the perspective as a whole has a number of problems which limit its potential utility. Demaine (1981)[22], for instance, criticizes the lack of rigorous theoretical argument which can be followed stage by stage. The outcome is that the deployment of this line leads only to speculation, which in the long term cannot create acceptable theory. Similarly, he attacks the essential relativism and subjectivism of the project, the consequence of which is to put much of the work beyond investigation.

However, the purpose of including Young and his colleagues in this analysis is not to adopt their overall programme. Rather, what stands as valid from the work is the need to be aware of the arbitrary nature of 'knowledges' and 'truths'. And where the focusses of study are institutions which aim to extend their influence beyond the academic domain to the social and cultural spheres, this should be recognized as relevant beyond as well as within the classroom.

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22 J Demaine Contemporary Theories in the Sociology of Education (London: Macmillan 1981) pp63-64

Structuralist Marxism and Schooling

Althusser (1972)[23] was a central figure in the neo-Marxist challenge in the sociology of education in the early 1970s, with his theory designed to provide a general framework for future analysis. As a part of the ideological state apparatuses, indeed as its most influential component in modern capitalism, education institutions were 'in the last instance', seen to be shaped by the economic base and as such reflect the relations of production and invariably serve the interests of the ruling class. This occurred notably through the production of required skills but also, and probably more importantly, through the socializing of the working class to ruling class ideology. The concept of 'structural causality' was at the core of his analysis. By this he was referring to a relation between structure and effects, or between structure and its subordinate structures. For example, the capitalist mode of production (structure) inevitably reproduces its conditions of existence in political, economic and ideological arenas (subordinate structures). Therein lies the condition for the continuation of the capitalist mode of production.

While influential in orientation, the theory itself is replete with problems and inconsistencies. The most

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[23] L Althusser "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in B Cosin (ed) 1972 op cit

damaging, and oft-cited, of these is the determinism inherent in the analysis. For example, Giroux (1983)[24] argues that its 'one-sided' nature presents a picture of schools in which there is an unproblematic creation of a docile labour force .without an interplay of domination, struggle, structure and human agency, a situation which reduces actors to the status of mere bearers of roles. Similarly, Erben and Gleeson (1977)[25] criticize the over-emphases on consumption rather than production of knowledge, together with the inability of such a passive model to explain deviations from the reproductive pattern, because of the implicit assumption of successful socialization. On the concept of 'structural causality', Demaine (1981)[26] identifies a fundamental contradiction. If the mode of production is viewed as eternally reproducing the conditions necessary for its perpetuation, then his underlying claim for the possibility of a socialist transformation is theoretically flawed and redundant.

Bowles and Gintis (1976)[26], similarly working within the realm of structural Marxism, also stress the importance of education in the reproduction of class relations.

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24 H Giroux Theory and Resistance in Education: A Pedagogy for the Opposition (London: Heinemann 1983) pp82-83

25 M Erben and D Gleeson "Education as Reproduction: A Critical Examination of Some Aspects of the Work of L Althusser" in M Young and G Whitty (ed) Society, State and Schooling (Lewes: Falmer Press 1977) pp73-92

26 J Dermaine 1981 op cit pp84-85

27 S Bowles and H Gintis 1976 op cit pp130-132

Their analysis is built around the theoretical construct of the 'correspondence principle'. This deals with the idea that the significance of educational institutions lies in the correspondence between the nature of dominant patterns of interactions and social relationships both in the school, and later, in the work place. The school is seen as a mechanism whereby appropriate attitudes are instilled in the potential labour force. Therefore, it is the 'form' of education which is vital to this process, rather than the specific content.

The major continuities between the two spheres were identified as follows. Firstly, there is a hierarchy of authority in which dominant groups instruct and subordinates obey. Secondly, the lower group has minimal control over the work they do. Finally, reward does not come from fulfilment in the work itself, but rather through the external means of qualifications or wages.

The theory has been subject to numerous and wide ranging criticisms. Reynolds (1984)[28] argues that there is actually very little correspondence between the economic base and the education system. For example, he argues that the presence of so much anti-social behaviour cannot be explained in terms of its positive contribution to capitalism. Furthermore, it is argued that there is little

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[28] D Reynolds "Relative Autonomy Reconstructed" in L Barton and S Walker (ed) Social Crisis and Educational Research (London: Croom Helm 1984) pp292-294

correspondence between the curriculum, such as the survival of humanities, and the requirements of the economic system. However, in relation to the latter, it is fair to point out that Bowles and Gintis did, of course, explicitly state their concern with form rather than content. In a more blatant manner, Musgrove (1979)[29] states simply that the correspondence principle is fundamentally wrong, although again his discussion placed emphasis upon content.

Sarup (1982)[30] argues that a fundamental problem is that the actions of the state are seen to be determined automatically from the needs of capital at any one time. As such, educational institutions are not allowed any autonomy, and the mediations in the relationship between the state and capital are missing.

Price (1986)[31] though, has offered something of a counter-balance to such critiques. He argues that there is a subtle difference between the way critics have viewed the correspondence principle and the way it was actually meant by the authors. He states that their's is not simply a 'mirror theory' with consciousness passively reflecting social structure. In fact, the degree of transformation in consciousness from family type to work type is mediated by

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29 F Musgrove School and the Social Order (New York: J Wiley and Sons 1979) p74

30 M Sarup Education, State and Crisis (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1982) pp50-51

31 R Price Marx and Education in Late Capitalism (London: Croom Helm 1986) pp187-193

the social relations of the school, and it is this transformation which is largely influential in ensuring that the correspondence between school and work facilitates reproduction.

In fact, recognizing confusions and inadequacies in their 1976 book, Bowles and Gintis (1981)[32] have offered a revised analysis, in which the base/super structure conception has been rejected and potential for contradictions in each area of society, which is now defined 'an ensemble of structurally articulated sites of social practice,'[33] is now accepted.

Leaving aside for now the injection of human agency into the analysis, as this has probably been more successfully dealt with by writers to be considered later, there are other positive elements to be gleaned from the theories highlighted.

Althusser, in emphasizing the importance of the position of education within the context of society's class relations, opened a fertile source of debate. In discussing Bowles and Gintis, though, while maintaining a sense of the partial nature of their contribution, a more directly relevant input is revealed. The examination of the 'form' of life, especially in terms of relations of power and authority, is important to the public school analysis.

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32 S Bowles and H Gintis 1981 op cit
33 ibid p49

Similarly important is the notion of the creation of certain personality types conducive to the assumed position to be occupied in the social structure by specific classes, especially as the likelihood of a match between the views of staff and pupils is greater in this situation, and therefore, the potential for contradiction reduced.

Post-Reproduction Radical and Neo-Marxist Theory and Ethnography

As recently reiterated by Jones (1989)[34], in the phase since the prominence of the structuralists, radical theorists have primarily been concerned with the role of 'the subject' in educational theory. It is to these discussions that I now turn.

The work of Bourdieu, will be given a more detailed analysis than many other writers, both because of his widespread influence and the direct contribution that his concepts make to the present study. I will begin with an exposition of the main tenets of his work followed by an over-view of some of the major failures attributed to his position. However, it will be argued that many of the criticisms fail to grasp the total context of his work and, as such, a further discussion will take place based on a

[34] A Jones "The Cultural Production of Classroom Practice" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 10 No 1 1989 p19

reading of lesser known writings of Bourdieu and contributions from elsewhere. This latter section will also focus on important complementary concepts in Bourdieu's work and a re-appraisal of the nature and utility of central ones.

Bourdieu (1973)[35] describes the major role of the educational system as 'cultural reproduction', that is, the reproduction of the specific culture of the dominant class. He argues that the power of the ruling class allows them to define their culture of worthy of possessing and fosters it to the extent that it becomes the basis of all educational knowledge in the school system. As recently stated:

"The dominant class determines (by means of discussions between the various elites in the symbolic goods market) what are important meanings in the area of knowledge and culture and, at the same time, by implication, what are less important, or unimportant meanings. These meanings vary with time."[36]

This dominant culture is referred to as 'cultural capital', as through the institutions of education it can be translated into wealth and power. It is the uneven distribution of cultural capital, rather than the oppressive

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35 P Bourdieu "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction" in R Brown (ed) Knowledge, Education and Cultural Change (London: Tavistock 1973)

36 Jan C C Rupp and Rob de Lange "Social Order, Cultural Capital and Citizenship: an Essay Concerning Education Status and Educational Power Versus Comprehensiveness of Elementary Schools" The Sociological Review Vol 37 No 4 November 1989 p672

imposition of docility, which largely accounts for class differentiation in educational achievement. Therefore, in appearing to be neutral in the transmission of a shared and valued culture, education can simultaneously promote inequality and overtly appear to be fair.

It is the habitus, that is, the subjective dispositions of style, behaviour and knowledge which serve as a link between practice and reproduction. For while upper and middle class children have a class culture which relates closely to the dominant culture, the working class pupils find themselves with something of a culture gap to overcome, on top of academic study. As such, those of higher social class have a built in advantage and possess the 'code of the message' on which all future learning is based. Bourdieu gives particular attention to pupil style rather than content in determining success, and as working class style inevitably differs from the dominant culture, coupled with the difficulty in understanding the language structure of teachers, the loss of the working class from the system becomes increasingly likely. This occurs both through examination failure and via a process of rejection by the pupils themselves, due to a recognition of the biased nature of the system.

Blackledge and Hunt (1985)[37] argue that on the basis of

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[37] D Blackledge and B Hunt Sociological Interpretations of Education (London: Croom Helm 1985) p172

Bourdieu's own figures, it is not the dominant classes who possess cultural capital, but rather the powerless teachers and civil servants, therefore casting doubt on his theory. Now, while this certainly has an element of truth, it may well be something of a function of the measures of cultural capital employed by Bourdieu (1973)[38]. For while the indices such as theatre and museum attendance may well have a place in such an analysis, 'active' aspects of motivations, expectations, aspirations and perceptions cannot be ignored. Elsewhere the very validity of the concept of cultural capital has been brought into doubt (Halsey, Heath and Ridge 1980)[39], though Hammersley (1981)[40] argues that such a perspective rests on inadequate operationalization of the term, and indeed, Halsey, Heath and Ridge (1982)[41] acknowledge that statistical analysis was not the most appropriate means of analysis and confirmed the continuing problem with definition.

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38 P Bourdieu 1973 <u>op cit</u>

39 A Halsey, A Heath and J Ridge 1980 <u>op cit</u> p88

40 M Hammersley "Review of 'Origins and Destinations'" in <u>British Journal of Sociology of Education</u> Vol 3 No 1 1981 pp92-94

41 A Halsey, A Heath and J Ridge "Cultural Capital and Political Arithmetic: A Response to the Review Symposium on 'Origins and Destinations'" <u>British Journal of Sociology of Education</u> Vol 3 No 1 1982 p88

Sharp (1980)[42] claims that the inadequate nature of the context within which Bourdieu places his work leaves it incomplete and without value as a total explanation. The main focus of her concern lies in the failure to provide a strict definition of class and the lack of discussion of class in terms of production rather than merely occupational elites. However, while this may indeed leave the analysis incomplete, there appears to be nothing in all the critique to prevent the central concepts being of future value, albeit in a redefined manner to sociological studies of education.

Fernandez (1988)[43] has demonstrated concern about the lack of discussion of dimensions of inequality apart from class, for instance sex inequality. However, the acceptance and integration of this would serve to strengthen rather than threaten Bourdieu's programme.

Carnoy (1982)[44] identifies what has become one of the central criticisms of Bourdieu's work, namely that despite some useful insights, it remains essentially mechanistic and deterministic, in that each individual is seen to inherit

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42 R Sharp Knowledge, Ideology and the Politics of Schooling: Toward a Marxist Analysis of Education (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1980) p73

43 J V Fernandez "From Theories of Social and Cultural Reproduction to the Theory of Resistance" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 9 No 2 1988 p177

44 M Carnoy "Education, Economy and the State" in M W Apple (ed) Cultural and Economic Reproduction in Education: Essays on Class, Ideology and the State (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1982a) pp104-105

his/her class position from the parents, with the school simply reproducing what exists. As such there is no dynamic of change within the system. Similarly, Lakomski (1984)[45] argues that there is a severing of the dialectic between structure and consciousness, with the result that the theory is left dealing with the structure without reference to human agency.

Giroux (1983)[46] has been a major critic of Bourdieu on related grounds. He argues that the advances which are made by Bourdieu are impotent in view of the fact that they are locked within notions of power and domination which are too complete and irreversible. He cites the example of the concept of habitus, which although appreciated as valuable in its role of linking structural domination to the realm of individual personality, is seen to suffer from just such a restriction and thus an inability to deal with the issue of social change.

A further implication of the 'one-sided' analysis, he argues, is that working class cultures and knowledges are viewed as a homogeneous entity, and indeed as something of a poor relation of the dominant cultural capital. Also, with the failure to include aspects of cultural production and

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45 G Lakomski "On Agency and Structure: P Bourdieu and J C Passeron's Theory of Symbolic Violence" Curriculum Inquiry Vol 14 No 2 1984 p153

46 H Giroux 1983 op cit p90

resistance, situations of conflict, both within and between classes, are lost. As such, Giroux is recognizing that while it is important to see how dominant ideologies are transmitted to, and imposed on, students, it is just as important to allow pupils the possibility for realizing that such ideas and practices are against their interests, and therefore, providing the possibility of rebellion.

Harker's (1984)[47] paper tackles such criticisms of Bourdieu, arguing that it is inaccurate to regard his theory as undialectical in nature and unable to incorporate human agency and change. Such a reading, he claims, results from a failure to understand the basis of his work, as social and cultural practice are clearly seen to assimilate such 'active' concepts.

Harker feels that the misconception arises from the fact that most of his empirical work, and indeed most (although not all) of his translated work dates from the 1960s. However, since this time Bourdieu (1979 and especially 1977b)[48] has made theoretical advances which although not explicitly dealing with education, would require it to be seen as an arena of social practice.

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[47] R Harker "On Reproduction, Habitus and Education" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 5 No 2 1984 pp117-127

[48] P Bourdieu Algeria 1960 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1979)
P Bourdieu Outline of a Theory of Practice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1977b)

Harker argues that Bourdieu (1977b) not only explicitly rejects a simple reproduction model of structure - practice but introduces the concept of 'time', which allows both a perception of the dialectical relation between structures and an intervening theoretical level to account for change, importantly stressing the role of habitus as the mediating concept between structure and action. Indeed, a reading of Bourdieu (1977b)[49] provides support for this interpretation:

"It is necessary to abandon all theories which explicitly or implicitly treat practice as a mechanical reaction ... but this in no way implies that ... we should reduce ... actions ... to the conscious and deliberate actions of the authors."

Therefore, with habitus serving as the mediating influence it is important to recognize the 'active' rather than 'static' nature of its composition. As Bourdieu states, it is reconstructed in each generation from two sources. Initially, from the habitus of socializing agents, and secondly, from changes in the material and social environment which influences motivations and aspirations. As such in each generation it develops in relation to material conditions. The relationship is though, of course, biased in that it occurs through the mediation of the dominant habitus form of the time. As such the habitus is

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49 P Bourdieu op cit 1977b p73

being continually formed in daily practice, therefore showing actors to be creative subjects and not merely passive role bearers. As Bourdieu (1977b)[50] puts it:

"the habitus acquired in the family underlies the structuring of school experiences (in particular the reception and assimilation of the specific pedagogical message) and the habitus transformed by schooling, itself diversified, in turn underlies the structuring of all subsequent experiences, and so on from restructuring to restructuring".

As such, in the production of practice, habitus is a mediating rather than determining construct. Therefore, practice cannot be reduced to habitus and, in turn, to objective structures, as situationally specific factors influence the development of creative action. Also, actions cannot be reduced to these historical situations as they are being experienced through the class specific habitus. Such a recognition lies at the heart of the present study.

The concept of social capital is one rarely drawn from the work of Bourdieu, however, it is one directly applicable to the public school situation. Its specific definition here deriving from both the original work of Bourdieu and from the utilization of the term by Salter and Tapper. This

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50 ibid p87

is important as it is in the analysis of the latter's assertions that the concept is principally employed. What is referred to is best described in relation to the major points in the life cycle in which it manifests itself. Firstly, during primary socialization it is used to refer to capital of social connections and prestige and secondly, in post-school life as experienced through the 'old boy network' (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977a - Fig 1)[51]. Indeed, Salter and Tapper[52], present being "well connected socially ... in colloquial language ... members of an old boy network", as essentially social capital. Therefore, essentially, it is concerned with the role of networks of social relations able to be drawn upon in the course of the life process, serving to complement other forms of capital.

Distinction (1984)[53] reveals a discussion of 'taste' another concept to have received limited attention, although 'distinction' has been utilized in some interesting work, such as that of Roos and Roos (1984)[54] on life in three generations of Swedish Finns. Bourdieu states:

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51 P Bourdieu and J Passeron Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture (London: Sage Publications 1977a) Figure 1

52 B Salter and T Tapper 1985 op cit p65

53 P Bourdieu Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste trans Richard Nice (Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press 1984)

54 J P Roos and B Roos "Upper Class Life Over Three Generations: The Case of the Swedish Finns" Oral History Vol 12 No 1 Spring 1984 p37

"Taste is an acquired disposition to differentiate and appreciate ... the schemes of the habitus, the primary forms of classification, owe their specific efficacy to the fact that they function below the level of consciousness and language beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control by the will orientating practices practically they embed ... in the most automatic gestures of apparently insignificant techniques of the body - ways of walking, or blowing one's nose, ways of eating or talking - and engage the most fundamental principles of construction and evaluation of the social world, those which directly express the division of labour (between the classes, the age groups and the sexes) ... [taste] functions as a sort of social orientation, a sense of one's place, guiding the occupants of a given place in social space toward the social positions adjusted to their properties, and towards the practices or goods which befit the occupants of that position".[55]

So, here a situation is being described in which arbitrary definitions of taste have strong ties with the establishing and perpetuation of patterns of differentiation and hierarchy. In the public school context, the role of taste and style, as underlying assumptions, will reveal themselves as integral to distinction both between classes and sectors as a whole, and indeed, within the institutions themselves - as an influence of the composition of sub-

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55 P Bourdieu 1984 op cit p466

cultural forms. In this specific context, where dimensions of social and cultural elitism exist at the core of reality, such perceptions themselves express a tendency of members (embedded in intergenerational involvement with public school and elite status) to perceive themselves as genuine arbiters of high level taste and culture. Taste, therefore, is both a reality of the system and concentrated in its traditional patrons.

It is the nature of British public schools, the historical emphases, the specific range of classes found therein and the crucial role of such subjective dimensions as taste that has led to a recognition of the fact that the concept of cultural capital, when applied to this very specific context, needs to be revised and extended. Essentially, the public school is recognized as existing on another, almost imperceptible level, beyond the academic - access to this and manipulation of it, being habitus dependent. Now, the crux of established cultural capital theory is the degree of distance between personal habitus and school culture and practice as the basis for academic progression (Hammersley 1981)[56]. This is similarly the basis for the second dimension. Therefore, to gain a complete understanding of the class - school interaction in this context, there are two 'codes' to be identified, and

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[56] M Hammersley 1981 op cit p93

therefore, two forms of cultural capital to be possessed. Differential class possession of these proving to underlie many of the contemporary forms, interactions and consequences of public school life today. (Full details being presented in Chapter 5.)

Therefore, despite the many confusions and difficulties, Bourdieu, via the concepts of habitus, social and cultural capital and distinction/taste provides a significant contribution to the sociology of education - a fact that recent commentators have expressed a greater willingness to accept, despite continued identification of limitations (Wacquant 1987 for instance)[57].

Aggleton's (1987)[58] study examines the issue of how a group of middle class students - all regarded as being high in cultural capital - came to be under-achievers in the immediate post-school period. The principle points of interest are as follows.

In discussing home life, a recognizable pattern emerged. Rich and liberal parents, free discussions of sex, involvement with alcohol and soft drugs were common. Of

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57 C J D Wacquant "Symbolic Violence and the Making of the French Agriculturalist: an Enquiry into Pierre Bourdieu's Sociology" The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology Vol 23 No 1 March 1987 pp65-68

58 P Aggleton 1987 op cit

perhaps greater significance was the weak framing and classification (Bernstein 1971)[59] of relationships fostering individual decision making and personal autonomy. As such, people tended to be produced who rather than adopting an obedient mentality, would instead challenge authority and expectations outside the home. Beyond the value of these findings in themselves, the work reinforces the need for an appreciation of subjective value orientations in the family as well as knowledge of actual practices, plus an appreciation of the relationship between these patterns and those dominant in the institution concerned, in order for cultural capital, as a concept, to reveal its utility. Indeed, despite similar levels of cultural capital (by basic definition), the form and content of practices exhibited and the degree of identification with educational institutions demonstrated significant variability between these pupils and the public school sample.

A more particular, but nonetheless interesting, discussion relates to the prominence of 'effortless achievement'[60] within the culture of the pupils. This was regarded by Aggleton as a significant contribution to poor academic success levels. However this is an assessment in need of revision, because rather than being influential in itself to this end, I would argue that its influence is

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59 B Bernstein "On the Classification of Educational Knowledge" in M F D Young (ed) 1971b <u>op cit</u>

60 P Aggleton 1987 <u>op cit</u> p77

better understood as dependent upon its particular manifestation within a specific cultural environment. The reason for this is that an almost identical attitude is found to exist in public school life and, as such, it is the way it is articulated with other values of the setting that is important. In itself, in the public school context, it does not generally produce negative academic consequences, as it can be subject to re-definition by consensus to meet the needs of those involved. However, when its intensity is increased within certain sub-cultural forms under-achievement can result, illustrating its essentially context dependent nature. What the two samples have in common is the actual existence of the same phenomenon in the first place, rather than any particular consequences. The valuing of success, the implication of 'natural' ability and superiority and the denigrating of those beyond this culture - often focussing on contemporaries in occupations with physical (or non creative) emphasis (secretaries and 'brickies' - Aggleton) serving to underline something of a class consistency despite variations in content.

In his presentation of sub-cultures, Aggleton stressed the relationship between these and other dimensions of the life process, highlighting similarity of form across various sites, emphasising both the positive regard for weak framing and the strong definition of the culturally acceptable and unacceptable. He states:

"In the light of these insights, it would seem that the

transportation of classification and frames across sites of experience had important consequences for cultural reproduction of key aspects of middle class habitus."[61]

Therefore, the work confirms the importance of recognizing the relationship between principles dominating in one quarter of life for processes elsewhere, this being particularly represented in the study by family patterns (habitus formation) and internal school processes. So, being presented with a picture of 'underlying rebels', Aggleton examined their rapport with the dominant values of society. Both in terms of class and gender he argues that their behaviour is essentially reproductive - their quest for personal autonomy in no way threatening the overall relations of power in Britain. However, as Banks (1988)[62] states, while a transformative role may have been a theoretical possibility, Aggleton provides no reason to suggest why these pupils, as beneficiaries of the class structure, should be anything but reproductive in their practice.

Willis's (1977)[63] ethnography "Learning to Labour" has been widely influential in the study of education and sub-

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61 ibid p117

62 O Banks "Review Symposium: Rebels Without a Cause?" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 9 No 2 1988 p225

63 P Willis 1977 op cit

cultures on both sides of the Atlantic since its publication. Fundamental to Willis's programme was the need to place what happened in schools, in this case specifically the working class counter school culture, in the wider context of the participants' class background and capitalist society at large. So, the culture of the small group of non-academic white 'lads' in a Midlands secondary modern school was viewed as something of a manifestation of working class culture at large, therefore producing an underlying similarity between the elements of the lads' school culture and the shop floor that they were moving towards. As a consequence, Willis argues, calls for internal reforms (such as de-streaming) by Hargreaves (1967) and Lacey (1970)[64] would have no effect upon the development of specific cultural forms because the origins and meanings of these go beyond the confines of the school society.

It is this basic similarity of culture which is central to the generally smooth move between education and the world of work in the factory. Therefore, rather than describing the move to manual work for these working class youths in a strict deterministic manner, Willis stresses that they are actively choosing to follow this pattern, and as such, contributing to the perpetuation of class inequality. Similarly, these cultural forms themselves cannot be

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64 D Hargreaves 1967 op cit and C Lacey 1970 op cit

described as if they were automatic responses to determinants rooted in the structural make up of society. While recognizing the existence of such determining factors he points out that they will not necessarily be obeyed. For the reproduction of classes, and class relations, to occur, the macro influences need to pass through the cultural level.

The school - manual work process, while presently dominant, is not though seen as inevitable. He draws a clear distinction between reproduction, that is, ascription by birth and the ideological surroundings of that position, and social reproduction - the wider societal process, stressing that the relationship between them is not pre-determined (Willis 1983)[65]. This is because the culture, including such elements as resistance and the subversion of authority, is able to offer 'penetrations' into the nature of being working class, for example the knowledge of the fact, yet the inability to adequately express, that schooling will only benefit a minority, of which they are not a part. The blocks, or ideological impediments, to the complete development of penetrations are termed 'limitations', with the resultant form of life being one of 'partial penetration' or the interaction of the two

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65 P Willis "Cultural Production and Theories of Reproduction" in L Barton and S Walker (eds) Race, Class and Education (Beckenham: Croom Helm 1983) esp pp111-137

processes[66].

Sarup (1982)[67] raises one of the most regularly cited criticisms against the work, ie, how far the sample could be regarded as typical of the working class, especially in view of the lack of attention paid to the 'ear-oles who were also solidly working class in background. Rather than being generalizable, he states the work must be regarded as both historically and sample specific. This issue had though been discussed by Willis (1981)[68]. In this he argued that while some components of the study were generalizable, it was the main purpose of the work to establish analytical tools which could be applied to other forms of culture and not claim that one study would illuminate all dimensions of race, class and gender. Clearly, though, with the research being carried out between 1972 and 1975, the recognition of the study's historical specificity, especially in view of substantial economic and political shifts that have occurred since that time, is certainly significant.

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66 P Willis 1977 _op cit_ pp119-159
67 M Sarup 1982 _op cit_ pp39-40
68 P Willis "Cultural Production is Different from Social Reproduction is Different from Reproduction" _Interchange_ Vol 12 No 2-3 1981 pp48-67

The strict separation of pupil activity into polar extremes has been criticized (Woods 1983)[69] as has Willis's methodology in which the failure to properly integrate the ethnographic account with theoretical analysis led to claims of a "spot-welded Marxism" (Gordon West 1984)[70] and that the interpretations given were no more valid than any from a range of others (A Hargreaves 1985)[71]. This lack of methodological rigour has also led to the charge of 'romanticism' as expressed in claims extending beyond the realities of the data (Walker 1986, Nash 1987)[72].

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69 P Woods Sociology and the School: An Interactionist Viewpoint (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1983) p90

70 W Gordon West "Phenomenon and Form In the Interactionist and Neo-Marxist Qualitative Educational Research" in L Barton and S Walker (eds) Social Crisis and Educational Research (London: Croom Helm 1984) p20

71 A Hargreaves "The Micro-macro Problem in the Sociology of Education" in R G Burgess (ed) Issues in Educational Research (Lewes: Falmer Press 1985) pp27-30

72 J Walker "Romanticising Resistance, Romanticising Culture: Problems in Willis's Theory of Cultural Production" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 7 No 1 1986 pp59-80
R Nash "Who Gets a Choice?: Some Problems with the Cultural Studies Imported from Birmingham" New Zealand Sociology Vol 2 No 2 Nov 1987 pp80-97

While Willis (1980)[73] defended himself by claiming that the nature of ethnography ensures the uncovering of elements of social reality beyond original theoretical expectations - thereby pushing pre-conceived bias to the periphery, it is clear that practitioners of qualitative methods as a whole do need both an awareness of potential pitfalls and the mechanisms which can minimize the negative consequences of these (see Chapter 4).

In looking at the applicability of Willis's work to the study of contemporary public school education, at the substantive level the study appears to be both socially and historically restrictive. For example, the vital concept of penetration would, by its very nature, seem to exclude itself from usage outside of the working class context, as inherent in it is the acceptance that the pupils will not profit from the system and will recognize this. Obviously, there is not such a façade to penetrate in the elite sector, with rebellion itself only being recognized as a possibility, rather than integral to the situation.

The relevance of the concept 'cultural production' has been less than clear cut. For although Gordon (1984)[74] claims that Willis states that each class develops its own cultural forms in relation to its position in the social

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73 P Willis "Notes on Method" in S Hall et al Culture, Media and Language (London: Hutchinson 1980)

74 L Gordon "Paul Willis, Cultural Production and Social Reproduction" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 5 No 2 1984 pp107

structure, itself a valid and indeed significant point, Walker (1986)[75] points to a contradiction in the analysis. For while Willis discusses throughout the independent nature of cultural production in the working class, he denies the theoretical possibility of autonomous cultural production in the ruling class. Walker argues that this is merely a reversal of the one-sidedness for which he criticized Bourdieu. Indeed, there seems no genuine reason why independent cultural production should not be a reality for non-working class pupils simply because they have an interest in believing and supporting the dominant ideology which the working class do not. Such an assumption must inevitably force the analysis towards determinism. As such, by discounting the validity of the very real nature of meanings attributed to the situation by privileged pupils, whatever its consequences for social reproduction, an accurate understanding of the potentially intricate processes of self-recruitment and class inequalities will not be fully achieved.

Also arising from the critiques is the vital recognition that an understanding of conformist behaviour is potentially just as informative as rebellion. Indeed, in the context of public schools to falsely search for, and

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75 J Walker 1986 op cit p70

expect to find, rebellion where there is only a minimal amount would serve to produce misinterpretations and inaccuracies.

There are, though, components which are of underlying importance. The centrality of class context is especially relevant. An example is the need to understand background components of class cultures, such as a more apparent stress on individualism amongst sections of the middle class, patterns of class loyalty (historically part of the public school ethos) and a recognition that actions may well be interpreted by the school in very different ways across class boundaries and hold very different meanings for those involved. The stress on mediation, therefore, rather than merely the structural imposition of behaviour, attitudes and status is seen as vital.

Corrigan (1979)[76] provides another rich ethnography of working class youth, one point of discussion being of particular relevance. He claims that the question of acceptance or rejection of school values, as a central dynamic, was of no importance to the youths in the study. Rather, the system of schooling could be better understood as "education as imposition" and consequently a question of power. Essentially, this refers to the power differential

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76 P Corrigan Schooling the Smash Street Kids (London: Macmillan 1979)

between staff and pupils and the fact that the pupils were only at school because of the element of compulsion. Now, while on virtually every dimension the experience of schooling is fundamentally different for such youths and the pupils of a public school, education for the privileged is still surrounded by imposition, external control and compulsion. The imposition placed on the public school pupils is, of course, not of the same character as that described by Corrigan, in which the control of working class pupils was accompanied by a feeling of pointlessness regarding education from the youths themselves. However, an imposition it remains and the potential for analysis of reaction and consequential behaviour, in view of differential habitus and processes with public school, is established.

The radical sociology of education in America has also recently displayed a tendency toward rejection of passive and mechanistic theories, in favour of an approach stressing relative autonomy and resistance.

Apple's work is as representative as that of any single writer regarding these changes. For it not only includes a specific rejection of correspondence theory (Apple 1982a)[77], which the author once embraced, but also includes a widening of the terms of inquiry beyond theory to, for

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77 M W Apple "Reproduction and Contradiction in Education: an Introduction" in M W Apple (ed) 1982a op cit pp8-9

example, the ethnographic following of a textbook from production through to individual mediation in order to develop an understanding of the interaction between economics, politics and cultures (Apple 1985)[78]. Also, in analyzing the curriculum in terms of both form and content (Apple 1982b)[79], concepts are provided with utility beyond the classroom.

Apple (1982b)[80] explains the basis of his position as follows. Schooling is in large part influenced, though not totally determined, by the nature of capitalist relations, with the state involving itself in the process to try and diffuse crises. However, the result is that class conflict moves into state regulated arenas as well as the workplace. Therefore, the school is a place of tension between the pressures to produce ideological consent and skills needed for production, and the resistance of the working class to this. As such, as A Hargreaves (1984)[81] points out, Apple recognizes that the needs of society are not as fully met as reproduction theories claimed.

The concept of mediation runs deeply through the work of these theorists, but it is not only used to refer to

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78 M W Apple "Culture and Commerce of the Textbook" Journal of Curriculum Studies Vol 17 No 2 1985 pp147-162

79 M W Apple Education and Power (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1982b) esp pp135-164

80 ibid esp pp12-30

81 A Hargreaves "Review of Apple's 'Education and Power and Cultural and Economic Reproduction in Education'" Journal of Curriculum Studies Vol 16 No 2 1984 p209

individual adjustments, it is also seen as relevant to the mediation of the formal aspects of schooling. Giroux (1981)[82], for example, discusses the way in which the hidden curriculum, as a concept, should not merely be restricted to the analysis of social control, but considered to be a ground upon which ideological struggles occur. As such its transformative nature is recognized as well as its potential importance as a reproductive element.

Similarly, resistance as a concept is vital to the studies. Giroux (1983b)[83], though, is keen to draw the distinction that not all oppositional behaviour can be regarded as resistance, this being a very specific form of behaviour contingent upon an element of political indignation on the part of the pupil. Importantly, he states that not only may oppositional behaviour not be based in a reaction to authority and domination, but itself may be an expression of power. However, he still regards all such actions as worthy of study.

Anyon (1981)[84] is probably the best example of what Whitty (1985)[85] recognizes to be one of the strengths of the American work, that is, the realization that the effects of

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82 H Giroux Ideology, Culture and the Process of Schooling (Lewes: Falmer Press 1981) pp72-78

83 H Giroux "Theories of Reproduction and Resistance in the New Sociology of Education: A Critical Analysis" Harvard Education Review Vol 53 No 3 August 1983b pp285-286

84 J Anyon "Social Class and School Knowledge" Curriculum Inquiry Vol 11 No 1 1981 pp3-42

85 G Whitty Sociology and School Knowledge (London: Methuen 1985) pp40-42

educational practices is a political question, in terms of how they fit into the overall pedagogical pattern and class context, both within and outside of the school. As such, clearly any aspect of the curriculum will have very different meanings, in British private schools as opposed to the state sector, due to the structural elements of class and environment as well as the individual mediations of staff and pupils.

Everhart's (1983)[86] study of a junior high school demonstrates a situation in which only minimal, rather than oppressive, demands are placed upon the pupils, and though the school was actually peripheral as a cultural arena for certain pupil groups, work was carried out in the manner of a trade off to allow a peaceful generation of their own cultural activity. As such, a group appearing to be conforming to school ideology actually had no normative integration with school at all. Therefore, rebellion focussed on 'working the cracks' rather than risking the negative consequences of overt rebellion. As a consequence, group behaviour had a very different meaning for participants than that recognizable to casual observers.

Therefore, the degree of true identification or instrumental compliance toward school ideology beneath overtly conformist practices, and the class nature of such

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[86] R Everhart Reading, Writing and Resistance (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1983) esp pp130-164

practices is revealed as a valuable area of study. Similarly, so, the role of 'working the cracks' - be it by humour or other means, in a context where overt rebellion is undesirable or inappropriate is significant, especially where control of time and space is revealed as a principal organizational measure. For Everhart, these activities served the purpose of a symbolic confirmation of sub-group membership, demonstrated apparent superiority of creativity and perceptiveness and was an expression of controlling fate - exercising independent influence over activities in the classroom normally beyond their influence. Such meanings, though, were appreciated as class and situationally specific, and therefore, subject to variation of format in relation to these factors.

Arnot and Whitty (1982)[87] have written on appraisal of the early phase of these theories. While recognizing certain problems, such as the assumption of a socialist teaching profession ready to operationalize changes and the less sensitive methodology than incorporated in British studies, they did see the work as encouraging, especially in relation to unifying radial research, theory and practice.

A Hargreaves (1982)[88] though, in the course of

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87 M Arnot and G Whitty "From Reproduction to Transformation: Recent Radical Perspectives on the Curriculum from the USA" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 3 No 1 1982 pp93-103

88 A Hargreaves "Resistance and Relative Autonomy Theories: Problems of Distortion and Incoherence in Recent Marxist Sociology of Education" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 3 No 2 1982 pp107-126

replying to Arnot and Whitty points to inadequacies which he considers in large measure leaves the approach flawed. The central criticism concerns the overt and integral commitment to socialist transformation in the work. For Hargreaves, this serves to produce distortion and incoherence through the insistence on the co-existence of subjugation and struggle, autonomy and dependence. He argues that a value free approach should be adopted, picking up political practice at a later stage.

Regardless of the overall utility of such an approach, various elements of the works are very relevant for the analysis of elite educational practice. The understanding of 'oppositional' behaviour in its true context; formal and individual mediations and the composition of the form and content of school life are all integral parts of the study. All being deployed within a framework which recognizes varying forms of normative integration amongst pupils as the norm, rather than the prominence of underlying contradiction and conflict.

The ethnographic study by McLaren (1986)[89] (which incorporates elements of both reproduction and resistance theory) of a pre-dominantly Portugese immigrant working class Catholic junior high school in Canada, would seem to be as far removed from British public schools as anything

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89 P McLaren 1986 op cit

discussed here. However, I would argue, that properly contextualized, some concepts and themes employed can be profitably integrated though not, in this instance, the central one of ritual whose deployment in McLaren's own work has been described as 'excessive'[90].

McLaren describes 'states of interaction'[91] within which students experience life. The most interesting of which is a comparison between the street corner and student states. While the former is characterized by the unstructured nature of time and movement, the student state revolves around a rigidity and formal organization of time, where hard work dominates and emotional displays are regarded as inappropriate.

Now, the lives of these students and those at British public schools are, for sure, fundamentally different and, in fact, often the split between the student and external state is not necessarily applicable, not only because of the role of a boarding school environment in preventing such a separation, but because the values, interests and sites of activity are often at one with the school anyway. However, the descriptions of control of time, space and body characteristic of the student state could just as easily be recognized from public school life. In order to facilitate an understanding of similarities and differences of

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90 S J Ball "Review of P McLaren's 'Schooling as a Ritual Performance'" Network No 36 October 1986 pp15-16

91 P McLaren 1986 op cit pp83-92

experience relating to these controls, two levels of perception need to be recognized.

Firstly, there is the dimension of ideology. The degree of cultural and ideological identification, between pupils on the one hand and teachers and schools on the other, across the two types of school is intrinsically different. Therefore, at public school the potentially widespread ideological affinity with underlying reasons for disciplinary practice (achievement of elite status and/or class power) is clearly disparate to the experiences of the working class immigrants.

However, at the second level, that of physical reality, the controls are experienced in a necessarily common manner. The fact that in the public school they are located in an ideology designed to provide eventual success for those being controlled and, indeed, their adoption of the same practices in the course of this, does not alter its immediate short term physical quality. Beyond the intentions of pedagogy these bodily restrictions appear to be related to the very nature of formalized institutions of schooling in contemporary society.

Now, the role of ideology in influencing the perception of such controls is, in the long term, inevitably highly significant and further to this the overall 'life context' will ensure that the experiencing of similar patterns of controls lead to differing conclusions related to class location, both immediately and over the long term. However,

it will be demonstrated that the experiencing of these controls, in themselves, be they primarily focussing on temporal, spatial or bodily dimensions are regarded as an important dynamic on which the pattern of school practice exists. And that subject to variable ideological and practical interpretations these practices can continue to exert influence on development beyond the schooling period. Control, therefore, is demonstrated as being as central to the processes of institutions of elite production and reproduction as to those of working class schooling.

The study of Connell et al (1981, 1982)[92] of home and school relations is, in one important respect, of more direct utility than the theoretical work covered so far. The reason is that what were designated as 'ruling class' schools were studied empirically alongside mainly 'working class' institutions. It is on the Australian independent schools, and their patrons, that I will now focus my exposition.

The relationship, at a general level, between the elite families and schools was one characterized by cohesion and an essential similarity in the cultural make up of the two institutions. The schools, though, were not viewed as simply reproductive, obeying the explicit demands of the ruling class. Instead, the relationship was treated as a 'living dynamic', in which the school acted as a working

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92 R W Connell et al 1981 op cit
R W Connell et al 1982 op cit

component of the class, engaged in perpetual interaction. Under such circumstances, the theoretical possibility was recognized that social processes, on the educational dimension, could work to shape and redirect the nature of the class as well as renew it. As they state:

"the ruling class school is no mere agent of class; it is an important and active part of it. In short, it is organic to its class ... we would suggest an equal stress should be laid on the school (as constructor and on its role as conserver)"[93].

This is a highly significant theoretical recognition, for despite the undoubted class identity of the schools, as demonstrated in the historical review the schools have their own concerns and rationale for existence. Therefore, while not underestimating the influence of class, there is a need for a recognition of the degree of autonomy at the level of structure and process, which can influence both individuals and classes within a transactional rather than unidirectional manner.

An important element of private school life was noted to be the social and normative separation of its members from the outside world[94]. By this they referred both to the construction of informal friendship networks and to the

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93 R W Connell 1981 op cit cited in H Giroux 1983 op cit p91

94 R W Connell et all 1982 op cit pp144-151

development of the very definite pattern of viewing the world via the 'us and them' perspective, with 'them' inevitably characterized negatively in terms of laziness and bad manners. Of importance, though, was the recognition that each school did not consider itself as an isolated entity but rather as an integral part of the private sector as a whole. Both the generalized feelings of distinction and a perception of belonging to a sector (the intensity of which being strongly affected by class and personal identities) would appear to be only too relevant to post-school attitudes and patterns of interaction in the British context.

Interestingly, though, the idea of the school trying to present itself as possessing a coherent identity[95] is regarded as being as problematic in Connell's study as it will be revealed to be in British public schools. He states that through the use of symbols and other mechanisms there is an attempt to produce a unity where there is not one - usually due to the diversity of pupil backgrounds. Indeed, Connell describes a situation in which a minority held hegemonic authority in accepted style and tone, with often the new rich adopting these dispositions, with others remaining marginalized. While not concerned directly with matters of replication of forms, as the nature of who dominates and who is marginalized being dependent, to some

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95 *ibid* pp151-154

degree, on the historical nature of the school and its class composition, the demonstration of the existence of groups of differing levels of power beneath an image of unity is highly applicable to other situations.

The changing attitudes of the schools in Britain to the inclusion of female pupils makes Connell's thoughts on gender and class relations apt[96]. In common with the overall analysis, gender relations are not seen to be passively reproduced by the schools, rather it is accepted that the processes and relations of power allow conventions to be altered. As such, schools have to be seen as an element, albeit minor, in the construction of gender relations. Also class and gender relations are not seen as separate and random variables, but are viewed as structures of power which interact in all facets of life. Indeed, both gender and class relations are composed of tensions and contradictions which make the reproductive process a problematic one. Therefore, class and patriarchal processes do not necessarily work in harmony, and cannot only contradict each other but actually work to change the other's composition. The acceptance of this places the higher class - elite schooling - gender dynamic on the agenda as an extra dimension to the study of contemporary school life.

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96 <u>ibid</u> pp173-183

Political Socialization

The discussion of political socialization by Dowse and Hughes[97] is of some relevance to the present study, especially since the nature of the home-school interaction is at the core of the present work. Essentially, Dowse and Hughes state that the connection between family emphases and resultant political realities is less direct and powerful in industrial society than in other social structures. The large amount of socialization occurring in institutions beyond the family develops a possible conflict. They state:

"our findings indicate ... that the process of political socialization amongst children can be looked at as complex interaction between many agencies but especially school and home ... our study strongly suggests that the school is the more significant agency, although it does not work in isolation from the home"[98].

The content of findings, though, was the result of a different historical moment and/or social composition. What it does provide however is an appreciation of the centrality of the family - school process. As will become apparent,

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97 R E Dowse and J A Hughes Political Sociology (London: John Wiley and Sons 1972) pp179-225

98 R E Dowse and J A Hughes "The Family, the School and the Political Socialization Process" in R Rose (ed) Studies in British Politics 3rd Edition (London: Macmillan Press Ltd 1976) p190

the identification of a chasm between family practices and school structures and informal actions is not a particularly appropriate one to the fostering of an understanding of dominant processes in the contemporary public school context. This is not to necessarily force a re-classification of one institution as dominant over the other, but instead to identify an interaction founded on similarities, rather than inevitable contradiction.

Social Closure

Murphy (1988)[99] presents his discussion of social closure within the framework of recent reinterpretations of the relationship between Marx and Weber emphasising that Weber was serving to complement and develop Marx's work, in a critical manner for sure, but not one merely offering a 'bourgeois' refutation. The question of the resulting dominant perspective has been subject to differing emphases. Parkin (1979)[100] whilst retaining the relevance of property in his analysis, puts social closure rather than political economy at its centre, whereas those beyond an overtly neo-Weberian position have called for its incorporation at a

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99 R Murphy Social Closure: The Theory of Monopolization and Exclusion (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1988) pp5-8

100 F Parkin Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique (London: Tavistock 1979) esp pp44-116

sub-ordinate level of theory eg Mackenzie (1980)[101]. Similarly, Giddens (1980)[102] states:

"that the reformulation of class formation as social closure ... should be rejected".

It does not, of course, follow that the notion of social closure is of no interest to class theory. It is through its complementary role that I see its utility for this project.

Murphy (1988) stresses the role of both the structural and the cultural in influencing human conduct - the form of social closure being regarded as more or less formalized and overt depending on the prevailing ideological practices - monopolization and exclusion, though, being the inevitable consequence. He states:

"Weber used the term 'closure' to refer to the process of sub-ordination whereby one group monopolizes advantages by closing off opportunities to another group beneath it which it defines as inferior and ineligible. Any convenient, visible characteristic such as race, language, social origin, religion or lack of a particular school diploma, can be used to declare competitors as outsiders."[103]

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101 G Mackenzie "Review of F Parkin 'Marxism and Class theory: A Bourgeois Critique'" British Journal of Sociology Vol 31 No 4 December 1980 p584

102 A Giddens "Classes, Capitalism and the State" Theory and Society Vol 9 No 6 November 1980 p888

103 R Murphy op cit p8

In looking at the processes dominant in the public school context, the applicability of the concept of social closure is seen to relate to differentiation between classes, both within and beyond school boundaries. Firstly, the restricted entry characteristic of the schools displays exclusion - in this case a relatively formalized process, based on financial criteria and leading toward a relative monopolization of qualifications due to the cultural unity of home and school, access to better facilities and related dimensions. Beyond this, a parallel process of the monopolization of elite occupational posts is formed, bringing to the fore not only the academic variable, but also the potentially highly informative issue of access to, and monopolization of, the covert social network. Closed to those beyond the system it holds something approaching a formalized reality to those at the heart of the process, while perhaps being a more informally perceived mechanism to those outside it.

Within the school itself the significance of social closure can be assessed against both those processes widespread through the sector serving to reinforce cultural exclusion against the working class and internal forms of differentiation, with monopolization and exclusion relating to possession of formal or informal statuses and means of advancement. Internal class instigated mechanisms operate at an 'underground' level because of their clash with the ideology emphasising school unity.

Therefore, in looking at the incorporation of 'social closure' two points seem paramount. Firstly, that where the crucial dynamic of an institution is class and class differentiation any discussions of processes of closure, monopolization and exclusion have to be seen in those terms, and not themselves be regarded as the principal source of action. Secondly, the dominant ideology as it articulates school and class interests has a strong bearing on the recognizable nature of closure patterns. A greater degree of formalized closure is tolerated by participants where those excluded can be acknowledged as sub-ordinate within the accepted ideological framework of a particular institution, though having to exist at a more covert level if this becomes extended to variations within the school. For while such forms are perfectly consistent with an ideology of class differentiation, identification and exclusion as a generality, in practice they clash with the particular interests of the public schools which holds a clear requirement to deny internal stratification based on class in order to continue to attract the new rich. Also those regularly affected by such exclusion would not provide the necessary consensus to allow formalized distinction as is likely in other manifestations. In such cases, the informal processes represent a departure from school presentations, but not from the principles of class society with which they hold such an affinity.

Sociological Interest in Public Schools

Public Schools as 'Total Institutions': the 1960s Literature

The sociological literature of the 1960s, because of changing historical circumstances, can inevitably be of only limited utility. However, both elements of subject matter and the consistent usage of the concept of 'total institution' as the principal analytical device warrant exposition and critique.

The term 'total institution' was brought to prominence in Goffman's study 'Asylums' in which he defines it as:

"a place of residence and work where a large number of like situated individuals cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life".[104] (Goffman 1963)

Weinberg's (1967)[105] interpretations were based on a short questionnaire sent to 84 institutions defined as 'the public schools'. He aimed to use the concept of total institution in an 'active' way, ie, to employ it to help understand the changing nature of public schools, and not viewing them as being in a static condition. As such, he puts great stress on what he sees as a definite life cycle

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[104] E Goffman Asylums (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books 1963) pxiii

[105] I Weinberg 1967 op cit

for public schools. This being supported in his analysis by pointing to the fact that public schools developed 'total' characteristics during the nineteenth century due to external pressures, and now, in the late twentieth century, the process is being reversed.[106]

However, it is precisely the highlighting of external influences which illuminates the inadequacy of the concept. For if factors outside of the institution are to be deemed significant, then surely the nature of that society, its class structure and how the schools in question relate to this hierarchy must be integral to the study. To hold the initial premise that a school system which is largely limited to the higher social classes with the overt aim of perpetuating privilege and high status for its pupils will not be analyzed in close relation to the social structure into which they will later fit, appears severely restricted. Indeed, by focussing the analysis of external pressures merely on how far they affect the degree of 'totality' alone, questions relating to the purpose of the schools, who benefits, the effects of these influences on policies and cultural practices and, as a consequence, the kind of individuals produced, are necessarily neglected.

Away from the theoretical difficulties in this perspective it is becoming increasingly clear that shifts in public school practice such as the relative decline in the

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106 _ibid_ ppxiv-xiv

number of boarders in relation to day pupils, the greater acceptability of links with the family and knowledge of (if limited involvement with) popular culture and issues, even allowing for Weinberg's claim that a certain amount of time away does not forego the 'total' nature of the institution, must be stretching the concept's applicability in this area to breaking point.

However, having said this, it needs to be made clear that it is not the notion that organizational structure can, and does, affect behaviour in certain ways that is being rejected, rather it is its deployment as the central organizing concept that is problematic. As a component of a class based analysis it is clearly relevant. Furthermore, an inadequate theoretical perspective does not necessarily invalidate the substantive data and concepts used. Therefore, while bearing in mind the substantial changes in public school life recently, it is to these I now turn.

