For

Stephen, Ila, Leon, Kieron, Liam

Traa dy liooar,
Soie sheese as tow aash

BEGGARS CAN'T BE CHOOSERS

AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF POST-SCHOOL TRANSITIONS
IN A HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT AREA

(VOLUMES I AND II)

by

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although, as is required by the University of Salford's declaration of originality, this thesis "embodies the results of my own ... research [and] has been composed by myself", there is hardly an idea contained herein that is not the product of dialogue (friendly debate/heated dispute), collaboration and team work. On the weird and wonderful journey to sociological 'Doctordom', I encountered a host of 'significant others who, directly and indirectly, knowingly and unknowingly, contributed to what, 'at the end of the day', has emerged as a PhD thesis.

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The final acknowledgements are reserved for the participants in my study. I would argue that, during the course of intensive fieldwork, those attempting to operate from positions of empathy and advocacy are, in some subtle and indefinable way, transformed by those they seek to represent. This is a highly personal matter and, at the risk of sounding like Richard Attenbrough making an Oscar acceptance speech, I will only say that from some of my study participants, I learned more than they learned from me, "something more of courage, endurance ... resignation and forbearance, that I had no great understanding of before" (Evans-Pritchard 1971 : 5). For study participants and others like them, long may they continue to 'know the score'.

Steve Craine

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Abstract of Thesis

BEGGARS CAN'T BE CHOOSERS :

AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF POST-SCHOOL TRANSITIONS IN A HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT AREA

My thesis seeks to explore and document the processes involved in the career transitions of a specific sample of unqualified minimum age school leavers drawn from a high unemployment inner city area. The main body of data was collected ethnographically between 1985 and 1990, although the original 'data-base', entrée into the field, and 'insider status' were derived from my former employment in a Youth and Community Project in the study area.

The research has identified three broad patterns of labour market transition: the first involved a minority of participants and was a traditional post-school transition to primary employment; the second involved a slightly larger group in protracted transitions *via* combinations of experiences which included unemployment, underemployment and government schemes; the third and most common pattern involved a cyclical post-school transition described by some study participants as the 'Black Magic Roundabout'. Cyclical transitions entailed early careers in which participants became trapped on a (not so) merry-go-round of unemployment, government schemes and special programmes, youth jobs, work in the informal economy, more unemployment, schemes, and so on. Generally, this transition preceded the slide into cynicism, disillusionment and labour market withdrawal. Each of the labour market transitions reflected a complementary career pattern in terms of entry into and progress through adult domestic life. Case studies explore individual responses which were mediated by the inter-relationships between labour market and domestic career transitions and trends in government policy, the economy, local labour market conditions, housing and the family.

By far the largest group among research participants were those who had moved through cyclical transitions and labour market withdrawal into long-term unemployment. My study illustrates how this group restricted social networks to others in a similar position, built on a common sense of identity and reduced commitment to the orthodox labour market. My study reveals that to those for whom employment was perceived as only a distant and diminished possibility, alternative status systems were subculturally conceived. Significantly large numbers of participants proactively explored, constructed and pursued sub- and anti-employment careers. Affiliation to the sub- and anti-employment subcultures enabled participants to offset threats to psychological well-being posed by their objective labour market positions and provided alternative routes to income, status, identity and meaning.

Of all the post-sixteen progression routes, the slide into the informal economy and acquisitive criminality is the most under-researched. Detailed exploration of these non-conventional routes contributes to the contemporary understanding of post-school transitions and provides knowledge of the 'career points' through which this transition occurs.

INTRODUCTION

> "The Sociological Imagination enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society. This is its task and its promise" (C. Wright Mills (1971 : 12)

The transition from school to work has become an issue of national significance in recent years. One of the central principles of both British political parties between 1945 and 1979 was an avowed commitment to 'full employment'. Though it was never universal, the principle of full employment served to establish the parameters within which a traditional transition from school and dependent status to employment and independent adult status was achieved. Previously, those sociologists concerned with the transitions to adulthood and adult working life could safely assume there was work to go to. Attention was largely directed at how young people came to occupy different occupational roles and positions within the labour market. The traditional post-school transition routes, forged in the post-war political consensus, held until the sudden quadrupling of oil prices in the mid-1970s. The resulting economic recession, when combined with changes in technology, produced a near collapse of manufacturing industry and wiped out substantial areas of the traditional youth labour market.

In 1979, when I first moved to my study area to begin work as a detached youthworker, unemployment was endemic; since that time, it has doubled nationally and almost tripled locally. The volume of research and comment on the issue of unemployment has proliferated in tandem with the expansion of agencies designed to deal with it. What else can be added to the avalanche of studies produced in the past decade or more? Most work on the subject of unemployment and youth transitions has been concerned with specific issues: unemployment and the family, changes in the labour market, the state's responses, and so on. In the spirit of Sociological Imagination advocated by C. Wright Mills, my thesis brings together these and other themes by examining them in relation to the lives and lived experience of a specific group of unqualified, minimum age school leavers in a high unemployment inner city area. In

attempting to grasp history and biography, my thesis seeks to explore and document the processes of post-school transitions within the overarching canopy of structured inequalities.

The national economic and employment crises had significant local consequences for study participants as the late 1970s saw an apparent breakdown in the smooth transitional progression from school to employment, from working class origins to male and female working class destinations in the occupational and social structure. The North West region as a whole has suffered a contracting labour market for over twenty years and my study area exhibits many of the socio-economic consequences of de-industrialisation which have become familiar to the traditional industrial regions of the North. As the old industrial areas lost investment and employment, so the traditional opportunities for both the indigenous adult and youth labour force evaporated. High inflation rates and dwindling productivity produced closures and labour shedding on an unprecedented scale. These, in turn, affected public expenditure pressures at both a national and local level. The very structure of the Welfare State, which had been established in the post-war economic consensus, came under increasing fiscal and ideological pressure. By 1979, a new Conservative political regime had emerged under Thatcher, with radical right wing programmes of deregulation and privatisation which represented a fundamental break with the post-war Keynesian consensus. Changes in youth policy during the Thatcher era ensured that the life transitions of the young working class were no longer to be structured through employment opportunity, but rather through containment and socialisation schemes under the 'new curriculum' for young people.

In our society, the series of post-school transactions and transitions are crucially dependent