The 'rite de passage'[107] was recognized as a central element in the early period of a new pupil's life at public school, a means by which a pupil formerly of senior status at a previous school, comes to accept the role of 'new boy/girl'. Now, while as an officially legitimized ceremony the concept may have limited utility, in highlighting a process whereby those holding age related statuses activate informal 'humiliations' it is valid. In reinforcing

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107 ibid pp99-103

hierarchy and serving as a corridor to the school collectivity (to whatever degree), and thereby in both of these reflecting the interests of the school, the often found 'blind eye' of housemasters is revealed as consistent with the school's internal logic.

However, despite its potential significance, Weinberg's operationalization of the concept falls foul, to some extent, of his reliance on 'total institution' as a theoretical basis. For Weinberg, it is not only statuses relating to age, peers and internal hierarchies that are erased, but similarly, those relating to family, class and previous education, leaving the school as an institution, able to imprint a new 'total identity' on the pupil. As will become apparent processes develop from an interaction of habitus and institution, not the replacement of one by the other - the often fundamental affinity of the two making such usurping contrary to the requirements of individual, school and class.

In examining peer group values he recognized a tendency for traits valued by the school - honesty, manliness and not 'squealing' - to be widely accepted. In looking at inter-group variations and class background my aim is to provide a clear look at such patterns[108]. Weinberg also raises the issue of political involvements of pupils and this is clearly relevant to contemporary analysis[109]. As a step

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108 *ibid* pp111-113
109 *ibid* pp116-121

beyond this, I was allowing for a school reaction which tolerated alternative organized groupings and attempted to institutionalize potential conflict rather than risk sporadic rebellion,recognizing that traits of organization, independence and political skills are ones which complement the school programme. However, the largely conformist political composition of pupils leaves such a (group based) analysis inappropriate, but the underlying ideas far from redundant.

One final point made is that occasionally pragmatism rather than ideology may be behind the deployment of certain activities[110]. Weinberg cites 'games' as being partly influenced by this. In the contemporary situation co-education, in particular, bears the hallmarks of this.

Wakeford's[111] study, while incorporating a participant observation technique, employed a similar theoretical perspective to Weinberg. The result was that many of the concepts drawn from studies of complex organizations, which were incorporated in the study, suffered from the inability to deal with the components of life specific to the public schools. For while, like Weinberg, the concepts of class and elite are not actually ignored, they are dealt with more in terms of methodological organization than as central

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110 ibid pp69-70
111 J Wakeford 1969 op cit

dimensions, to which all parts of the study relate. It is on some of the major concepts used, and the problems they bring, that I will now concentrate.

Wakeford argues that public schools belong to a category of complex organizations which are specifically designed to be 'people changing'[112]. Whilst, to a certain level, such a proposition can be recognized as potentially valid, its actual deployment in this respect is problematic. Firstly, the aims of the schools are clear cut and eminently political and class based. To employ a general concept in this way merely serves to deflect attention away from the central dynamic of the institution. Secondly, to assume the presence of a process of 'people changing' in the face of unity between the form and content of home life and that of schooling holds no logical credence.

With regard to the dispositions, values and processes of consciousness that the pupil brings with him/her to the school, Wakeford again follows Goffman in the use of the term 'presenting culture'[113]. While in some ways a positive concept, it is not followed through to its full conclusions, again probably because the concept is grounded in the sociologically general rather than specific. For example, he mentions briefly how boys from the state sector exhibited specific patterns of friendship, but this was not related to

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112 ibid p42
113 ibid p44

later consequences, aspirations, confidence to deal with the system and how differential elements of background (or presenting culture) may interact with school processes to produce such results.

According to Wakeford, the public school may attempt to instil 'inmate pride'[114], collective protest being seen as a means by which identification with the school is induced. Although having the advantage of realizing, as did Weinberg, that seemingly negative behaviours may have a 'functional' effect for the school, there are limitations. Again, use of a concept derived from the study of mental hospitals is not really able to give a full appreciation of the complexities of a very peculiar and specific institution. The examples of collective protest cited: CND, the refugee issue and involvement with socialism, surely require individual investigation. Indeed, the shifting focusses of disquiet today - largely internal and induced by traditionalism rather than radicalism - certainly require an approach sensitive to the historical realities of the institution and pupils, the relationship to established school and social norms and an appreciation of the reasons for a particular focus of protest. Only by going beyond the conceptually general can the significance of processes be assessed.

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[114] ibid p49-50

Wakeford's employment of a revised version of Merton's (1957) typology of modes of adaptation provides the last major element of his work to be commented upon. The problems associated with this approach exist both generally, and specifically in relation to this study[115].

At the general level, Hammersley and Turner (1984)[116] note two inherent problems of particular relevance. Firstly, it is likely that an individual may hold one mode of adaptation to one element of the school simultaneously with one or more others for different aspects of school life. Secondly, imposed prior assumptions of key categories may serve to push attention away from important, but previously unknown processes.

Besides these central criticisms, Wakeford himself recognizes that his analysis has stopped at the level of description. The determinants of particular modes employed being left uncovered[117]. As a consequence, interactions and processes between class, culture and schooling remain unstudied.

The work of Lambert (1966,1968)[118], although of less overall utility, is worth brief examination. In a similar manner to Weinberg and Wakeford, he examines public schools

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115 _ibid_ pp128-159; drawing on R Merton
116 M Hammersley and J Turner 1984 _op cit_ pp162-166
117 J Wakeford 1969 _op cit_ pp158-159
118 R Lambert 1966 _op cit_
R Lambert 1968 _op cit_

as 'complex organizations', and developed his model of school life from this basis. Consequently, many of the difficulties in the analysis of the previous writers apply equally strongly here, however it is on one specific claim by Lambert that I wish to comment.

He argues that the deployment of this theoretical perspective allows:

"a controversial topic such as the public schools to be dealt with objectively" (Lambert 1966)[119]. However, the notion that anything objectively accurate is being recorded by this narrow method is brought deeply into question with even the minimal recognition of the position of public schools in relation to the wider social structure and, indeed, the influences that bear down upon them fostering change. Whether the public schools actually contribute in any direct sense to class privilege and reproduction is, in this context, irrelevant. What is vital is the need to recognize and incorporate in the analysis the kind of facts discussed earlier. For example, that they are patronized by a very distinct elite sector of the class structure, with the overt purpose of maintaining that elite position. To leave out such a realization from any analysis condemns the study to remain at the level of description. Furthermore, as Salter and Tapper (1981)[120] state, the discussion of

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119 R Lambert 1966 op cit pxxxi
120 B Salter and T Tapper 1981 op cit p159

change in the public school system becomes restricted to problems internal to the schools themselves, and as such, can at best, only represent a partial examination.

Despite their (essentially theoretical) inadequacies these works have remained important largely because of the lack of widespread sociological interest in public schools in the following period, a deficiency which is now beginning to be corrected.

Beyond Total Institutions

Delamont (1984)[121] reports on her study of an exclusive Scottish girls' private school, the actual fieldwork for which was carried out in 1970. The aim of the study was to show how differential patterns of classroom involvement were influenced by the type of peer group belonged to, which in turn was discussed in terms of level of cultural capital. Six separate sub-groups of pupils were identified along with three isolates. The differences between groups two and five highlight well the crux of Delamont's argument.

Group two, 'debs and dollies', was characterized by involvement with fashion, alcohol, cigarettes and its members viewed themselves as 'grown up'. Group five, 'swots and weeds', perceived themselves as the intellectuals,

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121 S Delamont "Classroom Styles at St Luke's" in G Walford (ed) 1984 op cit

generally rejecting team games in favour of individual academic pursuits.

This distinctiveness manifested itself within the classroom environment. For the 'debs and dollies', schooling was about 'facts', and they reacted in a 'passive' way to academic life. Group five, however, both spoke more in class, made more independent contributions and viewed the whole process of education as one in which they should have an active role.

Although recognizing her explanation as speculative[122], Delamont highlights background as being an important influence on the patterns described. The academic sub-set were largely drawn from the intelligentsia, and were preparing to enter the intellectual elite themselves. Group two, though, came from largely entrepreneurial homes, fathers generally working in industry and no mothers being graduates. In group five, however, both parents were graduates with mothers having careers.

Therefore, her main point is that although all girls in the school could be identified as coming from the elite, differential levels of cultural capital were brought to the school by various members of peer groups, with the consequence that those of entrepreneurial homes did not possess the full range of cultural skills and dispositions to enable them to 'use' knowledge rather than merely consume

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122 ibid p80

it.

Coming out of this research, therefore, are four central, and related issues relevant to the organization of my own research project. Firstly, in discussing cultural capital it is inadequate to see all those within an elite institution as being equally endowed with it. Rather, variables of class and cultural background are influential in its uneven distribution. Secondly, it is confirmed that the concept of cultural capital needs to be utilized in a manner specific to the study itself, ie, in relation to the specific features of institutions, which require certain cultural dispositions to assimilate with and manipulate the particular environment. Thirdly, though the focus is primarily academic here, the relevance of differential possession of nuances of style and knowledges to the powerful cultural dimension of life is clear. Finally, it is apparent that if cultural capital is a concept of relevance to 'classroom styles' and peer groups, then an examination of the way in which all structures and processes of school life interact with it is vital to a full understanding of the nature of schooling as a whole. In this way, determinism can be avoided by an emphasis on mediated process.

Delamont[123] has recently further developed the analysis of elite women, and in particular, that of the 'new middle

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[123] S Delamont Knowledgeable Women: Structuralism and the Reproduction of Elites (London: Routledge 1989)

class'. Although recognizing the breadth of content of the work, it is to one overall assertion that attention is drawn:

"Feminists have stressed the importance of studying the intersection of class and gender in the working class; it is equally important to examine that intersection in the 'privileged' classes."[124]

This is a perspective which has been integral to the present research programme since its inception. Inevitably, due to the rationale of the study of historically 'male public schools', the quality of female input was restricted (as, for instance, not every school had even partial co-education) but very definite findings emerged through a recognition of the primacy of the interpretation of class and gender for those involved.

Eglin's (1984)[125] article deals with the respective aspirations of pupils within the state and private sectors. The starting point of the analysis is the statement that within sixth forms there will be pupils capable of passing 'A' levels, and as there is a legal duty to see that the potential of all involved is reached, aspirations should be similar across the board.

However, his questionnaire results identified a marked

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124 ibid p267
125 G Eglin "Public Schools and the Choice at 18+" in G Walford (ed) 1984 op cit

difference on many themes. As an illustrative example, 73% of private against only 47% of state pupils intended to apply for university. Moreover, not only was there inequality in terms of quantity, but also of quality, with more pupils from the private sector aiming for high status subjects, such as medicine and law.

While such figures present a reality and can lead the author, quite legitimately, to claim that such a differentiation may well result from the respective understanding of their social position by the two groups, they cannot help with an analysis of the various components and processes of life which have produced this greater perception of self-worth and ability in the private sector. To do this, an understanding of 'modes of existence' of pupils is required, looking at unconscious expectations and self images grounded in the family and extended or intensified in the school. It is only via such a technique that the dominant social processes of advantage can be located, therefore, helping to further unravel the relationship between class and education in the perpetuation of privilege.

Fox's study (1984, 1985)[126] was based on the

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[126] I Fox "The Demand For a Public School Education: A Crisis of Confidence in Comprehensive Schooling?" in G Walford (ed) 1984 op cit
I Fox 1985 op cit

interviewing of 190 sets of parents of public school pupils and clearly highlights some of their major common characteristics and perceptions. Overriding all other factors, the desire for better academic results was consistently quoted as the most important reason for choosing the private sector. The development of character, although also viewed as significant, concentrated on a desire for the teaching of right and wrong, self discipline, how to dress 'properly' and other such characteristics which have become the domain of the new right. The quest for a 'sense of responsibility' was limited as was the overt desire for traditional leadership preparation - though clearly this does not equate with a lack of demand for the achievement of positions of authority as such[127]. As for the form of education, there was a noted tendency for boarders to come from stable service class backgrounds, with upwardly mobile elements being represented more in the day sector. Interestingly, a significantly greater proportion of parents of day pupils stressed academic results as being of primary importance, while more of the boarding families were inclined to stress the role of character and discipline as independently important - not merely in association with other elements of schooling[128]. As such, once underneath the general patterns of attitudes, the influence of class and cultural identity were revealed.

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127 ibid p142
128 ibid pp166-172

Of particular value in this study is its role in contextualizing new findings especially in relation to the following input which serves to clarify the wider socio-cultural environment within which processes of individuals and sub-groups operate. The first contribution reinforces the importance of recognizing variation in the 'nature' of families despite many apparent similarities. In focussing on the friendship patterns of parents of similar occupational status, Fox was able to discover a clear line of influence from the origins of those involved. For instance, owners of large companies who inherited their wealth drew friends from similar status backgrounds, whereas the entrepreneurs tended to associate with small businessmen[129]. This is in itself perhaps not of paramount importance, but as an illustration of differences of cultural existence which (via differing forms of interactions) transfer to the habitus of pupils, in turn expressing themselves in the expectations and mannerisms of everyday life, its contribution is clear.

Again, at a parental level, it is interesting to note the existence and practices of a social elite[130]. A group which not only principally draws on people in the City and those holding elite status, top managers or owners of big businesses, but also ensures that their ranks are free of

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[129] ibid pp66-91
[130] ibid pp29-40

the socially mobile and especially the state educated. In doing so, they not only differentiate themselves by virtue of public school education (though that is, of course, central) but also in terms of their elite status amongst those who have been in the system. As will be seen (Chapter 6) recognizably comparable formations can be observed, at pupil level, in the sector today, under appropriate institutions and class conditions.

Thirdly, there is the question of the 'old boy network', recognized by Fox (1985) as existing in wider society at three levels:

a) interlocking directorships;

b) connection between political elite and economic elite;

c) informal contacts.

She states:

"the school and community networks of those who are public school educated remain distinguishable from those who are not and this social segregation is achieved effectively and effortlessly. What is open to debate and further investigation is the precise significance of such networks"[131].

In examining the personal lived experiences and knowledges of pupils of a wide class and cultural background in this respect, my own work can make a contribution to

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131 ibid p95

assessing the potential role of such informal mechanisms both for public school pupils as a whole and for various sub-groups.

Overall, the study of Fox has served to highlight several areas of some consequence: the general significance of a public school education as a point of differentiation from those outside of the school, a certain uniformity of values across parents, and crucially, continued forms of divergence between participants. Inevitably, substantial differences exist between the focus of the above work and the life histories under discussion, but as a contribution to the establishment of an adequate context its applicability is noted.

Salter and Tapper (1981, 1984, 1985)[132] have discussed various elements in the changing nature of contemporary public schools, the most relevant of which will now be presented.

It was outlined earlier that Salter and Tapper (1981)[133] claimed that through the academic ethos public schools found the ideal legitimation for their privilege and

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132 B Salter and T Tapper 1981 _op cit_
T Tapper and B Salter "Images of Independent Schooling: Exploring the Perceptions of Parents and Politicians" in G Walford (ed) 1984 _op cit_
B Salter and T Tapper 1985 _op cit_

133 B Salter and T Tapper 1981 _op cit_ pp174-175

that due to the rationalization of the surrounding society, a situation developed whereby they held fewer and fewer genuine options about potential directions which could be taken. Moreover, they went on to argue (Tapper and Salter1984)[134] that schools successfully identified and incorporated societal trends, and indeed, at the same time lost their peculiarity. They elaborate on this claiming that not only are the formal elements of schooling converging across the sectors, through more external examinations and closer careers guidance for example, but also that youth cultures are increasingly cutting across class lines. However, Walford (1986)[135] rightly criticizes the analysis. He states that although the same proportion of different classes may be involved in similar activities at a general level, for example, sport or reading, not only will the actual content of the pursuits vary but also the meaning attached to them and the context in which they exist. Therefore, due to underlying differences in attitudes and values, the mediation of elements of culture will differ.

The weakness of Salter and Tapper's position is examined in relation to whether such a conception of public school life ignores the continuing realities of the situation. It is considered how far the pressures and

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[134] T Tapper and B Salter 1984 _op cit_ pp189-204
[135] G Walford 1986 _op cit_ p239

focusses of school life,the internal structures and routines coupled with the clearly distinct clientele conspire to produce conditions in which very specific cultural forms develop - forms whose very existence lie not just in an evolution of class identity but via an interplay with their environment. As such, rather than losing their peculiarity, the analysis looks at the extent to which groups are existing as genuine entities, and re-defining that existence in relation to shifts of institutional practice, a re-assessment which may inspire greater or lesser adjustments in action, but which regardless retain a clear sense of historical and class identity.

A further noteworthy aspect of the same paper is the view they hold of the public schools as acting as something of an institutional catalyst[136]. Specifically, they are referring to the fact that within the schools the various elements necessary for achieving elite status co-exist (for example, social and cultural capital), and over a period of time interact to ensure that each individual is equipped with the important pre-requisites for success, fostering the perpetuation of class society.

Now, while agreeing with Salter and Tapper concerning

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136 T Tapper and B Salter 1984 op cit pp198-200

the contributory relevance of social capital, alongside economic and cultural (as did MacKinnon 1987)[137], in the production of elites it is the application of the conception of interaction of capital forms that requires further attention. In order to describe the problems, I will focus specifically on the extent of any dissemination of social capital and its integration by pupils holding varying levels and types of capital forms.

Social capital is defined by Salter and Tapper as a 'network of social relations'[138] offering personal contacts which provide help in securing advancement, notably in employment (though the social area is also relevant). This is clearly, therefore, demarcated from any generalized advantage occurring through (probably ex-public school) employer preference for a pupil from the sector.

Salter and Tapper state that independent schools are particularly successful at either 'creating' or 'cementing' social capital. It is the validity of treating these as two elements of the same process rather than distinct ones located in class background and cultural knowledges that is raised by this study. This is an analysis which

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137 D Mackinnon "Public School Today" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 8 No 3 1987 p351

138 T Tapper and B Salter 1984 op cit pp198-199. Later referring to it in terms of the 'old boy network' B Salter and T Tapper 1985 op cit p65

necessitates an appreciation of the wider patterns of interactions and processes which are revealed throughout the study.

Salter and Tapper (1985)[139] in their most recent work return to a discussion of the external influences upon changes in the sector. In doing so they draw a distinction between the 'top' twelve or so schools and the remainder. While recognizing the great importance of direct parental pressure coming via the market place for the lower status schools, the elite, they argue, face related yet different pressures. Such schools are content knowing that as long as a large proportion of their pupils fill elite positions, both academically and occupationally, parents will continue to want to use them. Therefore, it is not direct parental pressure that concerns them. Instead, it is the changing requirements of societal institutions such as the Oxbridge universities that is significant for this group. Furthermore, there is a greater degree of cushioning from any potential parental pressure because of their established high status and inevitable waiting lists. Clearly, though,

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[139] B Salter and T Tapper op cit 1985 pp66-69

this is not necessarily a function of the objective measures of success outlined by Salter and Tapper, the social and cultural standing which continues to be provided by attendance serving to insulate such institutions to a greater degree than others in the sector. For it needs to be remembered that not only is the private sector far from an homogeneous entity, but the divergence rests on perspectives of historical and class position in which subjective dimensions of stratification and distinction can, given appropriate circumstances, far outweigh qualitatively measurable criteria.

As the most recent ethnographic account of public school life, Walford (1986)[140] begins by differentiating between Willis's (1977) study and that of Jenkins (1983)[141] on Belfast youth. Essentially he draws attention to the basic organizational forms described - that is, the strictly defined boundaries of sub-cultural groups found in Willis against the fluidity of composition in Jenkins's study. It is with the latter that Walford identifies pupil activity in the public schools studied. He continues, though, that it is wrong to view the situation as one in which high culture is simply, in an unproblematic manner assimilated by the pupils. Instead, cultural production is as much a relevant concept for these privileged pupils as for the working class

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140 G Walford 1986 op cit

141 P Willis 1977 op cit
R Jenkins Lads, Citizens and Ordinary Kids (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul 1983)

subjects of other studies. Therefore, he argues, the pupils create for themselves a culture which, although it may include elements of 'high' culture, is just as likely to involve selected elements of popular culture. Importantly, though, he states that when components of popular culture are involved they are 'grafted' on to a very specific understanding of both their position and future prospects. As such a cultural form is produced which will not hinder the successful progression through the academic and occupational hierarchy. This 'dabbling' in alternative cultures does not, therefore, impinge on the reproductive process, which is ensured by the fundamental ideological consistency across generations within a specific class. As a consequence, he states that there are no distinctive cultural forms, the similarities being far more important and informative than any differences[142].

However, while accepting as valid, and indeed vital, the need to recognize the existence of cultural production alongside reproduction and the importance of an ideological foundation, the question of how accurate the resulting assertions in the analysis are needs to be raised. To this end, I will individually assess the principal component parts of his presentation of cultural production and cultural forms.

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142 G Walford 1986 op cit pp23 and 83-84

Walford states:

"the days of cultivating a separate accent and flouting striped coloured jackets and caps are now over and the majority of the boys wish to blend anonymously with the crowd"[143].

This statement seems to incorporate a naivety concerning the nature of the social arena. It may be that at a superficial level certain pupils may wish it to be known that they too have an interest in popular culture, but that does not actually, in itself, progress discussion very far and does not demand the rejection of cultural distinction as a principal concern in this context. Indeed, Walford does note that a few[144] pupils exhibit such characteristics. However, it is not necessarily the number of pupils that is important but their qualitative reality and their identification with the historical bases of school and class. It is against this background that a re-consideration of the situation is offered, one in which findings relating to general and specific expressions of 'superiority' are integrated.

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143 _ibid_ p83
144 _ibid_ p83

A related position providing real difficulties is expressed as follows:

"Different groups and individuals selectively incorporated the various aspects of wider youth culture to different extents, but there was no clear division between cultural forms... Instead, cultural forms interweave and overlap with a considerable degree of tolerance."[145]

This is quite clearly problematic. The difficulty centres on Walford's insistence on basing the creation of any possible sub-cultural formations around dimensions of popular culture or related 'inappropriate' core dimensions - essentially searching for a 'working class sub-cultural configuration' in an elite context. The fact that no sub-cultures were found expressing an overt anti school culture, or that divisions between groups of pupils in terms of interest in one or another component of popular culture were missing is hardly surprising, yet does not constitute grounds for concluding that there are no clear differences and divisions between cultural forms. It is the manner in which Walford was looking that is suspect. Evolving from class realities, sub-cultural formations in public schools could be logically expected to have their own specific characters and focusses of bonding, and while for some pupils a fluidity of existence may dominate, for others, solid unified cultural forms, clearly demarcated by styles

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145 _ibid_ p83

and values are a genuine theoretical possibility, inextricably bound up in class and pedagogic history and institutional context. As central expressions of identity both to participants and fellow pupils their existence would then be noted as a principal form of school life in order to extend analysis beyond impressions of surface unity, which inevitably represent but a partial truth.

In stating that cultural activity exists in such a manner that it will not harm the chances of achievement of individuals, Walford is on slightly firmer ground. However, his lack of appreciation of the nature of class based formations leads to an incomplete analysis. For he states:

"Some of the boys may be part of a punk group [or] ... a Mozart quartet, but eventually they all sit down in the same examination hall and know that matters to them all is good 'O' levels and 'A' levels."[146]

In suggesting that principal (yet eventually insignificant) forms of differentiation rest on music in this way, he cannot take account of variations of background, expectations and experiences which must be incorporated into analyses of class based groupings. For while, to be sure, academia is the recognized vehicle for success for the majority, the providing of a singular categorization makes it impossible to theoretically account for any variations and leaves them as arbitrary expressions.

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146 ibid p83

For instance, lack of academic success may well be a useful measure of 'harmed chances' for many, but for others it may be irrelevant because of their reliance on social capital or its acceptance as part of a culture which expects an extra year to be taken at 'A' level standard. Therefore, the essential point is that while pupils may, and indeed do, adopt practices which do not damage their potential for success this cannot be fully acknowledged until the range of behaviours and projected career paths have been approached. Examination failure, while the best suited measure for most pupils, is simply an inappropriate gauge of the results of activities for others, for whom the developmental pattern holds a distinctive format.

As mentioned earlier, Walford claims that the distinctive nature of 'the public school master'[147] is beginning to fade. The move toward the academic ethos has placed demands on masters for examination success which is severely limiting the flexibility previously enjoyed by them. This pressure is also revealing itself in the selection of teachers, qualifications now beginning to hold precedence over sporting or expressive qualities. Therefore, he argues, the changing work experience is producing something more approaching an employer-worker relationship, with similarity of teaching experience across the sectors steadily increasing. Having said this, it is

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[147] _ibid_ pp85-113

important not to prematurely over-emphasise any such shifts, for while greater unity may be developing in conditions, attitudes grounded in elitism and the distinctiveness and superiority of the private sector cannot be assumed to have become extinct, but must be the subject of empirical assessment.

Continuing this theme of developments in the nature of staff, Walford presents housemasters as increasingly adopting a caring and concerned role[148]. Again such a position should be met with caution awaiting the evidence cited by pupils. Affinity with traditional values and a desire to play down any problems within specific houses potentially serves to counter-act such a shift.

Female involvement in public schools is now at such a level that failure to make it an integral part of an analysis would represent a serious inadequacy. Indeed, Walford (1986) states that girls now constitute 11.7% of all HMC school pupils. Of adult females in public schools there has, of course, been a long tradition of non-academic low status involvement and although women now represent 9.1% of masters (Walford 1986) they still tend to be in the lower status subjects such as art and music[149].

Walford goes on to describe these changes in theoretical terms. He argues that while gender differentiation is decreasing, gender consolidation (of

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148 ibid p118
149 ibid pp142 and 167

traditional roles) is, if anything, getting worse. However, he does see potential for change in the questioning of these patterns by staff and pupils alike, and actually envisages possibly threatening the overall dominance of the male sexist ethos in its contemporary form[150]. The nature of gender expectations and their interaction with class is discussed in Chapter 7.

Walford contributes to the discussion of interaction of capital forms by claiming that those with financial capital but not cultural capital are able to use the public schools to convert between the two[151]. Now, while the schools may offer certain 'tricks' and 'insights' for manipulation of the educational system, whether this constitutes the actual creation of cultural capital is less clear. In developing this point, the study looks at both the form of cultural capital brought into the schooling situation and on what aspects of it any conversions would centre. Furthermore, whether restrictive access to components of it is based on symbolic and actual statements of class and cultural superiority and exclusion is also considered.

Of some interest is Walford's reporting of a reluctance by older boys to discipline younger pupils and generally exercise authority over them[152]. The reasons cited were both pragmatic and moral - ie, a perceived need to spend

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150 _ibid_ pp181-184
151 _ibid_ p238
152 _ibid_ pp131-132

more time on academic study and the adoption of a liberal stance reacting against ingrained expressions of power. Observations here may well be influenced by the impact of historical shifts even over a short period. With fieldwork being carried out by Walford in 1981/1982, seven years elapsed before the taking of the life-histories (though less between the actual years of schooling involved). While the academic necessities have remained a constant, the atmosphere of liberalism (itself a strange finding given the era) has been replaced by a dominant right wing ideology - any liberal concerns being pushed very much to the margins. The nature of findings relating to the acceptance and legitimacy of hierarchical practices, as discussed in Chapter 7, should be seen in this light.

Walford goes on to play down the role of the 'old boy network'[153] claiming that the changing occupational structure of society means that at early stages in a career it is less important that it has previously been. Having been discussed elsewhere in this review, it is sufficient to state that this is an incomplete view which can be, and is, further illuminated by reference to input from those within the sector.

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153 *ibid* p207

Finally, Walford refers to the awareness amongst the boys of 'CV filling'[154] or establishing as many pastimes as possible to include on application forms, both for university and beyond. It is apparent that Walford regarded this as a practice being independently developed by the boys themselves. The extent to which the evidence drawn from subject experiences demands a further interpretation is discussed in Chapter 8.

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154 *ibid* p72

CHAPTER 4: Research Practice: the Life-History and Sociological Analysis

This chapter will be concerned with a number of related dimensions of the 'life-history' approach and its practical application. After presenting a review of both the 'classic' and more recent work in this field, I will examine the use made of the method by contemporary researchers who go beyond the established symbolic interactionist framework and suggest fusion with other approaches. Attention will then be centred on both inherent problems and advantages of the method before I provide a detailed exposition of my own research methodology. Descriptions of the specific schools and subjects at the heart of the study will conclude the chapter.

Life-Histories: The 'Classic' Work

During the early decades of this century the life-history technique held a greater legitimacy than it had in ensuing generations and accompanying this was its extensive deployment in research practice. The centre for this activity was, of course, the Chicago School of Sociology. Perhaps the single most important and influential piece of work of this type was Thomas and Znaniecki's (1927) "The Polish Peasant"[1] - which drew on a range of sources including personal letters and documents as well as autobiography.

Located firmly within the theoretical tradition of symbolic interactionism, the nature and presentation of the work may, as Blumer (1939)[2] highlights in his extensive appraisal of the book, lead to a first impression that it represents solely a monograph on Polish peasant existence under specific historical and social conditions. While accurate at the level of substantive content such a perspective ignores the theoretical implications of the work for the study of more general social processes. Thomas and Znaniecki argued that the experiences undergone by the people studied were indicative of those felt by a wider

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1 W Thomas and F Znaniecki The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (New York: Dover Publications 1927)

2 H Blumer "An Appraisal of Thomas and Znaniecki's 'The Polish Peasant in Europe and America'" Critiques of Research in the Social Sciences Bulletin 44 (New York: Social Science Research Council 1939) p4

range of social groups. As such, they were actually concerned to offer methodological proposals for more generalized sociological analysis. Therefore, as Platt states, Harvey (1987)[3] has recently re-affirmed the dominant opinion that survived for much of the twentieth century that the works were essentially descriptive rather than dealing with issues of social theory, was a 'myth' - though clearly such work was framed within fairly specific theoretical terms of reference.

Within such limits, therefore, life-stories have been used in the pursuit of understanding the sociologically general as well as the individually peculiar. Plummer (1983)[4] for instance, draws attention to their focus on the relationship between social change and community structure, the nature of the family under similar conditions, the process of individualization as influenced by the structure of social relations and the question of relations between the sexes and the consequences of these on group efficiency.

Blumer (1939)[5] had earlier drawn attention to the broader contributions made by the study. Perhaps the

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3 J Platt "Review of L Harvey 'Myths of the Chicago School of Sociology'" (Aldershot: Gower Publishing Co Ltd 1987) Sociology Vol 27 No 4 November 1987 pp645-6

4 K Plummer Documents of Life (London: George Allen and Unwin 1983) p40

5 H Blumer 1939 op cit p6

two most lasting examples of which were firstly, the generalized need to study the subjective component of social life and then, building on this, the now classic sociological concept of 'definition of the situation'. Blumer's review though, was not without critical content. He stated that despite the usefulness of concepts, they did not actually evolve from the data presented, and as such could not be supported or proved by it. Faris (1967)[6] reports that Thomas was prepared to acknowledge this point. The influence of the work was described by Bain in 1939 as " .... a monumental instance of the revolt against 'armchair' sociology ... Few present day sociological theorists fail to give lip service, at least, to this conception of sociology and they also profess to base their theories upon actual or possible empirical research."[7] The statement confirms the importance of the text.

Shaw (1930, 1931, 1938)[8] was ultimately interested in the prevention and 'treatment' of delinquency. The life-story document was his principal tool and in his most well

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6 R Faris Chicago Sociology 1920-32 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1967) p18

7 R Bain "Summary and Analysis of the Conference" in H Blumer 1939 op cit p192

8 C Shaw The Jack Roller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1930, 1966 edition)
C Shaw The Natural History of a Delinquent Career (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1931)
C Shaw Brothers in Crime (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1938)

known work, "The Jack Roller", he states that such documents show: "three important aspects of delinquent conduct:

1. the point of view of the delinquent;
2. the social and cultural situation to which the delinquent is responsive; and
3. the sequence of past experiences and situations in the life of the delinquent."[9]

Such a presentation clearly underlines the contemporary relevance of the approach. In introducing the same text, Becker (1966)[10] states that "The Jack Roller" provides insights normally beyond the knowledge of sociologists as it gives a vision from actually within the culture concerned. In this way the biases (in this case of Stanley) which dominate thinking can be appreciated and underlying assumptions of life become subject to analysis. Questions about the topic concerned can be approached from the angle of the central actor.

Perhaps the principal difficulty of the work focussed on the matching of the methodology with the nature of the subjects. As a population, Angell (1945)[11] states, many had limited educational experience. As a consequence, those who

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9 C Shaw 1966 op cit p3
10 H Becker "Introduction" to C Shaw 1966 op cit pxv
11 R Angell "A Critical Review of the Development of the Personal Document Method in Sociology 1920-1940" in L Gottshalk, C Kluckholm and R Angell The Use of Personal Documents in History, Anthropology and Sociology (New York: Social Science Research Council 1945) pp193-194

wrote the life-stories were a specific representation of the group rather than being illustrative of the whole. This is noted by Geis (1982)[12] to be especially relevant to the case of Stanley whose background and characteristics - especially his intelligence - were far from the norm. It is claimed that while Shaw does make passing reference to his being 'very bright', elsewhere he tries to play this down presenting him as near average.

Overall Angell (1945)[13] considers Shaw to have made some clear advances over Thomas and Znaniecki, for instance in showing how life-stories could be collected from different sources, given patience, and that the interpretations of others as well as sociologists were valid. Also regarded as significant was the recognition that the most appropriate documents were those specifically produced for the study as they were able to be focussed and controlled, enabling specific areas of interest to be covered. However, Geis (1982)[14] rejects this, pointing to the potential for the interests and biases of the sociologist to dominate. Whilst accepting this, I would argue that by adopting appropriate modes of analysis the advantages of such focussing can be gained without detriment to the research programme.

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12 G Geis "The Jack Roller: The Appeal, the Person the Impact" in J Snodgrass (ed) The Jack Roller at Seventy (Lexington Mass: Lexington Books 1982) p125
13 R Angell 1945 op cit p200
14 G Geis 1982 op cit p124

Thrasher (1927)[15] again used written life-stories, interviews and official records in his study of gang life. He became acquainted with the culture of gangs, not only identifying their activities and the nature of the boys involved, but also the reasons behind the observable realities, which themselves reacted to specific situational conditions. As Bennett (1981)[16] points out Thrasher was able to portray a situation in which gang members were viewed as psychologically 'normal' and to describe the process of gang formation more generally as a natural one, representing the gang in terms of a centre of re-adjustment between being a dependant child and an adult. Thrasher (elaborates Brake 1985)[17] saw the street as an area of freedom and adventure contrasting with the agencies of social control which constrained behaviour and were negatively perceived by gang members.

The main shortcoming of the work lay in its methodology which was unsystematic (Bennett 1981)[18]. However, the work was essentially exploratory and not only did it provide data of relevance to substantive issues but served to underline the importance of the individual as an active force in the construction of reality.

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15 F M Thrasher The Gang (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1927)
16 J Bennett Oral History and Delinquency (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1981) p160
17 M Brake Comparative Youth Culture: The Sociology of Youth Cultures and Youth Sub-Cultures in America, Britain and Canada (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1985) pp35-36
18 J Bennett 1981 op cit p161

Zorbaugh's (1929)[19] study of slum cultures drew only a small number of personal documents from residents, instead the basis of the work was those materials produced by social workers and post-graduate observers. For Angell (1945)[20] this study led to one significant contribution to research method, namely the close integration of such documents and (using the terminology of the dominant theoretical position) ecological data. In this way the background conditions within which personal experiences occurred could be appreciated and the nature of the study enhanced.

The study of Sutherland (1937)[21] demonstrated a variation in the nature of the research process in terms of its actual organization. Here the focus is not so much on the actual life of an individual in itself, but rather the use of the participant's knowledge as a resource from which detailed information can be gleaned concerning the topic at hand - the professional thief. Using both written responses to specific themes and questions, Sutherland was able to gain an insight into the activities and viewpoint of the thief, learning both about the culture of the occupation and its place within a larger whole. This further reinforced the potential role of the technique to link the individual with wider social forms and processes.

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19 H Zorbaugh The Gold Coast and the Slum: A Sociological Study of Chicago's Near North Side (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1929)

20 R Angell 1945 op cit p207

21 E Sutherland The Professional Thief by a Professional Thief (Chicago: Chicago University Press 1937)

Between these studies and the current resurgence of interest in the method, one study (or series of studies) stands out. Lewis's (1961) "The Children of Sanchez"[22] is the work of an anthropologist concentrating on an economically poor family in Mexico City. For Lewis, this single family could be recognized as being truly representative of both the social and psychological problems faced by people of similar socio-economic status in Mexico. As such, the life-stories of each member of the family were collected. The work covered the complete range of thoughts, interests and issues which made up their lives, just as readily focussing on dreams and aspirations as relationships and sexual activity and conceptions of justice and politics. In doing so, he developed the theory of the 'culture of poverty'[23], of significance, in his view, well beyond the specific context of its development.

Identifiably influenced by the Chicago methodology, Chambliss (1972)[24] returns to the study of the professional thief. The work is presented as an autobiography with a short introduction and conclusion by Chambliss. Several observations are made concerning the relationship between the professional thief and society and how it can function in a positive as well as negative manner for institutions

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22 O Lewis The Children of Sanchez (New York: Random House 1961)
23 ibid ppxxiv-xxvii
24 B Chambliss The Box Man (New York: Harper and Row Publishers 1972)

such as the police and insurance companies. In drawing attention to the connection between the professional thief and the legitimate businessman, Chambliss describes the law breaker as incorporating principles of capitalism - ensuring jobs for a range of professionals including judges and lawyers. As such he relates individual practices to wider social processes, stating "By coming to grips with Harry's life we learn a great deal more about America, law, order and being".[25] However, a fuller theoretical discussion is something which may well have been assisted by the closer integration of evidence and analysis.

Klockars' "The Professional Fence" (1974)[26], similarly, has the real 'feel' of a study carried out in the tradition of Chicago sociology. Beginning with the development of his hustling skills, the study goes on to describe the personal legitimations of life-style employed, thereby presenting the situation via the viewpoint of the fence. The metaphor of the 'ledger' was employed, with claims for entries in both the positive and negative columns and, therefore, an identification with the life and moral code of 'non-criminals' and, in turn, the societal mainstream. As such, the work uncovers the meanings attached to life by the fence and something of the ideology within which it is framed.

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25 ibid pix
26 C Klockars The Professional Fence (London: Tavistock 1974)

However, just as this work encompasses the strengths of the early work, so too it retains the weaknesses. This is exemplified by the treatment of the distinction between criminals and non-criminals as a (if not 'the') principal dimension of societal differentiation. Now, clearly within such a study it is one variable of genuine relevance, but the implication of the existence of a single moral order for the law abiding population is problematic, as is the presentation of the criminal as simply a deviant from this norm. This clearly is a difficulty endemic to the ethnomethodological programme as a whole - a theoretical stance influential at the time of writing. For despite the presence of detailed descriptions of practice this is not located within an adequate conception of the realities of class society. Without incorporating this extra dimension, the life-history method is unable to achieve its full potential utility in macro sociological analysis.

Life-Histories: Contemporary Trends and Emphases

Since the 1970s there have been signs of a fundamental shift in the nature of the relationship between the life-history technique and theoretical discussion, with macro sociological issues being at the very heart of much of the work. The majority of these studies evolved independently and, as a consequence, there is no unity of theoretical stance, rather the opposite is found. For instance,

alongside the inevitable symbolic interactionists, writers are found embracing role theory, historical sociology and both structural and Sartrian Marxism. As such, in providing this brief review my aim is two-fold. Firstly, to give a general presentation of developments in the kind of work being carried out and, secondly, in doing so, highlight those pieces of positive relevance to the establishment of class contexted qualitative analysis.

Bertaux (1981)[27] in his adaptation of the life-story approach to research argues for the need for a re-establishment of the 'stages' via which it is actually carried out. Underlying this, he argues, is the recognition that the aim of research becomes the attempt to acquire knowledge about social processes and not produce scientific 'truths'. He continues that all such processes involve forms of domination at whatever level, and as such, practice involves overcoming ideologies which accompany social order to present it as 'natural'.

This re-consideration of method is particularly valuable in relation to two of these 'stages' - hypothesis formulation and their confirmation via data. Contrary to established procedure, hypotheses should only be established toward the end of the research and not at its outset,

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27 D Bertaux "From the Life-History Approach to the Transformation of Sociological Practice" in D Bertaux (ed) <u>Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences</u> (London: Sage 1981)

argues Bertaux. They should evolve from a continuous process of examining each new piece of data as it presents itself to assist the understanding of a given set of social relations. As such, the task of sociology becomes the move "towards a progressive elucidation of the historical movement of social relations"[28], not merely attempting to discover narrow laws relating to fixed variables. Analysis needs to be grounded in an appreciation of the forms of social relations as they relate to the wider social structure and the historical moment and not between characteristics of static nature.

The position is developed by Bertaux and Bertaux-Wiame (1981)[29] in their study of the French baking trade. Identifying their approach as structuralist, their aim was to discover the forms of socio-structural relations involved in the actual production of bread. While the structure and logic of the situation was of interest, so were the contradictions and their historical development. Crucial to the recognition of acceptable findings was the identification of 'saturation' - that is, from one story to another certain features were being continually reported. Therefore, research was provided with validity. Now, they go on to argue that if a picture of the underlying socio-structural relations as they influence social practices is

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28 ibid p41

29 D Bertaux and I Bertaux-Wiame "Life-Stories in the Bakers' Trade" in D Bertaux (ed) 1981 op cit

established then the issue of data analysis in the established sense is irrelevant, "the constant search for socio-structural relations"[30] serving to make sense of evidence more effectively than a restrictive post-research methodology.

Bertaux-Wiame (1981)[31] extends this approach to the study of internal migration, crucially highlighting that the view of migrants as lone individuals is not an accurate one, as they are always located within a network of social relations. Perhaps the single most significant theoretical development in the work comes in relation to a discussion of the 'form' of life-stories. She states:

"The facts of the story will allow us to see social relations in action. The forms, on the other hand, reveal the shape of the mind, the cultural and ideological structures, for it is through ideology and culture that interpretations are given to the real conditions of existence."[32]

So, in essence, the form is the mode of telling, the objects of constant reference being all important. Bertaux-Wiame shows how while men relate their stories to the search for work, women refer to the family and children. The significance of 'form' is not, of course, restricted to the gender dimension, but holds potential both for class

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30 ibid p189
31 I Bertaux-Wiame "The Life-History Approach to the Study of Internal Migration" in D Bertaux (ed) 1981 op cit
32 ibid p259

analysis and the interpenetration of these two axes of inequality.

Karpati (1981)[33] discusses the deployment of the life-history approach within a large scale survey of mobility and urbanization in Hungary. For him the character of someone which evolves from a singular focus on quantitative data is restricted and 'time bound'. The response to this, though, was not the absolute rejection of such techniques, but rather, their incorporation within an approach which used the 'hard data' to provide a picture of the wider context within which the life-stories were taken. In this case the differences between being a peasant in Hungary in the 1950s and 1970s provided the background. Therefore, an integration of approaches is offered through the perceived importance of understanding societal trends before the mediations and processes of an individual can be adequately analyzed.

A A de Camargo (1981) states:

"What is lost in statistical precision is gained in comprehension and credibility, based on a more attentive observation of the way the groups or segments comprising society are operating."[34]

This affirmation of the significance of life-stories is

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33 Z Karpati "The Methodological Use of the Life-History Approach in a Hungarian Survey on Mobility and Urbanization" in D Bertaux (ed) 1981 op cit

34 A A de Camargo "The Actor and the System: Trajectory of the Brazilian Political Elites" in D Bertaux (ed) 1981 op cit p 192

made in relation to the study of Brazilian political elites. He stresses the importance of a person's 'individual trajectory', including origin and socialization alongside his/her position within a larger whole. The life-story approach being able to elucidate two dimensions: the relationship between the individual and the system and the individual and history. In this way, it is able to overcome what he identifies as a principal problem with positivism and much Marxist thought - namely the failure to recognize the individual as a valuable point of access to an understanding of the system as a whole.

Gagnon (1981)[35] was principally concerned to show, via the life-stories of those involved, how social changes since 1940 have been experienced by the people of Quebec, again therefore, looking at the individual in terms of a relationship with the wider social process. The notion of vecu (lived experience) lies at the heart of the work and recognizing the influence of symbolic interactionism, her co-worker (Morin) elaborates each account as an expression of an individual's critical reading of a given situation - one determined by a complete conception of society and discussed and explained via significations (values, norms, ideas, expressions etc) developing over the course of a particular life. It is not psychologism that results from such an approach, she states, but rather a means by which

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[35] N Gagnon "On the Analysis of Life-Accounts" in D Bertaux (ed) 1981 op cit

the researcher is able to reach toward culture's subjective component, remaining within the sociological realm, albeit of somewhat particular definition.

The importance of transcending a timeless and abstract approach is confirmed by Thompson (1981)[36]. As part of the essential nature of the life-history the dimension of time adds to sociological enquiry by serving to highlight areas of discussion as being involved in continual development. Referring to his earlier work, "The Edwardians" (1975)[37], he stated how the taking of individual life-stories (in this case cutting across class boundaries) was able to illuminate both dimensions of structure and individuality. In doing so, he was able to demonstrate both the potential for generalization and the requirement to recognize individual peculiarity in each individual account.

The recent study of Middleton (1987)[38] offers a particularly interesting utilization of this methodology. She was concerned with an analysis of New Zealand feminist teachers, born and educated in the period following World War II. In doing this, she too explicitly recognized the requirement of analyzing the issue from a perspective which

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36 P Thompson "Life-Histories and the Analysis of Social Change" in D Bertaux (ed) 1981 op cit p289

37 P Thompson The Edwardians: The Remaking of British History (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson 1975)

38 S Middleton "Schooling and Radicalization: Life-Histories of New Zealand Feminist Teachers" British Journal of Sociology of Education Vol 8 No 2 1987 pp169-189

took account of history and social structure as well as personal biography. Therefore, two distinct components of the study were offered, the first provided the post-war educational context in terms of both the curriculum, its contradictions and expectations for girls and the relevance of this and of how this related to the re-establishment of feminism as a force. She then moved on to specific case studies of the school experiences of women who went on to become feminist teachers looking at the beginnings of a radicalization in relation to the means employed for coping with contradictions inherent in experience. The study was able to demonstrate institutionalized attitudes to sexuality and the contradiction between intellectuality and sexuality in this ideology at the level of hidden curriculum. By reference to the concepts of habitus and cultural capital, and their specific composition across subjects, she was able to demonstrate how a feminist consciousness was established.

The question of gender identity is approached by another recent study, that of Summerfield (1987)[39]. Based on interviews with one hundred and twenty male and female subjects, the work centred on schooling in Lancashire in the first half of the twentieth century. In looking at elements of school life during this period - principally discipline and sexuality - differences between the sexes were uncovered

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39 P Summerfield "An Oral History of Schooling in Lancashire 1900-1950: Gender, Class and Education" Oral History Vol 15 No 2 Autumn 1987 pp19-31

in terms of variable patterns of expectations which served to suggest appropriate forms of behaviour both toward and by them. It was not solely gender which was considered though, and indeed she identifies the purpose of the work as "an exploration of some aspects of the process of becoming a classed and gendered individual."[40] An example of the consequence of such an approach is that the differing conceptions of femininity held by working class and middle class girls, by the secondary stage, could be demonstrated.

A particular value of life-stories has consistently been shown to be the way in which they are able to go beyond simplistic categories or statistical groupings. Hamilton's (1982)[41] study of women graduates between 1900 and 1935 shows this well. For while they all tended to come from a 'similar' middle class background, not only did they experience university with a sense of 'social role' which clearly separated women's experience from those of men, but beneath this important differences between women were found. The middle class categorization concealed variations of background between those of near upper class status and those nearer to the working class. Crucially, such differences were noted to relate to perceptions, the

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40 *ibid* p19
41 S Hamilton "Interviewing the Middle Class: Women Graduates of Scottish Universities c 1910-1935" *Oral History* Vol 10 No 2 Autumn 1982 pp58-67

approach to university life, expectations and the nature of social networks formed. As such, not only is the value of the method highlighted but also the relevance of its content, acknowledging the existence of differing cultural knowledges and forms within apparently homogeneous groupings, and the significance of this for personal and social processes.

Operationalization of a Method

The practical deployment of the life-history methodology is inevitably, as a consequence of its form, open to criticism, much of which has been just as readily applied to related types of qualitative research. It is not argued here that all such points are without foundation, but rather that while some professed problems are clearly grounded in reality, an awareness of these and a willingness to tackle them, coupled with an appreciation of the significant advantages offered by the technique, can allow the actual effect of these to be restricted.

Firstly, the labelling of the technique as being unable to extend beyond the descriptive has already been shown to be a fallacy. To some extent in the early work and more specifically in contemporary studies, the relationship between life-stories and the generation and analysis of theory has been a close one. Similarly, criticisms centring on selection of participants is also relatively misplaced.

The quest for a representative sample in any strict sense is, in relation to the life-history work, to a large extent both a mistaken and a vain one. For by its very nature, a study deliberately focussing upon a tiny fraction of a given population will neither want, nor be able to, satisfy positivist sampling requirements. However, this is not to say considerations of external validity are not taken seriously. The selection of both subjects and schools, despite being influenced by aspects of practicality, were carefully considered to ensure, as far as possible, were the inclusion of a range of experiences and a clear recognition of the actual specific nature of those involved.

Problems associated with internal validity are noted as genuine, though the use of a single interview avoids certain dimensions of this such as differing perceptions resulting from subject (and sociologist) maturation. Specifically, the two biggest difficulties here lie in the effect of the observer's presence and the use of the tape recorder. On the latter point, the use of an initial settling in period employing simple, mainly factual, questions served to relax the subject and accustomed him/her to the machine. As for the former, the most realistic approach appeared to be to accept and be aware of possible influences rather than to try and completely avoid them. Informal interviewing, guarantees of anonymity and the lack of continued association with institutions and people under discussion, though, all helped to limit the potential problems here.

The issue of how far the information given by respondents can be accepted as 'truth' lies at the heart of sociological research and the current project is no exception. The need to generalize, within whatever limits established by subject selection, confirms this. Several points need to be made with regard to this. Firstly, objective information, such as the level of fee payment, was triangulated by information from the school where possible. Beyond this level, though, the stress of the work lay on individual mediation ensuring that concerns for 'objective truth' were often outside the parameters of the work. However, when using the subjects as a 'resource' to gain information on wider social forms and processes, verification is, of course, needed. It is here that the nature of the methodology has particular value, both in allowing peer confirmation of activity (where possible) and more widely ensuring that any 'odd' findings would be regarded as such and be seen only within the totality of perceptions. Generalizations, therefore, evolved from repeated and/or refined cross-subject experience and not from the individual case.

Having taken account of the above, it is clear that the life-history is able to offer an approach to sociology which reaches beyond the range of quantitative data. As Denzin (1970)[42] states, the perspective of those actually

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[42] N Denzin The Research Act (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co 1970) p424

engaged in conducting social acts can be appreciated and, as a consequence, the subjective dimension of established institutional experience (be this the prison, hospital or school) can be recognized.

As a consequence, the nature of a dynamic culture, or set of inter-related sub-cultures within a particular environment can be analyzed as expressions of a whole, individual manifestations of which have a clearly identifiable meaning. It is important to note, however, that a greater recognized applicability of the method for a study of this kind does not constitute a rejection of quantitative approaches (a view supported by Armstrong 1982)[43]. Inadequate in themselves, as supporting dimensions the latter can serve to provide invaluable background data. As such, the use of available statistics and the development and deployment of an original questionnaire have served as constructive components herein.

However, the life-history is obviously but one possible expression of qualitative methodology. In the light of research planning and practice, though, I would contend that with regard to both theoretical and practical concerns, it represented the most appropriate choice for this study.

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[43] P Armstrong The Use of the Life-History Method in Social and Educational Research Newland Papers No 7 (Hull: University of Hull, Dept of Adult Education 1982) p60

For instance, public schools have presented themselves as often secretive and defensive in discussions concerning varying forms of access to pupils and it is clear that had the work taken an ethnographic form, the level of restrictions imposed by staff would have been prohibitive, both in terms of limits to both physical access and topics regarded as suitable for discussion. As such, the post-school life-history approach enabled a greater range of issues to be freely discussed. Not only this but a more considered input is likely due to the passage of time beyond the institution yet with subjects approached within three years of leaving school, accurate recall would not have been negatively affected, interpretations only being subject to personal mediations inevitably present at any stage of life. In the one to one environment, conformity of perspective induced by peer pressure is minimized as a factor and while, of course, experience during the schooling period continues to exert its influence, the likelihood of gaining 'truth' as it is personally perceived is greatly enhanced.

I would argue, therefore, that concepts and themes at the heart of the study were provided with information to an increased degree by the use of the life-history methodology. The difficulties of gaining information on home life and habitus formation in the institutional context, due to both staff concerns and peer pressure is clear. Such information was, without exception, freely given in either written autobiography or during the interview. Similarly, details

of and feelings toward sub-group formations were revealed, and such frank discussions would have presented far more problems for interviewees within the school context. Also a willingness to express feelings of a critical nature, found consistently across subjects, could not possibly have found comparable articulation in the claustrophobic school environment. Similarly, there are several areas which have proved illuminating, discussion of which, within school, would have required an element of secrecy or more likely would not have been introduced into conversations at all. For instance, the values and attitudes of teachers, the personal life of subjects and aspects of 'sexual deviancy' were all considered worthy of mention. As such, both in terms of degree of access to material and the quality of the information presented, the conception of the method, in the particular form developed, as the most applicable is reinforced.

It is to the actual nature of the research process that I now turn, beginning with an outline of some aspects of thinking which lay at its heart, through to the principal stages involved in the practice of life-story collection and analysis.

As is now clear, the principal research technique used here has been that of the life-history. However, it is equally apparent that this tool does not have but a single expression, but rather can be utilized in a manner best fitting the requirements of the specific programme. As has

been discussed earlier, the socio-political context of actions is deemed all important to this study. Similarly, the recognition of historical specificity is seriously regarded. Within this perspective the use of the life-stories is shaped by two separate, yet inevitably inter-related interests. Firstly, I looked at the way in which individuals of recognizably differing backgrounds and habitus experience and mediate a schooling process which explicitly exists as a gateway to elite status, and secondly, I used the same individuals as a 'resource', as eye witnesses, able to describe structures and processes of life within and beyond public schools - both formal and informal - which can help illuminate the nature of patterns of life. As such, the study is concerned with aspects of unity and division within the system, and with conceptions of class distinction, deriving both from established formal components reinforced by individuals in positions of influence and from related forms as they evolve from distinct yet connected forms of cultural existence. While a detailed appreciation of the orientation of the study can be gleaned from elsewhere in the work, crucial to this point is the recognition that these life-stories of individuals are regarded as manifestations of a personally mediated, yet class and gender inspired, reality concentrated in institutions of very specific political and historical character. In doing so, the work is able to offer insight into themes and concepts central to

sociological enquiry and not be restricted to interpretations limited to the individual.

It was decided that sixteen ex-pupils should be sought for the research and due to the fact that the rationale of the project dictated that they had been at public school during the years of the present (1979 -) Conservative government, the result was that no subject had left school more than three years before and the majority somewhat less. Their ages, therefore, fell within the range of eighteen to twenty one years. The actual number of sixteen was regarded as large enough to provide a significant range of input without being so large as to reduce the depth and quality of the study. A dual approach to the selection of numbers of subjects per school was adopted, with approximately half (eventually nine) to be drawn from just two study schools, whilst the remainder were to come from seven other schools. The reasoning behind this was that given the inevitably small sample size, this represented a means by which the variety of those schools comprising the HMC could be included, while at the same time providing detail of comparative experience of the same institution and processes by a range of subjects in two cases. Thus, information on variation of experience (of value in assessing the single cases as well) within schools could be combined with the widest possible range of input.

Considerable difficulty was experienced in gaining the help of headmasters. Out of thirty schools contacted only

four agreed to assist, just one of which could be described as genuinely helpful. The range of replies included simple refusal (by far the majority), agreement to help which never materialized and three who having initially agreed later withdrew support without apparent reason. The suspicion, and at times accompanying abrasive tone of the replies, served to reinforce a perception of the sector as continually wary of 'outsiders' despite their apparent position of strength and professed shift in character.

The difficulties encountered meant that five subjects were not contacted via this route, but rather, were individuals who replied to advertisements placed in a number of universities and university newspapers. People volunteering in this manner were of such diversity of backgrounds and schools as to fit the requirements well.

In contacting schools, while the actual choice of subjects inevitably rested with the headmaster, 'guide lines' were offered which ensured a relevant range of respondents. Subjects in the following categories were selected. A male whose father had attended public school; a male (full fees payer) new to the sector; a male on an 'assisted place' or scholarship and a female (eventually three of the sixteen were female and while the full range of those in the sector cannot possibly be covered by this, some expression of variation was found with both 'traditional' and assisted places pupils being represented).

Now, the fact that senior staff made the choice

inevitably ensured that the selection would not be a random one. However, whilst recognizing this as imperfect, the nature of the selection (ie, those likely to be 'achieving' and/or entering positions of power by one means or another) served the rationale of the study well. Also, where appropriate, subjects were asked to assess the nature of those selected by the school, and a consistent response was found. This was that while invariably 'positively regarded' pupils (either for reasons of academia or 'character') were selected, because of the categories used all respondents suggested that they were not particularly atypical and were as likely as any other pupils to provide an accurate picture of school processes. A fuller description of the nature of subjects will be presented later in this chapter.

As for the nature of schools represented, the influence of the practicalities described did certainly impinge upon those selected. However, having begun with a requirement for representation across the range of schools, this was eventually achieved to an almost ideal level. Again, details of the schools can be found further on in this chapter, but it can be stated here that subjects were drawn from schools of quite a considerable range, from those which could be classified as being of historical and international renown, through more 'ordinary' Eton and Rugby group schools to 'minor' HMC members of varying natures and emphases.

Questionnaires were sent out with each request for assistance, the original purpose of this being to provide

information, specific to the schools from which subjects were drawn, relating to patterns evolving in the sector as a whole. While this information was employed where appropriate, there was a marked reluctance on the part of schools to assist with both dimensions of the study, but more often a willingness to express views via the questionnaire without offering the names of ex-pupils. As a consequence, a valuable extra resource was provided, which although limited in numbers (thirteen) did give some interesting and often remarkably consistent input on trends both within schools and throughout the sector as a whole. Information from these was employed in a complementary role in Chapter 2.

Prior to beginning the actual fieldwork, a pilot study was undertaken involving the collection of a life-story from an ex-pupil and conducting of an interview in precisely the manner to be adopted later. Not only were the practicalities of recording equipment tested and interviewing skills developed, but aspects of guidance to be given to subjects for the writing of life-stories were clarified. Similarly, the most appropriate and successful means of eliciting information during interviews was identified and interestingly, 'fresh' themes mentioned and highlighted by this ex-pupil were able to be integrated into the main analysis.

All sixteen subjects were asked to complete a written autobiography. While the advantages of requesting

completely unguided pieces were recognized - in terms of revealing the emphases of thought of the individual - it was felt that the essence of this could be retained alongside the deployment of points of guidance. The preference for this rested on two considerations. Firstly, inevitably and without exception the production of a 'life-story' was an alien experience to subjects and concern that peripheral and irrelevant information was being included was widespread. Second, there were a number of areas of sociological interest which required input, aspects of life which may not have been deemed appropriate for inclusion by the contributors themselves. As such, it was suggested that the work be approached with reference to the following phases: pre-school, early schooling, public school and post-school. It was stressed that it was what they as individuals considered important within each of these periods that was of interest, including points of particular pleasure or difficulty, overall patterns of life, interests and the nature of those who shared these experiences.

The degree of flexibility allowed by such guide lines was shown in the variety of papers presented, not only in length, but similarly in emphasis. Some chose to base their account almost entirely on one phase, for instance on the detailed description of family life, whereas others produced more 'objective' and evenly spread descriptions. The production of these stories proved invaluable to the research. Not only were they a significant source of

information concerning the lives and points of emphases of these individuals and a means of access to useful areas of enquiry on a wider level, but they served to make the following stage of research - the interview - a far more profitable one. As well as allowing a more specific directing of conversation to areas of particular interest, it also served to inspire a period of recall of past experiences and an examination of these. As the interviews were carried out, therefore, elements of life which had been paid little conscious attention for some time had been retrieved and were ready for exposition.

As for the willingness with which life-stories were produced, there was large variation. While at one extreme a paper was received within two weeks, a full eight months (and numerous letters and phone calls) elapsed before one particular piece was collected. The norm fell somewhere between these two examples, yet almost without exception follow up communication of some sort was required to secure the papers. The reasons for this were two fold. First, all subjects had serious time commitments already, namely paid employment or university, and secondly, the unusualness of the project led some to question whether they were producing 'appropriate' accounts. Re-assurance regarding the lack of a set of requirements was usually successful in relation to this.

Having obtained the life-stories, they were subject to a detailed analysis and the individual nature of interview stimulus questions finalized. While inevitably there was some similarity of themes across subjects, the actual nature of the 'cues' used depended on the content of the story in question. The issue of how far to structure the interviews was something to which considerable attention was paid, but again it was decided that the introduction of specific themes was the only systematic way to ensure that all areas of interest were covered. However, having suggested a 'structure' to the interviews, it was made clear to interviewees that it was far from a simple question and answer session and it was consistently found that following an initial 'settling in' period subjects were prepared to enter into flowing conversation, and indeed, at times describe aspects of life in great detail without interruption. It was a constant concern to avoid 'leading' subjects or non-verbally supporting certain points at the expense of others. The duration of the interviews was subject to significant variation - the longest running to over five hours (including two short breaks), the shortest being one and a half hours. In total, interviews with the sixteen subjects yielded around a quarter of a million words of transcribed discussion, and in excess of fifty thousand words being produced by life-stories. Interviews were carried out between March 8, 1988 and March 13, 1989 and took place at the homes of subjects. This involved

interviews throughout England and included Scotland and the Channel Islands.

As already stated, each life-story was subject to individual analysis, a process which gave rise to the particular format of each interview. Building on this, the completion of each interview saw the undertaking of a fresh analysis, which was organized in terms of component themes which make up the crux of the study. The working descriptions of these themes were as follows: form, habitus, class and gender, sub-cultural activity, assumptions and expectations, control, family and school relationship, classroom activity, out of school activities, degree of genuine internalization of school values, transitions, awareness of pupil background, nature of positively and negatively regarded pupils and teachers, extra-curricular activity, psycho-social development, knowledge of and attitude toward other social classes and finally resulting attitudes and values and post-school life.

Now, what is crucial to the mode of analysis is that within each of these themes there were no concrete hypotheses, instead seventy smaller areas of interest were separated - areas which were perceived as potentially able to yield information of significance to the project. Beginning with no more than a basic description of such areas, gradually propositions developed focussing on each of these, as information was gleaned from each individual subject. Therefore, there was no single hypothesis to test

for each topic, but rather a set of propositions evolving from the evidence and subject to continual and absolute re-formulation at the completion of each interview and analysis. As such, some propositions needed to be completely rejected in terms of their earliest formulations while others, with constant expansion and revision were seen as legitimate, while others in turn experienced 'saturation' across the range of experience. The point to be stressed here is that because of this (inevitably time consuming) process, the resulting assertions and discussions are seen to have an organic unity with the evidence and were not subject to a post-analysis 'spot-welding' which has damaged the credibility of other work. It is the constant searching for negative cases in relation to each proposition which has served as the core to this approach. Where contrary cases were discovered, these could be accommodated within the rationale of the approach and served only to provide a greater depth to the findings. As such, single pieces of evidence, however potentially interesting, were integrated within a whole which took account of all related evidence and did not, therefore, inspire generalizations without wider evidence.

Subjects and Schools: the Nature of the Sample

The purpose of this short section is to serve as the linking phase between the wider methodological discussion and the

following empirical and theoretical chapters. Essentially, descriptions will be presented of the principal aspects of the realities of both schools and ex-pupils. Schools will be referred to by means of objective labels (ie letters) whereas pseudonyms will be used for subjects - the names chosen to reflect the cultural and social identities inherent in the originals. Whereas the later use of statements from subjects suggests the need for personal identification, the minimal specific references to schools negates such a requirement.

As outlined earlier, nine schools were represented in the study. The diversity of these - within the context of a fundamental unity - will become clear. The principal dimensions of each school will now be presented. In identifying 'status levels' of schools, I am referring to a perceived consensus of rank of those within the very hierarchical sector.

School A (Robert, Rachel, Paul, Alistair). Despite being 'non-Clarendon', this school must be regarded as being of extremely high status - not just within the sector, but a school widely known throughout society. Founded as a 'progressive' school in the 1930s, the stress on character building has, for generations, been of paramount importance. Emphasis on 'adventure', 'enterprise' and the identification of pupils strengths is central to life. Co-education is now well established with a male/female pupil ratio of around

3:2.

The last decade has witnessed a shift in school emphasis toward the academic. While not rejecting the 'traditional values', this shift was noted by subjects as a significant one. Indeed, it can be said to have had a direct bearing on the nature of school processes and a genuine split was identified between those staff favouring the innovations and those supporting the established norms. The school is overwhelmingly boarding.

School B (Charles, Nigel, Andrew, Fiona, Chris). As a 'Rugby group' school, this institution can certainly be classified as of solid status level though not being of the truly elite order. Its geographical location away from the Southern heartland was perceived by both staff and pupils as setting them apart a little from the more 'snobbish' schools. This was though, inevitably, a relative assessment and one only to be considered within the context of their established HMC position. The school's physical location was in a village, a number of the local people depending on it for employment - a situation not unrelated to the nature of inter-class perceptions. As elsewhere, there has been an increase in academic orientation in the last twenty years, though with less of the obvious problems of School A. Female involvement is restricted to the sixth form and there are no plans for this to change. The school has a very long history and is dominated by boarders at a ratio of 6:1.

School C (Giles). The archetypal public school, this is both one of the Clarendon group and a Rugby group school, and as such enjoys high status. As would be expected the school continues to be dominated by male boarders, though a tiny representation of day pupils and females has been established. The influence of females was even less pronounced here than elsewhere due to their staying in 'digs' outside the school, rather than within an internal house.

Academia is again noted to be receiving increasing priority, though the established emphasis on team sports is not being lost. The school has probably been slower to adopt changes in disciplinary and fagging practices than many of its contemporaries.

School D (Jane). A small public school, and one of the few Catholic ones. Certainly regarded as low status. Here reports of sexual 'scandal' and 'deviancy' caused concern amongst both staff and pupils. Again mainly composed of male boarders, though there were small numbers of both females and day pupils. Recently the school has been more academically successful at 'O' level, though a large number of pupils are lost at sixth form level, due to poor attainment records at 'A' level and the poorly regarded 'social atmosphere'.

School E (Peter). Another high status Southern public school - this time of the Eton group. It has a substantial history and while one third of pupils do not board, there is no female intake at all and there seems to be little likelihood of change in the foreseeable future. Sport continues to be extremely important and strict discipline is especially noted. This is not, though, to discount the presence of an academic priority.

School F (Craig). A Cathedral and ex-direct grant school, this does not belong to the elite core of schools. A significant number of pupils enter on scholarships and the emphasis on music, art and drama is greater than usual. It is massively male dominated and has approximately 80% day pupils. Academic life is regarded as important and the present headmaster, installed within the last decade is concerned to increase the status of the school and has personal associations with more traditional and elite public schools.

School G (Anthony). A further Rugby school with a small female intake and a 6:1 ratio of boarders to day pupils. This school could be ranked as roughly equivalent to School B. The pupils engaged in a process of status identification, not only seeing themselves as high in societal terms, but significantly accepting their status as necessarily below that of the elite minority. Sport was

still a crucial part of life - though again stress on the academic should not be understated.

School H (Simon). Here a clearly different form of school is identified. This is a totally day school and exclusively for boys. It has only become independent within the last two decades since losing its grammar school status. As such, its identity rests on very different principles from the 'traditional public school' and has not developed any of the traditions and practices of such schools. Inevitably, academic concerns have always been at the heart of the school ethos and while sport and extra-curricular activity are encouraged, there is no noticeable split between the two spheres and no recent shift in emphasis on academia. Also, it has an unusually high take up rate from the local middle class residents, though this is not to say some locals do not regard it negatively as with other fee paying schools.

School I (John). Finally, to a more recognizable example of a long established public school. However, it is certainly fair to describe this as a rather isolated and low status school, again almost totally male and boarding. Until very recently very little interest was expressed in academia and a noticeably poor record resulted - particularly in science. Within the last five years, though, a new academically orientated headmaster was introduced, attempting to largely re-organize the school at the expense of such traditional

practices as fagging. Again, this approach served to influence internal processes with a level of resistance remaining despite the initial removal from the school of many staff and pupils regarded as inappropriate to the new regime.

The range of forms of schooling experienced by the subjects is, therefore, established with 50% being drawn from varying levels of Eton/Rugby group schools, 25% from a high status school beyond this group and the remaining 25% from a number of lower status schools. In moving on to a sketch of each subject, my purpose is limited to providing the basic objective facts on each of these - establishing the context for a reading of later chapters.

SUBJECT AND SCHOOL	SEX	BASIS OF INVOLVEMENT	FAMILY BACK-GROUND: PARENTAL EDUCATION, POLI-TICS AND PRIORITIES	PUPIL ATTITUDES POLITICS AND PRINCIPAL CONCERNS	POST-SCHOOL POSITION AND CAREER EXPECTATION
Robert A	M	Traditional[44] public school family (boarder)	Fth-School A (solicitor) Mth-state[45] (housewife) Dominance of right wing Conservative politics; importance of character build-ing over academia.	Strong identification with 'Thatcherism' Wants school to move away from increasing academic priority	Public school favoured non-Oxbridge University Assumption of elite position in Navy.
Rachel A	F	Traditional public school family (boarder)	Fth-School A (engineer) Mth-Europe (PT Teacher) Both 'floating' voters. Value both academia and aspects of 'personal development'.	Pragmatic - dislike of school elitism. Rejection of all extremes; contra-dictory attitude to public school No political party allegiance.	University as above Highly confident of a career with inter-national wildlife organizations.
Paul A	M	First generation own fees paid at prep school. Later assisted place (boarder)	Fth-state (indust. manager) Mth-state (housewife) Both parents stanch Con-servatives with total academic priority.	Reconsidering extreme right wing views (though without major shift) 'Marginal' status at school still important.	Higher Education college. No career plans.
Alistair A	M	First generation Fee payer 6th form attendance only (boarder)	Fth-state (ins/entrepreneur) Mth-state (teacher) Right wing values and important religious dimension. Belief in academia but also the value of a 'hard life'.	Liberal/Conservative views. Religious. Aware of 'social issues' but secondary to 'school values'. Conservative voter.	University; Career in management.

SUBJECT AND SCHOOL	SEX	BASIS OF INVOLVEMENT	FAMILY BACK-GROUND: PARENTAL EDUCATION, POLITICS AND PRIORITIES	PUPIL ATTITUDES POLITICS AND PRINCIPAL CONCERNS	POST-SCHOOL POSITION AND CAREER EXPECTATION
Charles B	M	Traditional public school family (boarder)	Fth-elite public school (industry) Mth-convent (ex-teacher) Thatcherite Conservative (esp Mth). Academic priority. 'High culture' important.	Narrow views and knowledge; happy with status quo. Public schools regarded as unquestionably 'superior' in every way.	Completed one year 'Art' based course. Applying for degree courses.
Nigel B	M	Assisted place 6th form attendance only (day)	Fth-grammar (teacher/ entrepreneur) Mth-state (teacher) Return to Conservatism following 1960s 'rad-icalization'. Academic priority.	Pragmatic. Aware of problems of public schools but competition and individualism are primary motivations.	Oxbridge; Career undecided.
Andrew B	M	First Gen-eration fee payer (boarder)	Fth-grammar (teacher) Mth-state (teacher) Fth-politically uninterested Mth-'anti-socialist' though had voted Labour in 1970s. Academic priority.	Conservtive voter Leadership of absolute importance Individual 'freedom to choose' Education more significant than recognized elitism.	Oxbridge Medicine
Fiona B	F	Traditional public school family. Sixth form attend-ance only (ex girls private school) (boarder)	Fth-public school (Rugby group) Mth-small private (housewife with degree from Cambridge) High culture cen-tral. Christian input. 'Wet' Conservatives. Con-cerns of academia and character.	Strongly allied to emphasis on 'power, compet-itition, success' Describes self as a 'natural conserv-ative'.	Public school favoured university Looks to management to be 'in control'.

SUBJECT AND SCHOOL	SEX	BASIS OF INVOLVEMENT	FAMILY BACK-GROUND: PARENTAL EDUCATION, POLI-TICS AND PRIORITIES	PUPIL ATTITUDES POLITICS AND PRINCIPAL CONCERNS	POST-SCHOOL POSITION AND CAREER EXPECTATION
Chris B	M	First generation (part scholarship) (boarder)	Fth-grammar (entrepreneur) Mth-state (housewife) Both apathetic Conservatives with strong academic priority.	Very individualistic Votes Conservative Lack of interest in problems of the system or society	Public school favoured university. Career undecided but desire to ensure the continuation of 'idyllic lifestyle'.
Giles C	M	Traditional public school family (boarder)	Fth-School C (company director) Mth-elite girls school (company director) Mth-extreme right wing. Fth- 'wet'. Character develop ment recognized but academia is dominant.	Votes Conservative Recognizes 'social problems' but states belief in capital-ist achievement above all else	University. Law as a probable career.
Jane D	F	First generation assisted place (day)	Mth-state (teacher) Academic stress in 'strict' home	Conservative voter Despite seeing the problems of the sector, identifies it as 'superior'.	University; career in business /management.
Peter E	M	First generation scholarship (day - 1 yr board)	Fth-grammar (accountant) Mth-state (housewife) Fth-Conservative Mth-floating voter Academic priority.	Conservative voter but worries over 'social issues.' Recognizes narrow-ness of public school education.	University; engineering.
Craig F	M	First generation scholarship (day)	Mth-state (civil service) Politics described as voting SDP with Conservative leanings.	Uncompromising Thatcherite Conservative. 'Power' and 'success' his priorities.	University; undecided career.

SUBJECT AND SCHOOL	SEX	BASIS OF INVOLVEMENT	FAMILY BACK-GROUND: PARENTAL EDUCATION, POLI-TICS AND PRIORITIES	PUPIL ATTITUDES POLITICS AND PRINCIPAL CONCERNS	POST-SCHOOL POSITION AND CAREER EXPECTATION
Anthony G	M	Traditional public school family (day)	Fth-public school (small business) Mth-West Indies (small business) Uninterested Conservative voters. Academic priority.	Conservative values. Belief in 'hard work'; disdain for 'idleness'.	University; TV producer (via family friends).
Simon H	M	First generation scholarship (day)	Fth-grammar (draughtsman) Mth-state (housewife and PT hairdresser) Floating voters; strong academic emphasis.	Probably vote Labour, though 'unhappy' about that. Pragmatic association with public school 'superiority'.	Public school favoured university; aiming for post-graduate study.
John I	M	Traditional public school family (boarder)	Fth-public school (landowner etc) Mth-state (housewife) Capitalist priority, leadership and character. Conservative political basis with charitable concerns.	Conservative voter Belief in centrality of competition. Mention of 'social issues'.	Banking

Abbreviations

M - male
F - female
Mth - mother
Fth - father
PT - part-time
Ins - Insurance
Indust - Industrial

Notes

44 'Traditional' has no cultural/attitudinal connotations in itself. It refers strictly to inter-generational involvement.

45 'State' is used where subjects were unaware of specific form of parental education within this sector.

CHAPTER 5: Foundations of the Process: Elements of Home Life and the Family - School Interaction

It is a principal concern of this research to ensure that analysis of individuals and institutions is related to their full societal context, including concerns of an historical, political, class and cultural nature. In doing so, the structural location of 'the public school' is recognized. However, accompanying this is the rejection of a deterministic analysis, a central acknowledgement of which is that a single institution, or institutional form, will not impinge upon all individuals in the same way to manufacture a single product. This is not to argue that the ideology and practices - both formal and informal - will not influence development, but rather that these will be interpreted by the individual through personal habitus. As such, as a foundation upon which the details of later discussions can be fully appreciated, this chapter begins with an examination of the nature of family practices which would have most directly shaped habitus formation. Beyond this attention will be shifted onto the nature - both ideological and practical - of the family - school interaction and the influence this has on patterns of progression. Examples of consistencies and background-influenced variations being employed to illustrate the nature of findings as they evolved from constant proposition refinement embracing the experiences of all subjects. As

such, quotations are representative rather than arbitrary, their use avoiding the necessity for potentially tedious repetition. To conclude, a study-specific re-definition of the concept of cultural capital will be presented to provide a more appropriate operationalization to underpin the analysis of patterns of reproduction and forms of cultural expression and influence.

Central Aspects of Family Life

In establishing the nature of influences on habitus formation, aspects of cultural and leisure activity, politics and morality, gender issues, discipline and assumptions and expectations will be addressed. However, the initial task is to uncover the underlying life emphases, the pedagogic priorities which served to induce public school affiliation.

In this respect, it is clear that a continuum can be identified, that is, a range of priorities, a recognition of principal requirements from the system. At one end is found 'academic stress', a clear perception that academia is of crucial importance in social advancement or in the preservation of position. This view, coupled with a perception of public schools as the most successful in this regard, the capital to secure a place and a personal ideology which finds it acceptable, fosters the association. At the other end is found 'character development'. Although this would include elements of ideology and culture found across varying forms of institution, it is its specific form, as historically ingrained in public schools that is referred to here. The concept incorporates notions of obedience, hierarchy and 'respect', but finds its peculiar manifestation allied to 'team games', adventure, loyalty and 'leadership' preparation. However, identification with one of these forms need not necessarily mean the rejection of

the other and some patterns of development can be seen to actually depend upon a combination of the two. Of principal significance, though, is the realization that these forms of emphases are far from arbitrary, indeed they are inextricably linked to educational (and class) histories of families involved.

As such it was found that those with academic priority - for whom the specific form of character development was an irrelevance - were invariably first generation. It is important to stress, though, that I am not suggesting that these families were not concerned with similar moral issues and comparable conceptions of appropriate behaviour - that is a separate issue - rather, the focus here is explicitly on the lack of identity with a mode of life which finds its foremost point of expression within the public school system. Therefore, the findings have a logic consistency to them, given the lack of involvement of these families with this particular cultural expression, with the following illustrating the dominant and consistent concerns of these families.

"It was purely a feeling that the local comprehensive was not offering satisfactory academic success [that induced the move]." (Interview, Simon.)

"My mother hoped that I would get a better education than I would at state school." (Interview, Jane.)

A further point illustrative of the cultural diversity within the sample is that only within the first generation

families was 'snob value/prestige' explicitly stated as a supplementary reason for attendance. It is not that such status considerations were not relevant to others, instead these concerns exist at an unconscious level rather than finding verbal expression. The possession of high status existed rather more at the level of expectation than quest.

In turning to an examination of established (at least second generation) subjects, the differences of cultural background are clear. For while again variations of priority are found, character development is always 'on the agenda', its relevance noted, whether or not it is assigned particular prominence. Again, the following differences of perspective are not arbitrary and indeed are not only interesting in themselves but, as will be seen, they can illuminate processes dominant later in life.

While in my sample there was no absolute rejection of academia, there were certain subjects who had been exposed to an idea of 'expressive' elements of schooling having priority within education. Thus, a belief in the value of harsh living, involvement with the old boy network and a continued involvement with the school are all characteristic of a 'traditional public school outlook' - the reinforcement of a culturally appropriate lifestyle being all important.

"Dad was appalled when he came to my boarding house and found that the dormitories had carpets and curtains and that we no longer did the morning run during the winter." (Life-Story, Robert.)

"My parents complained a lot about that (bullying) ... it was over pampering the young ones too much." (Interview, Robert.)

Both of these examples demonstrated how the concern to 'build character' was all important to this family. The meaning of schooling, as with previous generations, was about cultural specificity and class identity, not scholastic achievement.

This kind of perspective was, though, the result of a specific process and it is not my aim to suggest that such a pattern was either generalized or determined. Just as the habitus of this generation will have been shaped by specific forms of interactions, ideologies and family values, so inevitably would the habitus of parents. As such, due to the inevitable inconsistency of variables affecting families and cultural patterns, despite being of similarly established elite status, other pupils were exposed to priorities not located in the realm of group loyalty and 'traditional' pursuits. Rather, a significant stress on academic matters can be found amongst these families - seemingly an expression of an approach to life more concerned with individualism than group concerns (as elaborated in Chapter 6). The inherent instrumentalism in the relationship with the school is an important expression of a mode of interaction, which although also long held, rests on a perspective encompassing a further perceived meaning of the schooling process.

As such, Charles states:

"Dad has been very quiet about his school days ... he hasn't really kept up with his old school like some other people did. I think obviously they (parents) were very keen on the academic side ... (and) ... they are very much in favour of it being a more liberal atmosphere." (Interview, Charles.)

Having established variations of educational and life priorities, it is of further significance to note that alongside differing histories goes the variable impact of specific dimensions involved in the selection of public schools. For while it is clear that the academic emphasis of newcomers was a major impetus to involvement, it would be too simplistic to adopt such an approach to the situation of 'traditional' families. Rather than seeing 'character development' emphases as directly influencing choice of school, it needs to be recognized that such an identification was originally shaped, at least in part, by the sector itself. The relationship, therefore, takes on an intergenerational and transactional identity rather than operating as a one way influence. Similarly, as part of an overall cultural identity attendance was often regarded as 'natural' - a normal part of life - and not the result of conscious deliberation and assessment of 'components' integral to the choice of the pragmatists. The recognition of this further serves to underline the different meanings attached to entering the 'public school process' within the

primary socialization of pupils.

An appreciation of the nature of the cultural/leisure pursuits of parents and the early acquaintance with these by subjects is also informative since this gives the observer access to a dimension of life fully implicated in the development of distinctive cultural realities. It is the position within the whole, their relationship and interweaving with other life components that serves to illuminate. As such, the initial task is to establish the way in which this dimension serves to re-affirm dominant life principles - further assisting the delineation of subject forms. Its formative implication in processes of class distinction and social exclusion is studied and reference made to the consequences of variations of experience for future involvements.

The initial point of interest is the consistency uncovered between established life priorities and cultural interests. For example, family involvement with rugby and breeding and shooting pheasants complements the already presented views of Robert's family, to provide a clear indication of the lifestyle he became exposed to and integrated with. Similarly, the example of Charles indicates how leisure was grounded in individual pursuits. Sport, in itself, was not being rejected, but the involvement with, and importantly the implications of, team games were ignored in favour of golf and swimming. Furthermore for him, blood sports were irrelevant. Instead

the arts, especially classical music, dominated. Though these activities clearly are as closely allied with the dominant classes as the former, they represent a markedly different cultural perspective.

In the case of Simon the unequivocal academic priority is coupled with a pattern of leisure which marks out clear points of distinction at this formative stage. He states:

"We're not what you'd call a culturally middle class family, no theatre, no cinema, no golf or cricket or anything like that." (Interview, Simon.)

Not only does this reveal a lack of actual involvement, but its 'tone' clearly indicates the alien nature of such practices. Therefore, variation of experiences and cultural knowledges are revealed as being as 'genuine' and class rooted as differences in life priorities.

At this point, it is worth highlighting that while certain activities described above have clear class identities, others have not. The point is that 'neutral' activities - for instance swimming - only became imbued with a certain character and set of meanings when perceived within a total cultural framework. Therefore Rachel, under the guidance of her father approached swimming as a further avenue for the expression of her achievement orientation, within an ideology stressing the widespread benefits of concentrated physical activity. As such, its meaning here does not necessarily have similarity with that found in participants from other cultural milieu.

In focussing on variations, though, it is important not to lose sight of the class nature, the limited range of social origins of these families and their identification with the values of essentially elitist institutions. This is important because in doing this the expressions of social exclusivity and/or desire for class distinction uncovered becomes appropriately contextualized. Now, many of these people have never been in a position requiring interaction with the working class, therefore, the maintaining of physical barriers is not necessarily a constant concern, instead, their activities, often without recourse to conscious decisions, express a social exclusivity and elitism by their very existence. Such interests as classical music and the theatre, as a consequence of their very nature, reinforce exclusion, both physical and cultural. Attitudes, often at the level of assumption, serve to reinforce this segregation.

The exclusivity inherent in the activities and resources of these families can be illustrated with reference to John. His father, as a multi-millionaire, captains and organizes seven international cricket teams and is involved with the influential and prestigious Lords Taverners, while his mother's time is spent organizing traditional and exclusive charity balls. He adds:

"My master comes over every year to stay for a few days ... he said there were more books here than there is in the (school) library." (Interview, John.)

Against this background of access to high culture and high social status, a further illustrative quotation can be included.

"Last night ... we had an impromptu raffle and raised £100 in three minutes ... (but) who do you give it to? ... we raise so much money and so many people are so generous that it is hard to decide what to give it to in the end." (Interview, John.)

This degree of charity clearly owes more to the privilege/duty dualism - an established cultural characteristic of a given group - than to any actual purpose. As a consequence, it serves merely to reinforce social exclusivity and underline the elite nature of participants.

Elsewhere, those without traditionally 'elitist' pastimes invariably took part in what can loosely be described as middle class activities (eg squash, reading). Class differentiation, here again, is intrinsic to the process of activities relating to class identities and lifestyles. However, it must not be forgotten that all these parents, within whatever class categorization, actively selected to isolate their children from wider class input by attending public school. Now, remembering the complementary relevance of snob value/prestige/reproduction of elite sub-groups, any threat to the erosion of distinction can meet overt response. Jane describes parental reaction to a blurring of class identity prior to

moving to public school.

"I was very good friends with a girl who was very working class and my mother didn't approve at all. Because she was working class she didn't want me to have anything to do with her ... with playing hockey I got to meet the people in the hockey team ... they were probably middle class ... my Mum tended to push me into friendships with them." (Interview, Jane.)

It is not being suggested that all parents would have invariably followed this route, but it is certain that any naivety should be avoided in dealing with the issue - social and cultural distinction is a crucial dimension and although class selectivity of activities tend to avoid such complications, both the above response and generally espoused values suggest serious attention would inevitably be paid to the preservation of differentiation.

At this stage, it is the influences on habitus formation that are of principal concern, but it is clear that both 'social distinction' and class-inspired variation of experience and cultural knowledges are two of the core dynamics of future interactive processes. Composition and implication of family culture and leisure are integral to these, being at once crucial to an appreciation of presenting habitus and one component in its development.

Political values, and related moral concerns of parents establish a context, a frame of reference within which subjects internalize dimensions of their complete cultural

surroundings. Not surprisingly, the vast majority of the sample are staunch conservatives, not only in party terms, but as will be demonstrated in the value orientations which transcend such limits.

It is interesting to observe that while Conservative affiliation was often expressed with a tone of timeless inevitability, certain parents stood out as appearing not to follow such a pattern. With a clearer examination, though, a different interpretation was revealed. The case of Nigel provides the clearest example. Having been on an assisted place he recounts how his parents are recent converts to Conservatism, seemingly indicating an origin varying from the norm both financially and politically. However, when examining their background, both parents were seen to come from Conservative middle class families. The assisted place was possible by virtue of temporary difficulties induced by the demise of an entrepreneurial enterprise. A more accurate interpretation of events, therefore, was that a return to class allegiance had followed a temporary shift induced by trends in societal consciousness between the 1960s and the 1980s. The influence of this process is not though completely lost and it is interesting to observe the following as a manifestation of the influence of historical context within a single family.

"Mum and Dad are probably a good deal more liberal than I am and were quite concerned when I showed no rampant libido or desire to go punk." (Life-Story, Nigel.)

Both in terms of party allegiance, and in forms of Conservatism, variations are found. The nature of these relate to particular personal and family rationale and histories. For instance, the form of Christianity dominant in the families of Alistair and Fiona were perfectly consistent with their identification as Conservative 'wets'. Secondary concerns with social welfare being accommodated within, rather than replacing, the principal values. In comparison, the narrow traditionalism and cultural elitism of Robert's family fitted perfectly a 'hard line' right wing stance, while the marginal status of Simon's family (probably the least removed from any working class influence) permits their 'floating voter' status to include the Labour Party - a rare possibility indeed.

It is important to note, though, that abstract political thought and debate was generally accorded very low priority among these families. Consistently, subjects would report how parents certainly tended to have clear views, but rarely was politics a central point of discussion. Such values manifested themselves as taken-for-granted foundations of a lifestyle, politics in itself being a matter largely restricted to voting. Indeed, while Giles's father was chair of the local Conservative party, even he was not regarded as politically active, rather the position was perceived 'socially'.

It is to what must be regarded as the main point that I now turn. For while it is clear that to assume an absolute

singularity of viewpoint across families would be to embrace a perspective missing many of the intricacies present, it is crucial, both to an understanding of the influences on habitus formation and to an awareness of the values of public school participants in general, that a recognition is made of the remarkable consistency existing at the level of fundamental moral and political concerns. The uniformity of dominant concerns serves to contextualize the differences on this dimension as merely peripheral, sometimes cosmetic variations beyond a unified base.

Therefore, while accepting that differing experiences may lead to varying interpretations of stated priorities to some degree, throughout parental concerns were articulated with reference to the following: respect for authority, firm discipline, quest for achievement, the value of competitiveness, the importance of strong leadership within the inevitably hierarchical structure and specifically at the national level, the over-riding importance of defence.

For instance, Andrew, the second subject for whom a family return to Conservative voting is a 1980s phenomenon describes parental priorities thus:

"They voted Conservative ... because they do offer strong leadership ... they (parents) are really worried about chaos." (Interview, Andrew.)

Again the importance of organizational 'form' centred on the above characteristics is confirmed in discussion of Peter's father:

"I think he doesn't feel the other parties perhaps would be capable of holding the country in one piece. Although he doesn't like a lot of what the Conservatives have done, he can see that they have meant business." (Interview, Peter.)

Fiona provides further confirmation:

"They would like to see perhaps a more caring government ... however still supporting the competitive ethos and capitalist tendencies." (Interview, Fiona.)

The strength of this foundation is clear. Even when lip service is paid to 'social issues', this invariably comes as an afterthought and never with the potency to threaten the fundamental standpoint. The emphases and priorities in the upbringing of this sample provided a very particular conception of principal life focusses and, as will be seen later, not only are they of relevance to the mediation of life experience in general, but beyond the process of schooling, having engaged in interactions, been exposed to mediated input modifying the habitus and made conscious decisions of varying type and significance, they often manifest themselves in the eventual political alignments of subjects. These positions likely to be at the centre of habitus formation of the next public school generation.

In the above discussion, the importance attached to discipline was briefly noted. It is through a more concerted focus on this that the analysis of the principles

of life can be extended. Indeed, it is clear that in both providing a particular view of the nature of inter-personal (and class) relations and correspondingly in establishing the ideal link system to public school ideology, espoused principles of discipline are of pivotal importance. For the home experiences of subjects reveal clear conceptions of unequal power relations and the right of the super-ordinate to dominate the actions of the weaker party. It is not a picture of tyranny that is being expounded here, but rather the acceptance of an assumed natural equilibrium, the instilling of a perception, that being disciplined (and therefore to discipline) is a pre-condition of order. Of course, disciplinary activity extends throughout society impinging on relations within a multitude of institutions, but what is so revealing here is that while it encompasses a practical element, it is its ideological component, its elevated status as a foundation of successful societal structure that is all important. A disciplined mentality and life focus is of more significance than merely a pragmatic requirement to control a given situation. Anthony describes this as follows:

"... if I was told to do something at school then I would do it, because I've always been taught that if someone like parents or Auntie or Uncle or teacher at school told me to do something, then I would do it, it's not your job to argue". (Interview, Anthony.)

Therefore, it is not the case that exposure to

disciplinary forms of this kind will produce dominated and oppressed individuals. For not only must the process be perceived within the context of life as it is geared to elite attainment and/or reproduction but a clear part of this ideological input is the inevitability and correctness of this form and, therefore, its potential to transfer, not just to the school environment but beyond this to where the individual is able to operationalize these principles and not be on the receiving end of them. Such a conception of expected progression through structures dominated by hierarchy and strict disciplinary forms has traditionally been at the heart of public school life, as will be seen later.

It is this compatibility with the public school that particularly reinforces such conceptions. Anthony states with reference to his early schooling:

"I suppose that I think the discipline in the family affected the way I behaved at school," but with reference to the later emerging pattern he added: "I think that the two sort of fed each other". (Interview, Anthony.)

However, it is emerging clearly that as valid as such general processes are, not only will they be subject to specific expression across families, but the form of their interaction with educational institutions will depend upon the nature of a given school at a particular historical moment. Therefore, with reference to earlier analysis, certain expected manifestations are indeed confirmed. For

instance, Robert was exposed to the dual tenets of the 'traditionalist' conception of life - ie, clear discipline within a hierarchy yet without 'unnecessary' limits on its 'informal' enforcement, whereas Alistair was just as allied to the need for strict discipline but for him this was coupled with a greater emphasis on consensus or moral integration. Now, while it is clear that neither expression actually runs contrary to the principles of the school, the fact is that differences in emphasis do occur and, therefore, one mode will be closer to the dominant conception of the institution (or at least those in a position to impose this view) at a given time and this may, given appropriate circumstances, provide the potential for contradiction. This is indeed happening in this case (school A). The emphasis of Robert's family has long been that of the school, but the recent shift away from fagging, the crack down on bullying etc have brought the disciplinary ethos closer to that of the first generation pupil. As important as these shifts are to those actually involved, and the influence they have on the nature of internal processes, they are but pragmatic adaptations of practice and not re-assessments of principles.

In turning to an examination of family division of labour and considerations of gender relations and attitudes, attention is focussed on a facet of life of recently increased relevance to the study, given the contemporary moves toward partial co-education. How far this, and indeed

the more general resurgence of feminism of recent years has had an impact on families, now of course including those trying to foster a particular form of achievement in their female child, serves to provide a foundation for the analysis of class and gender realities at school level - discussed in Chapter 7.

The discussion can begin with a clear recognition of the tendency observed toward traditional gender roles, with the male parent not only the primary breadwinner but also the ultimate source of authority, the tacit recognition being that this entailed clear status connotations. The differentiation further serves to reinforce the legitimacy of unequal power relations as a generalizable principle. Jane, whose grandparents lived with her as virtual surrogate parents illustrates this:

"I can remember Sunday dinners and my grandpa used to sit at the head of the table and grandma used to cut the meat and give him the largest portion and fed him first and everything." (Interview, Jane.)

Chris in describing domestic work states:

"The thing is that it's Mum's province - what she loves most is to have a tidy house and to have a well kept garden." (Interview, Chris.)

The latter is, of course, an example of those mothers without paid employment. It is interesting to note, though, that this position did not necessarily result from an inadequate position in the labour market, but formed part of

a clear ideological assessment of the nature of gender roles. For instance, though a qualified teacher, Charles's mother is not active in this field and Fiona's mother has never utilized a degree from Cambridge in the workplace. Charles describes his mother's views thus:

"I think my mother feels strongly that in terms of the woman's role, a maternal role is very important and that I don't think she would agree necessarily with the father staying at home and looking after the baby and the woman going out to work, ... because that's something which is inborn and that's something biological and you can't kind of warp nature ..." (Interview, Charles.)

There are, though, a number of professional women in the sample, but their apparent status has little impact on domestic patterns. Within the one parent families dynamics of gender relations are not always easily apparent, however, it is clear, for example, that Jane's mother was closely allied to traditional conceptions.

The evidence from dual career families is, though, particularly interesting. Giles's parents, both company directors, did make attempts at sharing the domestic work (despite an au pair being employed!). However, it was without debate, his mother who took several years off work to look after the children and explicitly his father who remained the highest disciplinary authority. Similarly, Nigel's parents, despite in no way holding back the career of his mother, are not prepared to reject traditional

outlooks completely. Of his mother, Nigel states:

"Mum certainly isn't a feminist. I would say that she believes there is a natural inequality." (Interview, Nigel.)

Consequently, what emerges from the analysis of the life-stories and interviews is that the question of gender is not one which can simply be described as the intentional and consistent reproduction of a subordinate female position. The situation has a greater complexity than that. It is true that many families do adhere strongly to such conceptions, but elsewhere the importance attached to equality of opportunity is certainly perceived by subjects. However, though instances of 'progressive' behaviour are recorded, be they in relation to employment or a partial sharing of domestic labour they are, without exception, totally devoid of any ideological consistency, any attitudinal commitment to re-assessing the foundations of gender relations. This duality of perspective is described by Rachel:

"I did better at school than my brother did, I think my father was a bit disappointed that it hadn't been the other way round because I still think he has a vague idea that it's a bit of a waste a girl being more successful than a boy in the family ... but they always were, and still are, very encouraging about any ambitions I have." (Interview, Rachel.)

Often under-pinning such statements were the extensive

references to 'natural' inequalities - something which none of the families questioned, with the result that the weight of expectancies still, despite the presence of individual modifications, fell into traditional patterns. It was never explicitly stated that females should be prevented from advancement, and indeed the impetus from class identity could induce the opposite, but rather the dominant impression was that this should exist within the confines of established limits and not at the expense of them.

Assumptions and Expectations

The discussion can now move on to the means by which 'elitism becomes activated'. The above has described the composition of the ideological input available to the individual, but analysis now advances onto the actual development of personal assessments - that is, the assumptions and expectations held regarding the nature of present and eventual status levels. For I would argue that the consistently found expectations of success held by interviewees were not merely a consequence of their being at an advanced educational level or occupational position, but rather have their roots in a process of self perception instigated in the home and reinforced or developed by school. The variable nature of presentation and style of these expectations supports the view that influences extend beyond pedagogic constants.

Again the continuum is regarded as the most appropriate device for describing the nature of these particular findings, providing a degree of flexibility beyond that allowed by absolute categories. The ends of this continuum are characterized by two clearly distinct expressions of expectations, though both bear the influence of the source of the sample. The first 'end' - principally identifiable with 'established' families - is essentially characterized by the presence of a fundamental pre-disposition, a psychological expression, an attitude which exists at an unconscious level, serving to provide unquestioning expectations of success. It is its unspoken, taken for granted nature that is so evident here. It is not a stated idea that following a particular pattern will lead to high occupational and cultural status - these are inherent and assured components of life and though their actual form (especially occupational) may not necessarily be identified, the status of these is never questioned. Now, this may be inspired by expressions of elitism or it may simply evolve from growing up with occupationally and culturally elite role models, but what is important is that once established, such conceptions become embedded in reality and unshakeable even in the face of any apparently contradictory evidence. The level of success as defined by 'objective' measures is not accorded the significance, and therefore the potential to challenge, assumptions established on more 'subjective' dimensions.

Often the presence of appropriate forms of cultural capital and particular elements of the schooling process ensure that such achievements are actually secured, but as the following examples show, failure for this to occur does not dent expectations.

Robert described himself in his life-story as a 'slow learner' - a label which when applied in other social classes would be likely to instigate a process, reinforced by all concerned, leading toward lowered expectations. At no time did this occur here. The career choice throughout school years was a 'senior officer' in the Navy - a selection clearly arising from expectation over experience. Failing to attain this goal, his expectation of high status continued and eventually, after intensive help and some failures, he made it to university, and despite the fact that an objective assessment of his abilities could have regarded this as rather 'manufactured' and fortuitous, it was regarded with complacency by Robert himself.

The case of John reinforces this. Having stated that he "wasn't very intelligent" (Interview) and "I was not an academic by any means and I believe this became obvious to all" (Life-Story), he goes on to describe how the career possibilities discussed involved a place at Sandhurst or entering banking. Again, expectations unaltered by rejection by the army and continual failure with 'O' levels, he still presented himself with excessive self esteem and eventually by informal means (see Chapter 9) he secured a

a career in international banking of significant potential.

At the other end of the continuum expectations of success were also found, but their evolution is clearly different. Here subjects' career/life expectations are grounded in objective measures, in observations of their own success as they have moved through the system, and not in a pre-established self perception. This is, of course, not to say that these people are any less influenced by home life in establishing appropriate tools, or indeed that they do not exhibit positive expectations, rather the differentiation is between the assumption of class heritage on the one hand and gradually learned expectations on the other.

It is in the emphasis on, the consideration of, the 'reality principle' that Jane, for instance, in discussing her career potential differs from the above. Though also interested in international banking, she is conscious of assessing her strengths and weaknesses and the appropriateness of her university course. In the end she expresses a degree of confidence, obviously not untouched by the public school experience, but only after deliberate consideration.

Similarly for Nigel, of a middle class but first generation family, both past successes (such as Cambridge entrance) and future assessments are ground firmly in 'realism'. For him, there is nothing inevitable about the level of achievements, though again he is quick to

acknowledge that an increased degree of elite self perception did evolve from public school attendance.

It is to that schooling process that I now turn, and in particular, to the way in which it serves to either reinforce or instigate the development of the expectation of high ranking status and accompanying occupational and cultural positions. For it is clear from the evidence that it is not just home life that is important here, but that the class nature of the institutions does indeed operate to develop conceptions of the self wholly conducive to the quest for elite positions and a particular mode of behaviour therein. In addition to the actual self perception of being a part of an institution which both family and peers will regard as being imbued with superiority, come the actual day to day practices and statements of school life which become ingrained in the minds of participants and which form a further dimension to the establishing of particular resultant forms. At this stage, I will restrict the presentation to examples of the way in which the generalized conception of privilege and expectation of success is fostered by staff, though complementary elements of staff values and actions and related aspects of school life will be covered in later chapters. Of particular relevance is the discussion in Chapter 9 of the characteristic 'confidence/arrogance' - which I argue is endemic to the elitist tone of the class inspired institutions - which despite having differing manifestations is recognizable

across the range of subjects.

Craig describes the staff attitudes that he was presented with on starting public school:

"the teachers do make you realize things like, they say, you're the top (my emphasis) 5% in the country - and you've come here and that means you should be better than other people ... they tell you the average person's got one 'O' level and we're expected to get ten". (Interview, Craig.)

Therefore, here the school is detailing an image of their students as inherently superior. The expectation from the out-set is of high achievement and the distinction that is being established is constantly reinforced. Such statements were reported as being widespread across schools and when seen in total with both the formal statements and informal 'aura' and practices to be described, the role of the school in this sphere will be further confirmed.

It is, of course, in the nature of viewing processes as essentially 'active' that the form of particular mediations and the emphases given can serve to induce a result which while explicable within the established schema, does provide a certain variation from the norm. This is the case with Simon, who despite being first generation and not achieving a genuine cultural unity with the school (see Chapter 7) displays a degree of success expectation remarkably similar to that of Robert and John. However, this particular development can be traced through periods of constant

academic success and positive reinforcements. As such it is not actually illustrative of a union of experience with those of established elite backgrounds, especially in view of the failure of this similarity to extend into the principal bases of distinction, such as cultural forms.

The significance of these influences, therefore, are ones which relate entirely to the nature of this process resulting from the interaction of particular individuals of specific class origin and class influenced institutions. The establishment of elite self perception serves as an ideal and influential addition to the foundation through which future processes, similarly geared to the reinforcement of class, cultural and institutional distinction, can be perceived, mediated and acted upon.

The Home - School Interaction

Concern with the nature of the relationship between home and school has under-pinned the above discussion of influences on habitus formation. In the latter part of this chapter, the analysis of this interaction will be made more explicit. Beginning with an assessment of the degree of ideological compatibility and the effect this has on the nature of progression through schooling, attention will move on to focus on the potential for the interaction of capital forms, and then to the significance of physical involvements by parents. The chapter ends with a re-definition of

cultural capital, which both the nature of the evidence from this and later chapters demands.

The tracing of the historical development of public school ideology and the presentation of key concerns and priorities in the families of ex-pupils, demonstrates that there is a fundamental compatibility between home and school on those values and emphases which support the very existence of both institutions in their specific forms. Whether this rapport is the result of an ideological fusion influenced by several generations of transactional dealings or the independent re-alignment of priorities of pragmatic parents and image conscious schools, the singularity of principle is clear. On all levels - priorities of education, disciplinary practice, cultural and leisure activities, political and moral attitudes and considerations of gender - the range of practices adopted or ideologies valued incontrovertibly express an affinity with the concerns of the sector as a whole and with the realities of school life as perceived by participants.

Bearing in mind the 'appropriate' class context for this compatibility, what is taken into the school - in terms of orientations, knowledges and dispositions - must be conceived of as cultural capital. It is the possession of the 'key to the message' being offered by the school that characterizes the relationship. But the historical analysis and the material in this study show that the potential for the individual resulting from public school

attendance is not restricted to one sphere alone. Rather, there is the academic avenue and the cultural sphere, the latter being available, in part, as a second, socially restricted means of occupational progression, but primarily has its role in reproducing patterns of social and cultural distinction. Having established two distinct (though not necessarily mutually exclusive) means of passage to elite status, the singular all encompassing concept of cultural capital becomes rigid and ineffective and, therefore, having completed the analysis of this theme a re-definition (specific to this field of study) will be offered.

The identification of the compatibility between the range of individuals and the school forms a clear contrast to studies of working class youth and their relationship with educational institutions. Most notably in Willis (1977), it is the underlying disparity between the 'lads' and the institution and teachers that provides the process with its specific character. The ideological affinity on the bases of life observable here in the subjects' families (and later in their own actions and values) is the antithesis of that described by Willis.

However, I am not claiming that what is being observed is a clear cut distinction between public and comprehensive schools. The adoption of such a perspective would be to simplify the issue and remove the dynamics of class and culture from the analysis. Clearly, there are those who hold the appropriate (class based) 'keys' in the state

sector (as was a central point in Bourdieu's work, of course) providing the potential for a successful manipulation of the educational system. Equally, however, in emphasizing the class basis to the process, the significance of the intervening variable of the public school and the impact it has upon the nature of processes cannot be lost.

Therefore, it is my contention that the nature of habitus-influencing practices serve to constitute forms of cultural capital which provide the principal grounding for participation in the system, both influencing perceptions and interactions and, in turn, being moulded by these - though the essential similarity of the two centres of influence ensures that this takes the form of adjustments and modifications rather than re-assessments of ideology evolving from conflict.

This degree of compatibility does hold very real consequences for the schooling of the individual. For in the experiences of these pupils a characteristic 'stable progression' is observed, that is an encounter with schooling devoid of conflict with regard to the assessment of purpose and the means by which goals will be achieved. This stability is represented in dealings with academia, for sure, but more than that it focusses on both the components of schooling which various individuals particularly emphasise, and the generalized conception of an untroubled life, without contradictions or the existence of problems

which may act to negate the potential for a 'successful outcome' to the time at school, however this is individually perceived.

For instance, Chris confirmed that his life to date (and especially the public school period) was characterized by:

"an identification with the official school line, an interest in academic study and sport and generally an untroubled life with no major traumas and generally an underlying respect for the accepted status quo". (Interview, Chris.)

This is, of course, not to argue that pupils by virtue of a given background and educational experience become immune to any developmental problems. The point is that these will be centred on organizational, or at times personal levels, particular difficulties which do not bring with them a fundamental clash of perspective likely to endanger the nature of the relationship which operates positively for them. Therefore, any identifications of problematic periods reported by subjects did not focus upon disparate conceptions of schooling but rather dealt with practical difficulties with controls (see Chapter 7) and matters relating to personal interactions - notably bullying. For instance, Giles was probably subject to the most concerted bullying of any of the subjects. For a period this caused him considerable concern, yet at no point did he consider the nature of the school values to be in any

way related to these practices or feel particular disapproval toward the stand-offish behaviour of his housemaster. The bullying was regarded as an individual act and in no way affected his relationship with, or conception of, the school and its ideological bases. The unbroken affinity with, and consistent progression within, the institution being particularly apparent in his eventual attainment of the status of head boy.

Such a stable progression inevitably provides a valuable basis, in two distinct senses, on which pupils are able to move through school. Firstly, is the primary awareness that pupils will not come to face obstacles of any significant proportion (cultural or ideological) to negatively affect the purpose of their schooling. Secondly, and more specifically, the untroubled passage contributes to the establishing of conditions perfectly suited to the development of a self perception able to accommodate the dimensions of inherent superiority, arrogance and privilege (seen later to be of pivotal importance). As one element in the life process, it helps to nurture a personal identity in which the successful manipulation of the surrounding environment becomes ingrained as an expectation and, therefore, assists the self perception of being in a position to exert control rather than be subject to it.

The analysis of how far public schools act as an institutional catalyst for the interaction of capital forms across pupils is one which makes a genuine contribution to

an understanding of family - school interactions. Tapper and Salter's (1984) assertion that this indeed occurs has been outlined in Chapter 3, and although the evidence against this is distributed throughout the later chapters, it is appropriate to discuss the findings here as they form a definite part of the foundation of relevant social processes.

The most significant form of this interaction, were it found to be present, and that upon which I will therefore focus, would be expressed through those in possession of dimensions of cultural capital allowing successful manipulation of academia, to be able in the course of interactions to acquire dispositions which in turn could be deemed to constitute the second dimension of a revised cultural capital[1]. Furthermore, given that it is those who possess the latter who provide the core group of pupils gaining access to the 'network of social relations' (although the holding of one does not invariably lead to the presence of the other) then it should be expected that significant numbers of first generation pupils gain access

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1 The nature of this development to the concept of cultural capital is detailed later in this chapter.

gain access to this network and, therefore, be said to hold 'social capital'[2]. Pupils should then be able to gain the informal assistance - both occupational and social - which is characteristic of this capital form.

Now, I would argue that in the public schools such an interaction of capital forms does not exist and that far from being a perverse phenomenon, this outcome is consistent with the logic of the situation and that to have expected any such interchanges is to fail to understand the nature of the internal processes concerned. It is in the nature of an interaction that what is experienced is a two-way process implying that deficiencies of capital forms would be filled on both sides. Now, while it is clear that a first generation aspirant pupil would require access to input from the established pupils, they have nothing to offer the latter in return. The likelihood is that the members of the established group will already possess the capital forms appropriate to individual needs (bearing in mind that academia is not always of significant importance). If they do not derive any benefit from such associations, pupils principally of a competitive orientation, concerned with elite status acquisition are hardly likely to discard

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2 Social capital, as a concept, is discussed in the critique of Pierre Bourdieu in Chapter 3.

aspects of their distinctiveness.

Underlying this is a further failure of understanding. For while, quite correctly, concerns of writers have been on the class nature of the institutions, their location in class society and differentiation between public and state school pupils, as is partially the emphasis here, it is a mistake to assume that class concerns fail to transfer their power to within the institutions themselves. For it is the same ideology that legitimizes class differentiation in society at large, that (more covertly) encourages it within the school. For not only are certain forms of behaviour, associated with particular elite pupils, more in tune with the historical composition of the school ethos, but organizational principles and practices based on hierarchy provide a wider framework within which this can flourish.

It will become apparent (notably in Chapters 6, 7 and 9) that capital forms are not generally disseminated but rather, where appropriate, are jealously guarded and preserved as expressions of distinction. Therefore, not only are clearly demarcated class based sub-cultural forms observed but they also exhibit a considerable degree of closure. Some implications of this are represented in the differing feelings and perspectives presented regarding the personally perceived relationship with the institution and the extent to which nuances of culture are possessed or regarded as being unobtainable. The restricted possession and operationalization of social capital further serves to

conserve rather than spread capital forms.

Finally three points of caution are appropriate. Firstly, peripheral forms of capital interaction are not discounted as a possibility. For instance, that of financial to academic culture capital. Such processes allow personal progression without threatening the status quo. Second, it should not be extrapolated from the above that both formal and informal dimensions of school life do not serve to mould the individual - inevitably they do and in significant yet qualitatively distinct ways. Thirdly, while considerations of distinction are of paramount importance, it would be a mistake to see the reinforcement of differentiation as always the result of conscious deliberations - clearly in part they evolve from a class and cultural identity operating at a level beneath this.

In order to complement the discussion of values and ideas in the family - school relationship, I will now turn to the relevance of parents' physical interaction with the school. Beginning with an outline of general involvements, discussion will progress to deal with differing attitudes to intervention/complaining, a seemingly minor point but one which revealed itself to be illuminating.

In looking for parental involvement attention was focussed not on the half hour per term at parents' evening, but on a continuing *interaction between family and school.* The latter was found principally among those families who perceive the school as a dynamic component of class rather

than simply a singular and isolated resource.

Inevitably, as a physical consequence of inter-generational association with the sector, it is from the 'established' families that those involved in extended interaction are drawn. Manifesting itself in a number of ways, this connection could be located in long term family friendships, involvements with 'old boy' fixtures and associations or actually having relatives on the teaching staff. As a consistent extension of the discussions so far, it is both the nature of the activity, and importantly, the ideological context within which this is undertaken which ensures a particular meaning for participants. For instance, for Robert's father the continued involvement in 'old boy' sports matches was an expression of the extent to which he still regards himself and his family as being involved with the school with a degree of permanence which reinforces a conception of schooling going beyond the academic.

For John, the connection evolved in a particularly illuminating way. Two school masters had been to the same public school as John's father, a fact which both parties took to be of some considerable significance. Immediately that this became known a family - school relationship was established and John's development became of particular importance to them. He states:

"They gave me the direction which I had been lacking ... I believe without their help I would have achieved

nothing at school." (Life-Story, John.)

The limited academic qualifications he did secure, he clearly attributes to this relationship.

The above examples bring to the fore the two dimensions on which any physical involvement has an influence. The latter case describes a situation in which personal links produced a very real advantage for the pupil. The perception of unity felt between the teachers and the parent illustrates a bond between people of a particular character from a specific school, irrespective of the existence of an original friendship. How widespread such preferential treatment is has to be beyond quantification at present, though with teachers' sons in attendance and direct connections of the kind outlined this is unlikely to be an isolated occurrence. The second dimension is the way in which the family association, of which Robert's family is just one example, serves to reinforce the legitimacy of the school for the individual and produces an identification with it, within a similar frame of reference to that held in the institution itself. As a consequence, a greater perception of a genuine association with the school can result which, in turn, contributes to the distinctive social patterns of school life.

Therefore, while in comparative terms this may not, in itself, produce results of crucial importance, as a further manifestation of the importance of class and cultural identity, its relevance is noted.

It is the perceived nature of the relationship between family and school and, in particular, the relative levels of power accepted as being available to them, which serves as the basis for the ensuing discussion. Concern here is with the degree to which parents feel that it is possible, within the limits of this relationship, to actively intervene in the schooling process - more specifically to offer complaints should they be regarded as necessary.

As the last empirical input of the chapter, responses can be seen to contribute to a consistent presentation of the range of family experiences, certainly demonstrating realities far beyond individual psychological imperatives (though not denying the role of individual judgements) with patterns of social relations being revealed via a 'saturation' of subject evidence. The crucial dynamics of class, culture and pedagogic experience again provide an over-riding consistency to the results.

While it is wholly appropriate to discuss findings in terms of a continuum, it is also necessary to describe three principal groupings, the one located at the mid-point having unifying features as well as those located at the extremes.

It is the 'traditional' public school families that constitute the first group - those unequivocally prepared to complain. Here were found parents of high social class and status involved at a high level with a range of social institutions and, therefore, regularly interacting on an equal basis with people at the 'level' of the public school

hierarchy. As a consequence, not only do these parents have a knowledge of the workings of the system and feel a degree of affinity with it, but a comparability of power and social standing is assumed. As such, with the confidence this brings and the assured nature of their financial and historical stake in the school, there is no reluctance to make their presence felt when required.

For instance, Giles was clear concerning parental intentions:

"Yes definitely. If they thought things weren't being done in the right way, they would have complained." (Interview, Giles.)

Robert's parents were known to actually regularly complain:

"They used to complain about quite a few things. Just about petty things ... dates ... for half term ... oh and [too much emphasis on] bullying." (Interview, Robert.)

Therefore, both organizational concerns and matters of principle were regarded as within the jurisdiction of these parents.

There was no representation from such families at the other extreme. Instead, an element of the first generation parents expressed absolute reverence for a sector which until recently had no practical reality in their lives other than as a desired goal for their child. Those within the system were regarded very highly and with a sense of awe. Though middle class, parents located here certainly had no

social interaction with people of high status cultural background and had little or no experience of interacting on a regular, and equal, basis with professionals.

Simon's parents exemplify this position:

"They have never complained because neither of them have had any kind of yardstick to measure anything that was going on. They were just content that we were at a good school which had a very good reputation. They always felt it wasn't quite their scene." (Interview, Simon.)

Uncovered here is a retention of distance grounded both in a lack of knowledge of the system and a perceived cultural disparity.

The third group was characterized by people who though without first hand experience of the sector were certainly less distanced in both self perceptions and actions. Principally professionals (teachers), while not having the assurity in their protestations of the first group, they would certainly have been more willing to complain had the situation required it.

An interesting point is that whether an individual was on an assisted place or scholarship really had far less bearing on the situation than the central dimensions of class, status, culture and education. Family experience with the system was not necessarily a bar to the receipt of benefits.

Here, as elsewhere, particular family variables serve to produce specific configurations. Alistair's family

affiliation to a specific form of Methodism simply led to the taking for granted of the appropriateness of following regulations once enforced. The situation probably, in this case, only served to reinforce the established pattern, but non-generalizable family occurrences clearly can be of significant influence.

The evidence here thus provides further elaboration of the very real differences in context in which pupils bound for public school education establish their habitus. Taken for granted attitudes about the nature of the relationship between a particular family and an institution, sector, and indeed, specific social classes embracing distinct cultural forms are illuminated by the perceived ability to impose personal will in this specific social context.

Cultural Capital and the Public School Context

It is to a consideration of cultural capital, as a concept, that I now turn. Central to its problems, outlined earlier, was not only the difficulty of operationalization induced by inadequate definition but, more fundamentally, there was the claim that rather than being the reserve of an elite, it was the middle class (in particular the 'professions') who could be said to hold it to the greatest extent. In moving on specifically to the evidence presented so far, a further difficulty is uncovered, that is, given that seemingly all the subjects could well be seen to hold a

habitus constituting cultural capital (by established definition), given the range of experiences and perspectives, the concept is actually unable to say very much about the development of the intricacies of the situation.

One further issue which re-affirms the need to reconsider the concept is the nature of the system under study. In established cultural capital theory the nature of the school ethos already has a pivotal place in determining whether habitus constitutes cultural capital, but it is the genuinely different character of the institutions dealt with here that has to be taken into account. They are not simply parallel academic institutions differentiated from the state sector by payment. Both the history and class relationships discussed above reveal a more specific picture. Through generations, and often centuries, the 'cultural', the 'social', elements of distinction, and separateness and elitism have been at the heart of the school programme, with their presence providing a clear extra, valued dimension to schooling.

As a result of the reported experiences and observations of ex-pupils a two-fold splitting of cultural capital evolved - a recognition that two systems of predispositions, providing the 'key' to two clearly distinguishable avenues for development, exist. These are not, though, inevitably mutually exclusive, or indeed, determined in their outcome. The first level can be termed

cultural capital (academic). This refers to the extent of the affinity found between habitus and school on crucial dimensions which serve to unlock the means to academic achievement. Despite significant variations of background, it is clear that the underlying orientations and knowledges of parents ensure that this is widespread. Inevitably, families distant from academia (due either to inappropriate skills or dispositions and motivations) are found, as are differences in degrees of identification with it. The principal components can be outlined as follows:

1. A generalized conception that academia provides a genuine means by which future success can be attained. This operates not only in terms of attitude but also of motivation.
2. The possession of those values intrinsically linked with academic study in the sector. These comprise, acceptance of the legitimacy of hierarchy as an organizational form, the adoption of an obedient manner and, crucially, the existence alongside these of a belief in competition (almost as a natural state and an end in itself), desire for an elite position (however defined) and acceptance of principles on the complementary dimensions of class and gender attitudes and culture and leisure, consistent, or at least not at odds with those of the school.
3. The influence of parents able to acquaint their child with the principles of academic life, ie, the basic

mode of interacting with the school at this level. Knowledges thus become ingrained as assumptions and expectations. It is not necessarily public school experience that is important here, but rather a parental involvement with a system which they were able to successfully manipulate - be this state or private, 'O'/'A' levels, university or being involved in education as teachers themselves. The presence of literature in the home and an early acquaintance with it complements this well.

4. Developing from the above is the final component: that is, a basic awareness, and acceptance of, the legitimate nature of definitions of knowledge (and, therefore, high status knowledge) in the school. Here the focus is not necessarily on a detailed awareness of particular highly regarded 'pieces', simply a recognition that specific forms of literature and elements of 'science' are the 'natural' and unquestioned objects of education.

Identifying what constitutes the second level - cultural capital (culture) - is more difficult, and here an awareness of the intrinsic nature of the public school is even more consistently relevant.

Following again the basic premise of the original theory, what is being described here is the degree of proximity between an individual's culture and that established as high status culture in the school. What is

crucial here is a taken for granted cultural reality, certainly having very close ties with the historically evolved official school ethos, but not subject to changes simply as an immediate result of policy shifts. Therefore, where overt movements in school ethos have resulted in 'modernism' and 'academia', the underlying cultural conceptions may remain unaltered, being reinforced by both elements of staff and those pupils for whom it represents a significant part of the meaning of schooling.

In identifying this as something specific to the public school, it is logical that access to, and development of, such cultural manifestations will be restricted to 'established' families. This is indeed the case. The cultural knowledges of first generation pupils, having no interactive experience of these, remaining uninfluenced.

The central element of a specific habitus form that means it can be delineated as constituting cultural capital (culture) is a perception of the self as holding distinctive and superior cultural knowledges - those which have constituted high status culture in the school and continue to do so. In this, certain practical knowledges of the workings and unofficial expectations of the system are relevant, as are the relationships held with members of staff. But it is the seemingly minor, though vital, nuances of style and dispositions, the reified sense of superiority, the unashamed arrogance that most clearly represents this form. To clarify, the possession of cultural capital

(culture) is characterized by the level of 'normality' with which pupils are able to express those elements of culture, which reveal themselves as dominant and generalized, because of their developmental affinity with them. While the vast majority of pupils may come to adopt elitism or arrogance, for example, it is recognizable to all those involved from whatever stance as a qualitatively different expression in certain people. Beyond this level the possession becomes even more apparent in 'manners', 'styles' and indeed activities recognizably and distinctly of a separate nature.

Having stated this, though, it is the way in which these knowledges interact with other elements of habitus that reveals their significance. For those with an academically orientated habitus, the possession of cultural capital (culture) may not be so noticeable, as the family would have tended not to emphasize its significance. Here, the greater affinity principally manifests itself in a confidence in dealing with the school and a conception of belonging rather than anything more influential.

For it must not be forgotten that what is being described is a set of pre-dispositions underlying an active process. It is those pupils with established 'character' emphasis for whom this finds particular expression, especially in relation to the importance of group (class based) loyalty. Though taking various forms, the importance of distinct and separate groups, the self classification of these as superior, the identification with 'traditional'

elements of schooling (those deemed to constitute high status culture) and the inevitable classification of those beyond such groups without the appropriate knowledges as 'low status' are central elements. Such groups evolve from a mutual recognition of appropriate styles and dispositions within a constant cultural frame of reference, which depends upon elite self perception and 'knowing' that they constitute the pinnacle of public school pupils.

It is the possession of forms of cultural capital which forms the basis of pupil interaction with the school. Such a re-definition of the concept retains the idea of elite dominance of an element of cultural capital without rejecting the reality which inspires 'middle class' academic success. The contradiction in the original theory is thus resolved. The success of those in possession of the first form of cultural capital does not require the second, yet those holding the second were largely able to deploy the first or translate involvements in 'social networks' into elite status. Therefore, it is not necessarily occupational standing that distinguishes the pupils, but a genuine cultural distinction.

It has been the purpose of this chapter to describe the foundations upon which pupils interact with the public schools. Furthermore, I have been keen to demonstrate that discussing the eminently political and class based character of the sector and its generalized realities, should not result in the ignoring of internal variations. For such

differences are influenced by the same concerns of class, culture and education which provide the sector with its distinctive characteristics. Discussion of social and cultural reproduction is enhanced, therefore, by an approach able to incorporate institutional consistencies and structurally influenced individual mediations.

CHAPTER 6: Class Perceptions and Sub-Cultural Forms

The findings in this chapter will offer valuable insight into the nature of contemporary public schools, for the areas addressed here go to the core of the institutions and their bases of inequality and distinction. I will begin with the perceptions that pupils and teachers held of other social classes. Attention is then focussed on the degree to which there is an awareness of the social background of pupils actually within the school, with this being followed by a brief examination of the preferences of pupils and staff for particular characteristics in their fellow participants in school life. Sub-cultural forms will then be described and examined, with their very particular composition being illuminated.

Knowledge and Perception of Other Social Classes

In the last two decades public schools have attempted to foster an image of themselves as not only 'effective' but also no longer the preserve of elitism and class alignment. Their self-presentation stresses their apparent apolitical nature and distance from issues of societal structure. The following is an examination of this position through an analysis of attitudes to other social classes, and conceptions of relative status. The terms 'working class' and 'comprehensive' were often used interchangeably by subjects. Although many were clearly aware of middle class participation in state schools (a number having had personal experience, of course), this was essentially regarded as a deviation from the basic differing class associations of the two sectors. Though variations are discussed where they constitute significant forms, it is with the establishment of the 'general climate' of cross-class knowledge, interaction and perception that lies the principal aim of the presentation.

I turn first of all to the teachers, for they inevitably hold a focal position in setting the tone of the school. Their influence can be noted in two inter-related areas. Firstly, in the adoption and continuation of institutionalized bias. By this I refer to the perpetuation of practices which, by their very nature, reinforce conceptions of social barriers and hierarchy, without

necessarily involving verbalized confirmation. It is in the widespread assumption of, and tendency for, 'like-school' interactions, principally in sporting and social activities that this is most noticeable. Therefore, sports fixtures would be against other public schools, or even grammar (as locally defined) schools, in preference to a comprehensive and in the one case where the link was made, it was undertaken with such an air of gesture as to leave unaffected the core trend. Similarly, there was widespread reporting of public schools being 'matched' with appropriate girls' schools, with whom occasional social functions were organized. In no cases did such an arrangement involve invitations to those outside of the private sector.

Although the consequences would be unaffected, it could be argued that the above was the result of practicalities or naiveties, rather than elitist intent. However, when viewed alongside recorded teacher attitudes the inappropriateness of such claims becomes clear.

It became quite apparent that class bigotry, elitism and feelings of superiority were widespread through the schools. This is not to say that all teachers expressed such views, and indeed a large number were clearly more 'guarded', but across the range of schools pupils were fully aware of their presence. Though the intensity of feelings varied, the underlying trend is unmistakable. It is also revealing that where overt comments of this kind were not stated, no attempt was made, or interest shown, in

disputing the all pervading elitism; where not explicitly fostered it was done so by omission. A further illuminating and consistent finding was that of those in positions of influence in the school,a higher proportion than overall were found to hold strong elitist sentiments. The following is a selection of the evidence from which such conclusions developed.

"They didn't want to get involved with the comprehensive school down the road because it was degrading for them ... those that were in a position of influence tended toward that kind of attitude, it would be a 50/50 split amongst the ten housemasters and the headmaster." (Interview, Peter.)

"The staff sometimes came out with comments like, if you look scruffy you look like somebody from such and such (comprehensive) a school ... they (senior staff) probably looked down on them, especially the headmaster, he really was quite a snob." (Interview, Craig.)

"[The staff] weren't really concerned about getting rid of class barriers really." (Interview, Charles.)

"The teachers especially the older ones, are often narrow-minded, bigoted and expect to be treated like gods." (Life-Story, Rachel.)

The teachers who are like that (bigoted) tend to be higher up the school and so they set the tone really." (Interview, Rachel.)

With regard to pupils, it was stated by all respondents

that a generalized conception of superiority was a dominant element of school culture. It was, quite simply, regarded as an integral part of being a public school pupil.

"I think pupils just felt that being at an independent school, they were above, whether academically or socially, a state school." (Interview, Alistair.)

For Fiona (Interview), this was characterized by "a looking down on less fortunates". While Nigel states:

"They (working class) were there to take the piss out of. There was a looking down the nose at them." (Interview, Nigel.)

For some pupils, this was not a position induced by pre-established dogmatism, but rather represented a pragmatic response to the situation and culture in which they found themselves. This is not to say they were necessarily reluctant participants in this, adaption to such self-perceptions being greatly facilitated by achievement orientated dimensions of habitus. These taken for granted cultural assumptions suited their needs well. For many, though, some form of interaction with the working class had taken place. Although this rarely extended to full friendship, it did serve to induce an element of experience into assessments, thereby softening stereotypical excesses, prevalent amongst both staff and pupils with no cross-class knowledge, though not interfering with dominant processes.

However, such conceptions find their most blatant forms amongst those following the classic elite family - prep-

public school pattern. In this group, who have no personal interactions beyond their class, attitudes became moulded and reinforced by social 'actors' not just of a similar structural location but of the same cultural dispositions. For instance, although Robert's attitudes are based on ignorance they are no less strongly held for that:

"I don't know much about the state system but my Dad's a lawyer and he seems to get most of his clients from the local state school, they are always trying to burn it down and things like that. I think I would like my kids to go to boarding school." (Interview, Robert.)

The possession of cultural capital (culture) and the establishing of specific sub-cultural forms building on such attitudes excludes experience of people of different backgrounds who may modify rather than exaggerate such views. With the tacit support of school culture such perspectives are able to blossom, resulting in the following kinds of experiences.

Fiona describes how some local sixth formers had part-time jobs in the school and were "looked on as in their rightful place in the kitchen." (Interview, Fiona.) Finding its most overt manifestation in the elite circles such attitudes were nevertheless widespread in the school.

Peter discusses a school trip on which working class pupils were encountered and the elite self-perceptions of the element of traditional pupils came to the fore.

"They just took it for granted that anyone who wasn't

privileged was an inferior blob. It became more and more class orientated ... lower class, get back into the hole in the ground - that sort of thing." (Interview, Peter.)

It is important to regard all of these attitudes as the result of particular processes rooted as much in class and culture as in involvement with particular educational practices. Having said that, though, it can be categorically stated that across the board the interaction between home and school facilitated conceptions of superiority in all subjects. For some this may co-exist with a liberal façade, but the underlying belief in the appropriateness of personal high status is clear. Having accepted the class logic of the situation, though, analysis needs to take further account of the internal processes by which individuals come to adopt this position. For the elite, the continuation of assumptions has been outlined and will be further enhanced by the later discussions of sub-cultural forms, and while family/school interactions, achievement orientation and class are certainly relevant to the other groups, two further aspects of the process can be noted as being implicated here.

Firstly, is the issue of 'social standing', the lack of social acceptability which would result from interaction with the working class, or even from the expression of a positive attitude toward them. Although this taboo would be strongest within the elite sub-groups, the position of these (group inspired) holders of cultural capital (culture)

allows them to set an agenda and to define appropriate behaviour, transgression of which would induce low social standing. Though many pupils may reject the right of these to establish standards, or reject these standards themselves to some extent, the desire for social acceptance would induce the adoption of a perspective which, in any case, is largely consistent with the general aims and values of these pupils. As Peter states, himself far removed from the traditionally based elite groups and from any extreme views:

"A lot of it was social standing within the school and it wasn't going to do your street cred any good if you went out and started talking to people from the comprehensive down the road." (Interview, Peter.)

Secondly, and following from the above, the adoption of this specific pattern of behaviour would reduce the likelihood of being marginalized and, therefore, becoming an isolate. Within an often claustrophobic environment, being in this position would be extremely difficult.

As such, of influence in this process is class origin, the nature of 'wants' from the system, especially concerning how they relate to the dominant cultural practices of the school and, therefore, the active choice of the individual in the light of this and the dynamic influences discussed above.

It is apparent that despite the rhetoric of the sector, conceptions of elitism and superiority incorporating negative perceptions of other social classes are indeed at

the heart of the schools. Furthermore, there is no evidence to suggest that in practice any senior participants have displayed any interest in tackling the issue. For to do so would threaten not only a taken for granted cultural component of the schools, but also one of the principal bases upon which public schools are able to continue functioning - that is, their identification with, and unwritten promise of, social distinction. Therefore, the analysis cannot be reduced solely to the conscious choices of certain people. It is the rationale of the sector, both as an independent reality and as a part of a class - school dynamic, that serves to foster the conditions necessary for those attitudes and practices.

Awareness of Pupil Background

The historical study of public schools has already traced the requirement to attract the new rich of each era, a priority which continues today. In the light of this, the denial of forms of internal differentiation which are to the detriment of the first generation is easily understood. What is under study here is how far there is an awareness of pupil background amongst pupils and how far perceptions varied on this matter. Given the pivotal role of social distinction in school culture, it would seem, despite official claims of internal unity, somewhat unlikely that the importance of distinction should not extend into the

institutions themselves - and so it proved.

In discussing the issue with ex-pupils, it was clear that there was not a single interpretation of the extent to which there was a widespread awareness of pupil background in the schools. However, differences of opinion were not reducible to differing individuals skills of insight, but were located within the dimensions under-pinning school life, namely the position of individuals in the social hierarchy (as personally perceived) and the actual degree of centrality which differing people ascribed to such an awareness. In turn, these can be classified into three groupings of response.

The first group are those widely regarded as being at the head of the pupil hierarchy. An awareness of social distinction was crucial to the form of their lives - a form based on separation and distinction. Therefore, because of the imperatives of the situation, not only did they demonstrate an awareness of pupil background, but they assumed it to be of importance more widely.

The second grouping is represented by those in the middle of the hierarchy, largely individuals from established backgrounds, but also including a small number of first generation, though full fee paying, often prep school attending, pupils. Here the dominant perspective is of personal advancement assisted by an 'idyllic' passage through school. Concern about other people's background, while not irrelevant, is peripheral to their existence and

not a principal concern.

It is on the third group that I will concentrate, for it is here that the very real feelings of being different are most clearly expressed. The members are located toward the bottom of the social hierarchy. Inevitably first generation, they may be on an assisted place or scholarship or be a late entrant or one of other variants, but what is crucial is their recognition of a definite cultural distance. This awareness of background has two facets, both as categorized by others, whether by the first group, or indeed by members of staff, and as a self-perception and classification.

It is important to point out here that I am not referring simply to those few pupils who may be effectively described as outcasts or marginalized people. Although they are, of course, included in the third group, so are others who do not share the characteristics of the elite, as a result of, for instance, financial inequality or lack of cultural capital (culture).In taking their own dispositions into the educational environment and getting and shaping perceptions from that interaction, it can be seen that they are contributing to the importance placed on background as well as being on the receiving end of it.

In view of the tendency to see the public school pupils as a single entity, by both apologists for the sector and those critical of their influence, a significant selection of pupil opinions will now be presented, demonstrating

clearly that for those at the heart of the process, such a perspective does not concur with reality.

Simon notes the significance of awareness of his background in terms both of self-perception and cultural disparity and of being recognized as financially different from other pupils. He states:

"I think I really didn't get on with the girls at the public school because they were at a really long established girls' public school and it was as though we were poles apart and I was not interested in that kind of culture at all." (Interview, Simon.)

Later, he added "I wasn't quite so well equipped for the mental bullying and it was just a case of not having as much money as the rest of them and not going on school trips and things like that which other kids could go on. They didn't think twice about their parents being able to afford to send them there. I got teased quite a lot for that."

For him, the realization of background differences was a core dynamic in influencing his interactive patterns.

Nigel, during his life-story, describes entering the public school for interview after having been at comprehensive school until sixteen years of age.

"The bus stopped at the square, and my first sight was looking through a twelfth century arch down an avenue of trees watching thirteen and fourteen year olds strut confidently, even arrogantly, down the pavement, one hand in the pocket, the other resting files on the hip. It's like a

little swagger. Not a sportsbag or rucksack in sight." (Life-Story, Nigel.)

During the interview, he elaborated that although any overt statements about background were rare at his school, the distinctive cultures and behaviours served to identify some as being different from the dominant culture. He continued:

"A thing that stuck out for me was having a Midlands accent. Most of them had nice upper middle class accents." Thus different cultural knowledges and dispositions had important implications for his development.

For Andrew, the most noticeable manifestation of this came at a parents' evening where the differentiation of status, priority of staff, and indeed, attitudes of some families were revealed.

"There was one guy in our form whose Dad was high up in a multinational company and they had masses and masses of money and he was a snob. Such people who don't say hello to your parents when you introduce them. It's more of an impression. It's sort of like lots of little instances built up into sort of a lasting impression. I think the teachers were very bad in some instances. We had ones who would go round with the rich people, established people, and sort of ignore your parents." (Interview, Andrew.)

Jane also refers to staff attitudes but focusses on the financial realities of the situation:

"There were things I missed out on by being on an

assisted place because I couldn't afford the things these non-assisted place people took for granted. I mean things like milk at night and suppers, we couldn't afford them. We didn't have certain things on the bill and they had the uniform all paid for and just on the bill and we couldn't afford that. We had to scrape about ... I think my house mother might have objected to assisted place people. It was assisted place people she picked on." (Interview, Jane.)

Again, it is the day to day practices that served to reinforce awarenesses and as Alistair states:

"There was a definite feeling of putting people into groups, as in 'assisted', or from the state sector, or being 'right' for the system." (Interview, Alistair.)

In order to take this analysis a step further, it is highly informative to look at the experiences of, and attitude toward, those entering the system for the first time at sixth form level. In doing so, one can show how such differentiations are not simply relating to institutional common experience, or lack of it, in terms of having attended the same school for a given period, but are based upon considerations of class and culture.

Among those at the elite end of the hierarchy any significant influx of sixth formers produced a negative, not to mention aggressive response. Their perception was that individuals were entering the school and being provided with benefits which they had earned through their progression up the hierarchy, and were rightfully theirs anyway as the

'principal' pupil form. Prefect status was a particular source of dispute. For instance Robert on the 'coolie' attitude to policy on this matter stated:

"The bulk of the prefects were sixth form entrants, who had just entered the school and they'd obviously got it because they hadn't had time to do much wrong really, there was a lot of resentment about that." (Interview, Robert.)

It is interesting to note, though, that such a negative perception was concentrated in the hands of those for whom power within the established set up was prevalent. For instance, Paul, perhaps the most marginalized of all subjects viewed the influx of sixth formers in a very different way. For him it offered the chance to establish friendships which had previously largely been denied to him. Although the class intake at his school at sixth form level did not appear to be particularly different from that originally present in the school, the opportunity for interaction with others was available and materialized in the shape of two first generation pupils.

Crucial to the analysis, though, is the recognition that it is not just the nature of pupils already in the system that is of influence here, but an awareness on their part - including the elite sub-groups - of the background of the incoming person. Given an appropriately regarded individual, the response of the established elite could take on a markedly different complexion. For instance, Charles described how in the midst of the elite antipathy to many

sixth form entrants, one stood out and was assimilated with the appropriate sub-group immediately. He had been expelled from a well known Southern public school for drug involvement and was from a long established public school family of significant influence. The possession of cultural capital (culture) over-rode any potential problems of late involvement or other school identification.

Thus, it is clear that beyond the simple issue of timing of involvement, the perception (and treatment) of late entrants rests largely on three factors.

1. The nature of class position and cultural knowledges. An awareness of the possession, or lack of, capital forms being central.
2. The nature and history of the school. For example, the historically changing ethos and its relationship to different groups in the school.
3. The nature of established pupils - the range and attitudes of sub-groups and individuals.

Again, therefore, it can be seen how the 'comfortable' image of the schools as not being exposed internally to class bias and perception is inadequate. For those to whom this impinges to a significant degree, there is a clear appreciation that awareness of class background is an operating dynamic, often at a covert level, but nonetheless influential. The importance attached to social and cultural distinction (as well as objective statuses) in dealing with the working class also finds expression in the processes of

school life. Indeed, to have assumed that the bases upon which judgements are made are limited to one social context would be to deny that such assessments are manifestations of a fundamental way of seeing the world and this, in turn, would be to ignore consistent and overwhelming evidence.

Assessment of Primary Characteristics

A further appropriate means of identifying the concerns of those in the sector is through an appreciation of the characteristics in teachers and fellow pupils which they recognize as essentially positive or negative. Quite simply subjects outlined those people and their nature, for whom they had particular feelings. Observations of teacher preferences were also largely based on pupil perceptions.

The issue of attitudes to the characteristics of teachers is particularly informative. For, at a glance, it provides insight into the way an individual sees certain priorities of schooling. It is interesting and significant that a considerable degree of consistency was found in this matter, with two dimensions being particular sources of consensus.

The first of these is that the teacher should be a skilled academic. This related less to his/her specific talents or qualifications (though certainly where schools and universities regarded as prestigious had been attended this was well known and respected) but rather to how well

equipped (in terms of possession of the limited range of relevant knowledge) and how well disposed (in terms of presentation, communication and willingness to 'make an effort') s/he was. This underlines the significance of academia for the majority and provides support for the assertion of the widespread possession of cultural capital (academic) - in particular the importance attached to its motivational component. Inevitably, given the nature of internal differentiation patterns, those pupils not reliant on this avenue of achievement, and those for whom it was of only partial significance had a lower priority for such concerns and, therefore, a less enthusiastic response to these teachers. It is important to note, though, that membership of elite sub-groups and identification with traditional practices does not in itself constitute a necessary pre-condition for rejection of the academic. The two can, and do, co-exist in some cases but not in others - a situation dependent on both cultural perspectives and the strength and availability of alternative means of securing high status positions.

The second characteristic was even more widely accepted and yet more complex. It is essentially that an ordered environment should be established by a teacher. Largely amongst those with a strong academic bias the strict classroom was seen as a necessary, though often unenjoyable, component of school. Interestingly, classroom order was also favoured by the elite minority, not because of any

practical academic benefit, but because a teacher without a strict class was perceived as weak and weakness was not a characteristic to be tolerated. (The question of ideological and practical acceptance of control being developed in Chapter 7.)

The differing priorities can be demonstrated through the comments of Robert and Charles. Both were of established public school families, but as shown already, people for whom public school attendance had rather different meanings.

"Bad teachers. The ones that had no authority, it's hard to define why people don't have authority but some people just don't have it ... if you knew he had the authority you'd respect him." (Interview, Robert.) The 'form' of behaviour being regarded as all important here.

"The teachers I disliked most were the bad teachers who seemed to have no idea how to teach and you thought 'am I ever going to get this exam'?" (Interview, Charles.) A definite priority of 'content' and recognition of an objective end.

Although short of complete unity, there is a significant degree of similarity in the views which pupils expressed on teacher characteristics. Now, a superficial assessment may lead the observer to conclude that the same will be true of pupil characteristics, for we are discussing the same people with the same world view. However, significantly more variation was found. The

feelings expressed here evolved in relation to variations of habitus, class and cultural identity.

Robert had nothing but disdain for those with just narrow academic concerns:

"They'd do nothing for the system whatsoever. They'd just lock themselves away in the library all day and not get involved in any of the activities. I like people that get involved in a lot of the school things, be it sport or the Services or something like that ..." (Interview, Robert.)

Whereas the concern for the school and its traditional character is just the thing that Nigel took exception to:

"The pupils I disliked tended to be the ones who took the whole situation too seriously, to whom being at public school was a big thing. The chosen few sort of attitude." (Interview, Nigel.)

Examples of this kind extend across the range of subjects and so the question is raised as to why such variations here are not extended into assessments of teachers. Well, while recognizing the limited variations it is clear that irrespective of dimensions of culture, biases and perceptions, the vast majority of pupils were demanding the same thing from the school and approaching it in a similar way. Academic success was the goal and the degree of unity on the best means of achieving this was extensive. There was no such widespread requirement of pupils from one another and no such consistency of habitus forming input on this matter, with a resultant diversity of associations and

perspectives.

Given the apparent dominant concern of the sector, in the approach to the 1990s, with academia and the internal emphasis on obedience and respect for authority, it may be expected that a uniform picture of staff preferences of pupils would be present. While there is indeed a genuine foundation to such a view, to rely on it solely would be to offer an analysis devoid of historical basis. Furthermore, it is not simply general patterns of the evolution of the sector that are of concern, but those specific to individual schools.

However, this is not to argue that because of its particular history, each school will have a uniform set of preferences. Both the spread of academic emphasis and the inevitability of some form of staff variation based on personal priorities discount this possibility. What it does suggest, though, is that the adoption of a particular ethos at points in the past and the identification with this by specific staff members, ensures that more potential for ideological conflict exists in some schools than others, with this manifesting itself in the feelings presented towards certain forms of behaviour.

During Chapter 4 and the descriptions of study schools, such a situation was noted in relation to general school development. It is here that the consequences for personal assessments are taken up. Analysis of pupil perceptions, made it increasingly clear that the historical nature of the

school, and its ideological composition, was influencing teacher preferences. For instance, School H, an ex-grammar school, had no historical links with 'character' emphasis, therefore no sudden shift to academia, no ideologically displaced staff and, therefore, no such variables markedly influencing pupil preference. At both Schools A and C, in particular, the opposite was found. For many teachers in these schools the style and manner with which schooling was undertaken by pupils was of far more importance than its actual content. Indeed, Rachel notes how for a certain 'type' of teacher, it was the 'charismatic' (turning out to be group based holders of cultural capital (culture)) pupils who received favour - transgressions often being overlooked and regarded as insignificant in comparison to the values being upheld. It is important to remember, though, that even in this school, such teacher attitudes co-existed with the more singular academic emphasis of others.

The Nature and Significance of Sub-Cultures

The second half of this chapter will concentrate specifically on the nature of sub-cultural forms in public schools. There are several crucial themes and questions here. Principal amongst these, (especially in view of the earlier discussions of Willis and Walford[1]) is the extent

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1 P Willis 1977 op cit G Walford 1986 op cit

to which any groupings found can be defined as genuine sub-cultural forms or whether they are simply limited 'interest groups' or the result of externally imposed labels. To this end, groups of people as described by subjects will not automatically be seen to constitute sub-cultures, rather the level of internal integration and intensity of interaction is examined in each case. The nature of groupings will be analyzed against a background of class experience of participants and the meanings of schooling held by them. The role of specific types of capital will become apparent. Within the hierarchical ideological infra-structure of the schools, pupil relations are seen to be organized on a similar foundation, with the nature of those able to impose identities of super and subordinate status in these, being seen as integral to the sub-cultural pattern. Inevitably, numerous other points of discussion will hold varying degrees of relevance to each component - the history of the school, length of time spent there and being a day or boarding pupil being amongst these.

Individualism and Group Identity

The question of what pupils regard as the dominant organizational principle in their lives, ie, individualism or group activity has obvious significance to this work. Although the 'loyalty' and social networks of public schools have been 'known' in popular consciousness for generations,

the apparent dominant shift towards academia and, therefore, to individualism, would seem to weaken the earlier emphases. To understand what is happening we need to get beneath the trends and examine the nature of the relationship between the individual and the school and its cultural foundations.

Reference can thus be made back to the kinds of divisions found earlier in habitus. For instance, differentiation was noted between the 'pragmatists' - those first generation families with an academic emphasis and a location in that element of the middle class for whom individualism dominates life orientation - and the 'traditional' pupils who themselves were seen to be split between those somewhat similarly centring on academic and individual pursuits and those for whom group loyalty and character building was all important. This is not meant to suggest or imply any inevitability in the patterns evolving from these three broad bases, but instead, to re-affirm the varying cultural perspectives from which pupils begin their interactions internal to the school.

The situation, though, is more intricate than single division between individual emphasis and group loyalty. For not only do all feel some degree of identity with the school, but crucially, the kind of group affinity which dominates public school life does not disregard individualism for, to do so would be to reject one of the principle tenets of the sector's historically grounded cultural identity; rather, it embraces a different

conception of it. As such, the need for a definition of these two expressions of individualism is clear.

A. One mode of individualism is where subjects have a clear sense that their basic point of identity is as a singular being, concerned with personal achievement. Under this condition, friendships and interactions are, of course, engaged in, but they are not seen as a necessary point of reference in relation to important activities. Indeed, the nature of cultural pursuits and personal priorities (as largely distant from a group setting) see to it that this would be irrelevant.

B. Here the intensity of identification with a conception of individualism is often no less strong, but now it can happily co-exist with group loyalty. For here, while the stress on advancement, on eventual achievement for the individual remains, this is just one component of an ideology which embraces notions of obedience (in particular manifestations) and stresses that personal achievement, rather than depending purely upon a personal focus, is bound up with group membership.

As such, the broad ideology of individual advancement extends across the range of participants, but it is important that this does not necessarily deny the theoretical possibility of genuine sub-cultural forms. Simply because such groupings do not conform to standard expectations of the nature of sub-cultures borne of a near total reliance on working class studies, does not mean they

are any less 'real' in their consequences for those involved or indeed as observable realities.

Class, Cultural Distinction and Hierarchy: Public School Sub-Cultures

In presenting the evidence on sub-cultural activity, the forms described are those which evolved from the life-histories and interviews. Although subject to considerable analysis they are not the result of any imposed or artificial schema attempting to represent consistency across the schools. Recognizing complexity of attitudes and relationships there is no search for a simple and universal pro and anti school group distinction, despite the fact that the principal groups at some schools are split into just two extreme groups. The point is that whereas two groups as ends of a continuum may be an accurate representation of the main forces at one school (though not as simplistic pro/anti groups), 4/5/6 separate groupings are identified elsewhere. Unnecessary distortion has been avoided by trying not to over-simplify. At the same time, the comparisons between schools do reveal much of theoretical interest and importance.

The groups described are essentially those of the latter years of schooling, with the names used being widely employed by pupils. Occasionally, where groups were of low visibility - by virtue of being neither particularly high,

or indeed, low status or not incorporating especially identifiable characteristics - labels were subject to more variability. Furthermore, where such a name had derogatory associations it would not, of course, be used by those to whom it referred.

As described earlier, School A was noticeably undergoing a re-orientation of its ethos. This is not just of interest as an objective occurrence, but of significance to those involved at all levels with the institution. Here subjects referred to two distinct sub-groups and although they recognized that, as the ends of a continuum, pupils also fell between them, they were without doubt regarded as the principal points of identification. The nature of these groups varies considerably, however, since, I will argue, one of them is a genuine interactive sub-culture, whereas the other is an imposed category with no real meaning for those so labelled. Furthermore, it is the elite group that is recognized as the genuine one, therefore marking a point of departure from, for instance, the study of Willis's lads[2]. The descriptions offered by subjects illuminate the situation clearly.

Rachel states:

"There were people types, there was the coolies who were the confident, or the facade was confident, and they hung around in a clique, you had to be cool to be seen

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[2] P Willis 1977 op cit

speaking to them. They've got an image to upkeep and that at one end of the scale and at the other end of the scale there was the negs, and they were the nobodies ... The coolies were people who were ex-prep school, most if not all of them were richer, they tried to put on being thick, they didn't try to work at all but they at least tried to put on that they were thick, it was not cool to be clever ... [the negs] I think they tended to come from more 'working class' families, they didn't dress the right way, they didn't have that air about them that a coolie did, it's really hard to put your finger on it." (Interview, Rachel.)

Alistair described the situation thus:

"[the coolies] - traditional, been to prep school, being there all the time. Got rich fathers, shall we say, and fathers who had been through the system and fathers that went to work abroad and went abroad skiing at Easter and such like. I think they saw themselves as above other people. Those from a traditional family had their sort of sub-culture - their little goings on that you didn't know about." (Interview, Alistair.) He continued: "They saw themselves as being above other people, having attitudes on the definite right wing and perhaps of racism."

Robert, on the fringes of coolie identity illuminates the principal concerns in relation to an incident in which four friends were suspended for bullying:

"There is bound to be a lot of 'horse-play' in a boys' boarding house and it is something which I think is

beneficial, part of life's education. The school, however, takes a contrary view, and if things don't change soon it will have the reputation of being the school with the most pampered and softest juniors in the country." (Life-Story, Robert.)

On the basis of this and other evidence, two clear groups can be distinguished. The first, 'the coolies' were invariably second and third generation pupils, male dominated and having attended prep school. For them group loyalty, firm right wing values, an anti-academic slant and a basis around the first XV Rugby team were crucial. They were, without doubt, a strongly unified group with a high degree of closure. It is these values, both closely identified with and having evolved from an intergenerational transactional connection with the 'traditional' public school ethos which, coupled with their sense of 'natural' belonging and financial security, allows them to define themselves as both the elite and as incorporating the 'real' values of the system. The recent shift to academia in the official school ethos has made this slightly more problematic for them, and although their opposition to this change is not instrumental in the original group formation - as stated, this has longer class and cultural roots - it is implicated in the process of differentiation within the school ensuring, for instance, that their cultural distinctiveness is even more readily discernible. It is this area of 'culture' that is all important. For the group

draws solely from those who can be seen to possess group-inspired cultural capital (culture). This is not just a conscious bar to others but also an unconscious self selecting group process, whereby those with this particular expression of an elite perspective find mutual affinity. As illustrated by Rachel's statement, it is partly the nuances of style and disposition that separate pupils - particular cultural expressions which have evolved through close interaction with the public school, its elitist emphasis and the inherited expectation of power.

The 'style' which they represent, although no longer all powerful is certainly far from lost in the school - as seen by both the general elitism and the continued affinity of some staff with the 'charisma' of certain pupils. Therefore, just as the 'coolies'' affinity with the dominant underlying culture allows them the extra knowledges and sense of identity with, and elite status in, the school, so it also allows them to develop and reinforce conceptions of what it is to be 'low status' - to be a 'neg'. Although academic orientation is a part of this classification, it is again this matter of culture which dominates. The profusion of first generation pupils here, often on assisted places, lower middle class, the occasional working class pupil, accounts for the difference in style that so clearly marks them out. While interests and emphases play a part in this, it is the manner of participation as much as the content that is crucial.

This established power to influence cultural perceptions is further witnessed by the common usage - beyond the elite - of a term which defines low status as the polar extreme to the 'coolie' culture and yet describes a collection of unrelated individuals and not a sub-cultural group in any genuine sense.

The situation at School B was somewhat different. However, the importance of hierarchy, class and culture are again clear. Six 'groupings' were identified, though even this left a few individuals not covered.

It was the 'heroes' that were probably the dominant group amongst three high status sub-cultures. Described by Nigel as:

"the heads of house, the first XI footballers [the dominant sport at this school] the good boys, the school heroes. They used to go round with hearty swaggers and their very nice cricket tops." (Interview, Nigel.)

They were again all of established families, with a large proportion of masters' sons. This was a male preserve, females were described as 'followers'. Here, therefore, were those whose integration with the school culture could not have been more highly established, with school and staff influences often being one and the same.

Whereas the 'heroes' coupled elite status with the academic and social priorities of the school, the 'London set' were completely different. Drawn even more exclusively from the very rich and socially well connected, their

cultural distinctiveness was reinforced by both a physical separation and their precocious manner. A strongly unified group, their only interest was socializing and being 'seen' in the appropriate places. Their differentiation from first generation pupils could hardly have been more complete or the chances of access to the group by the latter more unlikely. This group completely rejected academia to an extent well beyond that of the 'coolies' of School A (some of whom eventually made it to university after the 'expected' retake year). Elite positions were assumed to be secured via mechanisms of social capital.

The third group, the 'lads', were also high status and had many of the characteristics of a 'coolie' mentality. However, the presence of the 'heroes' provided the 'lads' with a more specific, slightly different character. The emphasis on sports, drinking and 'old' values are there, as is the basis of traditional family pupils, but here access to the group was noticeably easier, with the integration of limited numbers of first generation pupils who exhibited related, though not necessarily identical attitudes.

With the 'black brigade' the first potentially ideological rebellion - ie, behaviour not actually consistent with one or other element of public school/elite culture - emerges. The members of this group made a concerted effort to distance themselves by dressing in black and talking of socialism. Interestingly, as a group (although numerically small) they were drawn from the ranks

of traditional families. However, despite professing a lack of affinity with the public schools, this did not extend to a rejection of the academic priority and their 'intellectual rebellion' (largely regarded by other pupils as transitory and insignificant) did not affect their chances of university entrance, thereby retaining association, after all, to a core aspect of school life. As Nigel puts it: "I think they were trying to say 'I'm a rebel' without actually being it." (Interview, Nigel.)

The 'God Squad' was the first of the 'imposed' categories. From Christian families in the main, these individuals were of low/moderate status but largely ignored rather than being on the receiving end of abuse. Existing at a peripheral and insular level, they were perceived as irrelevant to the specific form of cultural contestation. It was the 'squares/academics' for whom this attack was reserved. Interestingly, we have seen that academic priority at this school was not in any way a bar to elite status because of the specific institutional dynamics. Therefore, again the analysis has to seek an explanation in the arena of culture. Of a range of backgrounds, though with a massive over-representation of assisted places and first generation pupils, again it was the perceived lack of an appropriate 'style' which ensured classification as low status.

In moving on to School C, whilst appreciating differences of detail, certain definite patterns are

beginning to emerge. The dominant two high status sub-groups again are strictly drawn from a socially restricted elite and have strong internal unity and a high level of closure. The first of these are the 'cool unhappies'. Regarded as aloof and also known by the name 'untouchables', they had a clear reality of their own. For whilst maintaining an affinity with those traditional elements of public schools - in particular the elitism and belief in fagging and related practices - there were also suggestions of contradictions. This is shown through the occasional mention of ideological radicalism as a parallel expression of dislike of everyday regulations and controls. This perception of the 'unhappies' as having a radical component could well, though, be a function of the term radical being equated with being unco-operative and uninterested in work - which is of course, a totally different matter. The retention of principles of class superiority and the reinforcing of their elite aura are still dominant. Giles summed up their position and manner of distinction thus:

"You were arrogant and obviously you smoked, you gave the impression that you didn't care about anything and you generally didn't talk to most people, you wandered around grumpy and several young people would have been sat there and said 'my word that's so and so ooh' and if he spoke to you you would go 'ooh what a treat'." (Interview, Giles.)

The 'cool happies' whilst again high status were not so strictly exclusive. Though predominantly a traditionally

based sub-culture, appropriately orientated first generation pupils were not automatically excluded. The closeness to School B's 'lads' continues with their emphasis upon sports and 'enjoyment' and the over-riding stress on right wing politics. Academia was not beyond the terms of reference of this group. The greatest identification with the fagging system was found here. University was not an uncommon destination, often without the re-takes prevalent in 'unhappy' circles.

These two groups, therefore, dominated the elite end of the social hierarchy with a class and cultural composition of increasing familiarity. Two mid-level groupings were identified. The first, the 'ethnic' group was to some extent an interactive group, being largely orientated both to academia and having a strong interest in extra-curricular activities. The 'floaters', as the name suggests, did not have a permanent social location. They were not necessarily separate individuals but small groups of friends, usually first generation displaying varying affiliations. Of course, such movements as did take place did not involve access to the highest group, rather the 'cool happies' were the pinnacle for any such aspirants. Finally those of low status, known as the 'out-casts', are individuals often, though not necessarily, hard working, for whom quite simply the cultural knowledges and dispositions required for access to any of the established sub-groups were beyond their range of experience and who, because of their complete disparity

of perspective, stood no chance of being integrated with, or even accepted by, an elite group.

School D produced some particularly interesting results, because despite being a small school and very low in the HMC hierarchy, class based elitism and distinction were rife. Jane describes the existence of a continuum, yet with two groups at the extreme this left "just a few stragglers in the middle". (Interview, Jane.)

The groups were the 'men' and the 'squares'. The 'men' were the high status group with at least 95% being drawn from the ranks of prep school attending 'traditional' families. Again, it was this elite group which was setting the agenda with regard to cultural status. Defining themselves as inherently superior, its members embraced the familiar characteristics of being centred on the rugby first XV and identifying with pride in the school and its established characteristics. Here the official school ethos had not shifted significantly away from this mode and, therefore, the degree of cultural distance between this group and the school was particularly low. Again the derogatory term of 'squares' was an externally imposed status upon those without appropriate cultural capital (culture) and whose behaviour lay at the furthest point from the dominant cultural perspective. This grouping incorporated 'bright' pupils but the 'less socially active' were especially noted.

Four groups were identified at School E. Here again

there were two groups vying for recognized elite status. Interestingly, one held highest status by consensus, the other by self-perception. The generally recognized elite was the sport group. A group of considerable wealth, again very largely traditional pupils with a small influx of first generation pupils. House loyalty, fagging, right wing politics, drinking and socializing were all constituent elements of this very close knit though not absolutely impregnable group.

Whereas this group was entered with extreme difficulty the 'snob' group was absolutely beyond the reach of all but an exclusive few. Unquestionably of the highest class background, their self-perception was of having no equals. Peter describes their composition as being defined by "breeding and culture" (Interview), a turn of phrase going some way to appreciating the nature of those involved. This group was noted for its extremes of snobbery, elitism and bigotry, significantly beyond the level generally found. Concerned with personal and social power, their occupational destination was predominantly 'the City' - secured via social networks rather than academic attainment.

Interestingly, the two groups immediately below the elite were the lowest status pupils reported. No isolates or out-casts were identified. These groups were the 'arts' and the 'individuals'. The former had a high degree of first generation pupil involvement and an essentially academic orientation. This was a group with some

interactive unity. The latter were similar in orientation though less prepared to engage in social interaction.

In identifying the single elite group at School F the extremely familiar rugby based, politically right wing/traditional pupils again appear. The group, 'gods' - a name reported to be directly related to their self-perception - were mainly boarders, a characteristic of dominance elsewhere but of particular interest here given the predominance of day pupils overall. One point of significance here is that despite being a definite self contained group based on clear principles of class and culture, they were less obsessive regarding access than were other elite groups in the other schools though this, of course, was a purely relative situation. Craig himself eventually gained membership of this group. In his life-story he described how this came about. Entering the school as a first generation pupil it was not until the age of sixteen that he took up rugby. Having appropriate right wing values he began to integrate with the group - a willingness to adopt their manner and a preparedness to ease off on the previously dominant academic orientation allowed his acceptance. Two points can be made in this regard. Firstly, an internal hierarchy in this group continued to be active and within his own age range he was not able to advance through it significantly. Its accepted heads were not drawn from such an intake. Secondly, the nature of the school is certainly likely to have been influential in this

modification of the general process. For it had historically been a direct grant school and continued to take one quarter of its pupils on scholarship. This would not alleviate the tendency to hierarchy and distinction overall, but it may have impinged upon the interactive expectations of pupils in terms of those regarded as acceptable and valid participants.

Below this group, real interactive forms were limited. The academics aiming for Oxbridge were largely a classification, as were the 'sports-mix' - these being regarded as 'trainee gods' but without the dedication to sport. The last group were of some concordance with the 'black brigade' (School B). These were the 'trendies'. Of non-specific origin, they were intensely clothes conscious, but although offering an outward portrayal of the 'lack of cool' involved in working, nearly all secured university places. Although the least right wing of the pupils, politics was not particularly high profile for them.

In turning to School H, we have a situation which differs so much from the other study schools as to be worthy of particular attention. Only one interactive sub-culture was recorded and that was composed of the assisted places pupils and not related to a dominant group in any way. It was the perceived disparity between their cultural outlook and that of other pupils and the school itself which served as a particular bond. Their separation, however, was based upon their mental awareness rather than upon a physical

exclusion. Having noted this difference, it is not the case that the situation does not fit the recurring and constantly supported themes of this work, in fact the opposite can be seen to be true, once the context is appreciated.

It is possible, of course, that since there was just one respondent from this school,lack of insight coupled with his social location at a significant distance from the dominant culture may have simply left him unaware of such groups. However, both the extent to which they were widely known in other schools and the fact that he was aware of a definite hierarchy and the activities of those who headed it, makes this unlikely. For instance, he had knowledge of certain individuals who received Porsches for their 17th birthday, but insisted that they existed as individuals and not as a part of any unified social and cultural formation.

Taking this as a genuine phenomenon, therefore, the principal dimensions of the nature of the school and its individual participants can be assessed. The school, being in its first decade of HMC status and of grammar school origins, had never developed a dominant cultural perspective which could be described as 'public school like'. As such, there would be no inherent legitimacy, gained from affinity with an established ethos, for traditionally orientated elite groups as found elsewhere. Similarly, no such traditions could have developed in even second or third generation families, since such a culture was simply not present in the school. The type of pupils and families

reflected the form of school. Indeed, Simon was keen to point out the individual terms of reference of the middle class clientele, arguing that group affiliation was not really on the agenda for the established people.

The lack of sub-cultural forms does not, though, imply a lack of hierarchy, status quest and perceived cultural disparities. Indeed, on such dimensions acknowledged public school status was impinging on lives. It is rather that the process was following a markedly different pattern due to the particular class, cultural and historical imperatives.

The final school (I) also displays, on the face of it, a rather different expression of sub-cultural involvements from the norm, though a closer examination reveals more similarity. Again the nature of the school was influential here, a small school with an apparently much higher percentage than normal of 'traditional' pupils, with these expressing an amazing uniformity of cultural perspective. Though recently coming under the direction of an academically orientated headmaster (drawn from School A), this long held bastion of traditional public school practices was only in the early phases of transition.

Two groups were identified. The first was composed of the vast majority, some 70% of pupils being second/third generation and beyond. Now, it is tempting to regard such a group as representing so much of the school as to dispel the need to talk of sub-cultures, but the fact that the size of the school was small enough to allow a genuine interactive

unity, the clear difference from other pupils and, as will be seen later, the massive importance this group unity held for post-school practice assures its validity. As a group, therefore, they were both drawn from established families and strongly involved with sports and 'character building' - and though not rejecting academia en masse (despite it having a generally very low priority), the procession of pupils to 'the City' was instigated through the social network. The remaining pupils were principally first generation and a large number of females. Interested in the arts and academia, these people had no clear group identity.

The classifications above, therefore, represent the principal forms as described by those actually involved in the various schools. Inevitably to have covered every dimension of each formation would have led to excessive repetition of text and quotation. However, this has not led to the overlooking of any important elements. At this point, it is certainly valuable to draw out the principal themes evolving from the above accounts, remembering that certain components of analysis, notably on female sub-cultural activity and the post-school relevance of forms - the latter being particularly relevant to the question of how genuine and lasting the influence of these groups is - have yet to be covered.

The first point worthy of confirmation is that genuine sub-cultures were found, expressing a clearly distinct cultural identity, being units of intense interaction and displaying varying, though often rigid, modes of distinction. These, though, are not 'counter-forces', for their relationship to the official ethos is far more complicated than that. In fact, it is true to say that across the board there is a marked tendency for them to draw their power and legitimacy through an association with elements of dominant culture and not by opposing it. Equally apparent, though, is that not all identified groups were interactive units. Instead others, almost invariably found at the bottom of the hierarchy, represented the ascriptions of dominant groups attempting to re-affirm their position of authority by developing a consensus in which the archetype of low status was the full opposite of their own cultural form. As such, a fundamentally positive rather than conflicting relationship is noted between sub-cultural and official school doctrines. This has two principal expressions:

1. where the ideology of the sub-culture positively supports one or more cornerstones of historically grounded school ideology. In instances where this leads to transitory conflicts (eg 'coolies') the recognition by staff that the activity is not essentially the expression of a 'counter-culture' ensures the limiting of potential problems.

2. where there is a more direct suggestion of conflict of content (although often accompanied by 'positive' dimensions - eg 'unhappies') but even here the 'form' of the groups retains an affinity with the fundamental organizing principles of the sector, such as elite status acquisition/perpetuation, stress on hierarchy and social origin.

Where deviations occur from the established dominant emphases, they occur in such a way that the underlying central concern of the school for elite progression is unharmed. Therefore, the 'black brigade' did not question, or reject, those elements of public school life which were perceived as assisting them (for instance academia), while the 'London set's' rejection of academic study was made against a recognized certainty that the power of 'informal mechanisms' would allow them to achieve desired ends. This is, of course, an analysis of group forms at a specific historical moment, and does not, by implication, necessarily reject the possibility of processes yielding different outcomes where alternative variables interact.

It is also noticeable that with one exception (and indicators suggest this to have been more of a shared sense of inferior status stopping short of 'loyalty inducing' social interaction), all genuine sub-cultural forms were located at the elite end of the spectrum. Both ideological/cultural and practical reasons can be seen to influence this. Firstly,as has been shown throughout, the

mentality of group loyalty does not spread through all these middle and upper middle class families. Only a specific section develop such a position as part of a cultural totality developed over generations of interactions with the public schools. Alternatively, amongst other pupils not only is there found an individualistic outlook but, in the case of first generation pupils, there is no unity of experience or identity, all being drawn from specific developmental paths. In School H, where such historically developed cultural patterns were absent, a differing situation existed, one related specifically to the nature of that institution and the people therein.

Furthermore, the crucial role of social class in influencing sub-cultural formation was established and, in particular, its interpenetration with cultural identities and the holding or lack of forms of cultural capital. The possession of cultural capital (culture) was the only way to gain access to many elite groups and in those high status groups where some form of access was possible, this was not at the expense of cultural capital (culture) since internal hierarchies remained with traditional pupils inevitably dominating and, as evidence in Chapter 7 confirms, the full feeling by newcomers of having full access to available knowledges was still lacking.

It has been seen that the nature of the school ethos has influenced sub-cultural forms and I would add to that the influence of the historical moment. The lack of any

genuine oppositional forms clearly relates to the dominance of right wing ideology in the wider society as well as within the school - a point confirmed by both staff and pupils. Where any rebellions occurred they either focussed on the practical rather than the ideological or remained at the level of discussion.

There were several adjuncts to the central process of elite sub-cultural formation which in themselves are not enough to influence the direction of the process, but did form an intrinsic part of it. For instance prep school attendance and public school boarding were both consistent characteristics.

Crucial to an understanding of these forms is a recognition of their hierarchical nature. All involved were aware of this. Therefore, rather than the co-existence of separate interest groups, we find sub-cultures with clearly defined status levels. This is important both in demonstrating the adaption of a principal organizational form of public schools and as a further confirmation of the significance they hold for differential involvements with the system.

The importance attached to the groups as a means of cultural distinction is demonstrated in the extent to which the knowledges and styles which make up their specific nature are guarded. Invariably, the higher up the hierarchy the sub-culture, the greater was the level of exclusion and closure found, which confirms both that access could not be

secured without appropriate cultural knowledges and that access to the sources of acquiring them was generally denied. Where the nuances were not so esoteric, limited access was facilitated by individuals accepting a given orientation, but even then the higher level dispositions remained intact and the structural composition of the group stayed largely unaffected.

To those involved at whatever level, therefore, sub-cultures play a crucial role not only in the way schooling is experienced but in the way long held perceptions and interactions are formed for utilization in the wider society and it is with that appreciation that the analysis can be extended.

Female Pupils and Sub-Cultures

In moving onto the nature of female involvement in sub-cultural activity it is worth reaffirming that historically the 'maleness' of these schools has been as ingrained as their elitism. The extent of co-education is such that none of the study schools have yet achieved parity of numbers. The importance of this cannot be over-stated, for in the intergenerational development of a school culture, numbers will inevitably be of relevance. As has been seen, the closeness of high status groups, in form and content, to aspects of the dominant ideology is consistent and whether parallels exist in traditional attitudes to

gender relations or in the status connotations of established male sports, the implication for female involvement is clear. A dominant ideology that in principle and in practice has a traditional male basis presents a very specific benchmark for interactions. A concise exposition of cross-school involvements will be followed by the principal points to be drawn from this.

At School A, where a 3:2 male/female ratio exists and girls are involved throughout the school, the only reported classifications were directly related to the principal high status group. As such, the female 'negs' were classified on the familiar class/cultural basis and, crucially, as Alistair stated:

"There were girl coolies but they took on a subordinate position." (Interview, Alistair.)

Now, since this group holds established dominance and continues to re-affirm this, females who wish to integrate with the high status group and are of appropriate culture find themselves in a group in which status is principally defined by rugby playing and association with a 'boys will be boys' mentality. This increases the likelihood that their position will be at the periphery because of the structural identity of the group. Coupled with the prevailing attitude to male dominance, the options for females who desire association with high status are limited to either a subordinate position in the group or to a rejection of this avenue altogether. Here it is important

to point out that the class and cultural logic of sub-cultural formation is as real here as elsewhere, therefore, these choices are not available for all females, but only those with the appropriate cultural pre-dispositions and knowledge. Furthermore, the nature of their habitus influences their choice of direction - a habitus dominated as much by the same elitist and traditional priorities as the males. Politics of gender are certainly not included.

In School B, the 'heroes', 'London set' and 'lads' all had female involvement. For the heroes it was little short of a following or 'groupie' behaviour. In the latter two groups, while the subordinate position was less overt, it was still characteristic. School C showed a similar pattern. The 'unhappies' were strictly male dominated, whereas the 'happies' were accompanied by 'glamour girls'. While the 'social' nature of the group eased the barrier a little, the fundamental relations of power and expectation were unaffected.

The situation at School D was straightforward. Again no high status female group existed except in relation to an established male one. The relations within the elite group here were as unequal as those found anywhere, with the group name (men) serving to confirm the identity of the dominant representatives. There were no girls at School E. At School F, the most interesting deviation from the norm occurs. For while adopting a 'goddess' adjunct status to the rugby playing 'gods', in the final six months of

schooling the female elite tired of the explicit male dominance and began to break away. As an ex-direct grant school, the ideological context was not as rigid as elsewhere. School H had no females. In School I, though females were mainly in the lower status individual groupings, there was a minority in the elite end - but not penetrating the peak of the group hierarchy.

So overall, several conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, the influence of class and culture on sub-group associations here is no less important than for the male pupils and furthermore, despite the limitations, some status is derived from elite involvements by these females exhibiting appropriate dispositions. Secondly, that although the activity of by no means all females has been covered, the above-mentioned groups were the only involvements of females in sub-cultural activity reported. No sub-groups were identified in which females held dominant positions and there was certainly no independent high status grouping. Small groups of friends of academics, for instance, obviously existed but they were qualitatively different in intensity and influence (and size) from groups discussed earlier. As for the explanation of this, the often short term involvements and limited numbers of female pupils is certainly a contributing factor, but the observer only has to look to institutions where this is not so prominent (School A) to acknowledge the incomplete nature of such an analysis. The need to examine the dominant culture and its

component parts is clear. The elite females share many elements of this culture but are marginalized by the strength of past and present practices relating to gender. For them to establish a high status position, especially one significantly different in organizational form and content in this overall culture (of institutions and pupils) meets such structural barriers as to require, I would suggest, a degree of gender consciousness incompatible with the views of people from the kinds of habitus in question. Finally, it is worth noting that there was some variation in internal power relations between groups, with less overt bias being characteristic of those groups whose principal concerns were of a social (eg 'London set') nature, since the cultural emphases of the sexes in relation to such concerns is less disparate. This apart, analysis of power relations is a more complex one and seems dependent upon particular dimensions of group and school reality. However, the above remains a matter of degree and, overt or covert, male dominance persists in the established groups.

The Post-School Relevance of Sub-Cultural Formations

During the course of this research, findings emerged which had the effect of confirming the genuine nature and influence of those sub-cultural forms centring on the established elite of public school pupils. Where sub-cultural activity was pivotal to the life of the individual

at school, participation in the same form of sub-culture continued in the post-school period. Similarly, those people for whom individuality was primary retained that mode of interaction. What I am arguing is that whether or not the same members are present the specific nature of the group and its interactions will be re-established. This is to go beyond simply saying that friends will tend to be drawn from a similar class, to claim that they will establish groups embracing the sorts of attitudes and dispositions analyzed above and focussing on internal unity, with limited or no access and clearly distinct from those beyond the culturally self-selecting group.

Rachel, attending a university with a high proportion of public school pupils states:

"At university there is a real separation ... they are called 'yahs', you can tell them at 100 yards ... there is an absolutely clear line drawn, they do not mix with people." (Interview, Rachel.)

This cultural distinction extends into the academic domain with 'history of art' being dominated by the 'yahs'.

Simon, at the same university during the same period, describes the situation as follows:

"The social division of public schools still goes on ... they stick together alright. They tend to stick with their own social clique. Things are continued on from school. The 'plebs' are just ordinary students." (Interview, Simon.)

Again the ascription of low status to those beyond their group as a contributor to social distinction is seen. He continues:

"The 'yahs' are a very identifiable group - they're an elite. It is not just public schools versus comprehensive schools, it's rather an elite public school image and person versus ordinary public schools and pupils and other kinds of education."

This demonstrates the grounding of these groups located in a distinctive sub-cultural and a traditional public school identity.

Chris describes a similar process at another university favoured by public schools:

"It stems from the public school really. They're all wearing the same jumpers and they all drive Peugeot 205s or Golfs and they all drink in the same pub and they all go to the same hall as well when they come." (Interview, Chris.)

The remarkable post-school continuity from John's school will be raised again in Chapter 9, for here not only has the form of the group remained constant but so too has its members, though it is no longer geographically located anywhere near its point of origin. He states:

"They see each other every night and they go out to the cinema and to the theatre every night and they've basically never really met other people apart from the people they went to school with. All those from traditional public school backgrounds have stayed together once they've got up

to London. They are working in the City, some of them are working in the same office together. They live two minutes round the corner from each other." (Interview, John.)

Involved in a group of total unity and distinction, its members showed no interest in integrating elsewhere or allowing integration.

Nigel identifies the continuation of elite and distinct sub-groups at Oxbridge:

"They are traditional public school/prep school people [characterized by] partly the clothes, the way they dress, the way they speak. The poise." Furthermore he states how this corresponds to the high status culture thereof, and the re-affirmation of it as the desired culture is noted: "it is fair to say that most people at Oxbridge are public school. Or since they have been here they have started to act as though they are public school." (Interview, Nigel.)

Andrew, also at Oxbridge confirms that while individuals make cross-school and sector friendships there are those who make a "conscious decision only to go around with people like old Etonions and old schools and families." (Interview, Andrew.)

Therefore, the fact that it is not just a continuation of the same people underlies the importance of these sub-cultures as class and culture based realities, for it is the cultural compatibility, the identification of style, dispositions and attitudes that facilitates sub-group integration. Each member reinforces the validity of these

bases and thereby by practice as well as ideological intent maintains social exclusivity.

As an adjunct to this, it is briefly worth raising the point that such processes are assisted by public school emphases on particular universities and colleges. It is apparent that schools hold clear perceptions of desired post-school institutions and with a degree of consistency across schools this serves to increase the pool of potential sub-cultural affiliates in particular locations. For instance, beyond Oxbridge the public school preferences for Durham, Exeter, St Andrew's and Bristol is well established and both Nigel and Andrew recount how they were given very specific guidance, which resulted in them attending Oxbridge Colleges composed (in their assessments) of 90% public school pupils. This process does not in itself directly influence sub-cultural formation, but supports it by providing appropriate institutional links. Furthermore, this is assisted by word of mouth information from 'old boys' and older relatives and friends outlining the most 'appropriate' colleges. How far those actually carrying out selection at various institutions also contribute to this remains, though, at the level of conjecture.

As such, the sub-cultural forms internal to the school are seen to have parallel expressions beyond its boundaries, and thereby sustain the positions of power of these pupils, and the policies and/or practice ingrained in conceptions of class elitism and cultural superiority. Discussion of these

themes is extended in Chapters 9 and 10.

To attempt to summarize the findings of the above exposition will inevitably lead to omissions of some importance. However, certain conclusions of over-riding significance should be noted. Firstly, it is imperative that recognition of the shift toward greater academic emphasis by public schools should not lead to the conclusion that the schools operate solely - or arguably even principally - on that basis. For the class alignments and conceptions of superiority and distinction, which were perhaps more overt in previous generations, have been identified as still extensive and influential, with this extending to forms of internal differentiation. Secondly, it has been demonstrated how sub-cultural forms provide the principal vehicle for this in the school, with the identified groupings bearing all the hallmarks of class allegiance and cultural elitism within a clearly recognized hierarchy. As such, two aspects of identification and influence are noted, though both rest on similar life priorities. The first is the widespread conception of those within the schools as being essentially superior to those in the state sector - especially to those who can be classified as working class. This simple yet all pervading distinction is highly compatible with the aims and orientations of the vast majority of pupils. The second is the need for the internal elite to re-affirm their status as an elite grounded in a greater historically-based family

interaction with the sector and possessing specific knowledges continually operationalized as indicating high status. In both ways, class and cultural distinctions remain central, at the levels of both ideology and practice.

CHAPTER 7 - Organization and Identification: Principles of Everyday Life and Ideological Legitimacy

The principal theme of this chapter is the nature, perception and legitimacy of the organizational bases of everyday school existence. Within this attention is focussed on several specific areas beginning with an examination of female experience of institutional arrangements and emphases. Discussion is then broadened to the centrality of control and the way it is mediated, at both ideological and practical levels. Classroom activity is then given specifically defined consideration. Hierarchy is identified as a constant form, and the contemporary role of its most widely known manifestation - fagging - is analyzed, before an assessment of the extent of the internalization of school ideology and the associated role of instrumentalism. In so doing consistent and dominant school structures are uncovered and both specific interpretations, and generalized responses, observed.

Class/Gender Interaction: Female Pupils in Public Schools

In analyzing female pupil involvement in HMC public schools, attention is focussed upon a situation novel to the sector. In such a transformation - especially in view of the often less than principled reasons for change (see Chapter 2) - aspects of the dominant ideology, largely unimplicated in the policy shift, are likely to remain. This is not to imply a simplistic propagation of male dominance, for the needs of the institution and those responsible for it ensure a more complex relationship than that. It is this realization that dictates the progression of discussions to follow. Beginning with an exposition of female treatment in the academic domain, analysis then moves to an appreciation of the social and cultural practices accompanying these, the variation between the two and how this reflects a perception of gender reality grounded in pragmatism as well as ideology and suiting the requirements of the institutionalized culture. The section is completed by further assessing the nature of female involvement considering both dominant norms and personal priorities.

The Academic Arena

In the specific area of academic encouragement and achievement the lack of any overt barriers against females grounded in specific historical priorities, became clear.

Without exception,all subjects in all types of school agreed that females were encouraged to be as academically successful as the male pupils. This becomes particularly informative when it is remembered that the sample includes schools which were only just beginning policy shifts toward academia at the expense of some 'traditional' dimensions of schooling. The opening of the schools to females often pre-dated this shift in ethos thus suggesting that an ideological reassessment of the position of the sexes in the school is unlikely to have been a prime mover in this trend. As such, the evolution of the process would appear to have its roots in the more practical 'survival needs' of the institutions and it is this that should be borne in mind throughout.

The pragmatic impetus which brought females into the schools originally continues to exert an influence on practice once they are in the school. One generation of females is of no value to the school - long term needs are paramount. While cultural considerations may continue to influence participation for some families, it is academic advancement, as has been shown, that often constitutes the primary motivation. As such, with the females now embedded in the school population, the institutions become impelled by the logic of the situation to encourage them. The oft-cited concern with 'statistics', which assists in the selling of the school, is integral to this. On this dimension, getting females to Oxbridge being just as

valuable to the schools as gaining success for males.

'Success', of course, is not just achieved or lost at the diktat of the schools - the nature of the entrants themselves is crucial to the interaction. For it should not be overlooked that while some enter on scholarships (even these pupils being principally middle class) the vast majority of the females are drawn from the same families, and therefore the same high social class position, as the male pupils. As such the influences of their habitus, although subject to definite gender inspired variations, will have been composed of essentially the same range of priorities and knowledges.

The process is further assisted by the fact that where entry was restricted to sixth form only, such females generally (although exceptions on the basis of 'influence' were reported - for instance by Rachel) had to meet specific academic entrance requirements. As university orientated, a large number of these pupils were highly motivated in a comparable way to short-term male participants to secure their specific objectives. For the school to have operated negatively in this regard would have been to force an intolerable contradiction on the relationship.

Their possession of cultural capital (academic), often established high class status and, of course, the fact that the school is as directly reliant on the finances of these parents as any others all served to secure a certain attitude toward these pupils. This is, of course, not to

claim that fully equal treatment in the classroom (as elsewhere) existed or indeed that the teachers showed any particular aptitude or skill in dealing with them, indeed often the opposite was reported as true. However, it is an appreciation that those inadequacies or reservations that did exist did not prevent the tolerance of female academic progression that is important at this stage.

Unequal Gender Relations

Having established the nature of academic encouragement, the question of how this relates to wider elements of daily practice can now be addressed. This is particularly important because of the previously established recognition that within the sector it is never simply academic ability as a single entity which facilitates conceptions of status within institutions. Rather, it is in the cultural arena that perceptions of power and distinction are defined. The point is, therefore, that academic success of females can be tolerated by those with vested interests in perpetuating the established hierarchy, for in itself it does not threaten existing power and status relationships. However, if female activity were to become viewed as just as valid and worthy of adoration as those traditional forms of activity, then the power base of the established elite group might be threatened.

Of concern, therefore, is how elements of school life

work to define gender relations and consequential power and status differentials. It is crucial to see this in the life context. Following the exposition of home life and sub-cultures it is principally the orientation of the school that is of interest here - exploring the extent to which traditional, largely subordinate conceptions of being female are retained overall despite the academic exception.

It is by now apparent that sport - or rather the appropriately defined form and content of specific sports - retain a pivotal role in school life (both at the official level and, crucially, as an essential characteristic of many elite sub-groups). As such, the established tone, the accepted conception of the status of particular sports and those involved in them can prove particularly illuminating.

Essentially,those bastions of maleness, namely rugby and cricket, continue to produce revered status (for high profile exponents). This is not to say that success for females in their particular specialisms is not acknowledged, but in comparative terms 'the' school sports continue to be those which have always dominated. For instance, school B on one level took female sport very seriously as ability - especially in tennis - certainly influenced chances of entry and competitions were frequently entered. This would appear to indicate that a shift was occurring in the status ascribed to tennis but for Charles, a pupil at the same school, this was not the case:

"Certainly their (female) sports tended to go rather

unnoticed whereas it would always be the topic of conversation amongst masters and pupils that our school (male team) had won against another school - it was hardly noticed that the girls' basketball team won against some other basketball team." (Interview, Charles.)

Now, of course, a numerically and historically male dominated school may be expected to develop in such a way, but the point is that no effort at re-adjusting the emphases at a structural level was made. This was perhaps not a conscious decision for many, but rather the consequence of evolving from the system themselves. However, as a reinforcer of male dominance the result is unaltered.

There is always a tendency to think that such results derive from the limited presence of females, but in moving to school A the situation is found to be very similar:

"We had some activities that were different, played hockey instead of rugby and things like that, and they were always considered inferior because they were the second option, but more than that the teachers were principally all male and over forty, it was definitely male orientated." (Interview, Rachel.)

Thus it is clear that the coveted and guarded route to status remained the preserve of male pupils. Sport, in itself, was more than acceptable for the girls, but any shifting of the activities with which the school identified,thereby offering the possibility of a re-definition of dominant activities, cultures and groups, was

clearly beyond the range of thinking of those in authority.

Beyond this, an extensive range of elements of school life served to reinforce very particular conceptions of gender identities and relations. Differences in style of accommodation were interesting with that available to females tending to conform very much to the 'soft', 'feminine' images, whereas for the boys fairly basic conditions were not uncommon. The fact that the female houses were new and, therefore, likely to be less 'Victorian' cannot be overlooked, but it would be naive to assume that this accounted for all such differences:

"We had all nicely painted Laura Ashley rooms and things while the boys were living in their stark dormitories." (Interview, Fiona.)

It is hard to imagine such decor being of priority in any new male houses, under the guidance of senior staff. Jane describes a similar situation in comparison to the usual conditions for male pupils:

"We had our own wing with our own bathrooms which had individual showers." (Interview, Jane.)

Such symbolism was confirmed at Fiona's school by the fact that the female house was the only one not allowed its own bar - a disparity so blatant as to be explainable in no other way but through ideologically grounded conceptions of appropriate gender behaviour. It was not that females were not permitted to consume alcohol in the school, or at other schools, simply that it was deemed inappropriate for them to

have such ready and equal access to it.

Fiona reports a further disparity in the treatment of the sexes - one in which overtones of domesticity loom large. The girls had their rooms checked for tidiness on a regular basis, whereas not only was such monitoring unheard of for the boys but they had younger pupils to do this work for them anyway. No explanation was offered for this, it was rather a taken for granted manifestation of gender assumptions.

It is against such perceptions that the differing extent of control of movement can be analyzed. The evidence on this was totally consistent and continuously raised by respondents across the range of schools. Simply, the amount of limitations and control over personal freedom was greater for the girls than the boys. The girls were invariably faced with strict 'security'. The extent to which boys had freedoms varied both officially and in the extent to which a 'blind eye' was turned - but in no case was it as restrictive as for the girls:

"The boys would wander round in the middle of the night, while we were all locked in at ten o'clock and it was very strict." (Interview, Fiona.)

"We could get away with being out until late and coming through the window and even if he (teacher) found us he wouldn't mind. The girls had to be in early." (Interview, Charles.)

This is not to minimize the control over male pupils

(see later this chapter) but rather to say this could be tempered with a pragmatism not displayed in dealing with females.

While concern for 'safety' was partially implicated here, when seen in relation to all other practices this seems a somewhat weak rationale especially when considering rules which were peripheral to such concerns. For example, school B's regulation of locking up girls one hour before boys was an arbitrary and meaningless regulation in no way relating to any increased 'danger' from whatever source in the intervening period. There was a feeling that the extensive ignorance of many of the staff was responsible for such regulations, coupled with an often near obsessional concern with the stamping out of any potential sexual relationship. As Jane pointed out, the controls focussed on preventing access to, and movement of girls, rather than restricting male movements. Such practices contributed to the formulation of differing self perceptions concerning freedoms to manipulate and exert influence over their environment.

Such internal processes, if accurately interpreted, would be expected to be accompanied by a feeling that females were still operating in a male environment, with traditional male orientated practices and priorities and no ideological shift. This was indeed the case:

"A girl who applied and had an interview was told by the housemaster of the girls' house that they were there for

the entertainment of the boys." (Interview, Charles.)

This is a clear reference to the priorities (accompanying the financial) behind female involvement. He continued:

"It was generally sexist. Everything was still based on the premise of the school as a male school and the girls just fitting in a corner."

Whatever the feelings about this, the acknowledgement was widespread.

In emphasising the role and influence of dominant expectations as building on habitus assumptions, the individual experiences as recalled by Rachel and Jane can be noted. Rachel describes a school trip to Thailand during which the traditional roles were adopted and accepted by male and female pupils. She describes how task sharing was sorted out in a manner which left the only two girls in the party looking after nursery school children while the boys adopted the physical (though not overly physically demanding) task of building a small dam. Three points can be made:

1. This evolved out of a taken for granted process, with no debate or conflict.
2. Rachel made clear that this fitted very much into the atmosphere of role separation which dominated at school and under no circumstances would the vast majority of boys have tolerated any task sharing had this been suggested.

3. There was a clear sense in which all concerned regarded the dam building as the high status work. It was recognized that despite protestations of wanting female involvement at all levels, this occurrence reflected closely the reality of school life.

The example raised by Jane illustrates how far her exposure to very specific and concerted perceptions of gender identities had led to a direct change in her manner. She states:

"I became more feminine. I think it was influenced by the school's view of the female role ... We were treated like 'little ladies' and I tended to act like one after that."

She continued:

"The lads were called by their surname and we were called by our first names. We were treated like 'little ladies' and had to sit at the front of the class and things like that. I think they thought that if they shouted at you, you would probably burst out crying or something. They seemed to treat you with kid gloves." (Interview, Jane.)

So although aware of the over-the-top nature of the differentiation, in order to assist assimilation Jane adopted the required behaviour, a conception of gender identity far from inconsistent with that dominant at home. This patronizing attitude based on ignorance serving to reinforce the practice of ideological distinction and resultant conceptions of reality of all concerned.

Public school life is thus seen to foster achievement orientation yet only within very specific parameters of traditional gender perceptions. The use of Christian names, softer discipline, limited access to alcohol, restrictions on movement and encouragement of domestic activity coupled with limited avenues for status acquisition and the fostered aura of male dominance at school and societal levels, are the other side of the process. Thus is perpetuated the image of the weaker female who needs to be looked after, an image which reinforces her continued secondary status. Now, of course, the nature of institutional needs, the values of society at large and the demands of social classes of origin dictate that this process be sufficiently flexible to allow academic progression - yet without shifting the principal points of reference. Indeed beyond academia, prefect status is often achieved by girls, but against the background of the taken for granted assumptions described its impact is modified.

The importance of this process lies not in its effect upon occupational destination (although there is some evidence to suggest that females following such exposure do, in some numbers, edge toward traditionally female occupations) but rather in its influence on the development and confirmation of self and on cultural perspectives under-pinning their (often influential) interactions with individuals and institutions in wider society. As an impetus to reproduction its significance is noted. The lack

of concerted objections to these practices, influences in the family and probable eventual achievement of desired status all assist the acceptance of the status quo. Weaknesses of the schools are recognized, but acceptance of inequalities as 'natural' and feminism (as perceived) as inappropriate [see later discussion in this chapter and Chapter 9] prevent any real challenge to existing patterns. Therefore, one of the power bases of the established order remains intact, while both class and sector are able to claim greater meritocratic legitimacy.

A very specific picture is built up, therefore, of the nature of female involvement in HMC schools, one markedly different from that presented by the system. Official literature, prospectuses and indeed head teachers all concentrate attention upon academic successes and the moves to a less artificial environment. In fact, it is clear that the 'real atmosphere' which one headmaster so positively described (in Questionnaire) is constructed not upon a cultural foundation of tolerance and equality of opportunity spread through all elements of school life, as the response was attempting to describe, but rather one in which this stated 'reality' mirrors patriarchal priorities both within and beyond the institutional settings to which females were being allowed access.

These female pupils thus possess the dual characteristics of high class yet low gender status. It is the co-existence of the two coupled with habitus priorities

which, I would argue, accounts for the lack of gender consciousness developing in reaction to unequal practices. To elaborate: as previously shown the achievement related priorities, the motivation and the values of the schools are as essentially compatible with the homes of female pupils as for the males. Given the desire to succeed, the girls identify with the most likely means of achieving this. It would become apparent through daily interaction that to make gender the principal point of identification in this specific context is unlikely to assist their cause, so they adopt attitudes to gender issues, and in particular to feminism, broadly consistent with the established traditional class/school perspective:

"Well, I wouldn't claim to be a feminist but having said that I wouldn't like to think that I had been prevented from doing things just because I was a girl ... I find extreme feminists are quite frustrating,I don't like the idea that all women are a suppressed minority." (Interview, Fiona.)

What is being expressed here is not a passive acceptance of subordinate status - rather, the desire for achievement is more prominent. An identity with feminism is not recognized as the means of gaining this, but affinity with the status quo - despite the appreciation of its biases - is.

The process described here is composed of two interacting elements which cannot profitably be separated. Firstly, there is the class-influenced habitus, the point

from which mediations take place. By incorporating an essentially positive perspective regarding the established order which contains an inherent trivialization of non-right wing radical politics, the foundations for the rejection of feminism are laid. This is the essentially unconscious component. From this basis the quest for achievement interacts with a dynamic process in which pupils recognize that alignment with feminism would not facilitate successful manipulation of the system because of the need to approach it in its own terms, and would be regarded as stretching the 'rules of the game' too far. To raise minor problems of policy is tolerated, to question the fundamentals is likely to incur marginalization. As such, I am not suggesting that pupils assess and reject feminist politics in overt terms, but rather this process evolves from a habitus mediated interaction with the system, in terms of both accepted attitudes and personal aims. In this process, the widespread perception of the situation in terms of 'gender differences' rather than 'gender inequalities' takes a central position.

Overall, the female position within the public school can be seen to be affected significantly, not only by class status but also by the operationalization of gender expectations. As such the external influences on behaviour and perceptions take on very specific manifestations with both continuities and differences with the experiences of the male pupils. It is finally worth re-affirming, though,

that despite the structural influences, here as elsewhere, the participants were not passive role bearers. Indeed, it was the mediated interaction of personal, institutional and societal influences that led to particular outcomes. The imprint of class and cultural priorities was indeed uncovered - though not uniformly - but via the active choices and priorities of individuals.

Control: Time/Space/Body

Control of time, space and body is one of the cornerstones of daily practice in public schools. To be sure, there are similarities with all educational institutions in contemporary industrial society but beyond this the practices reveal a large amount about conceptions of appropriate forms of social relationships at all levels of society. Therefore, these aspects of school organization can be related both to the nature of organized educational activity in advanced capitalist society as a whole and to the historical and ideological foundations of the private sector. This dual focus is important because it is here that the similarities between the educational experiences of state and public school educated pupils, of working class, middle class and the elite are greatest. Two levels at which public school pupils experience control can be distinguished. At the ideological level it is seen as legitimate since pupils accept a moral philosophy which

justifies the right of the legitimate superordinate to control and the duty of the subordinate to conform. This ideology is all the more acceptable since those in subordinate positions in the school hierarchy know that due to the logic of the situation they can expect in time to attain the positions of power themselves. However, while at the ideological level this is secure enough, in the immediate period the controls still need to be endured and education as a daily practice involves imposition. In this sense, the experience of control as a reality is common to pupils in all types of schools, although its meaning and perceived consequences will differ across classes and sectors. Further discussion of the perception of control, its relationship to rebellion and the way it integrates with the societal power structure will follow presentation of evidence of the widespread presence of such control and how it impinges on pupil existence.

The accounts of subjects were littered with descriptions of how the specification of correct practices dominated everyday life. Even the few who noted the possibility of the occasional 'escape' or 'freedom' still confirmed the norm:

"I found the discipline on movements really soon, because the whole day was really programmed for you, you got up, then you did (a) and then you did (b), then you did (c)." (Interview, Rachel.)

Alistair (Interview) confirms:

"It was regimented, there were definite times for doing everything."

While Peter's life-story stated:

"If I had to pick out one other personal criticism of the school's operations, it would be that there was not a great deal of 'space' in one's life. It seemed very hard just to sit down and read a book or chat for ten minutes without feeling that one should be doing something 'more profitably'."

This illustrated a further facet of the perceived need to have a continual influence on the pupils to the largest possible degree. Time needed to be spent on approved activity where at all possible.

Elsewhere Giles recounts a similar experience:

"It was quite hard and being organized that much in a day from A to B, back again, lunch, back to school, play games, prep, then off to bed or whatever, it was all very organized for you, the only thing you had to think about was where you had to be and then what you were going to do when you got there, but that was about it for the first three years anyway." (Interview, Giles.)

This emphasis on the first three years is interesting and again widely found - for once senior status was gained (notably sixth form) the possibility of becoming controller as well as controlled was seen. Such a progression served to prevent the development of a mentality of subjugation, of course counter to the requirements of all concerned.

Charles confirmed this role for sixth formers:

"A lot of the discipline was organized by people in the sixth form. The headmaster obviously kept a close eye on things but they did most of the work like taking some of the prep for younger boys or going round switching out lights." (Interview, Charles.)

Certain specific examples can be used to elaborate the nature of controls. Although unlikely to be generalizable, the evidence of Peter reveals a fascinating insight into the degree to which his school (for the observer an unremarkable Eton group school) expected to exert control:

"The way the school operated was such that the day pupils, in theory, were supposed to abide by the same restrictions as the boarders, even when they were at home ... it was like, say, you couldn't go out to the cinema on a weekend without asking permission first ... but if they ever found anyone not asking they were obliged to make an example of them." (Interview, Peter.)

To clarify: the school policy explicitly intended to over-ride parental decisions at all times and while some parents objected (though evidently not strongly enough to withdraw from the school) many were known to accept this.

Nigel described the controls which accompanied any attempt at establishing a personal relationship (during sixth form):

"It was like running a relationship to a timetable. You had set times when you could see them. You could go up

on any break as long as you stayed in the foyer and didn't go into any of the rooms. You could go on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoons and similarly, girls could go up to the blokes' studies at break, I think on Thursdays and Saturdays only. There were silly things like the six inch rule and the bean bag rule. You weren't allowed to walk within six inches of the girl or publicly display any affection, only one bean bag was allowed per study." (Interview, Nigel.)

Thus, there were both strict controls on the timing of meetings and regulations affecting their nature. The reasoning behind the six inch rule was clear, while the bean bag regulation rested on an apparent belief that a sexual relationship was unlikely to evolve unless two or more such objects were present! Though widely ridiculed by pupils, such a regulation does illuminate the belief of possessors of authority of their right to impose such controls.

These controls not only impinge upon the lives of pupils but are an illustration of ideologically inspired action. They demonstrate the continued influence of conceptions of character building (however expressed), life within an ordered environment, and a system based on respect for, and acceptance of, status and power differentiations. However, it is crucial to see this as but one component of the life process. The parallel concerns of school and social class life with elite attainment and forms of

competitive individualism offset the restrictive nature of school discipline. Furthermore, the elite self perceptions, the specific assumptions and expectations, the underlying meaning attached to public school attendance and the official and unofficial possibilities the system provides for the exercising of control all serve to provide a dynamic element to the situation. Similarly, such controls are mediated by individuals in very particular ways dependent upon how restrictions fit into the overall life process, and it is to this that I now turn.

While the perception of control shows diversity, this relates in identifiable ways to pupils' reasons for being in public schools, the degree of choice they had in going, the length of time spent there, day or boarding status and crucially, the nature of cultural background and sub-cultural involvements.

The attitudes expressed can initially be grouped into two broad categories. The first is composed of those subjects for whom controls were a negatively perceived component of schooling. Secondly, there are those who regarded them as peripheral or even an irrelevance - simply accepting their presence. These two will be looked at individually.

Inevitably, within the first grouping, the extent to which the imposition of these controls was negatively regarded varied considerably, but in none of these cases was there an ideological rejection of the right of those in

authority to wield power as agents of a specific institution or as representatives of authority in itself. Criticism centred on a practical dislike of the daily controls, at times expressed quite forcibly, operating in unity with an ideological affinity with the system. Again here, the manner in which this affinity was articulated depended upon the person concerned and ranged from deep rooted loyalty to pragmatic and personalized tolerance, yet at no point did the relationship extend toward breaking point. Any 'battles' were fought on territory mutually recognized not to threaten the fundamental principles of the school, instead focussing on day to day practicalities.

Why is it, then, that some pupils are less able to accept the practical consequences of a regime with which they either totally identify or at least whose priorities and knowledges they continue to accept? Both individual and group manifestations need to be examined to uncover such causes.

Where criticism comes from a pupil for whom individualism was primary, this developed from a clash with the nature of the experiences upon which schooling (or life more generally) had been organized prior to attending public school. Rachel is the clearest example of this. Having spent much of her childhood, and therefore schooling, abroad, the confines of a British public school did not always settle easily. In particular the 'pointless' practices such as the early morning run annoyed her.

She eventually adopted a fairly critical stance on public schools yet retained a belief in many of its core elements.

However, it was amongst those whose principal identification was as a part of a sub-culture that tension was usually most acute. Now, remembering that these were mainly elite groups and related positively to school ideology, this may appear to be somewhat incongruous, but it is precisely this sense of belonging, their elite self perception, and the recognition of themselves as heading the internal power structure and being destined to do so at societal level that combined to form this apparently contradictory relationship. This is because while obedience and conformity are integral parts of this ideology, at school they inevitably function to restrain pupil activity. Therefore, while these pupils recognized that the overall process is positively orientated toward their elite attainment the practical and short-term pressure of these controls is strongly felt. For instance, the curtailment in School A of the 'bullying' activity of Robert and his associates, discussed earlier, was to them an unnecessary control over the 'natural' order of things. Furthermore, the controls over social activities (drinking, going to town, etc), activities so important to the group, were constant sources of discontent. This was never perceived, however, in terms of a conflict with the system or its values; it was an annoying inconvenience, one which they

would do all they could to overcome but not to the point of challenging the status quo. The attitudes in this school were based on a perception of being above trivial rules. This contrasts with School B's 'heroes', where such an attitude was not present. However, the peculiar over-representation of master's sons (in the latter group) helps to account for its specific nature. Of the lower status groups the only ones to have conflict on this level and to this extent were the 'clothes conscious' whose raison d'etre inevitably presented problems.

The 'absolute conformist' represents the first of two categories of pupils for whom controls were no less real as a physical presence but were insignificant in terms of subjective appraisal. Here, the principle of respect for authority and obedience to those in legitimate positions was deeply ingrained, cultural identities and sub-cultural loyalties not significantly influencing this.

Secondly, there are those for whom the schooling experience was short-term (usually sixth form) and importantly was the result of a selection in which they played an active part. Their involvement was usually had a specific aim. In such circumstances, apart from the lack of sub-cultural involvement, attention is focussed so firmly on the desired end (be this Oxbridge or something less specific) that little attention is paid to the nature of the regulatory system. In choosing to go to such schools, these (essentially first generation) pupils were often

prepared to tolerate such practices as a part of the price paid for the perceived benefits. This element of choice is all important, because some late entrants were found to exhibit difficulties in adjusting to the system, but this only became problematic where their say in the type of school attended, and their degree of personal commitment to the move, was limited.

Therefore, the nature of responses to controls is dependent upon multiple factors. However, one result stands out clearly, that the group with the strongest negative reaction to the regulatory system is the very one which provides its greatest support. This is contradictory, but also a perfectly consistent expression of the co-existence of those characteristics at the heart of such groups and indeed of the dominant ideology. Laissez-faire freedoms and the concern to establish high status and power for themselves are coupled with obedience and conformity to an accepted authority structure. At this stage in the life process gearing participants to possible conflict but offering a long-term impetus to the (personally perceived) legitimate exercising of power, and in turn, to reproduction of ideology.

A note on the specific character of the expressions of discontent is appropriate here. The first task is to reject the applicability of terminology used in other settings, notably working class dominated schools. While concepts such as discontent, tensions even conflict are appropriate

within this context, the same cannot be said of 'oppositional behaviour'. This is because qualms related only to the practical, not the ideological dimension. No penetration of a façade[1] occurred, since for these pupils the end result will be real enough. Therefore, points of tension rarely found expression in a failure to do essays, truancy was virtually non-existent (specifically referring to day pupils) and challenges to the principal authority structures were absent. In short, over the fundamentals of school life manifestations of discontent, barring of course the occasional and trivial, were absent.

Looking at the issues raised by subjects, it can be seen that they all refer to the arbitrary imposition of restrictions. Therefore, depending upon the priorities of individuals and groups, control of movement (especially going in and out of school), control of body (interactions and sexuality being central) and control of time (in terms of the prescribed points at which certain tasks were to be undertaken) evolved as the domains of active discontent. This reveals 'control' to be of paramount importance in defining pupil transgressions as well as more generally being a dominant organizing principle of schooling.

Having established the centrality of control, it is worth considering why it holds such a central position. Of course, the historical development of culture and ideology

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1 Such concerns being central to the analysis of 'working class kids' by P Willis 1977 op cit

plays a determining role and the maintenance of order within an institution combining both home and work is also relevant. However, it is the nature of the wider society on which I wish to concentrate, the position pupils expect to hold within that society and the desire to protect both of these.

Contemporary capitalism, while not always requiring domination by rigid restrictions, is inextricably bound up with class, unequal power relations and the need to accept the right of those in power to exercise authority. Now, it is to the positions of power - be it in the professions, or as owners or agents (managers) of capital - that these pupils are heading and an ideology emphasising the fundamental right of control and authority not only serves the interests of the system as a whole, but more specifically satisfies the requirements of the pupils within the system.

The much maligned concept of correspondence[2] can be introduced here, and while in no way am I suggesting an inevitable and unproblematic match on every dimension, there is a fundamental unity with the school serving to reinforce or establish a mentality which legitimizes such a system in the perceptions of individuals and, alongside parallel processes of elite production, prepares them for a

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2 See S Bowles and H Gintis 1976 op cit, especially pp130-132

very particular way of behaving within the system. Just as Bowles and Gintis talked of the production of appropriate attitudes for workers, here I am suggesting that the operation of such a strict regulatory framework, and its evaluation as not only proper but essentially natural, will provide specific terms of reference for later societal interactions and relations of power by ex-pupils. Thus exposure to this system, and its assimilation as part of a process which they have seen has yielded successful results, leads pupils to identify it as 'the' appropriate organizational arrangement, while the 'proof' of its relevance is their 'achievement'. Further, a personal legitimacy to exercise power is established for, having been on the receiving end of disciplinary roles, once they have attained positions of authority it is deemed appropriate for them to exercise power.

It is an important component of the ideological acceptance of the school's discipline that what they were receiving was in fact a 'preparation for power'. Although not widely articulated, the acknowledgement of this was of clear assistance in cementing the ideological stability. Alistair made this very point:

"I think the purpose of strict discipline was based on the need to respect those in responsible positions and to justify being in positions of authority oneself. If you get in a position of authority then you know what it was like not being so." (Interview, Alistair.)

Here analysis can return to the crux of the matter. While it is hard to imagine any subjects rejecting 'power preparation' (be it articulated in this manner or in terms of assisting certain forms of attainment) as a legitimate goal, this does not prevent reaction to the physical impositions that go with it. Indeed, this actually often takes on a more concrete form by the sixth form where the tension between exerting influence and yet still being subject to it becomes most intense, for pupils are expected to take significant responsibility for younger pupils and yet be subject themselves to essentially similar, though modified regulations. Overall, therefore, it is this duality that so exemplifies the nature of controls in public schools, at once oppressive and accepted. The vital point in interpretation is to approach this not as solely an objective reality but as a part of a wider class, cultural and ideological framework.

The Classroom

Those aspects of classroom practices and priorities which have been central to other studies are not, by virtue of my particular emphases, deemed to be so here. However, this does not result in the exclusion of the classroom from the analysis altogether, rather it dictates the adoption of a particular focus. Essentially, this rests on pupil reactions to the nature of teachers and to the importance of

various academic subjects, both of which yield informative evidence.

The first task is to recognize what can be regarded as the 'normal state' of classroom interactions, ie, that which is reported to occur across the range of schools. This was, not surprisingly, characterized by order and obedience - a state of affairs existing as the consequence of the meeting of a traditional pupil-teacher authority relationship and the expectation of this on the part of the pupils. The classroom is, after all, governed by the same principles as those active in school activities at large. As such, domineering enforcement of regulations was largely unnecessary, although all concerned were more than aware that they would be imposed if 'appropriate'. For instance, Giles expressed the certainty of sanctions, ranging from being "sent out" or "referred to your housemaster" to "demonstrating to everyone that you've been an idiot by making you stick your head in a hedge." (Interview, Giles.)

Within this closely structured environment the only variation comes in the form of 'banter' with teachers, with a clear recognition of the limit of this in dealing with each teacher. Even here therefore, there is some evidence of a 'working of the cracks'[3], a practical dislike of controls, finding means of expression most appropriate to

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3 See R Everhart 1983 <u>op cit</u> especially pp130-164, on humour in the classroom.

the given situation.

However, in each school certain teachers deviated from the norm in the sense of being identified as 'weak' (that is, they were seen as lacking the power to control the situation in the manner required of them and as being less likely to impose strict sanctions on negative behaviour). It is here that support for the above assertion is really found and the importance of ideological affinity/practical dislike is again uncovered. For a consistency from school to school was described in which the identification of a weak teacher was followed by the exploitation of this by the pupils.

Jane describes just such an example:

"There was one teacher specifically who was more prone to rowdiness. He had actually had a stroke, I think he couldn't control us at all and we used to play him up a lot. He was the physics teacher and we used to blow up circuits and things just to get at him." (Interview, Jane.)

She confirmed that such actions were examples of simply wanting to break free of the controls whenever the opportunity arose and not manifestations of a deeper discontent. Such a pattern was re-affirmed by Robert, who stressed that although the 'coolie type' often headed such actions, this reaction was far from limited to them.

"Some teachers, you didn't dare speak in the class, some teachers got a real rough time because they had no authority whatsoever. We immediately got onto that and gave

them a rough time - just ignore them, talk, just sort of generally mess around. Throw things about, just pretty stupid things that would get him annoyed." (Interview, Robert.)

It would appear that there are three factors fostering such behaviour. Firstly, pupils desire to remove themselves from the influence of the controls which they are constantly subjected to - thereby confirming the feelings outlined earlier. Second, in attempting to exercise power over someone who is perceived as weak, the pupils are acting in a manner wholly consistent with the priorities underlying the schooling process. What is being witnessed is a small but significant attempt to redefine power relations, again not due to any fundamental dissatisfaction but as a result of the degree of contradiction in the influences which they are exposed to - a means by which the (simultaneously fostered) feeling of power expectation can be expressed. Finally, pupils are able to do this comfortably in the knowledge that further opportunity for disruption will be severely limited, therefore ensuring that such actions will not unduly harm long term goals.

It is important to highlight that I am not claiming that these actions as observed are in any way specific to public schools, however I do argue that the context, the nature of the participants, and the meaning and implications of these actions for them, do dictate the need for analysis in these very particular terms.

Similarity of objective occurrence in no way precludes disparity of subjective reality.

The reactions outlined covered the majority of pupils and while certain individuals (normally through sub-cultural affiliations) were more likely to be in the forefront than others, this was largely a matter of degree. There were, though, the exceptions, those for whom the expression of conformity, or lack of concern with issues of control generally, manifested itself in this area as in others. Again this provides support for the assertion that pupil forms are relevant to processes on all dimensions of schooling.

In turning to the second element, my interest is not so much with the concrete nature of any particular academic subject as on what it represents to the pupil involved - its potential utility in the achievement of his/her aims. It is my contention that where an individual (or group) comes to regard a subject as irrelevant to specifically prescribed wants (principally academic) and/or where a consensus exists to regard such classes as 'low status', then they will be the ones which will be the home for any discontent/rebellion. The following provides examples from the extensive range of illustrations available. Within a normally conformist environment, Andrew notes the introduction of a subject seen as outside of their terms of reference:

"When it came to the sixth form they tried to bring in

general studies and people didn't take it that seriously." (Interview, Andrew.)

In this context general studies incorporated non-examination classes. The other principal 'target subject' was religion/scripture/RE.

"People were always rude during scripture, because it wasn't an important subject. Well, nobody thought of it as an important subject and people would just come out with snide silly comments when they were asked questions and they would just muck around and that was a generally done thing." (Interview, Giles.)

It was this subject which probably received such reaction most frequently. Elsewhere, Peter stated:

"there was a tendency for messing around in some subjects ... religious studies was the main one". (Interview, Peter.)

Such findings require discussion on two levels. The first is particularly relevant to the rejection of 'general studies' and related subjects. For here the attitudes of the pupils to the nature of education is revealed. It is apparent that their singlemindedness is indicative of that very process of individual competitiveness and academic attainment that the school fosters. And while those holding traditional priorities could not be so accused, their emphasis on the physical rather than the more widely intellectual could hardly counter-act this. Therefore, when the school makes the occasional effort to introduce aspects

of schooling outside those actually 'needed' by the pupils, they are expecting the adoption of behaviour contrary to that which they have instilled. Therefore, the narrowness of emphasis adopted by the pupils makes sense within, rather than runs counter to, the general school programme, and in identifying the presence of such a limited conception of learning, the observer cannot help but be drawn to comparisons with the narrowness of positions so evident in social perspectives, borne of similarly blinkered dispositions.

Secondly, there was a clear awareness of the nature of those subjects in which anti-conformist behaviour was undertaken. It is no coincidence that RE was continually stated to be the principal arena for this. Respondents were consistently keen to point out that being outside of the academic mainstream, long term chances were absolutely unaffected. Seemingly rebellious behaviour was carefully planned, and subject to strictly defined personal limits.

This matter is not one of absolute free will for the pupils. Earlier, it was shown that opportunities for non-conformist behaviour are dependent upon the nature of the teacher and this continues to be the case. Therefore, every class in a given subject will not produce identical outcomes, but it is apparent that in so far as other conditions are equal 'low status' academic subjects will be those so affected. This interaction of subject content and teacher is an interesting one because even in schools where

RE has been 'targeted', the introduction of a disciplinarian to share or take over teaching is more than enough to quell rebellion. This further shows the opportunist nature of these actions and the fact, that they do not, in themselves, express a challenge to the authority structure.

Hierarchy

At this point in the discussion of internal organization it is informative to take a more focussed look at an aspect of schooling which enters into all of the principal structures and processes - that is, hierarchy. Hierarchy, of course, forms a part of much of the organization and interpersonal interactions of contemporary society. However, in the independent sector it is ascribed an extra importance. As a foundation of culture and ideology, it serves as an indispensable constituent part of internal organization and of conceptions of 'the' way to establish and assess social and power relations. It is not just the operationalization of hierarchy but an awareness of it as something of a linchpin by the pupils themselves that makes this so important.

In his life-story Nigel describes his impressions of this aspect on entering the school:

"Hierarchy there mattered so much, not who could beat up who, but who wore what tie, team tie, distinction, prefect tie and so on and so on." (Life-Story, Nigel.)

For him, then, its extension into the lives of pupils was evident. At the same school, Fiona provides an example of the way in which the underlying acceptance of hierarchy (and the significance attached to it) actually influenced inter-personal relations and perceptions:
"there was real hierarchy in the boys as those in the first XI were sort of looked up to by those in the second and third XI and the sports captains were quite god-like within the school". (Interview, Fiona.)

The centrality of 'knowing your place' and only talking to 'appropriate' people would be merely of historical interest could the current self presentation of the sector be accepted at face value, but the account of Charles illustrates how these continue to dictate interactive patterns:

"there was a kind of peerage system where someone a year older than you was definitely superior to you and somebody below you, you could kind of speak to them in a derogatory manner. Here somebody only nine months older than you was superior to you and everybody just got used to that system ... as you got older you accepted it because you had people below you and you liked to think that you had people below you". (Interview, Charles.)

Thus, not only was there an age-related hierarchy, but this was officially sanctioned. Integration into the system, beyond general ideological affinity, was fostered by the promise of the reward of being able to exercise power

themselves. Here, of course, we are in the realm of the semi-official but there was no doubt in the minds of respondents about its connection with official organization. Chris described this awareness:

"the antiquated power structure which operated in the house did not encourage intimacy with the upper years. As 'stigs' we were soon informed that we were the lowest of the low." (Life-Story, Chris.)

On moving into the system Craig commented:

"there was a definite hierarchy which I hadn't found before," and insofar as its location within the formal domain is concerned, he adds "it was taken for granted the way the school worked but I think the staff did encourage it." (Interview, Craig.)

Again this confirms that as pupils moved through the school the expectation of exerting power increased - in this case not necessarily sanctioned by official titles, but operating unofficially and unquestioningly.

Giles describes his early public school experiences:

"Any bullying there was had to come my way, that's the thing about public school there's a pecking order and I was at the bottom and felt miserable. It wasn't anything personal apparently, just the way it happens." (Life-Story, Giles.)

His elaboration during interview has much in common with the experiences in other schools:

"I found that people had put up unnecessary barriers in

the fact that you were in year one and they were in year three and you couldn't talk to them and if they were in year five you definitely didn't talk to them, I mean, you could hold open the door but that was about it. That was quite weird in that, in theory everyone was in the same boat but that it was split so much."

He continued that in matters concerning those at the base of the hierarchy the circumstances of an action were irrelevant:

"Our school was very authoritarian, I mean if you did something there were no excuses, and it didn't matter how the event had come about, you were just done for it. In theory it is supposed to build this great British quality of taking it on the lip."

Therefore, the emphasis on hierarchy is seen to extend into every facet of the public school life, as a continually reinforced cultural reality. It also has the support of the staff, on some dimensions tacitly, on others, overtly. Either way it forms a part of the build up of a way of perceiving the world and the principles governing power relations therein, which implies its 'natural' position in reality, beyond the level of debate. In being so aware of the centrality of hierarchy, pupils vehemently defended their status and power. In doing this they are acting to further intensify the underlying importance of it for all concerned. Also the unofficial system of status (as existing alongside the official powers) has been seen to be

manifestly age related. Through this, pupils become aware of the inevitability of their progression toward the upper reaches and, therefore, in one form at least they can be sure of their chance to legitimately exercise power - a situation assisting the acceptance of the structure.

The importance of being assimilated to the value of hierarchical structure cannot be under-estimated as a component of the contemporary public school process, for it is naive to expect that those principles by which pupils have lived during their formative years should be dropped in the following period and if conclusions derived from post-school experiences and the continuation of sub-cultural activity (see Chapters 6 and 9) are any guide, then this is indeed the case, these central organizational and attitudinal principles continuing to dominate. Furthermore, it is imperative to consider this hierarchical emphasis in relation to the total context and not merely as a part of an abstract ideology. To this end account has to be taken of the aims and priorities of the schools, the stratified nature of class society as a whole and the expected destination within this of the pupils. In doing so, and by viewing it alongside the processes of elitism at work throughout the sector, assimilation to the principles of hierarchical (anti-egalitarian) organization can be seen to represent a means by which unequal power relations can be reproduced. This satisfies both a moral/political concern

for certain organizational forms and personal and class priorities for the legitimation of societal distinction.

Fagging

In an analysis of hierarchy and control during any era of the public schools, attention is inevitably drawn toward 'fagging'. Perhaps as much as any other single manifestation of the 'old image', this has been a concern of 'modernizing' headmasters. As a consequence, its acceptability as a freely discussed component of schooling has diminished. Indeed, there is no doubt that across the board it requires a very different analysis now than twenty years ago. However, the consistent references to it by subjects undermines any idea that it should be regarded as of historical validity only.

Despite inevitable variations,a significant degree of consistency does emerge in the fagging practices across schools. As a process this has two distinct strands. The first is an overt reduction in the extent to which traditional fagging is permitted. This may or may not incorporate a rejection of the term itself as a symbolic break with the past, but in practice it amounts to a shift in emphasis of permissible practices. The dominant result of this pattern tends to be the official rejection of personal fagging in which individuals could legitimately instruct younger pupils to carry out an extensive array of

tasks, but the retention of house/group fagging - jobs done in rotation including the cleaning of studies, sweeping floors and cleaning tables. Such activities are still carried out under the gaze of senior pupils who are empowered to order them to be re-done if deemed necessary. However, despite changes being underway, for John the realities of personal fagging, officially sanctioned, were very much a part of his schooling during the 80s:

"You would fag for one in particular, you just do jobs for them, anything from cleaning rugby boots to doing washing to cleaning out their rooms for them, going to the tuck shop, dropping off messages to other heads of houses about meetings and things like that." (Interview, John.)

Similarly, the experiences of Giles were very much based on an intricate hierarchy involving 'running fags' and 'long running fags' and the following futile practices would, if the sector's own publicity were to be believed, be more characteristic of the 1880s than the 1980s:

"The top table, house monitors or whatever, would sit at the top and if they wanted something done, one of them would shout and all the running fags would have to run from the bottom table to the top table and the last one to get there would be sent off either to go back to the house to get a pen or a piece of paper that they just couldn't be bothered to get. The problem was that on your way there everyone else would try to stop you getting to the top table, so everyone would put chairs together and knock them

against you." (Interview, Giles.)

He further details the tasks of an official fag:

"You had to wake everyone by ringing bells all round the house. You rang an electric bell at the start then you ran around with a hand bell waking everyone up. You would get a lot of stick for that if you woke up too many people. The idea was to wake the whole house up, but if you woke them up the wrong way by shouting too loudly, you were obviously going to get into trouble for that."

Therefore whatever the emphasis, and despite overall trends, official fagging was still a significant experience for many in recent years.

The second element in this process is the concurrent evolution and/or perpetuation of unofficial fagging - the existence of which was just as real as that officially sanctioned. Chris clearly draws a connection between the two:

"The official fagging - there was just a rota so that everybody was on duty for a week. You'd clear up after a meal or sweep the passage, something trivial like that - the unofficial fagging, I suppose, was each study had a fag and we used to get up in the morning and tidy the study before breakfast, so inevitably that became more of a personal thing because the study holder could be there in the morning and his mug hadn't been cleaned and he'd get a bit stroppy. If it wasn't clean the following day, you'd do it for an extra week. It built from that sort of situation and some

people obviously got a raw deal." (Interview, Chris.)

But it was not just where an official relationship had been established that fagging occurred. For instance Nigel states:

"There was unofficial personal fagging. You used to go back to your study at break and if you wanted coffee you would send the stigs to get coffee." (Interview, Nigel.)

This simply evolved from the expectations of the power structure, senior pupils regarding it as their right to expect these privileges irrespective of official protestations which, they were very much aware, were influenced by concerns of public relations.

The point is developed by Andrew. He states that the personal fagging system has been taken over by the pupils because the school can no longer be seen to support it because of their need to attract parents. It can thus be seen how the acquaintance of these pupils with established practices, their cultural affinity with them and their overall conservative political nature ensure the continuation of practices at a covert level, whilst allowing the school to present a 'modern' image. Further support for the above can be found in the evidence cited that the strongest support for fagging practices came from the elite sub-cultures, who fitted the above characteristics most clearly. Such groups, as has been shown, share traditional perceptions of the meaning of being public school educated and, crucially, have developed as active and real groups

with their own cultural imperatives. The nature of these, again shown earlier, has been largely impervious to revisionist trends. Therefore, to expect groups which have evolved from the elitist, traditional and house practices of the school to immediately restructure is to under-estimate the significance of their cultural bases and priorities. It is interesting to note, though, that while greatest pupil support came from the above groups, they were not alone. In very few pupils did fagging inspire dissent with many settling for nonchalant acceptance.

This discussion can be taken one step further, several respondents independently coming to similar conclusions. Regardless of official protestations there are aspects of the school system, be they structural, organizational or cultural which ensure that fagging will not be lost from it. For instance Andrew continued:

"It's very difficult to stop it because of the very hierarchical structure of the place. Because you get to the prefects before you get to the housemasters and people like that, the prefects are able to say ... there are recognized channels really operating and if somebody steps outside that then (say you have a housemaster who tries to forcefully ... who almost takes over prefect jobs and things like that to actually run the house right down to grass roots) you do get a lot of that friction and aggro and stuff like that and most of the housemasters didn't actually do that sort of thing." (Interview, Andrew.)

Therefore, the structural arrangements embedded in the history of the school, coupled with everyday processes dominated by the traditional cultural priorities, ensure the peripheral impact of official statements.

Giles, from experience at a different school, came to a remarkably similar viewpoint. For him the official acceptance or rejection of fagging was of limited impact because of the nature of the pupils and the ingrained reliance on hierarchy as an organizational form:

"The people at the top of the house wielded a great deal of power over the people at the bottom of the house, and therefore they could use this authority to get them to do what they wanted them to do. I suppose it was a sort of hangback from ideas of personal valets ... plus the fact that your whole first year is dominated by the idea that you are the lowest of the low and you should only open your mouth when someone talks to you ... So once you are in that situation then you do what you are told, which I suppose in a way is carrying on the whole ethos of people at the bottom of the heap do what the people at the top say which is basically what it is all about." (Interview, Giles.)

As such, to see policy changes on one dimension alone (eg fagging) without being aware of the wider policies of school officials, let alone the other dimensions of influence, will inevitably lead to an incomplete analysis.

One final point that is worth highlighting is that a consistent accompaniment to fagging was physical

intimidation. Describing younger pupils as 'servants' Alistair (Interview) continued that they lived in "violent fear" which ensured that they never "tried it on", and for Nigel such bullying was all a part of:

"an old school attitude of keeping up values and character building". (Interview, Nigel.)

While John states:

"there was quite a lot of bullying when I was there. I was hung out of a top floor window at school by the back of my feet with just a blanket round my ankles". (Interview, John.)

The point is not that bullying exists only in public schools, which is obviously not the case, but what is of paramount importance is the difficulty facing anyone trying to separate such actions from the officially inspired power structure and its principal expressions. The official and unofficial, the regimented and the violently excessive are all a part of the same overall process, located in the historical reality of the sector.

Certain central points can, therefore, be drawn from the above. Firstly, that while it is accurate to see the official attitude to fagging as changing, and in the overt sense its legitimate operation as decreasing, for many pupils who experienced public school education in the 1980s, it was far from a thing of the past. Second, is the issue of how far the staff have the power to determine its presence or absence. Clearly, on the basis of the evidence

of the subjects, and knowledge of the historical reality and internal structures and processes of the sector, their power must be seen as at best partial. It is certainly possible that future patterns of interactions between staff attitudes, sub-cultural processes and class priorities may lead choices to evolve differently, but what can be said with surety is that at this historical moment structural and cultural conditions are not compatible with the abandonment of fagging. This is not to suggest that staff interventions will not influence its day to day character - after all in many schools the detailed and complex structure of fagging interweaves visibly with official life, but it is to acknowledge that against a background of largely unaltered core principles and priorities within the specific context of class-school interactions, everyday practice will continue to be based on established and readily identifiable relations of power.

Instrumentalism and Affinity: the Nature of Involvement

In discussing the perceptions of school practices and any resultant 'sense of belonging', I am alluding to something quite specific. It is not simply general attitudes of approval or rejection of the sector, but rather the question of how far subjects genuinely accept and internalize the cultural values and priorities of the school or how far apparent uniformity can best be explained in

terms of instrumental compliance - a going along with the system principally as a means to a narrowly defined end. Therefore, it is not so much the core bases of life orientation that are of interest here, but those specifically public school practices and expressions. It is an element of the study intrinsically bound up with how far public school attendance is imbued with a long term significance for some rather than others and is fully interconnected with the overall process beginning in the family.

In recognizing this element to be a part of a wider whole, the principal divisions of responses identified do maintain the logic of the analysis. The evidence indicates that it is among elite sub-cultural groups dominated by pupils of traditional families that the school and its 'name' needs to be protected, its practices legitimized and its priorities (as defined) internalized. Having already detailed the nature of these groups, I will draw on the evidence of other (essentially first generation) pupils to draw out the differences of perspective.

Although the perceptions of the elite groups are dominated by absolutes, it is not the case that those who do not hold such an obsessive affinity hold negative views of their schooling - it is simply that their values are tempered and influenced by slightly differing perspectives, often varying experiences and inevitably a tendency to view the public school as more of a resource than a sacred cow -

though of course, these positions are subject to substantial variation.

Peter, as someone entering the system late and without previous family involvements, describes both his own position and that of the internal elite as a force toward a more instrumental attitude and something of a barrier to him ever identifying with the school in the same manner as certain other pupils:

"I'm quite certain that I was not as much a part of the working of the school as much as someone whose father and grandfather had been there before, because they had been brought up to expect, however subtly, what was going to happen and the way it worked." (Interview, Peter.)

Characteristic of the differences in outlook was the identification by newcomers of principal contradictions and excesses in the system. For instance, Chris (Interview) describes the 'false' and 'ridiculous' nature of the school pretending to be a 'little society' with its own power structure and Andrew, whilst accepting the regulations in part as a pay off for his scholarship, never internalized the full range of accompanying values and was aware of a "false morality about the place", and continued:

"I did find it distasteful being preached to by these people". (Interview, Andrew.)

He was referring here solely to issues of how to run one's personal life,not academic matters.

Nigel extended discussion of the degree of belonging

to, and identification with, a school by comparing the public school pupils to the "timeserver" at his comprehensive, the latter simply biding his/her time until getting a job locally, whilst the former was either using the time to aim towards a specific end or else (in the case of many of the elite) treating it as something from which positive results will emerge from whatever source.

The subjective reality of the differential sense of belonging is perhaps best summed up by Simon:

"I don't think I was ever truly integrated in the school. Obviously, I had a lot in common and identified with many of the values - the need for academic success, intellectual sentiments about the place. It obviously appealed to me and I felt good in that although I didn't feel totally and socially integrated ... I think some of them, because of their social background, have felt more at home in that sense. More at one because they were more in tune with the nature of the culture ... I don't keep in contact with the school that much." (Interview, Simon.)

These examples demonstrate an awareness of the differing perceptions of the school and their location within the overall structure. From these and similarly instructive statements the following conclusions are possible. Firstly, that for specific traditional pupils, there was a degree of internalization of school mores quite beyond that found elsewhere - intergenerational cultural evolution being more influential in this than conscious

decision making. Secondly, while the remaining traditional pupils' perceptions and involvement varied according to personal priorities, the first generation subjects demonstrated a clearly differing perspective in which reverence for school histories, traditions and cultural priorities was often irrelevant, or at best considered and accepted as an afterthought, not as a pre-condition of involvement. Instrumentalism is an appropriate term to use here, although this certainly does not exclude a recognition of the influence of internal processes on the individual, as established earlier.

In cases where the full 'sense of belonging' and internalization have occurred, its expression can at times be further illuminated by the 'affection' felt for the school. While for many, the 'macho' nature of sub-group affiliation may lead to such feelings being articulated differently, the strength of significance ascribed to the school shows through clearly. The following example is drawn from a pupil of a traditional public school family whose personal attitudes never became masked by the intervening presence of sub-cultural forms. Anthony states:

"I look back to my time at public school with a great deal of affection. I was enormously sad at having to leave. When I go back and the people have changed I find that quite sad to the extent that I deliberately avoid going back, although I often walk round the playing fields in the holidays when no-one is about." (Life-Story, Anthony.)

This is, of course, a particular personal demonstration of this 'oneness' and elsewhere Anthony described how problematic the general transition had been in leaving such an environment. Living in the past, the dislike of change and the need to continue to feel a physical part of the school, while all finding particular expression here, are part of a process in which the school continues to exert its influence - be it via a specific mentality, a continued association with staff and pupils or whatever - long after the end of formal schooling. This kind of 'obsessive affection' was largely absent from first generation subjects however ferocious their support for the system . It is, of course, perfectly feasible that events (both intentional and unintentional) can lead to such feelings being present in non-traditional pupils, and indeed, it is not my intention to suggest that all first generation pupils are solely calculating and instrumental, for clearly the positive regard which they have developed for the school and the aspects of its emphases they have adopted show that the position is more complicated than this. However, it is accurate to say (for instance drawing on the cases of Chris and Craig, perhaps the two most positively orientated of the first generation pupils) that their feelings could not be described as incorporating internalization, sense of belonging and affection in the same manner as traditional pupils, their habitus basis maintaining subtly different, yet significant, nuances of emphases.

The situation can be ascribed a further complexity by the introduction of the concept of 'selective internalization' for as earlier evidence has shown, while general patterns are observable, obedience, internalization and instrumental compliance are not total, but certain aspects of schooling are accorded greater respect than others. The classroom example has already been noted but here the analysis is broadened. In relation to control and changes in ethos in particular, the operationalization of 'selective internalization' can be noted. While all forms of extra-curricular activity are inevitably affected by this, one aspect of school life stands out as being regarded as irrelevant by a large number of pupils: the combined cadet force (CCF) or its equivalent. Although still widespread (for reasons partly of ideology and partly financial support from relevant quarters[4]) the attitudes of pupils to it certainly do not display a perception of its importance. Now, of course, for some it is the perfect vehicle for exercising authority, it fits the established image of schooling and acts as an introduction to a potential career, but for those large numbers for whom academic priority is central, it is nothing more than an anachronism and even quite frequently

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4 The financial benefit secured from the Ministry of Defence is discussed in G Walford 1986 <u>op cit</u> pp214-215

ridiculed. The fact is that while it fits the meaning of schooling for some, and indeed their life priorities, for others it can be perceived as a distraction, or simply a waste of time. For instance Andrew, himself on his way to Oxbridge, and retaining his sporting interest stated:

"they made a big thing of the CCF and I really couldn't stand it, I don't like rolling in mud at the best of times. It did seem a bit unnecessary what with fagging as well". (Interview, Andrew.)

Such attitudes were widely repeated except among individuals with a specific personal or cultural stake in supporting the activity. The latter have a clear objective in mind. Therefore, despite the very real and influential requirements of obedience and the equally important cultural undercurrents, where specific opportunities arise these individuals are still making active choices to facilitate a personally desired outcome to the process.

To take the analysis a step further, it is always a possibility that certain individuals will participate in the school and yet fundamentally object to all its stated bases. Now, it must be said that while images of the public school rebel may exist in 'common sense knowledge', during the course of investigating 1980s reality, no such practice was found. The nearest was the identification by Alistair of two socialist friends; there was also the similarly orientated 'black brigade' and other occasional political

'rebels', but their 'deviancy' remained at an intellectual level only. What I wish to suggest here is that given an appropriate form such 'deviances' will not only be tolerated by the school but serve an identifiable purpose for it. To elaborate: while the school can be sure that intellectual rebellion is limited to a small number of pupils and that it is not accompanied by a rejection of underlying school principles, the situation is stable. However, should key boundaries be crossed, authoritarianism becomes activated. As I said, full scale political/ideological rejection was not observable, but examples of 'the line' being crossed were present. It was in the possession of drugs that this was most clearly seen. Perceived as a very real threat, both physically to the foundations of discipline, and crucially as a source of potentially harmful publicity, wherever drugs appeared immediate action resulted.

The 'rebellions' lacking in actual threat are regarded very differently. For the few pupils involved, the widespread ridicule and defining of them as outsiders can certainly help to foster a greater sense of unity in the other participants, both at sub-cultural and school levels. This is something which the authorities would certainly be appreciative of. Also, in such a regimented environment any 'manageable' expressions of individuality while perhaps not preferred by choice can, when handled appropriately be used to foster an image of tolerance without affecting elitist priorities. This is, in fact, a process related to one

which has for generations been a part of the image projected by the public school. Usually referring to a teacher, but certainly amenable to pupil application, the 'lovable eccentric' remains a useful member of the public school staff in helping to perpetuate the cosy image of the 'very British' eccentric (particularly favourable because of connotations of high intellectual capability) in a 'very British' institution - again serving to deflect attention from the primary roles of the sector. The 'creation and definition of a public school eccentric (teacher)' is, in itself, an area of great interest, for the criteria on which such individuals become so described in these elite and isolated establishments would, in other walks of life, lead to institutionalization and/or calls for occupational dismissal. For instance, time and again pupils referred to alcoholic teachers or those undergoing psychiatric treatment as 'eccentrics'. Due to the widespread presence of such a definition, it must be seen as the consequence of a widely accepted norm throughout the sector and not simply personal assessments. It is hard to imagine proponents of the new right ideology adopting a similar attitude to state teachers of similar dispositions, or indeed the same pupils faced with the same behaviour, in different contexts. Therefore, even with such an authoritarian environment as the one described, the role and position of the deviant is an intricate one, though given the trends at school and

societal levels such manifestations may well continue to be more focussed on teachers than pupils.

Official Routes to Status Acquisition

In a system which lives and breathes by hierarchy, a specific and prescribed set of status achievements can be expected and so it is with the public schools. Via sub-cultures, sport and fagging, differentiation by gender, class and age becomes ingrained as we have seen, but it is those officially defined statuses, usually identified in terms of being school/house prefects/monitors, that I will now concentrate upon.

For the system itself such a structure has many potentially beneficial features. In offering reward for 'playing by the rules', for instance, it helps produce an 'appropriate mentality' in linking hierarchical differentiation with success. It acts as a further reinforcer of the 'normality' of a system of dominated and dominator and it provides the sampling of power which was often noted to have instilled wider expectation of this in pupils.

However, such a system requires the active support of the pupils to be effective and while in studies of other contexts (eg Hargreaves - status perception of streams)[5]

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[5] See Chapter 3 for relevant discussion of D Hargreaves

there has been found to be a significant disparity between staff and pupils, in this situation there was no such divergence. There existed, with certain partial exceptions, a uniformly positive attitude toward the achievement of these statuses, as the following examples show.

For Robert, the possession of prefect status was inextricably linked with the coolies' demand to be recognized as the internal elite. The placing of such responsibilities elsewhere, though not enough to threaten that position, was the source of intense resentment:

"they ... abolished ... the prefect system of ... the first XV plus a few of their friends ... things got done with that lot. They reintroduced it with the bulk of prefects being sixth form entrants ... there was a lot of resentment about that". (Interview, Robert.)

Chris argues that such statuses were an integral part of the schooling process, both at public school and earlier at prep school:

"My brother and I both boarded in our last year because if you didn't board you couldn't become a prefect. Anything like getting sports colours, captain of team or being a prefect was basically what the system geared you towards. It was the prestige." (Interview, Chris.)

This widespread identification was noted by Nigel and then compared with his experiences of comprehensive school, describing the latter as follows:

"The prefect system had to be respected by the people

who used it and the people under it and that didn't happen at comprehensive. The only status came from say coming top in a set or being a 'hard lad' or whatever. There was no official status that mattered." (Interview, Nigel.)

This sums up the degree of conformity with and acceptance of school structures. The sub-system's strength was based on the pupils' desire to use it, as much as on its official imposition. Indeed, Charles actually described prefect status as carrying with it 'glamour', demonstrating the subjective importance for those concerned.

Of the few who did not wholeheartedly seek status from the official sources, very clear reasoning or patterns of influence were noted, but none fundamentally rejected the basic premises of the system. Andrew found it problematic, but only insofar as it was using up time he was desperate to spend preparing for Oxbridge while the 'unhappies' (School C), while not overtly concerned with official statuses were busy establishing their own lines of power as they evolved from that other bastion of public school status ascription - fagging. It should be re-affirmed, though, that such examples were reported as being rare.

Thus, what evolves from the data is the massive acceptance of these statuses as a legitimate goal and, as such, an acceptance of activities based upon the control of others. Uncovered, then, is the degree of affinity between staff and pupils on what is regarded as a genuine source of personal status. It is the perception of 'being on the same

side' that is revealed, a feeling that these forms are not simply arbitrary impositions without relevance to the pupils but are very much a part of the system which they so closely identify with, if only as the means to an end.

Therefore, the reluctance to take up such positions, as observed by Walford[6], was simply not found to exist in this study. Instead, the desire to attain positions, which are clearly held in a significant degree of awe could hardly be stronger, and I would argue that there are very important reasons for this. Firstly, there is the class similarity of staff and pupils. The lack of a culture gap provides the basis for an affinity with, rather than automatic rejection of values espoused by staff which is more widespread in working class schools with middle class teachers. Second, there is the sense in which the system can be trusted to foster success because of its position as integral rather than opposed to their core principles of life. Thirdly, class and background are often recognized as being of greater importance to these pupils than generational identities. The sense of inter-generational continuity, the widespread identity with established

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6 G Walford 1986 op cit p131

values rather than the desire to formulate new ones, perceptions of class loyalty and right wing political values all, to a lesser or greater extent in each case, reveal their relevance for these subjects. Fourthly, and underlying this, is the fundamental unity between habitus and school priorities outlined earlier and fifthly, it provides pupils with the perfect vehicle for exercising control after long periods of being in the main on the receiving end of it - thereby satisfying one half of the power/obedience dualism.

Returning to the two reasons offered by Walford for his findings, the difficulty of his position becomes clarified. The first of these, a pragmatic rejection based on a perceived need to concentrate on academic work was found to influence the thoughts of just one single subject - Andrew - but for the majority there was no conflict between the two, with the vast majority of academically orientated pupils seeing such status as actually contributing to the attainment of their goals, not being a distraction. Be this simply for 'CV' purposes or as a wider integration to the exercising of power, it was perceived as meeting their needs as defined in relation to the nature of society. As for any moral disquiet, the findings could hardly be further from this. If one thing above all else bound together the attitudes and values of these pupils, it was the identification with principles of differentiation, self interest and personal success - all a part of a clear

internalization of the dynamics of Thatcherite Britain and a distancing from any liberal concerns as central points of departure. It was not that a few pupils were unable to articulate wider points of focus, but rather that any moral questioning was never strong enough to threaten the legitimacy and applicability of these structures. Their right to impose controls on others was simply not on the agenda in 1980s public schools, let alone a determining influence.

This chapter has drawn together very definite and complementary accounts of the often rigid and authoritarian organizational bases of school life and the highly illuminating responses to them. Perhaps four points above all deserve particular note. First, that the incorporation of the gender dimension is crucial to a complete appreciation of the structures and processes which serve to define institutional reality. Second, that regardless of the extent of the controls (and these are often intense and strictly regimented), ideological identification with the school remains strong. The 'pain', albeit recognized and acted upon, is not in itself powerful enough to alter the underlying relationship - be this based on pragmatism, cultural affinity or elements of both. Third, experiencing the effects of power carried with it for pupils the (sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit) promise of the potential to exercise power/control themselves, both within and beyond the school. This was a particularly strong

source of support for the school/pupil relationship. Fourth, that here as elsewhere, responses and actions were not arbitrary. Rather they evolved from the logic of the meaning of schooling, personal and sub-cultural ideology and definite priorities. The nature of the process under study is further illuminated by these conclusions, both the general ones and the more specific and detailed ones arising from particular points of discussion.

CHAPTER 8 : Complementary Dimensions - Elements of Non-Academic, Extra-Curricular and Out of School Activities

In institutions whose influence is expressly intended to reach beyond the classroom, certain aspects of life require a place in the analysis. It is to these that attention is now addressed. The chapter will commence with a look at activities engaged in during those periods away from the school and the extent of their compatibility with public school emphases. Extra-curricular activities then enter the discussion and their tie up with overall priorities is assessed. The particular example of community work is given extended coverage as it is considered to be a particularly illuminating element of the modern sector. Moving beyond timetabled concerns, the significance of the existence of school bars and the attitudes to alcohol consumption are covered. The chapter is drawn to a conclusion with a focussed look at what continues to be an important feature of non-academic practice, namely 'houses'.

Non-School Activities and Friends

Any discussion of the activities and friends of pupils away from the school must begin with an appreciation that the school is widely regarded as the 'central organizing feature' of life during this period, for it is through contact with this institution that most primary processes will be undertaken. Both for boarders and for day pupils (the latter often not returning home until late in the evening) there was, therefore, both little time or subjective inclination to seek to develop a wide range of external activities.

Where both the demands and the highly specific nature of the forms of behaviour expected by the public schools show through immediately is in the effect this has upon friendships which existed prior to the shift to the private sector. On several separate occasions subjects recalled a wedge evolving between themselves and those without knowledge or expectation of anything but state education. A physical barrier, in part, but also the result of altered, normally negative, perceptions on the part of friends and shifting social norms and priorities on the part of the pupil. Such an interpretation may appear open to the charge of ascribing exaggerated meanings to a situation which can be more simply explained. Indeed, an awareness of a tendency toward a 'drifting away' from old friends as a simple consequence of moving school is partly implicated but

it was, as always, the evidence itself which dictated a fuller explanation based on class perceptions and increasing cultural disparities.

Two differing processes can be observed here. The first deals with the tendency for friendships with non-public school friends to die out. This applies to both those always destined to change sectors and to the pragmatic late entrants. For instance, Charles from an established public school family recalls:

"the friends I had in the village had abandoned me by this stage as they became more aware of our differing circumstances. Indeed, when they saw me they made comments about my type of school being some kind of prison. I did not mind for my life revolved around the school now". (Life-Story, Charles.)

The awareness by his friends of a change to a very socially different type of school by his friends and, indeed, his lack of concern because of his identity with this school, ensured the finality of the split. The example of Nigel is very different but nonetheless informative. Going to public school for the sixth form only, he too, despite being keenly aware of the excesses and bigotry of the public schools, reported a definite break from old friends, facilitated by a self perception (reinforced by structures and interactions of the new school) that he had "outgrown" them and "moved on to something better". (Interview, Nigel.)

The second process follows a different pattern. For here, there is no inevitable split but rather a continuity of friendship, which was only temporarily interrupted. Here we are referring to people whose friends were drawn from a similarly elite class/educational background and as a consequence, no cultural gulf emerged during the transition. Occasional friendship losses certainly do occur via the 'drifting away' noted above and this may be accentuated by personal jealousies and inter-school rivalries, but these are simply modifications of the principal forms. Entering the school at the same time as Nigel, Fiona's experiences probably demonstrate this most clearly. She had previously been at a girls' private school and stressed that her friendships from there were still strongly maintained in the university era and while there was obvious interest in her changing school and going to a 'public school' it was not regarded as a significant cultural shift.

As an aside it is particularly interesting to note the extent to which Nigel became embroiled in the attitudes of the institution. While not referring to the variations of integration (Chapter 7) it is clear how even for someone with a short term and specific goal for attending, feelings and attitudes were affected by the dominant ethos of the school. This was, in fact, something which in retrospect he was completely aware of, the all encompassing tendency to differentiate, which in the course of the most basic moves to assimilation, he found himself a part of. It is also

worth noting that the limited potential for external involvements did tend toward a continued involvement with the family for social and leisure activities. For many pupils the family remained a prominent source of interactions and wider meetings up to and beyond the end of schooling. It is not a picture of closeness and harmony that I am presenting, since serious conflicts and some very distant relationships were noted, rather the continuation of influences within the ideological boundaries of the family-school dynamic. In these later stages the individual is mediating such interactions through experiences s/he has acquired, but they remain essentially limited in nature.

That the school dominates during these years is beyond question, but however much this is the case the pupil will still inevitably find him/herself away from school during holidays and possibly weekends and evenings. It must be noted, though, that even for these periods, many subjects illustrated how their total life was centred on the school and its activities, with several pupils recalling voluntarily spending this time at school wherever possible. For instance, Giles would return several weeks early during the summer, nominally to practice sport, but this pattern reveals the weakness of beyond school ties, while Craig (a day pupil) frequently remained at school well beyond the expected periods.

External activities are, however, engaged in and the crucial aspect of the findings is that such activities are

essentially consistent (in form and/or content) with those cultural priorities which have evolved during the course of the home-school dynamic. This provides further insight into the willingness and ideological identity (at whatever level) with which pupils engage in the school programme. For it is apparent that the positive relationship between the central activities and their form in each area of life conveys a sense of satisfaction and integration. There is, for instance, no evidence of repressed disaffection manifesting itself in the choice (or lack) of interests beyond the school. Rather the personal and voluntaristic choices are submerged within a mass of cultural consistency. It is not the influence of one element of the life process over another that is of concern here but rather its fit within the whole.

The actual nature of these is, of course, entirely dependent upon the personal emphases of the individual. For Charles, attending classical music concerts rated highly and insofar as this was a social activity, the upper middle class public school educated acquaintances of his home village were those with whom it was shared. With Fiona, it was the form of her interactions as much as the content which was of interest. Involvements in the seemingly 'neutral' 'guiding', swimming and youth council work were all undertaken with one dominant (though obviously not sole) priority - to attain leadership within them and this indeed resulted. It was the Guides (itself an organization with a

very particular ideological basis) where this manifested itself for the longest period, thus becoming a long term vehicle for attaining and exercising power and leading on to the British Youth Council and the continuing quest for positions of authority beyond school. This stress and priority was clearly articulated by her. Thus, the family and school ideology which fostered such priorities became supported by the personal selection of these as areas of concentration, demonstrating the interlocking of the individual and institutions in the development process.

The idea of the 'neutral' pastime is an important one here for it is not necessarily the identification of a particular activity that illuminates discussion, but the meanings attached to it and the context within which it occurs. For instance swimming, in itself, can be a means of relaxation, general exercise, a social meeting point or whatever. However, while a significant number of the sample were involved in it, the principal meaning attached was without exception as a means to achieve 'success'. There was never any mention of any intrinsic enjoyment or satisfaction, but rather an (often family inspired) attention to its possibilities for leading to higher status than others. Now this is certainly not restricted to public school pupils, but with such high numbers and against the wider context, it is a finding worthy of note and underlines the importance of appreciating individual meanings as well as objective occurrences.

While some activities such as those of Fiona (and Simon's preoccupation with reading) demonstrate a clearly positive relationship to overall priorities, it is in the nature of leisure pursuits that some will show no such direct influence. Nevertheless, as Charles' music or the skiing so favoured by Chris exemplifies, the important fact is that these are still very much activities which fit comfortably into a wholly acceptable mode of life - at no point threatening the bases of cultural unity.

Extra-Curricular Activity

Extra-curricular activities have been and remain, albeit in an evolving way, integral to the public school programme. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, there is the need for control, particularly intensified by the length of the school day. Unstructured free time does not rest easily within the overall ethos but is perceived (with whatever justification) as potentially giving rise to negatively regarded behaviour. Furthermore, there is the continual concern to persuade parents that they are receiving value for money, and constant activity is regarded as likely to assist this. Beyond the practical concerns there are, though, genuine issues of culture and ideology for these schools never see their influence as limited to one sphere but attempt to be the central and overall source of reference. For instance, Craig recalls how he was told

as a day pupil that if he did not stay at school well beyond 5.00 pm at least three times a week, he would not be getting enough from the experience. Moreover, as will be uncovered, activities here can contribute to directly observable goals and thereby incorporate both the practical and the ideological.

Inevitably, the nature of pursuits varied between schools, with the range of activities defined as appropriate continuing to evolve in relation to wider changes. In terms of content, though, sport, despite recent trends (real and suggested) still takes centre stage and to be more specific, rugby and cricket are at its heart, although due to particular histories some schools varied from this. Moreover, the importance attached to team sports in the development of character may now be less overtly identified but it is certainly not lost.

Having recognized that extra-curricular activities are not divorced from the dynamics at the centre of the schools and given the recent shifts that have occurred there, it could be postulated that similar changes may be witnessed in this area - and this was indeed the case. The increasing legitimacy of individualistic sport can be seen to parallel the greater individualistic stress in the school at large, and indeed, to be a means of courting the attentions of those without the traditional public school priorities of team games or any particular desire to acquire them. Therefore, golf and squash were increasingly incorporated

onto the lists of permitted sports (these being indicative of the class composition of clientele) and while it is true that those of a sporting bent - usually focussing on established team games - may well have been drawn to these, those for whom sport was a low priority did tend to report that they found the new inclusions more acceptable. It is not just in sport that this institutionalized shift is observable. Charles, for instance, was encouraged toward music and photography. Indeed, it seems that what is evolving is a mentality which is less obsessed with defining the content of activity and increasingly interested in finding any means by which the pupils can develop a self perception, and be seen by others, as skilled in a particular field. In this way images of elitism become reinforced and the 'appropriate' mentality further cemented, even though an objective level of proficiency need not actually have been achieved. It would be a misunderstanding, however, to assume that this incorporated an equalization of status ascription, either at the official level or amongst pupils. Tolerance of a wider range of pursuits does not involve fundamental reassessments of this sort.

In the previous section, it was noted that content alone cannot convey the total influence of an activity. Its form is just as relevant and while forms vary with the activities, their affinity to the recurrent emphases of the schools emerges. For instance, team sports are organized

within a torrent of competitiveness and hierarchy, with as many as five teams per sport being clearly demarcated and assigned particular status. Individual activities, while obviously operating on a different basis, retain the emphasis on achievement and competitiveness while, of course, the CCF dictates, by its very nature, a regimentation and obedience of the strictest form.

At this point, the analysis will move from the general to the specific in order to highlight the interactive relationship between formal and extra-curricular activity and the importance of a seemingly peripheral element of schooling. The crux of the matter is that for the schools the overriding goal must be to achieve the highest occupational status and class position for their pupils. For the majority this involves academic success, which in turn entails the need for higher education. Entry to universities and colleges, whilst qualification based, is not solely determined by this and subjective assessments of the all round 'contribution' a candidate will make to an institution are of influence. The public schools are, of course, well aware of this, and crucially, have the motivation - in order to improve 'statistics', and legitimacy and thereby ensure status and survival - to do something about this. To this end, the schools provide a plethora of opportunities for the acquisition of experiences which have their natural home on the UCCA form. This simultaneously satisfies the ideological and practical

concerns outlined earlier, but this in no way diminishes the relevance of this dimension.

I am not simply arguing that the school fosters an environment in which individual talents and interests can develop - the kind of phraseology commonly employed in the sector and by apologists on the political right - but rather that these activities had an inherent nature which required the minimum effort for the maximum effect. In reality they constitute a structural sham.

Again Nigel's comparison between comprehensive and public school makes interesting reading:

"Comprehensive did not have any institutions by which you became captain of a set group. Public school was full of them. Thousands of them. Certainly I had a lot more to put on my UCCA form. Little things like I was secretary to the historical society and basically what I did was to introduce a speaker. I didn't organize anything." (Interview, Nigel.)

The position of responsibility within a society was particularly widely implicated and while (despite Nigel's experiences) such organizations are not necessarily limited to the private sector, the organizational priority placed on them, their considerable numbers and the very specific environment certainly is. Even at a day school, Simon states there were over one hundred societies, of which he was president of one, which again evolved from academic work and involved virtually no participation, but secured a

very useful title for him. Given the usual stress on 'hard work' and fulfilling 'duties', this state of affairs becomes even more illuminating.

Fiona was clear on the impetus behind these organizations:

"I think they were conscious that these will come up on the CV in the end and that when you are looking for a job and even for places at university, you do want to do more than just the curriculum." (Interview, Fiona.)

Perhaps, though, the most extensively employed means of institutionalized CV filling was that supposed bastion of individual development, independence and character formation, the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Jane states:

"It was laid out for you. The only thing you had to do for yourself was your project, everything else was done for you. Your sport, you did on a Wednesday afternoon, we had a bloke come in and teach first aid or you went to an old people's home, so it was just laid on a plate for you really. The main thing you had to do for yourself was this project and I think you would have passed that whatever you did. They wanted everyone to do it". (Interview, Jane.)

Thus, something which would be used to ease the passage into desired locations was, in effect, a virtually guaranteed component of school attendance, with its components inter-connected with scheduled school periods. The organizational structure of many public schools (the afternoons free from academia) is very amenable to these

developments.

Walford[1] was thus accurate in highlighting pupil concern with CV filling, but his emphasis on this as an essentially individual activity seems to have missed the very strong, institutionalized character of it and its identification as a minor, yet contributory, mechanism in the process of class reproduction. For these pupils, and a wide range of others, describe how, without any genuine legitimacy, they were able to laden applications with descriptions of personal achievements which as a rule bore no relation to objective occurrences. That admissions tutors and employers should continue to be influenced by such claims is in itself somewhat surprising, but such a continued institutionalized preoccupation would certainly suggest this to be the case.

The relevance of discussing potential status achievement in relation to this area of school life will already be apparent, reference having been made to such processes in earlier chapters. It is also clear that the analysis of status in Chapter 7 provides insights of direct significance because of the close tie up between formal and

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1 G Walford 1986 _op cit_ p72. While recognizing that housemasters, especially, were keen to encourage extra-curricular activity any 'highly questionable reasons' for participation (in the sense discussed here) were seen to be the consequence of independent action by the older boys.

extra-curricular activities. However, a brief presentation and development of certain issues is appropriate, in particular the principal means by which such status is secured.

Those traditionally high status activities - the male dominated team sports - have appeared throughout as the basis of many elite sub-groups and indeed, the retention of official reverence for their 'achievements' has also been noted. In identifying intergenerational cultural patterns which serve as agents of cultural reproduction and influence the nature of pupil hierarchy, a structural compatibility is uncovered. For the match between the prioritized activities of many traditional families and those still providing the most secure means of status ascription within the schools provides a 'built in' advantage for certain pupils. Rugby playing is, of course, the classic example (benefitting from a winter season coinciding with the school year). The accent during socialization on certain activities which bear the hallmark of previous involvement with the sector, instil priorities which, when developed in the appropriate manner, via the interactive relationships outlined, yield outcomes of a recognizable nature.

The achievement of status through extra-curricular activity has wider dimensions than indicated so far. For while it is true that the above process continues to hold centre stage, status achievements are crucial for others, not necessarily in terms of the internal hierarchy, but as a

component of the whole elite orientated development process. It is therefore important to recognize the potential for deriving status from involvement with, and achievement in, a wide range of pursuits, both extensive in variety and significant in the time allotted to them. The already mentioned Duke of Edinburgh Award and individual sports and activities are relevant examples. In themselves, as a means of gaining status within the school, their influence may be peripheral, but their significance does not end here. For inevitably (due to the priorities and tendencies of the sector) they will, at least by elements of staff, and possibly by some pupils, be recognized as skilled. Thus, elite self perception becomes intensified as does the expectation of success and, coupled with objective 'proofs' of these achievements, this helps shape perceptions forming the basis of post-school interactions.

Community Work

The mere presence of a particular activity in the schools cannot, in itself, reveal either the seriousness with which it is regarded or the influence it may have. This is certainly so with those aspects of school life variously labelled as community work or social services. Of course, within a context in which elitism and distinction rather than egalitarianism and compassion are dominant, its place could be expected to require a very specific analysis

and this proved to be an expectation confirmed and re-confirmed by the evidence.

Although there was variation in the organizational arrangements, one element stood out as a constant. This was the unanimous low regard in which community work was held by the teachers and the accompanying differentiation of prestige and effort it inspired, particularly in comparison to the traditionally favoured activities. Moreover, the intensity which was generally reported as dominating the perspective of staff in dealings with their subject specialisms was replaced here by a picture of peripheral interest and second rate knowledge. This ordering of priorities and/or the isolated nature of their life style, coupled with a narrowness of ideology, helped establish a situation in which practices evolved arbitrarily and with more emphasis on what it was providing for the pupil and the school than the recipient. So while some correspondence between needs and activities was bound to occur at some points (for instance, the widespread deployment of pupils to weed pensioners' gardens) this was often the inevitable consequence of the subject matter of the activities, rather than of any knowledge or commitment. Andrew elaborates:

"I've got a friend - both his parents are deaf - he used to work (the social service he did) in a deaf school. You tended to find that the teachers in charge of the social services were fairly ignorant as to what was required and they seemed to be doing it out of a false sense of charity.

There was this deaf centre with perfectly normal kids and they used to go there because in some way they had a gym that was safer to play in than other gyms. The teacher who used to take the kids from school was under the impression that these deaf kids were stupid. It was some sort of horrible desire to help these less fortunate people." (Interview, Andrew.)

This kind of condescending attitude was reported widely as being characteristic of the schools. It should be pointed out that this was usually a minority activity, never sufficiently integrated into the mainstream to attract large numbers of pupils. It was also the case (with two interesting exceptions noted below) that what was undertaken was unilateral activity. Local organizations as a source of information and expertise were ignored. The lack of seriousness concerning 'social objectives' is made clear by this. For despite the apparent need to target resources and improve knowledge of issues for both staff and pupils, they preferred to remain at arm's length from local groups. There are two points that need to be developed here. Firstly, this further reveals the essential isolation of the school from its immediate environment - the class and cultural distinctions, revealed elsewhere, are happily reinforced by both staff and pupils. Second, it is possible that the oft found disparity may also have affected the willingness of community groups to become involved, were they to have been approached, anyway.

The two exceptions offer an important contribution to the analysis and while adding a greater complexity, they also serve to reinforce the primacy of class processes. Referring to the history and context of Simon's school, it can be noted how a large number of the pupils of this ex-grammar school had been drawn from the immediate locale and, largely due to its continued day school status, still were. Therefore, while some conflict existed, the school was regarded by many of the local middle class as an organic part of the area. The nature of the community work displays this link. For here, local groups wrote to the school with specific requests and often these were met. While much of the wider character of this activity in the sector was retained, it did take on a form, related to the greater class correspondence between school and local community, that was not prevalent elsewhere.

At Giles' school, the local interaction was the consequence of a geographical quirk and perceptions of class and prestige. For this 'classic' public school was not involved with local organizations as such, but rather with an international conservation group whose headquarters was nearby. It can be no coincidence that across all schools studied with a cultural distance between themselves and the local people, the only reported interaction at an organizational level was one which could be regarded as highly prestigious and certainly more likely than any community groups to be dominated by people of a similar

class background to themselves .

So rather than breaking down barriers, I would argue that the way in which community work is established can only reinforce conceptions of distinction and superiority. This is shown, for instance, both in the way in which interactions are restricted to a certain form of organization and in the recurrent notion of giving up valuable time to help 'less fortunates'. A lack of 'community action' results from the structural and cultural chasm and from the absolute lack of will in the schools to significantly change the situation. For to offer gestures and isolated action serves both as a source of useful publicity and as a support to the processes of distinction, and is therefore seen to meet the needs of specifically defined interests.

Furthermore, this mode of association can be seen as having its place within a dualism of privilege/duty which has influenced much public school action through history. The paternalism inherent in this is now finding ideological support from the societal trends of the new right in the renewed emphasis on the elite supporting organizations through charitable donation, thus emphasizing 'bountiful' giving rather than absolute rights.

However, despite its advantages for the system it seems unlikely that this activity will ever develop too far. This is because, though potentially useful for the sector as a whole, it is not directly relevant to the achievement

orientation of pupils. As such, through a process of 'selective internalization', it will tend to be overlooked by pupils, and although it is theoretically possible that the ever more image conscious school authorities may increase timetabled involvement, both its apparent contradiction with underlying individualism and competitiveness and the resultant loss of other established activity make this unlikely.

Such an activity thus displays a multi-faceted character. It is at once perfectly consistent with elements of an historical ethos and contradictory to dominant contemporary priorities. Similarly, it is useful for re-affirming distinction, yet irrelevant to narrow personal progression. Indeed, it is possible that interactions of this kind have an inherent danger for the system. This is that personal involvements with people for whom constant and expected privilege is far from the norm, may lead to a questioning of the structures that influence such differentiation. However, there seems no evidence to suggest that any such 'crisis of ideology' has evolved from these interactions, essentially for the following reasons. First, these pupils, as has constantly been shown, are experiencing all aspects of school life through a habitus dominated by a positive orientation, not simply to the system, but to the principles on which it is based. The result is that while, for those so disposed, personal sympathy is possible, it seems beyond their conceptual

framework to draw a link between their privilege and other people's difficulties. They are regarded as individuals with problems relating solely to them, with notions of 'natural inequality' underlying this. Secondly, the nature of those selected as beneficiaries - usually the aged or disabled or 'apolitical conservation' groups - serves to make the structural links of inequality rather more hidden. Again the first two categories can both be subsumed within notions of individual difficulties and natural processes. While I am not suggesting that help from these schools would necessarily be welcomed in projects with a more obvious class basis, the fact is the issue never arose and 'disadvantage' remains divorced from societal organization.

So, despite actual contradictions and potential resultant complications, the present practice of community work is essentially reproductive in nature. Both its low status and limited participation rates, and the means by which it is activated, contribute to this.

School 'Bars' and Alcohol Consumption

The existence of 'bars' in schools, and/or the nature of legitimate alcohol consumption, in and around an institution in which the vast majority of pupils are below the minimum drinking age, is the area to now be approached. The legality of this is not, in itself, the central point of concern. Instead, the way in which it is integrated into

the whole process of life is paramount. No value judgements on the actual practices are intended, it is their position alongside stated ideology that raises it as an issue.

A brief summary of the variation in practice across schools is of help here. Although there were no bars at school A, pupils were allowed to drink in town on Saturday nights, this being subject to an age restriction of seventeen and a supposed limit of one and a half pints of beer. School B had an extensive network of internal bars - both for individual houses and the school as a whole. Again, drinking was authorized at seventeen years and the various bars opened for limited periods at set times. In practice, though, all male pupils reported unlimited access - though being aware that the 'abuse of privilege' may potentially result in its loss. School C had bar membership at sixteen/seventeen and again restricted opening times but not consumption. The Catholic links of School D made such practices unacceptable while school E was in the process of considering a bar, whilst adopting a pragmatic attitude to external drinking - a similar attitude to that in school F. The evidence was unclear from school G and as a day school, the issue is largely inappropriate to school H. Finally school I had a bar and a starting age of sixteen years with a limit of four pints of beer per week. In practice though, personal supplies were the norm.

As such, except where organizational or ideological reasons made it inappropriate, alcohol can be seen to be a

part of a system of privileges, becoming officially sanctioned or limited as deemed apposite. However, it must be highlighted that the official line and the nature of behaviour actually accepted were often far from the same thing. In fact, the interviewees revealed a state of affairs in which the schools were setting themselves up as legal arbiters, quite independently of national regulations. For instance, Peter described a situation in which the school recognized that the majority of their pupils were at some stage going to a local pub. Fearful of a scandal and resultant effects on intake and political legitimacy, they established their own system of regulations which completely barred the lower years from the pub, while inducing the top year (irrespective of whether they were eighteen or not) to control this. The pay off for this group was that while the official school rule, as written, remained compatible with the law in order to 'cover' the institution:

"there was a verbal announcement ... upper year people were expected to be sensible enough to break the law if they wanted to. But don't get caught". (Interview, Peter.)

Similarly, Craig recalls how as long as the school felt that it was 'covered' then going to the pub was allowed:

"A lot of the masters knew, especially the younger ones and, I think, generally a blind eye was turned to it." (Interview, Craig.)

Even where guidelines were blatantly broken, though,

there was a reported tendency for interpretations of behaviour and consequential actions to be more than a little influenced by wider concerns and perceptions. Again, public relations were all important. For example, John provides a case which describes how, while returning drunk to the school with friends, significant damage was done to the property of the institution, although not with intent. This was, however, completely overlooked by his housemaster in return for a promise of it not being repeated. The interpretation of the event was clearly based on the assumption that it was a transitory deviation, not considering the possibility of genuine significance in the act. 'Moral panics' over working class youth drinking are likely in a similar situation to have led to very different interpretations.

Now, while regulation of drinking was often slack, when it became bound up with the allocation of status positions it was literally non-existent. The prefects at school B had their own bar and, as an expression of the elevated status of these pupils, they were totally on trust. This was fully intended. This is a means by which those heading the official power structures are provided with extra privilege, thereby inducing deeper assimilation.

There is one particular irony in the presence of school bars. Since they were non-profit making concerns these pupils, already experiencing numerous forms of privilege, were receiving drinks at cost price. On this as with all

the other elements, comparison with working class experience is inevitable. Two points in particular are worth emphasis. First, that whatever the legal position, the activity of social drinking under the age of eighteen is one which for working class youth (and other non-public school pupils) runs the risk of prosecution, but which for certain of the elite represents an officially sanctioned privilege. Now, while it may be argued that comprehensive pupils can drink at home this is not the same as a largely unregulated (however artificial) bar environment. Therefore, exactly the same activity, under one set of circumstances runs the risk of confrontation with officialdom, in the other exists at the instigation of authority (as represented by public school staff). Second, the segregated existence of 'private bars' and the legitimation of drinking offered by staff, must help to reinforce self perceptions of distinction and essential separateness. For the privilege associated with this is certainly recognized and the differentiation from the rest of society duly noted. As with so many aspects of the public school experience, where observation occurs without reference to the full range of influences its significance can be overlooked, but once so contextualized, especially having established an empathy for the way in which such issues are interpreted, its place and importance are noted.

To my mind, though, the most compelling aspect of the evidence is the marked disjuncture between the underlying

principles of the institutions and their actual practice. For it is they who are setting the terms of reference within which their own actions must be assessed. The priorities of respect for law and regulation expressed by these bastions of moral absolutes are seen to become clouded when faced with the pragmatic needs of the schools. Law breaking becomes acceptable if it serves to secure their own future. I refer particularly to the attitudes relating to drinking in pubs, but the institutionalized propagation of under-age drinking irrespective of legal restraints surely cannot rest comfortably alongside concerns with 'declining moral standards' - one of the principal rallying calls of the sector. For here, whether considered as part of the system of privileges, or as a means of reproducing conceptions of distinction, or simply as a pragmatic device, the schools are choosing to establish their own regulatory system which, whether legally or morally, departs from the legal structure which is at the heart of their professed vision of social order.

House Practice and House Loyalty

The discussion of 'houses' is required at this point since for some of the aspects of life analyzed above, they provide a significant part of the social context and are the primary point of interaction with authority beyond the classroom. To understand their essential features

facilitates an appreciation of the overall process and its specific components.

Although they are logically consistent with expectations, it is still important to draw attention to the nature of internal power structures. Essentially age related, it is here that both the officially-sanctioned prefect system and the unofficial regimes find their most immediate points of expression. The acceptance of regulation from such sources is central even though this involves, on occasions, the arbitrary abuse of power, which staff were often reluctant to interfere with. This is shown by the case cited by Giles in which his bed boards were smashed by pupils holding authority, yet when this was discovered by teachers at the end of term, it was he who was billed and no doubts were raised as to why someone should vandalize their own bed.

Competition between houses varied in both seriousness and intensity across schools and within them, but there was a definite feeling that it still held an important place. It was the role of the housemaster himself which was generally recognized as important in influencing this, in particular in the selection of the 'type' of pupils he wanted for his house and the extent to which he emphasized specific priorities. Giles elaborates:

"It depends a lot on the housemaster's spirit that he manages to inspire his house ... my housemaster was a bachelor so we were like his family and he really wanted his

house to do well and took a real interest and would protect people in his house to the utmost degree." (Interview, Giles.)

Such protection extended to exercising influence in preventing suspensions and expulsions should the occasion arise.

As for selection of pupils, this was done by certain housemasters with a clear mind to establishing differential practices between houses. For instance, Nigel describes the result as follows:

"each house had its own character, one for sporting nuts, one for 'lads', musicians, Christian no-hopers and that". (Interview, Nigel.)

Housemaster selection was not the only influence however, for family-school interaction was also important, with parents often coming to the school one or two years early to meet housemasters and select the most 'appropriate' house. This has significant implications on two levels. Firstly, it further diminishes the chances of a lack of match between the priorities of the two environments and thereby reinforces the significance attached to specific ways of viewing schooling and, indeed, society. Secondly, this is an activity largely limited to those with long term plans for involvement with private education. Therefore, although some first generation users may be involved, it will be the traditional families who are able to take advantage of this to the greatest extent, further cementing

the potential for a more complete 'sense of belonging'. Pragmatic late-comers, like Jane, whose assisted-place application came at the last minute, cannot establish such an institutional rapport and thus have a further differing basis for future experience.

'House loyalty' has traditionally been a full part of school life and its existence is still very real today, though its intensity is very much related to the evolving character of the schools outlined above. Inevitably, there is some overlap with the priorities and pupil composition of sub-cultural groups, due to the compatibility of certain family, house and group emphases. However, it is not the case that sub-cultural groupings neatly related to house membership, for while tendencies did exist, matters of organization, limits to numbers in houses and the degree of active selection involved in sub-cultural forms resulted in a spreading of group members through the school. Furthermore, as Craig says:

"there was more loyalty to the group than the house". (Interview, Craig.)

However, certain expressions of loyalty did occur, even if they did not have the long term quality of the sub-cultures. AS Peter states:

"the traditional sporting types held greater store by loyalty than the individualists, who were less inclined". (Interview, Peter.)

Therefore, while some houses had a greater tendency to

loyalty than others, this did not automatically induce all of its members to react in this way. Rather the experience was mediated by the same life priorities which dominate throughout. As such, a matching of a traditionally orientated elite sub-culture member with a 'traditional' house held the greatest likelihood of producing high loyalty, but a similar person finding him/herself in a less compatible house could well retain such values, because of inter-house sub-cultural links, to a greater extent than an individualist located in the first house. The influence of house thus appears to be real but limited. The institution impinges upon the stated and/or acted upon priorities of an individual, but while original priorities and interactions remain, the extent of the influence of the house will be mediated by these.

In drawing together the findings of this chapter, despite the diverse content, a common theme is revealed. It is that although on the face of it each of these activities has the potential to work to contradict and/or undermine the school programme in some way, such outcomes are essentially unrecorded. Whether it is the potential tensions induced by the diverse input from wider society, the close proximity of pupils who are (on one level at least), subject to strict physical control, exposure to the disadvantaged or the availability of alcohol, all are experienced through these varying, though largely positively orientated habituses which have been constantly in evidence. Operating within

the context of the compatibility between pupils and schools regarding conceptions of society, their place within it and appropriate means of gaining success, the 'triggers' are lacking for the development of fundamentally negative responses. It is this which makes contradictions peripheral and apparent 'threats' trivial.

CHAPTER 9: The Public School Pupil in Society: Transition, Personal Consequences and Attitudes

This chapter centres on the pupils in post-school life. In the course of this, particularly informative aspects of 'the person so far' will be analyzed. Beginning with the transition itself and the particular difficulties that can accompany this, discussion moves on to those personal characteristics especially worthy of note. The importance of the 'old boy network' during this period is followed by analysis of the attitudes expressed by pupils to key issues of their experience and to society as a whole.

Transition and Personal Reality

Given the largely unproblematic transitions from home to school, and in turn, between schools of various levels, it is the eventual move from public school which perhaps contains the greatest potential for difficulties. Two post-school routes dominate. The first, and less numerically prevalent, is the progression directly to employment. Since these pupils are dominated by elite expectations, and since the means to satisfy these are usually academic credentials achieved beyond the age of sixteen or eighteen it can be deduced and indeed is confirmed by the evidence, that for those who enter employment immediately, the social network is of primary importance. Furthermore, as the influence of this is concentrated in specific occupational areas (eg stockbroking), then the cultural environment, not to mention personal acquaintances found, will be essentially complementary to that previously dominant and thereby problems of adaptation minimized. The second, and most popular route, is to university - a setting in which the pool of appropriately-disposed people (especially given the public school emphasis on certain universities and colleges) is extensive and the possibilities for following a similar pattern of life confirmed.

Thus, most ex-pupils are able to re-establish their style of life, one which is closely related to the values and background of surrounding people. The organizational

contexts within which this occurs are problematic for some. Most pupils, however, can interpret and handle them in a manner suiting their requirements and manage to retain a distance from those aspects of the new environment not consistent with their ideological perspectives. To take universities for example, while their class composition is far from representative of the social structure, there is significant working class participation and clearly a greater social range than at public school. Yet the friendships of those interviewed, while not limited to ex-public school pupils, (though with certain sub-cultural forms this is so - see Chapter 6), rarely extended beyond the middle class. Even those of a liberal disposition, such as Rachel, in practice retain a group of friends with a high degree of homogeneity of social class and, importantly, of emphasis and priorities. Simon for instance states:

"I'd say most of my friends are middle class, there's no-one who is rich or wealthy." (Interview, Simon.)

He both identifies a smooth transition to a similar type of friend and confirms that acquaintance with the elite remained absent. Transition and progression thus continue in a relatively unchanging manner due both to the structural context and the active choices of the participants.

The significance of the perpetuation of certain forms and priorities for the ease of transition is demonstrated by situations where the fundamental match is absent. The 'unusual' choice by Charles of a career in art/photography

took him, in the first instance, to a college whose priorities were as much on the day release (mainly working class) printers as on the 'art students'. His inability to interact in any genuine way with the day release pupils, and his essential ignorance of them, were the principal characteristics of the period. To be sure, hostility from sections of the printers was real enough, but judging by his comments he felt completely out of place even where this was not occurring.

It is important, though, not to assume that difficulties will only evolve in circumstances like the above for even university, with all its similarity of clientele, and indeed to a large extent of priorities, does offer a certain organizational variation. Not only this but the actual act of leaving such a clearly structured institution as a public school can raise difficulties. The following is a list of features which can complicate the process and which, if experienced together, can cause some disquiet for the individual. In cases where only a few apply, specific outcomes inevitably relate to their nature and the person involved, though in general those organizational dimensions seem less independently influential than those relating to social and cultural continuity. The process of transition is rendered more difficult by the following circumstances:

i. where the school was the central organizing feature of life to an extent beyond the norm, with few/no outside

friends or potential for interactions;

ii. where there was little experience of society and the lives of other social classes;

iii. where maintaining daily or regular contact with an established group of friends is impossible;

iv. where patterns of interactions cannot be maintained because the class and cultural form and content of people's activities in the new setting is markedly different from that previously experienced;

v. where the school continued to exert a high degree of control and influence, right until leaving.

The importance of seeing these in relation to individuals and as part of a whole is clear. For example, many of the elite sub-culture members would experience points i, ii and possibly v, but the lack of applicability of iv and probably iii minimizes the significance of other factors.

These elements have a very particular affinity to the specific institutional form of public school life. The isolated life, the extent of controls and the social and attitudinal narrowness are all potentially problematic. The repercussions are, however, for the most part reduced by the continuing complementary nature of the environment. And while any truly significant psycho-social consequences will inevitably reveal themselves, those borne of institutional disparity are largely dependent upon the specific life components, as outlined, for the extent of

their effects.

One of the most striking and immediate features of the post-school transition is the sudden (relative) lack of compulsion, as that control long at the heart of life is largely superseded by differing principles underlying personal relations. As will be seen its significance in this period closely relates to perceptions of it at school. Indeed, recognition of the differentiation between the practical and the ideological bases of experience is observed to be just as relevant as when previously applied.

Of initial concern, therefore, is how far the shift from control represented an important practical aspect of post-school life for these pupils. Not surprisingly, this was dependent upon the extent to which it had been regarded by him/her as seriously impinging on everyday freedoms. For example, Robert and Rachel, who had both found the controls very difficult to handle, though for very different reasons, were keen to express the pleasure they gained from their new environment. Interestingly, though, persistent worries about 'going too far' continued to reveal the school's ideological influence. A contrasting example of consistency with patterns of school life is provided by Charles and Nigel, for whom control had not been a significant issue and who identified no particular problems in the transition. These are but specific examples which show how the reactions on this dimension related closely to stressed school time concerns, thereby both reinforcing the genuine

nature of these earlier stated accounts and stressing their continued relevance for the pupil.

This period of a shift away from controls can offer very real potential for certain ex-pupils to engage in the re-assessment of certain personal orientations and priorities, difficult in the confined school atmosphere. It should be made clear, however, that pupils do not question the bases of ideological affinity - with their strength deriving from the family-school relationship, these remained essentially solid. Similarly, not all pupils are affected by this, but those who had problems of priority or personal concerns were able to consider these once away from the school. This is not to suggest that the remainder of the pupils did not continue to develop personally, rather that in their accounts the stress was on continuity and not the appraisal and incorporation of wider considerations.

For Anthony, the first year at university provided the setting in which he was able to consider the nature of his sexuality, something which had been causing him problems for several years, though he had previously been unable to give serious consideration to it. Indeed, it was his ability to accept being gay which he felt to be the most important aspect of his immediate post-school period.

The extensive pre-public school experiences of Rachel certainly influenced her need to approach the world from a wider perspective. Therefore, she says how for her the

chance to consider ideas such as vegetarianism and matters relating to the environment, without necessarily becoming associated with them, was something which she greatly appreciated, stressing how this was beyond the possibilities inherent in school life:

"At school things are very male dominated, very conservative, it's very narrow actually in its views and all the pupils there - none of them really branch out, they don't get the chance to, there's no opportunity to, whereas here [university] you have a whole new set of ideas, just new ways of thinking which didn't exist at school." (Interview, Rachel.)

Similar examples from other subjects are found with religion and the re-ordering of priorities between academia and extra-curricular activities. Despite this variation of content two conclusions are clear:

1. that the narrowness of perspective which dominates public school life, while largely acceptable and compatible with the dispositions and priorities of participants, including those cited above, is absolutely inappropriate to the personal needs of the same people, should any deviation from prescribed norms develop;
2. that such personal re-assessments and re-organizations can certainly co-exist with established ideological foundations. There is nothing to suggest that despite the qualms expressed, those involved would come up with

a 'form' of behaviour that would be anything but appropriate to the long-term emphases of the school.

It is to the continuing influence of an ethos grounded in control and compulsion that I now turn. For it is my contention that pupils are organized and operate on such bases, and whether accompanied by the kinds of developments outlined above or not, they continue to influence the manner in which future relations are entered into. Drawing, in particular, on the university example, two dominant manifestations can be observed - one of which is coupled with some specificity of background, the other revealing a generalized impact.

The first of these is the perception that a lack of compulsion is essentially the same thing as weakness, inferiority, low status and is consequently associated with lack of success in any given field. There is a very real split here between those pupils with a limited range of experience and/or dogmatic parents and those with experiences beyond the sector and of less 'conservative' families. It is important to appreciate that this is a matter of degree, though, with the latter pupils certainly not rejecting these as bases of order, as at least a partial means to an end, but rather allowing for the possibility of more flexible arrangements. The former group, although principally of traditional families, also drew from those first generation families with a deep commitment to the idea of positive results emanating primarily from strict

discipline. The attitude of Anthony to the freer intellectual climate of university epitomizes this mentality and its problematic nature for the transition:

"You can get away with so much, I mean at school if we'd been set some work to do, and we said oh I haven't done it because I couldn't find the book, they would say, what sort of excuse is that? and they would really lay into you, 'cos obviously you'd have gone to see the teacher and said I can't find the book and he would say, here you are you can borrow mine, or look at this one instead. And here when you go off to seminars and you're meant to have read a book and he says what's the so and so reference and you'd say I couldn't find the book, and he'd say oh yes, fine, that's alright and I'd think oh God, this is pathetic, and they get away with murder here." (Interview, Anthony)

Therefore, both the tutors and the system are being regarded with contempt. In not pushing to exert control, one important link between authority figures and personal ideology is broken. As such, it is the stress on the possession and exercising of power by those in authority as 'the' means of achievement, which marks out the defining quality of this outlook.

The second manifestation presents itself as a behavioural consequence of the inculcation of this form of power structure. Subjects repeatedly talked of the <u>need</u> for compulsion as an element of their academic study - the fact that without deadlines and/or the threat of sanctions they

are unable to motivate themselves. Socialization into a structure dependent upon compulsion led to significant problems in the post-school environment and serving to reveal an attitude to 'learning' in general of such narrowness - devoid of personal priority - as to serve as a further indictment of such 'spoon-feeding'. Anthony continues:

"If you don't want to do things then they really don't push you and they think it's your choice. I get really pissed off with it and you need to be pushed because if people don't push you, then you don't do things. I only do preparation for tutorials if I know I've been told to read this, that and the other and the tutor is frightening enough to make me work ... we just get away with so much it appals me at times. I just can't believe it, terrible." (Interview, Anthony.)

While students not preparing for tutorials is hardly specific to ex-public school pupils, it is the manner in which this is discussed that is so revealing. The desperate need for compulsion is apparent, stemming from a recognition that work should be done, yet the individual lacks the personal impetus to manage this. A combination of feelings ranging from regarding certain tutors as 'pathetic' to actually enjoying this same freedom, the continual acknowledgement of the importance of academia, yet a personal inability to organize the self all interact to produce a confused state in which attitudes so compatible

with public school life are retained, despite their explicit inappropriateness, alongside a fundamental belief in their absolute (somehow timeless) dominance. The retention of established ideological principles in a less compatible environment ensures that the process has a more uncertain quality than at school.

The implications of this process are apparent. Firstly, it is certainly possible that reliance on a narrow mode of learning may contribute to a statistically poorer performance of ex-pupils at university. Of course, an absolute assessment of the relative significance of this against other factors is beyond the scope of the present study, but the potential is noted. Secondly, there is the damage that these findings present to the image that the sector cultivates of producing a certain maturity in the organization of personal work. Discussion of this was independently raised, in one manner or another, by all respondents of school B - indicating how much this was a part of the internal image building of the school. It is interesting to note that only one ex-pupil (Fiona) actually adopted the school line in insisting that comprehensive school pupils were less academically 'mature', whereas for the others, the glaring discrepancy between the spoon-feeding of school and the requirements of later life was all too clear. A third and much wider implication can also be advanced. In moving into positions of authority in wider society, it is apparent that pupils retain a perspective

regarding co-operative behaviour as weak and a uni-directional exercise of power as 'effective', with the associated results for the managing of class inequality that this entails.

Therefore, while it is certainly true that in the post-school transition - given institutional and cultural compatibility - continuity is often dominant, there are variables which can alter the progression somewhat. At the core of these is the school reliance on, followed by the sudden lack of, compulsion. Both in terms of personal assessments and of underlying considerations of the meaning and organization of academia, this influence continues well beyond the school gates, ingrained in the consciousness of the pupils.

Evolved Consequence: Arrogance

In looking at 'the person so far', one evolved cultural disposition is so pronounced that it is incumbent upon the researcher to give it particular attention. It is a manifestation of the self definitions of those involved and inseparable from the impetus to distinction which is at the forefront of public school ideology. It is 'arrogance' that I am referring to.

It is initially important to realize that the term 'arrogance' is not one imposed by myself as an outsider, but rather was one which appeared and re-appeared regularly

in the writings of, and conversations with, the ex-pupils. It is therefore, of rather more than descriptive significance, being for them a genuine part of the character of the setting as a whole and those within it. As such, although one might expect it to be used as a derogatory term, in reality subjects not only ascribed it to others and to the overall situation, but also in quite large numbers to themselves. The possession of this quality induced pride or at least satisfaction. It is interesting that of the (very few) subjects who did not ascribe the characteristic to themselves, there was no less emphasis on it as a generalized reality, nor any serious disjuncture between their apparent manner and objective goals and perspective and those of the other ex-pupils. The differing emphasis of the majority was concerned with the extent to which it was an acquired or 'natural' characteristic, but its widespread identification as a symbol of the sector, and the appreciation of the sector as essentially superior, protected its presence. The presence of 'arrogance' does not imply any genuine personal qualities or skills. It refers to a way of viewing the world and a perception of a personal place within it.

The existence of 'arrogance' as a component of public school life, and the particular subjective meanings which become ascribed to it, ensures that the issue of definition is one fraught with pitfalls. Despite being a word in common usage, its use in this context has a specificity

which makes translation somewhat difficult. However, certain of the more objective elements in its make up can be identified. An unimpeachable self confidence exhibited as a matter of course is its central expression, alongside a perception that whatever the situation its possessors are invariably the ones with the greatest and most appropriate input. It is, though, the manner in which these components become integrated into a whole that provides its most characteristic quality and prevents one from reducing it to one aspect alone.

As recognized above, 'arrogance' was noted as both a generalizable trait and as a real and positively regarded personal characteristic. These can be examined in turn. Nigel's awareness of a cultural disparity, on arriving at public school, has already contributed to the analysis, and drawn from his life-story, the following offers a neat summary of his perception of the difference:

"the mark of the public school was easy to spot - the confidence/arrogance". (Life-Story, Nigel.)

During the interview he continued:

"that there was this kind of underlying old school attitude which encouraged people to be pretentious and arrogant".

Simon concurred on this issue, stating:

"I think it's true to say that public school does make you more self confident and arrogant." (Interview, Simon.)

While the continuous barrage of such statements is

extremely illustrative, it is where subjects talk of their own relationships to this that the evidence achieves greater significance.

This can be taken a step further by differentiating between newcomers and traditional pupils. For the first generation pupils there was obviously no cultural foundation for the development of this institutionally related characteristic, though this did not hinder its development. The example of Nigel is particularly interesting. Here, he states:

"I didn't have any confidence, so going to public school gave me some of that. I picked up some of the social swagger which I have been maligning all the way through." (Interview, Nigel.)

Therefore, despite an initial contempt for these practices, the identification of this manner with 'success' fostered its development. Of course, as is clear from the sub-cultural analysis, this is not indicative of an even distribution of qualitatively identical characteristics, but it is demonstrating the power of a dominant disposition to influence perceptions of what is worthy of adopting. Craig demonstrates a similar adaptation and at the same time offers a fervent legitimation of it, beginning with the general and focussing on the personal:

"People were definitely self confident, I am now since I've been there. I feel that is what the school does instil in you. I can't think of anyone who came out of the school

who isn't self confident. I think it produced an arrogance in me and I'm quite proud of that. I think generally it's a good thing. I think most people would say I'm arrogant." (Interview, Craig.)

Clearly, this was a vital part of schooling for Craig. Here as elsewhere two recurrent words appear - confidence and arrogance. It is important not to regard them as two terms for the same characteristic, nor indeed, as two entirely separate elements. Rather the reality of each depends on the existence of the other. While self confidence reveals the expectation of success, arrogance is endemic to this, therefore a part of it, and the means by which it is articulated.

The nature of the characteristic can be further illuminated by reference to the example of John, who to re-cap is of great wealth, inter-generational public school family and by his own admission (and objective standards) of limited academic prowess.

"I think I am arrogant. I think arrogance is an indicator of public school life. And some people say arrogance is a way of looking down on certain people, and I think classing yourself as an arrogant person is that, but is also broader. Arrogance is saying you're always right even when you're definitely wrong - being arrogant just for the sake of it. I think saying people from public school background are like this is true. The main point of arrogance for me is I make a point of saying that they were

wrong and I was right when someone disagrees with me." (Interview, John.)

For John arrogance is a personal characteristic central to his definition of himself. The fact that he has no objective measures of his capabilities is irrelevant to him. The confidence and arrogance to correct people is almost beyond his conscious control, and is an expression of who he is and how he has come to perceive himself.

Given its universality, therefore, the question inevitably arises as to why it should evolve in such a manner. The importance of class and institutional realities are heavily implicated in this, with the nature of various aspects of personal and sector wide processes, previously uncovered, also being recognized.

I have described, through both the historical survey and contemporary evidence, how the very raison d'etre of public schools has been the preservation or production of distinction by which its participants are able to distance themselves from the bulk of society, not only occupationally, but culturally as well. The actual means of achieving certain positions may have varied within and between generations (guaranteed Oxbridge places, academia, Old Boy network, etc) but the cultural significance of attendance has never diminished. As pointed out in Chapter 6, it is not simply that public schools tolerate elements of distinction, they actually need them, otherwise their own legitimacy and significance could be called into question.

Thereby, the perfect institutional setting is provided for a characteristic which is above all concerned with conveying a dominance over the environment and a superiority over other participants. Therefore, the arrogant disposition can be seen to be a personal manifestation of the elitist processes described, and in which, it can be recalled, the official school figures of authority play a not insignificant part. The separation from other classes, the negative attitudes towards them, the bolstering of expectations through rhetoric, all contribute to the actual atmosphere of institutions. Furthermore, in analyzing a characteristic in which style is as important as content, teachers as role models must be included. The way in which their message is presented is not neutral but conveys the same influences already discussed, and they themselves are not divorced from the priorities around them, but are the translators of them.

Moreover, the organizational reliance on hierarchy and the inevitability of achieving some form of elevated age-related status was seen by some subjects as providing an important support to this. For instance, Giles states:

"I suppose that's why public school people come out with the aura of being very self confident in that by the time they've left they think they know what's going on in school and they translate that into the idea that they think they know what's going on outside school and that they are always right." (Interview, Giles.)

While his emphasis on this perhaps over-plays its independent significance, it is certainly a supportive mechanism.

As for the nature of the pupils themselves, the strength of desire for individual dominance, in whatever form, makes them the all-too-happy activators of personal practices couched in the prescribed terms of the institution. Indeed, several subjects recounted how the reverence ascribed to the public school as an essentially superior place of education, fostered personal arrogance by virtue of simply having gained the chance to attend.

It would be inaccurate, however, to regard this characteristic arrogance as a single definite entity which can be acquired in the same sense by all participants. While the above-mentioned conditions are applicable to all pupils, the element of process must be incorporated into the analysis. As such, the elements of habitus and sub-culture stressed throughout act here as mediating influences with the result that we can distinguish a continuum with certain important similarities to that used to describe the nature of assumptions and expectations in Chapter 5. The difference between the extremes of the continuum rests on the degree to which the arrogance was learned as opposed to 'naturally' evolving. The first generation pupils tended to identify a sense in which they were drawing on something in some respects distant from them, whereas for the traditional pupils this was very much absent - they were certainly

aware of how the school had helped to develop characteristics, but did not regard the school as being responsible for this. It was the feeling of partial detachment and gratitude in the manner of the non-traditionalists that was distinctive. Of course, being a continuum, at some points representatives of the two categories would appear very close and, indeed, the degree of arrogance expressed by the first generation was often as intense as by the traditional pupils. However, there was a discernibly different edge to many of their statements, which was simply not present elsewhere. Career expectations were talked of in terms of degrees of personal control over destiny but, for instance, the language of John and Robert had a more definite quality than that of Jane and Craig. (A characteristic fitting the overall pictures of the subjects as presented throughout.) It must be remembered, though, that this discussion is of degrees of emphasis, with the first generation having attained the manner and the expectations of the elite, but being prepared to accept the possible role of external variables, though certainly not to the extent of being dominated by them.

It has been my primary concern in drawing attention to this facet of personal development in the sector to appreciate its position and existence as indicative of much of what the sector is all about. If the possession and expression of 'arrogance' communicates one thing above all else it is the self perception that as a person, and as a

member of a particular sub-group, sector or class, its holders are unquestionably socially distinct. While much of the discussion has focussed on the school years, the issue also has an ingrained long-term (at least in terms of the immediate post-school years) significance, since it is a symbolic and practical means of establishing the parameters of interaction with the social world.

It is illuminating, therefore, to focus further on the immediate post-school experience, for the ex-pupils enter this period with a set of perceptions highly amenable to a particular way of manipulating institutions. Two points of significance can immediately be identified. Firstly, that the post-school institutions will tend to be dominated by principles or people with whom they share at least partial cultural similarity. Such institutions, whose staff often come from public schools, and/or are often at least middle class have a recognized and understandable form, despite potentially differing contents. Second, there is the recognition of this by participants, coupled with the expectation that they will be able to interact with these institutions on their own terms and get precisely what they want from them. It is illustrative to note, for instance, that no subjects ever expressed concern about structural unemployment and how this may affect their development - such considerations were incompatible with the developed elite image and were regarded as the problem of others.

At this point, it is appropriate to illustrate the kind

of attitudes involved in this, and in doing so, illuminate the nature of the continuum introduced above. Of those at university, the nonchalance attached to study was striking. For example, in discussing potential degree class, the only restriction was seen to be the level of personal effort. The question of whether or not they had the ability to get the highest possible grade was never raised, it was a simple matter of personal choice. Now, while in some cases the established academic record acts to legitimize such a view, this was in no way a pre-requisite of its presence. Its general existence was probably supported by the tendency for those most subject to the 'reality principle' to, in the main, be those most academically orientated and, therefore, to have gained an objective backup to these expectations.

The confidence that subjects displayed in their ability to manipulate institutions became even more concentrated in relation to career development. John's arrogance, without objective basis, here reaches a further level of intensity. For having gained a 'start' through the social network (see later this chapter) he then formulated a detailed and timetabled plan for progression which included taking up positions in the Far East in the near future. It is the uncompromising belief in self worth, unaffected by recognized personal inadequacies, which is noteworthy. The bank to him was little more than an extension of the cultural milieu with which he was familiar - the promise and delivery of status in earlier institutions being assumed to

be directly transferable to the adult environment.

It is interesting to recognize that such confidence is not limited to the traditional pupils. For despite the variation noted, certain first generation pupils talked in a manner not unrecognizable to their 'traditional' peers. This provides an important illustration of the potential for complexity inherent in an analysis incorporating the active role of the pupils in mediating institutional priority. However, it is clear that those full fee-paying long-term first generations pupils did display a greater complementary nature than the scholarship and/or short-term subjects. Simon's case is illustrative here. For despite having developed great personal confidence, both via school assimilation and examination success and having no qualms about stating that he is looking for, and expecting, a first class honours degree, in discussing post-graduate work there is an element of realism in his recognition of the competitive nature of this environment. This is not perceived as a threat as such, but it does show that he is aware of the possible role of external influences, which is either absent or ignored by traditional pupils.

So to the significance of this. Whether or not these characteristics actually assist in fostering success in any direct sense is not really the point. What is important to demonstrate is the widespread existence of this mentality and the way in which it influences the form of relationships within post-school institutions. It is the

personal expression of a cultural affinity, a mode of behaviour which attempts to confirm the agenda in their terms and begins with the assumption of success and/or progression until proved otherwise. Moreover, even in the face of objective evidence feelings of inherent superiority remain undented.

The latter element of the analysis, therefore, deals in part with the unwavering expectation of success and it may be argued that this is actually an accurate appraisal, by the pupils, of their situation. As a partial explanation, this is indeed so, but what is important is that whether elite progression is by means of academic nurturing/spoon-feeding, the old boy network or personal ability, the arrogance at its heart is all about personal superiority. While for some this is shaped by a personal assessment of the situation,it has a reality beyond this. Therefore, this expectation ensures that whatever the occupational destination, those entering institutions at levels of influence will shape the operationalization of power therein with clear consequences for future patterns of social distinction . Once in positions of influence the means by which they attained them is unlikely to merit consideration. Instead, the conceptions of personal superiority may well be seen to be justified by presence in a given occupational role and legitimation for the exercising of power in a particular form is provided.

Evolved Consequence: 'Social Incompetence'

It has been argued throughout that expressed arrogance can be most accurately interpreted as an external manifestation of culture and priority. There was, though, a further more personal consequence of intense involvement with the system. Again, its importance was identified by the subjects themselves, for it was they who quite independently argued that a 'social incompetence' - be it located in the sphere of relationships or in less specifically defined personal priorities - was a reality of life for a significant number of them.

Without exception the pupils who were identified in this regard were those with a long term, essentially boarding experience of schooling. Although primarily 'traditional' male pupils, where first generation pupils followed the boarding prep-public school process, they too were implicated. For it is the concentration on certain aspects of socialization coupled with the isolated existence and the evolution of a separate mentality that is implicated here. As such, the priorities of the established public school family again fit the bill perfectly, though certain narrow family priorities and early public school attendance can make this more widespread. The kind of emphases alluded to is made clear by Charles. In discussion two years after leaving school he was perfectly prepared to describe himself as in some ways 'personally underdeveloped'.

Although earlier he had noted that he had never had a one-to-one intimate relationship, he did not explicitly make the link with his 'inadequacy' here. Instead, he attempted to legitimize his life in terms of phases of one third. The first twenty five years were assigned for career development. For him, interpersonal relationships and personal development of any sort were incompatible with this and, therefore, reserved for attention in later phases. This specific approach will, I suggest, have been influenced by his individualist rather than sub-group identity, which implies that numerous other outcomes are possible. The starting point and priorities of life which this exemplifies are, though, apparent.

In relation to the school environment, it was the introduction of female pupils which provided the most obvious catalyst to the expression of the issue under analysis. In particular, I am referring to sixth form entry, although co-education at thirteen was for some problematic enough given the perpetual reinforcement of traditional attitudes. It is important to remember that responses evolve against a background of habitus formation, chances for interactions with females of whatever nature, a school ethos which maintains reverence for traditional emphases, and an individual's peer influences.

As such, a particular range of responses was observed. Some pupils displayed concerted sexual interest (often with accompanying gender stereotypes), others accepted female

presence as 'normal' (often those who had experienced co-education in the past), while others identified it as a real intrusion into their lives. Here, buried within a 'boys together' mentality, was both the feeling that valued elements of school were being lost and a realization that a relationship based on inter-personal awareness or any degree of equal perception or personal maturity was simply beyond their established practices. John's account displays both a reactionary attitude to their presence and a realization that relationships not based upon clear understandings of power/status or team spirit were beyond his range of knowledge. He states:

"I didn't socialize a lot with the girls at school. I found that a very difficult aspect and a lot of the people did as well. I don't think it's [co-education] a good thing and now it is completely mixed. I don't think it is a very good idea at all. I'm not very interested in that sort of thing - girls. I've got my sport and charity events and things." (Interview, John.)

The introduction of female students thus seems to have encouraged some pupils to cling to and intensify those practices which formed the backbone of their schooling. Despite variations between individuals links with personal and institutional emphases are clearly implicated. It was the trivialization of developmental personal relationships, in comparison with other public school concerns, which was the common feature.

It is not the intention here to discuss the desirability or universality of one-to-one relationships or to focus on the stereotyped image of the public school gay. What is at issue is the nature of a process and the limitation of options this inspires. Having said that, though, it would be irresponsible to gloss over the existence of teachers who can be closely allied with the established image of the socially or sexually inadequate, for they continue to be a reality within the power structure, influencing the context of pupil development. The extent of their presence is unclear, but the accounts of ex-pupils, confirm that it still exists. For instance, Nigel describes that it was not the existence of homosexuality at school that was particularly problematic, but the manner of some teachers:

"I have met homosexuals since school and they are really good blokes, no problem at all. At school, staff homosexuals were basically dirty old men ... little boys every now and then." (Interview, Nigel.)

He continued that while it wasn't regarded positively in school, homosexuality was known about and continued unaffected. The example cited earlier of Jane's headmaster - suspended for similar sexual practices - further confirms its existence.

Thus, just as external arrogance characterizes the products of the modern sector, so too does the relatively peculiar manifestation of social incompetence - although for

fewer pupils. Self assurance serves to gloss over personal contradictions. For instance, John recounts how he took pride in his paternalistic role of helping youngsters in their development through school - his own personal inadequacies never being regarded by him as diminishing his right to do so.

Peter drew attention to the problems of many pupils and in doing so refers to the importance for their development of their isolated nature. He continued:

"Suddenly, they (girls) were thrust upon them and they didn't know what to do." (Interview, Peter.)

For him it was predominantly a problem on the social level which could extend, in some cases, to the sexual, and furthermore, he was sure of its long-term relevance.

"I think it would be naive to think they wouldn't still be having problems with their relationships now (age 20), because I don't think it will have changed that dramatically since they left school and some of them had been segregated from day one as far as school was concerned. Some of them would get over it and some would remain bachelors for the rest of their lives."

Finally, although Peter highlighted cases of gay pupils, he re-affirmed that the difficulties were concerned with the formation of intimate relationships and not their content.

Several conclusions can be drawn. The first and most important is that, from the accounts of those actually

involved in the sector, for a significant number of participants the consequence of schooling is social and/or sexual incompetence. Although a range of contributory factors are implicated, the narrow conception of education, the basis of interpersonal relationships in power and status and the lack of interest in genuine social development in school are held as central. Through an appropriate habitus, peer reinforcements, physical isolation and cultural priority, some pupils are particularly likely to be affected. Significant numbers of pupils, because of breaks or particular components of the process, are far less affected. Secondly, the issue serves as an interesting juxtaposition to the analysis of arrogance, again re-affirming the arbitrary nature of the elitism inherent in it. Thirdly, it provides evidence that personal and sexual incompetents in the staff of public schools are far from merely being of historical interest. This leads to the final point that the whole subject matter of this phase of analysis provides evidence on 'the person so far' rather inconsistent with the emphasis in the sector's presentation on'full' 'well rounded' education.

The 'Old Boy' Network

In the present 'image conscious' era, the sector's desire for achievements to be seen as meritocratic in origin rather than the consequence of covert, class inspired,

influence has been at the forefront of the quest for legitimation. As such, we are witness to a further example of an aspect of contemporary schooling, perceived as unhelpful in relation to the public debate and frequently described as of historical relevance only. Once again, the analysis is based upon the participants own interpretation of the situation.

It is to the role of the 'old boy network' that I am referring. Whether we talk of 'social capital' or the 'social network', the theme is the same, i.e., the potential to gain occupational and social advantage through covert means or influence rather than objective skills. Differentiation can be made here between the formal, school-based organizations of ex-pupils and the informal mechanisms assisting progression. At times, distinction between the two becomes less than clear, especially when the traditional (and group orientated) families are heavily represented in both. Bearing this in mind, it is the latter which is concentrated on here.

Perhaps as much as in any single element of schooling, disparity between different pupil forms is apparent. This can be illuminated by reference to the dual terms of general and personal influence. All subjects were convinced that simply the fact that they had been to public school ensured a general advantage for them, solely by the school's name appearing on an application form. Time and again subjects referred to how, when faced with comprehensive school

competition of the same academic calibre, they would expect to get the post. The presence of so many ex-public school pupils in positions of influence is implicated here. Beyond this, however, there was clear evidence of a more limited (numerically but not in terms of consequence) but far more specific set of influences at work. Here, those personal connections identified as being consistent with an 'old boy network' are confirmed. Both by structure and inclination, it is the traditionally orientated public school families that are central here. The inter-generational involvement of the group-inspired participants serves to establish a range of friendships and points of access and the mentality of class loyalty inspires their activation. The situation, however, extends beyond this, in that individual parents in positions of influence in wider society can exercise that to the advantage of their son/daughter. In these cases it is not necessary to be group inspired or second/third generation. However, three points are important in this regard:

1. Amongst scholarship/first generation parents the potential for this would be greatly limited - the oft-found occupation of teaching, for instance, being hardly conducive to it.
2. It would not occupy such a place of priority in thinking, although this does not mean that it would be rejected if appropriate circumstances arose.
3. Though of definite importance to the individual, the

network of influence is limited rather than far reaching. For instance, Chris's father was able to gain well paid and prestigious vacation work for him due to his own successful position but this was a purely family matter and while the tentacles of influence may perhaps be used later, they are restricted to limited-range contacts. Reference to the experiences of other pupils can further illuminate this issue.

Craig was clear that simply having been to public school was a help to him in the general sense, but when it came to personal connections he was not aware of any help being available, despite knowing of certain 'old boys' who had been 'helped' to careers in the city. Thus, despite his unusual personal evolution in moving to the periphery of an elite group, this did not provide access to the social network for him, although the relatively low status of the school may have meant that its potential was less here than elsewhere.

Peter describes both institutional and social links at his school. The school, he stated, was largely financed by a highly successful company in London and, providing a career in finance was sought, he saw little problem in obtaining a post. As for the more informal mechanisms he added:

"if they got in touch with their friend's Daddy, he might be able to help them find a job". (Interview, Peter.)

But he was keen to point out that this was restricted in extent and located in the upper reaches of the pupil hierarchy.

Giles was adamant on the split between pupils in this matter, stating:

"It would be second and third generation. I don't think they would help you get a job if you were first generation, but if you were second or third and your father knew a person and you knew their son or your times almost coincided, then I think that would help you." (Interview, Giles.)

Continuing, he adds that the careers of "stockbroking ... firms of accountants [and] in law as well" were most amenable to this. Furthermore in describing the operation of the network he states:

"whereby one person gets to a certain age and starts looking for a career, their father might turn round and say: well, I know so and so who's in advertising or whatever, go and have a chat with him and see if he can tell you something useful".

While in relation to the internal elite this was widely considered highly relevant, it was only the value of the name which was recognized as influential by other subjects.

It is to the experiences of John and his contemporaries that I now turn. Early in his life-story he claimed:

"As in all walks of life it is who you know that counts." (Life-Story, John.)

The significance of this was indeed to be revealed. Earlier (Chapter 6) I described the post-school relevance of the sub-cultural affinities developed at John's school and noted how the school's particular nature accounted for its high numbers of traditional pupils. At the end of the fifth year, a large number of pupils left and John stated that a full half of those leaving went directly to 'the City', virtually en masse, to take up positions either in the same firms or else geographically and occupationally near to each other. This provided the basis for continued interaction. It is the way these careers were established that is important, with social networks being identified as significant, especially when it was confirmed that all these pupils could be classed as 'traditional'. Although John himself was not involved in this move to the City, he was keen to outline the influence of his social network. At a charity meeting, which included the local financial and social elite and members of his family, the following occurred:

"I was just sitting down talking to someone I had known for a long time over here. I had actually worked for him part-time in the summer, looking after his house and his swimming pool, things like that and we've played cricket together and I knew his children very well - all three of them were at my school funnily enough. And he said how's the job going? and I said I was pretty fed up with it and I was looking for something in finance. And he said there's

Mr Johnson over there and he's just started running a large bank. Have a chat with him and I had a word with him and obviously he said right come and see me Monday morning. I got the job there and then." (Interview, John.)

Moreover, now ingrained in the system, he describes how he is very much a part of its perpetuation:

"it's just a knock-on effect really, in that you see an advertisement in your circular going round the bank saying someone wanted for a couple of years. Oh there's someone I went to school with who's unemployed or he's just finishing university, I'll give him a ring saying there's a job going at our place. It happens like that and it's just trying to help people along".

It is important both to acknowledge the existence of this form of influence, and to see it within the whole set of class and cultural practices. In this way, both its presence as a prop to differentiation and the limited spread of this social capital can be understood. For 'distinction' both between the sector and those beyond, and within the sector itself is as much an imperative here as at any other point.

Form

As a precursor to discussion of the content of attitudes and values, it is informative to consider briefly the 'form' within which they exist. Following Bertaux-Wiame[1], attention is centred on those aspects of life through which subjects relate their stories and in doing so reveal the 'shape of the mind'. Thus it is the 'mode of telling' that is significant, the selected areas and themes highlighted in the discussion of life. Although interviews were question directed and thereby established on terms set by myself, the impetus for the questions often came from the individual life-stories. Moreover, although some guidance was given in the writing of this first stage, priorities and emphases were entirely the responsibility of the individual. Also, having assessed the 'form' of individual lives, the conclusions were presented to respondents for comment. In this way extraneous conclusions were avoided.

There was a great similarity of form across the subjects. Whereas the quest for work and family concerns were the dominant male and female forms respectively in Bertaux-Wiame's study, here it was the priorities of formal authority which experiences were constantly related to. In particular, stories were related to the desire to confirm

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1 I Bertaux-Wiame 1981 op cit p259

or establish their status as an individual, which was seen as being greater than the norm. There was variation in content within and between schools, with differing emphases on academic achievement and cultural distinction but the competitivism, however expressed, was central. Similarly, personal priorities were very much of secondary importance. As such, experiences were largely discussed in relation to 'the system' they were going through and how these affected chances for satisfying priorities. For instance, Chris confirmed the following to be the dominant personal leanings which shaped his life to date:

"an identification with the official line, respect for the status quo, an interest in academic study and sport, an untroubled life". (Interview, Chris.)

Thus in this case there is recognition that the form is based on school priorities, with aspects of content evolving from this.

It should be clarified that I am not pushing the analysis toward determinism or reducing the significance of individual mediation, rather it is as an identification of the parameters of action that form is so important. Moreover, it is also true that where life experiences had a distinctive character, stories were told in relation to wider emphases, though importantly without loss of the elite and conformist orientation. For example, Rachel concentrated much of her work on an 'idyllic childhood', constantly relating development to this. Her unusual, well

travelled and family centred upbringing may have been influential for her as may a particular manifestation of the gender split noted by Bertaux-Wiame. Although from a distinctly differing environment, the traditional gender differences are clearly relevant to her situation. Also Craig's 'illegitimate' birth, a factor of long term emotional significance to him, accompanied other constant points of reference though without replacing them.

So what can one conclude about the 'shape of mind' of these subjects? It seems clear that through their affinity with specific points of reference, they are revealing much of their 'selves' and the family and school priorities with which they are inextricably linked. In the quest for status, for power, for achievement - be it aggressive and bigoted or couched in meritocratic principles - it is a form which necessarily subjugates interpersonal concerns, alignments and co-operation not based on class distinction. In essence, the consistently revealed form is one stressing a 'conformity of spirit' in establishing dominant priorities of class and cultural specificity.

Principal Attitudes on Education, Gender and Politics

The level of importance attached to academia in the values of pupils has been a consistent issue in the research. Because of this, further evidence relating to pupil priorities need not be provided here. A concise

overview of the situation is, though, still of value.

The principal point is that academia was continually recognized across a wide range of pupils to be the central means by which the component goals of achievement orientation could be satisfied. However, much variation existed in the actual operationalization of this emphasis, some pupils stressing its sole priority, while for others it held a shared significance with character emphases. To detail these would produce unnecessary repetition, but it is the identification of the 'active' process and the various and interacting aspects of this that is important. For while the primary socialization and the priorities of early habitus do show a significant affinity with these later attitudes, it is not relevant to separate and quantify degrees of influence from particular groups and institutions, rather the need is to perceive how the priorities of one makes identification with certain values in the other more likely. It is also appropriate to remember that one set of influences does not exist to the exclusion of all others at particular times. The isolation from the family (especially, of course, with day pupils) is not absolute and the school's emphasis on becoming the central organizing feature of life, while inducing a lack of wide- ranging interactions did, at least in part, seem to reinforce reliance on the family.

Again with reference to earlier discussions, one can identify pupils whose attitudes do not reflect the same

positive regard for academia, viz those for whom academia was largely irrelevant and for whom a lack of serious interest in it was culturally acceptable. This should not be interpreted as a rejection of the system or as 'breaking away', rather it is based on the recognition that other means, as described, are available to satisfy elite progression.

Thus, it is not simply the degree of academic involvement which is at issue here, rather for these pupils this is a part of a wider consideration of how success/status/power/class position - however defined - is to be achieved. As has become clear, the desire to achieve elite status does not necessarily run parallel to the identification with, or lack of, academic priority. Instead, the material position of the individual has to be included in the analysis and the particular meaning ascribed to practices and situations appreciated. Therefore, broadly similar objectives were defined as achievable for some via academia, and for others via the completion of schooling and the establishment and re-affirming of social networks and specific outlooks. Others are located at points in between where there is identification with aspects of each without dissociation from either. Elite sub-groups do not necessarily dismiss the importance of academia altogether, but it is within these groups that the most significant variations are found.

The importance of both family and school influences on

the development of attitudes and values has been constantly expressed and this is never more clearly apparent than in relation to gender conceptions. For here, in the attitudes of ex-pupils, are all the 'knowledges' which dominated the earlier discussions. The overt, stated belief in equality of opportunity, coupled with a strong retention of underlying traditionally inspired perceptions, the ridiculing of feminism and the recourse to 'nature', all occupy a pre-eminent position.

Alistair demonstrates well the kind of perspective widely offered:

"if the woman would like to work she can," but when it comes to bringing up children "I think I would say it's a woman's role" and as for suitable occupations "housewives but they could also be in charge of certain community groups." (Interview, Alistair.)

When directly questioned his belief in 'equality' was stated, but the above provisos based on 'the nature of things' provide a fuller understanding of this.

A strikingly similar perspective was adopted by Peter:

"I am in favour of equality ... but at the same time you've got to bear in mind that there are fundamental differences between men and women and that one sex will be better at some things than the other sex ... I think ladies are better at looking after people and are more sympathetic than men are, who have to go and earn a living and provide for someone." (Interview, Peter.)

Recourse to 'natural' images of 'masculinity or femininity' were at the heart of this limited and specific conception of equality. Furthermore, the consistent trivialization of the issue, and the apparent inability to consider it without stereotypes is expressed by his statement:

"one thing that drives me up the wall is ladies who beg for sex equality and then kick you in the shins when you don't open the door for them and let them go first".

Fiona, while certainly adamant about not wanting to be prevented from 'advancing', still couched her discussion within terms of reference acceptable in the public school environment:

"I wouldn't claim to be a feminist ... I don't like the idea that all women are the suppressed minority ... I don't think the strive for equality is particularly realistic, I don't think anyone, even ardent feminists, can claim that women and men are the same." (Interview, Fiona.)

Time after time the same themes evolved from discussion, and even an awareness by a female subject of inequalities did not significantly alter the perspective.

The consistency of institutional and inter-personal input on this issue is striking at the root of this process and result. Consequently, similarity between habitus and school experiences facilitates the internalization of dominant ideas on gender. Thus, when faced, later in life, with any alternative conceptions, the ideological filter,

consistently reinforced by everyday events, serves to severely limit the potential genuine consideration of the new ideas.

Pupil attitudes to politics provide a further useful means by which an assessment of 'the person so far' can be made. The link with the dominant view in the home can again be observed, a matter which can be returned to after a presentation of conclusions.

The first point of interest is that, following a similar pattern in parents, pupils were largely uninterested in politics, only a small number having given it any kind of considered thought. Despite this, if asked there was a willingness to express opinions with an assurity which may have led the unknowing to assume a genuine interest. For here the confidence/arrogance was finding expression - a lack of knowledge being no barrier to the presentation of the self as worthy of being listened to. For instance, Charles began his discussion by not only stressing his limited interest, but further, how he didn't understand the arguments underlying much right wing policy. However, his attacks on the political atmosphere of his college were based on an assessment of "left wing unions controlling them (working class students)". (Interview, Charles.) His inability to understand the policy to which he lends support and his lack of knowledge of alternative positions did not prevent him uttering stereotypical judgements.

Most political standpoints were one or other shade of

Conservatism, ranging from the 'hard' right through to those with minimal, but mentioned, social concerns. It has already become apparent that the elite sub-groups and radical right wing politics often went together. Amongst individualist established pupils there was potential for a greater range of views (within Conservatism) often inspired by religious or charitable pre-occupations. These are all, however, variations on a theme and not fundamentally opposing views. Rachel again represents the 'odd' case, though the specificity of background and parental politics make her views comprehensive. Amongst first generation pupils a similar range of views existed, though there was not a sub-cultural basis to differentiation. Although staunch Conservative families were present, these pupils were also drawn from parental 'floaters', and a small number who had flirted with liberal or even radical politics. Nigel emanated from just such a background and his resultant position was one of pragmatism - he had a certain sympathy for left wing politics, but personal concerns were foremost for him and he identified his needs as best met by Conservatism. Craig's mother continued to be a floating voter even during his school years and his case represents the only one in which there was a marked party difference between the generations, although less on political fundamentals. Aspiring to, and eventually gaining partial membership of the elite sub-group, Craig developed a strong Conservatism on the right of the spectrum. His

personal account stressed his identification with the school, his long-term desire to associate with the elite group and what he regarded as his personal achievement in getting into the school on a scholarship, all building on a home life evidently compatible with the priorities of public schools, as shown by the preparedness to allow attendance.

The only non-Conservative besides Rachel was Simon. He was the subject nearest to working class family influences, his parents still having a partial Labour Party affinity and it is as a probable Labour voter that Simon classed himself. It is also important to recall his marginalized self perception and the recognition of cultural disparity which marred his school years. Therefore, the acceptability of labour politics, a failure to integrate fully and the sense of being an outcast from the strongholds of Conservative opinion all combined to influence his affiliations.

To concentrate attention on shades of opinion runs the risk, however, of underplaying what is, after all, a consistency of views on both ideology and policy across the range of pupils. Despite being subject to different interpretations the following themes were raised constantly as the crucial bases of political thought and action: the centrality of strong leadership, the overriding importance of defence, the need to ensure a competitive environment at all levels of society, the paramount importance of an achievement orientation and the freedom to make and spend

money with a limit of restriction. In these we can witness those themes on which the present prosperity of public schools and the wider political right has been based. The issue of 'leadership', for instance, was clearly uppermost in the minds of ex-pupils and not seen as merely of historical relevance.

To appreciate the nature of the process at hand, influences through the life course should be examined. The consistency and complementary nature of home life with school priorities was spelt out earlier and an essential part of this was the acceptance both of authority, in itself, and of the legitimacy of perspectives emanating from such sources. While I am not suggesting that this leads necessarily to wholesale adoption of attitudes in itself (although several pupils - including Charles and Jane - did openly state the direct influence of their parents in political attitude formation, though even here later events are far from unimportant), it does provide the appropriate framework for the principal characteristics to be internalized. On entering the public school system, those bases of political thought become intensified as truths by both peers and authority and, importantly, the individuals' own experiences become interpreted in this light. So, for instance, the emphasis on 'distinction' in attitude and action which lies at the heart of the system constantly re-affirms their difference and superiority, the need for leaders and the fact that the system, and its political

bases is serving their needs well. It is this sense of satisfaction with the status quo developed from the life process, which ensures a lack of interest in seeking alternative sources of information or alternative perspectives. Therefore, both ideological integration and personally perceived benefit act as a bond to these ideas. This is confirmed by looking at the cases of Rachel and Simon. Not having the dominant party affinity, they interpreted the same events somewhat differently despite retaining an overall ideological consistency. In particular for Simon, the adoption of Conservatism would have been to embrace the politics of those who saw him as marginal. However, he was still able to differentiate this from the dominant emphasis upon competitivism and individualism which he accepted, and perceived (whether accurately or not) as being a profitable line to follow.

The discussion of attitudes and values can be further focussed by turning to the views expressed on the attended school itself and the sector as a whole. As this actually represented a specific articulation of the structure of priorities which have formed the basis of other discussions, a widespread perception of legitimacy of public schools could be expected and, indeed, is found. Attitudes ranged from automatic and unquestioning support to considered pragmatism. Expressions of unease were few in number and peripheral in impact.

Charles stated:

"I agree with it (private education). We do live in a free country and I feel you should have the right to choose your education." (Interview, Charles.)

In doing so, he expressed the ingrained, almost cliched attitude and revealed how class inspired (in the assumption of available choice) his perspective is. The unquestioning positive assessment is illustrated, likewise, by Anthony:

"I am grateful for the opportunity public school has given me. I was tempted then to say that I turned out better that I went to public school rather than comprehensive ... I don't feel guilty about the fact that I've had some very good opportunities which other people simply have not had because my parents could afford to send me there." (Interview, Anthony.)

The points of importance to him being the perceived advantage gained from the system and its absolute right to exist. Although aware of the elitist basis to school life and its socially restrictive nature, these were not considered worthy of a central analytical position.

These views are particularly associated with those having a long-term intense involvement with the sector but are also held by others. However, where interaction with the system was built on a more pragmatic basis, opinions were likely to be more tempered, and this is also true of a minority of traditional pupils whose progression was in some way problematic. Andrew presents a view which incorporates much of what provides the slight difference. For while his

eventual conclusions are essentially the same, and even include similar rhetoric, he is prepared to enter some of the negative aspects of the situation into the equation:

"the problem is the elitism, that people might consider themselves superior to people who haven't gone to public school ... charitable status is a bit of a dodgy one as well ... (but) it's been good to me because I have got to Oxford ... it sounds pompous but I think in any free society you have got to have the right to choose how to spend your money how you want". (Interview, Andrew.)

This first generation son of a state school teacher was making at least a token effort at a fuller assessment of the situation, but in the end perceived self interest and recourse to public school clarion calls induced a very similar response.

Such a result confirms that although specific complaints and problems can be identified, they were never directed against the schools' fundamental right to exist. Despite certain aspects of policy being seen as regrettable, those which personally affected respondents were practical rather than ideological. There were, though, some sources of slightly more significant disquiet, although even here when the issue became a black and white one of whether they would continue to support the system, only Rachel was actually giving genuine consideration to not continuing involvement. She states:

"In general I think it's a bad idea, public school" but

having listed the criticisms which principally focussed on being "too much of an elite thing" in the end she would "still consider using it". (Interview, Rachel.)

Such an apparently contradictory set of statements was the nearest to a distancing from the system. Whatever the awareness of elitism and bigotry by subjects, the perception that the school was a valuable means to satisfy personally defined goals was enough to secure support.

Beneath such discussions there is an assumption which needs drawing attention to. For whether a judgement about the sector evolves without question or with some consideration, there is something which these pupils never query, which is that public schools, in the final analysis, provide a superior education. This is a highly significant point, for if accepted, it allows the public schools to set the terms of reference for contemporary education. The pupils are basing such an assessment on priorities gained from the schools themselves and positively orientated parents. Therefore, the products of public schools become both the assumed measures of success and the proof of public school superiority. The presence of competitivism, the 'natural' existence of hierarchy and respect for authority necessarily become points of positive appraisal. Co-operation and personal development framed in terms other than 'leadership and character' are regarded with contempt. That class distinction and elitism are an intrinsic part of such an ethos is not regarded by ex-pupils as relevant in

this context, for they are not seen as impinging on the defining characteristics of 'education'. Although a very real case could be made that any educational system harbouring such principles has fundamental inadequacies as a 'learning structure', this is beyond the perceptive scope of participants. As such, the dynamic development process inspires conceptions, taken into adult life, based not only on the superiority of the public schools, but also on its conception of schooling and of the appropriate social order.

Throughout the discussion, the need to see the public school experience as but one aspect of the life process and therefore subject to individual mediations and emphases of meaning has been regarded as being of paramount importance. However, having often been the central organizing feature of life for pupils over many years, the school's imprint on post-school characteristics, dispositions and attitudes is certainly observable. Moreover this chapter, in providing a further look at aspects of personal, social and cultural reality, building on previous components of analysis such as habitus, sub-culture and class perceptions, has helped to provide an appreciation of what public school education means, well beyond the quest for statistical facts.

CHAPTER 10: Conclusion

During the course of the research, not only did individual aspects of existence evolve as important to an overall understanding, but certain themes emerged as being of particular and consistent significance. These are broad areas which inevitably, in part, cut across the somewhat artificial chapter divisions. The principal amongst these can now be considered.

Integral to my adoption of the life-history methodology was the recognition that to study the 'public schools' as an isolated influence, exercising an all-powerful and uniform influence on the development of each individual, was to overlook actual lived experience and, therefore, served to induce simplistic categorization without actually contributing to sociological knowledge. Indeed, it was recognized in Chapter 3 that to describe these institutions as 'people changing'[1] is to misunderstand the nature of the sector, for to perceive public schools as working to produce a 'replacement' of what existed before is to sever the link between class/culture and education upon which the sector has historically depended. It is for this reason that the emphasis was placed on the home - school interaction; what the pupil brings to the school has to be regarded as the point of reference from which the ideology and practice of

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1 J Wakeford 1969 op cit p42

school life can be analyzed, with such an influence (albeit in a perpetually evolving form) continuing to be of relevance well beyond the initial post-school transition.

However, just as the analysis sought to avoid a deterministic perspective of the school-pupil relationship, the need to avoid replacing this with an approach stressing the uncontested influence of the family is acknowledged. The concept of 'process' has been utilized in an attempt to avoid both determinisms as has, likewise, the concept of individual mediation. For this, the incorporation of habitus[2] as a mediating construct was of particular value. For while the concept was concerned with the dispositions, knowledges and values developed in the home and through which later experiences are interpreted, these were never conceived of as 'fixed', and indeed, were seen to be modifiable in the light of later experience, be this in relation to informal or to officially directed action. The research findings throughout demanded the presence of such a theoretical construct, since the emphases of everyday life are subject to varying interpretations.

Running parallel to an appreciation of the home - school basis of the process was the recognition of the wider context of the study. For in stressing personal mediation the class association of the sector was never minimized.

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2 As developed from P Bourdieu 1977b _op cit_ p87

Indeed, the compatibility across the range of homes on a number of dimensions was noted, as was their similarity with the schools on such points. In this way the research was providing a significant advance over those studies[3] whose failure to adequately incorporate the dimension of social class was earlier described as limiting their value as a means of insight.

As analysis and propositions evolved, so too a number of facets became clear:

1) that it was inadequate and inaccurate to regard all pupils as experiencing public school in the same way;

2) that the life process, and therefore, certain emphases of habitus formation were implicated in these differences;

3) that despite this there was a distinct similarity in family priorities on many of the core life elements and that these had a large degree of 'matching' with those of the sector.

It is at this point that the concept of cultural capital can be re-introduced. While I am not suggesting that all individual mediation of experience is dependent upon this, I am stating that the possession or lack of one or other forms (see below) has a large bearing upon both subsequent interactive patterns and the way in which the schooling process is perceived.

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[3] J Wakeford 1969 op cit
I Weinberg 1967 op cit
R Lambert 1966 op cit
R Lambert 1968 op cit

The revised conceptualization of cultural capital (Chapter 5) is based around the theoretical extension of the concept re-defined in terms of, cultural capital (academic) and cultural capital (culture). Certain points can be appropriately raised in relation to this. It became apparent that if certain individuals could be said to possess cultural capital in the general sense (in that they had the dispositions appropriate to the 'form' of the message dominant in school), this did not actually further understanding of the nature of the internal processes of the schools and of differentiation as every one of the subjects could certainly be said to have entered the sector with the appropriate 'key'. When, however, cultural capital is seen as a dual concept, embracing both academia and nuances of style and manner, then a very real split emerged and the concept was revived as both a descriptive and explanatory tool. For while all subjects could be said to be in possession of cultural capital (academic), thereby confirming the large degree of continuity on one level amongst families, very few could be recognized as holding cultural capital (culture) which covered self perceptions and cultural priorities of a more limited character. While each point of individual difference did not become reducible to possession of a specific form of capital, what is apparent is that through the identification of these forms, one can make sense of the co-existence of apparent similarity of background with often rigid patterns of

differentiation in the schools and the accompanying variable patterns of involvement.

This has implications for the claim (as seen in the literature of ISIS) that first generation pupils would not feel any more out of place than the pupils of established families.[4] If we perceive the institutions as an homogeneous whole or as essentially 'people changing', we allow such assumptions to go unchallenged. However, when the experiences and degrees of 'sense of involvement/belonging and internalization' (Chapter 7) are viewed alongside a theoretical re-orientation of 'cultural capital' one can show that the claim that first generation pupils are fully accepted is inaccurate. The development of the concept of cultural capital can, in turn, contribute to the debate on the value of the term as detailed earlier.[5] For having offered a re-development of the concept in a context-specific manner, I would contend that difficulties with 'cultural capital' can be identified as relating to its definition and operationalization and not its fundamental validity.

Differentiating between different types of 'public school pupils' has led to both empirical findings and greater theoretical clarity on issues which were previously matters

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4 ISIS Independent Schools: Would they be Right for my Child? (nd)

5 A Halsey A Heath J Ridge 1980 op cit p88
M Hammersley 1981 op cit pp92-94
A Halsey A Heath J Ridge 1982 op cit p88

of conjecture. This is especially noticeable in relation to Salter and Tapper's[6] assertion that the schools may be arenas for acquiring capital forms originally lacking. This has been seen to be very largely not the case and, moreover, something which the nature and logic of the situation actively works against. It emerged that 'social capital', far from being disseminated was, in fact, protected and that this process was bound up with a specific cultural background and active sub-cultural forms. This discussion also provides illuminating evidence on a further claim of ISIS - that the 'old boy network' is no longer of relevance in a sector identified firmly with merit.[7] Two points are noteworthy here. Firstly, that the experiences of the pupils themselves deny that such influence has ended. Secondly, that the position of those for whom this is an important part of progression can only be understood in relation to family history and cultural priority. The sector is important as a pivotal point of association but is not, in itself, enough to determine access to the network.

Thus, in identifying the role of home - school interaction and, indeed, of forms of capital, crucial bases

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6 T Tapper and B Salter 1984 _op cit_ pp198-200

7 ISIS _Myths About Independent Schools_ (nd)

of the mediated process of class reproduction are identified. These are, though, just that: bases or foundations, upon which later experiences build and interact. One of the most significant elements in this is the process of internal differentiation in the schools and the formation of distinctive sub-cultures. The importance of this was not envisaged at the outset of the study. While Delamont's (1984)[8] study of two decades ago had observed group allegiances and their relationship to cultural capital, the most recent and more directly comparable study, that of Walford (1986),[9] although noting variation of practice, stressed the lack of existence of distinctive, meaningful sub-cultural forms. It has been a crucial finding of the research that this is not the case. It was the experiences reported by the ex-pupils which demanded the inclusion of sub-cultural formation in the analysis. Here, considerations of the influence of being a first generation pupil or of an established family were crucial, as was the extent to which priorities were located in the individualistic and academic and/or the group centred and traditional. The concept of sub-culture was only utilized where this made sense in terms of the relationships and interactions established by the pupils.

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8 S Delamont 1984 op cit
9 G Walford 1986 op cit p23 and pp83-84

The identification of sub-cultural forms, adds significantly to sociological knowledge of public schools and is especially important in moving beyond the widespread tendency to limit sub-cultural analysis to'deviant' or 'oppositional' activities. This advance was achieved through accepting the empirical realities of sub-cultures in a specific situation rather than trying to impose an ill-fitting schema derived from analysis of other areas. The finding that the groups in question had a genuine interactive unity based on particular emphases, practices and ways of viewing the world was at the heart of the matter. It is apparent that in the public school context, ideas of 'resistance' are not appropriate, but recognizing this does not entail a rejection of the significance of sub-cultural groupings. At the same time, the groups may or may not incorporate aspects of criticism toward the dominant mode of school operation. The issue of 'resistance' and 'criticism', however, must not be allowed to dominate the analysis for the groups need to be approached and analyzed in their own terms. Only then can any understanding emerge which is recognizable to those actually involved. It is therefore important to view the social act from the perspective of the participant and in relation to specifics of class, culture and institution. Thus in finding groups whose most obvious bond is a reaction to 'excessive' academic emphasis and a disgust at the loss of traditional school practices, this should on the

one hand not be trivialized, and on the other not be viewed in the same way as criticism of a school from a different class basis in a different sector.

As well as establishing the genuine existence of sub-cultural groupings the research generated a significant amount of information pertaining to their form and content. The class and cultural specificity of the make up of the groups was seen as central. For while the term 'public schools' inspires conceptions of a singular privilege, the research documented different degrees of privilege, based on the way in which variations in family history and habitus formation served as the foundation of sub-cultural identity. From school to school, the accounts of subjects stressed the importance of differences in background (and perspective). However, whereas this relationship between class/culture and sub-culture has an affinity with the theoretical underpinnings of much working class analysis, the point at which the sub-cultural forms here offer a markedly different point of departure is at their location in the social hierarchy. For, at public school, the principal sub-cultures were consistently found at the 'elite' end of the spectrum. In understanding this, the need to appreciate the context and accompanying values becomes further reinforced. What is witnessed here is the establishing and re-establishing of a basis for power within an institutional setting fundamentally and historically a part of a particular class-school dynamic. The elite pupils are not

in an 'alien' environment, but see themselves (and indeed, by virtue of a cultural affinity can be seen to be) closely allied to the school.

A further aspect of these groups was the tendency for their degree of closure to intensify alongside increasingly elevated locations within the hierarchy. These groups, which by self definition and/or by general consensus were regarded as the 'elite' were either impossible or difficult to enter. Two points need to be stressed here. Firstly, that the role of capital forms is implicit in these restrictions for the barrier is not just a conscious one but reflects the way in which 'self selection' rooted in cultural style, serves to exclude or integrate. Cultural distinction and social exclusion go hand in hand. This suggests, given that access to social capital will require concerted interaction with the elite possessors of it, that the idea of the schools acting to disseminate capital forms is as logically implausible as it is empirically inaccurate. Second, there is the explicit need to recognize that such differentiation is located firmly within a conception of inequality and, of course, hierarchy. It is on this point that discussion can be extended.

What became apparent in the investigation is that the sub-cultures, as organized within an unequal framework and not merely co-existing as differing but equally valid groups, were conforming to the underlying ethos of the school, as well as displaying characteristics at the heart

of family priority. In discussing the nature of everyday life, accounts described the schools' stress on hierarchy, competition, age related status, prefecting, fagging and so on. This is an atmosphere which, while maintaining that all the pupils are members of an elite, also inculcates an attitude that distinction and hierarchy are part of the 'nature of things'. It would be perverse to expect that the processes of unofficial activity could be divorced from the stress upon this mode of social organization, especially given the emphases of the homes. The patterns of sub-cultural differentiation thus make very real sense within their context.

In understanding sub-cultures in this manner, their continuing influence and identity in post-school life provides final confirmation that these are anything but transitory or fluid in composition. Having evolved from genuine material and cultural bases, continuation, be it in terms of form or actual personnel, retained links with the point of origin.

These aspects of school practice can be extended to a related matter. It was stressed in Chapter 2, that the sector as a whole, and more specifically its information service (ISIS), convey, the idea that the sector today essentially provides an education based on meritocratic principles grounded in academia (whilst retaining elements of extra-curricular activities for a 'rounded' education) and no longer involves elitism. If this is thrown into

doubt by the continuing existence of forms of social organization which demand inequality and the exercise of power by one group (or individual) over another, the evidence which emerged concerning dominant attitudes to other social classes completes the contemporary picture and confirms the problematic nature of such an assertion.

Earlier it was noted that, the sector, as part of its offensive, was encouraged to refrain from criticism of the state sector.[10] The reality, as described in Chapter 6, is very different. The perpetuation of images of segregation and distinction, for instance, continues to be widespread, as is the continued utilization of language filled with negative perceptions of comprehensive schools and/or working class pupils, and the attitudes which led pupils to describe the presence of a significant number of snobs and bigots. Although these were not the only teacher perspectives, where overt biases were not stated, concern with breaking down social distinction was not raised and the status quo, which rested on conceptions of the intrinsic superiority of the public schools and its pupils, remained unchallenged.

As has been stressed repeatedly in this analysis, when properly contextualized the practices observed make sense within the logic of the situation. The historical association with elite occupations and privileged social

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[10] ISIS Speaker's Notes (nd)

classes, the continuing priority of both family and school to provide or reproduce an elevated social position, family values, the schools' structures and processes and the evolved attitudes and priorities of those actually within the system all provide relevant background and influence. Against this background, the continued cultural distinction and the perpetuation of an ideology based on social distance can be seen to meet the needs of those achievement-orientated families and individuals who patronize the schools and, as a consequence, to increase the schools' likelihood of promoting 'consumer satisfaction' and, in turn, their own survival. Now, it is not the role of this work to be predictive. Whether or not cultural distinction is endemic to this form of fee-paying education is not the issue here; the point is that in the present era, despite protestations to the contrary, distinction is an ingrained reality and its existence displays an organic unity with other aspects of structure and practice.

Of recent changes to the public school format, the partial inclusion of female pupils is perhaps the most visible. During the course of the research, it became apparent that what was existing was an involvement which needed to be understood in relation to the interpenetration of high class, and low gender, status. For while females were certainly not overtly discriminated against on one level, neither were they establishing, or being encouraged to establish, a genuinely equal status. That their greatest

equality of treatment and expectation was observed in academia has a certain logical consistency, for here, 'success' can be achieved which both satisfies present participants and (via the deployment of statistics) encourages future generations. However, this offers a 'safe' expression of parity, for the cultural arena (within which expressions of distinction and superiority are so clearly located) remains dominated by the male prominence which has historically prevailed. Therefore, females (of specific class background and personal priorities) can both recognize problems with the system and express affinity with it as the most appropriate (as perceived) means of goal achievement. It is such complexity of experience which marks female involvement with the schools.

At this point, it is worth moving to a discussion of the 'new right'. In Chapter 2 I drew out a two-fold classification of the types of relationships operating between the new right and the public schools. Firstly, a connection borne of a perceived similarity of goals (or at least a recognition that such an association could be mutually advantageous) was identified. While noting its contextualizing importance to the research, the terms of reference of the present work were so formulated as to be more directly concerned with the second type of interaction. This is the broadly based ideological affinity, the sense in which both, while existing as evolving and independent entities, exhibit fundamental points of compatibility.

Throughout the study, the nature of this compatibility has demonstrated itself in the ideology and practice of everyday school life. For instance, Kavanagh's (1987)[11] discussion of the two component parts of the new right proponents,the 'Libertarian' and 'Authoritarian', has been found to have an unerring similarity with practice at the school level. This does not necessarily take the form of the differentiation between individuals to which Kavanagh was alluding, but both exist as foundations of manifest values. The continuing reliance on discipline, on control, on hierarchy all serve to illustrate the 'authoritarian' dimension of school, something which was very much 'felt' as well as observed. Alongside this was the 'Libertarian' strand, displaying calls to individual freedom. Indeed, it is through such stresses and the associated belief in the quest for achievement or power that the very specific nature of the often still very strict discipline is instilled. The fact that this discipline is mediated via the expectation of success prevents a mentality of subordination developing. Therefore, be it in terms of competitivism, 'natural' inequalities, conceptions of gender or whatever, the essential unity between the libertarian and authoritarian outlooks is clear. Furthermore, that pupils were aware of, and incorporated a mediated response to, societal trends was apparent. Thus, while the significance of links should not

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[11] D Kavanagh 1987 <u>op cit</u>

be overplayed, it is clear that an historically located study must take account of the particular nature of the period in question and the dominant ideologies involved.

The life-history technique now merits attention as the means by which evidence on actual practice was collated. Furthermore, its limited utilization in sociological research in general, and in the study of elites and education in particular, ensures that issues of methodology as well as of content are of interest here.

The benefits of the life-history come from both its qualitative approach and from various advantages that it has over the other principal qualitative techniques. On the first count, to go beyond statistics, to understand the practices and priorities of the schools today and the mediation of these by individuals, is clearly important. Secondly, although ethnography has been the favoured tool in the recent sociological studies with an 'active' emphasis, life-stories offer greater potential in a number of ways. The first of these is related to the nature of the schools under study. The sensitivity about image and the often abrasive and defensive manner of headmasters (experienced both in personal encounters and by letter) suggested that detailed discussion and unrestricted access within schools would have proved problematic. Second, away from the influence of peers and staff, personal assessments could be made in a freer manner. Thirdly, the individual's experience of schooling could be interpreted in the way in

which it had significance to him/her - namely as a part of their life. However influential the schooling, or particular parts thereof, an appreciation of life both before and after it serves to extend the validity of analysis. Although in certain educational settings gaining information on family experience may be possible, in this case the likelihood was severely limited, due to the above-stated sensitivity of the representatives of the institutions.

Furthermore, the work has confirmed the lack of truth in the assertion that the life-history methodology is unable to incorporate theoretical developments. The methodology itself can be adapted to the requirements of the particular research and researcher. Indeed, here life-history and theoretical analysis went hand in hand producing both fresh empirical observation and an extension of theoretical insights on a number of themes. In fact, it is my contention that given the emphasis on searching out negative cases and incorporating new findings to extend a complex proposition where necessary, rather than being limited by pre-established stable hypotheses, the theoretical assertions that did emanate from the research are grounded within a very solid framework. The flexibility allowed by such an approach serves to provide those interviewed with a chance to shape the direction of research and of potential theory as well as being able to offer evidence supporting or denying a particular point.

As has been seen the utilization of the life-history approach allowed a detailed presentation of the nature of school processes to be established. At this point, though, it is of value to draw out what can be identified as the two-fold and mutually dependent bases of these processes.

The first is the fostering, above all else, of the 'superiority' of the pupils. This is in no way restricted to a single dimension. Instead, it is concerned with the cultivation of an elite. Therefore, the academic priority is supported by supplementary aspects of schooling (for example, 'extra-curricular activities'), with a crucial emphasis on 'cultural distinction'. The latter is not a peripheral feature of the sector, it permeates each facet of everyday life. The organizational segregation from other social classes, the attitudes of teachers, the perceived underlying conceptions of superiority and the stated expectations are all official manifestations of this. Therefore, and this is of primary importance, while the shift to academia in these schools may appear to provide a certain justification for the view that they are simply providing a successful version of a widely-held schooling priority, this would miss the crux of the situation completely. Academia is one means of achieving or maintaining social differentiation, but its position can only be understood in relation to sector-wide emphases on class and cultural distinction. The pragmatic adoption of academia as a priority may have affected the balance of

school content on one level, but both its form (as class restrictive) and its content (as class centred) have remained constant. Therefore, while it may certainly be the case that academia may be the primary stated motivation for a number of parents to choose 'public schools', the powerful and established internal dynamics, though certainly mediated through this emphasis, are not fundamentally altered by it.

Alongside the overt and covert elitist emphases are certain organizational priorities of the school. As stated, the two can be regarded as very much a part of an interconnecting whole. For the concern with hierarchy and the right of those in positions of authority to exert control and all its related aspects serves not only to inculcate a way of viewing the world, a component of educational ethos in itself, but more, it reveals both the blue-print for appropriate means of wider social organization and, by implication, given the nature of class society, a doctrine which once applied and activated would serve to reinforce the status of the trainee elite of the public school. Given the potential for these pupils to attain positions in which they will be able to shape future expectations in organizational settings, the implications of the adoption of these practices as 'the' pattern is plain.

There is a further point of discussion which requires inclusion here. The view is widely promoted that the public school somehow represents the pinnacle of educational forms. This claim needs to be assessed in the light of the

evidence in the present study. It was discussed earlier how the characteristics of authority, discipline and 'traditional values' were at the heart of the Black Papers[12] and how the public school as embodying these came to be identified as providing a standard for the educational system as a whole. It is my contention that not only are these principles, in themselves, both narrow and inappropriate as pedagogic foundations, but that in the light of perceived experiences of the sector today, to hold them up as an educational model overlooks several important issues.

The populist calls for discipline and 'traditional values' carry with them, in practice, an ideological component which ensures that in addition to their stultifying character, their interpenetration with other public school norms and priorities produces the sorts of characteristics seen throughout this study. Therefore, while supporters of the sector draw legitimation by reference to Oxbridge entrance numbers and elite occupational achievement, the ingrained arrogance of the all pervading sense of superiority, the lack of interest in considering the nature of female involvement, the need for compulsion and the difficulties in establishing social interactions and relationships are serious problems which

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[12] See, for instance, C Cox and A Dyson (eds) The Black Papers on Education (London: Davis Poynter 1971)

are all glossed over. This study cannot, of course, resolve the issue of which form of education is best for contemporary society but it can present the realities of public school education, as experienced by its pupils, so as to provide a more complete picture against which value judgements may be debated.

In looking at the nature of the schooling, it is interesting to refer to the oft-cited significance of a 'rounded' education which is presented as synonymous with public school education by the latter's advocates. The content of this conception is revealing, for it embodies precisely those facets traditionally identified with 'character development'. For despite the increasing academic emphasis, schools are still keen to retain the perception of themselves as providing something more than qualification seeking, viz to provide education for the 'complete person'. Now, given the evidence referred to above, in particular attitudes to class and the specific 'personal difficulties' experienced by pupils coupled with the range of manifestations of distinction in everyday life, the sector's conception of a rounded education would appear to be rather narrow. The unwillingness, for instance, to include the challenging of class bigotry in the formulation of a complete education, whilst stressing elements such as physical activity, reveals the schools' priorities.

The significance of the material presented in this study lies not only in the formation of attitudes but also

in the way in which power is exercised and interactions engaged in. In the immediate post-school period, the regard with which the dominant attitudes and practices of the schools are held has been seen to be high, and the sector itself is often explicitly seen as being inherently 'better' than state schools. Even those with reservations, for instance pupils noting the restrictive access, were not questioning that the sector stood at the peak of available education.

Given the emphasis of the study, the concept of 'cultural disparity' is a useful starting point for an analysis of a certain form of lasting consequence. The eventual location of public school pupils in positions of power (eg in the professions or industry) will often lead to difficulties of cross-class interactions, as presented in Bochner's (1983)[13] work on the doctor/working class patient 'culture gap'. The concept of 'gap', however, does not convey the full reality of the situation, because it is not simply the case that two or more cultures differ, but rather that one is defined as qualitatively superior to others. Personal perceptions of this situation were seen earlier to be variable, but the conception of superiority was constant. It is this extra dimension (of elite self perception accompanying 'difference') that is all important. In turn,

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[13] J Bochner "Doctors, Patients and their Cultures" in D Pendleton and J Hasler (eds) Doctor and Patient Communication (London: Academic Press 1983)

the effect will depend on the individuals involved and the opportunities presented in specific locations for the exercise of power. As such, the range of impact will also vary, but whether interaction takes place in a small-scale setting or within, a larger area, for instance in television production (Anthony's intended career), the same assumptions will be taken into the situation. Not only are these assumptions regarded as 'right' but the arrogance/self confidence of the individual concerned helps to disseminate them and instigates a process through which they become the defining arbiters of taste and knowledge. It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss how these processes operate in the wider society; that the attitudes and assumptions formed at school are taken in to post-school life is, though, made clear by the range of accounts.

Overall, it is apparent that the public schools are institutions with a very specific reality, one which owes much to its grounding in particular social and historical imperatives. However the activation of the principles underlying their existence is a dynamic process. Analysis of the sector must be able to incorporate both dimensions giving due weight to both context and to the mediation of wider processes by individuals and groups. Furthermore, to detail such a situation has necessitated an awareness that despite the undoubted value of including the notion of a public school whole as a partial element of analysis, to allow such a perspective to be the single point of

description and explanation serves not only to simplify, but crucially to distort. For the public school process is one of specificity and complexity, a central impetus to which are the individual interpretations of life within the sector. These are, however, mediations of a particular institutional context with meanings embedded in concerns of class and culture and are not simply arbitrary unconnected judgements. It is this which provides the crucial point of access to reveal the lived experience of being public school educated.

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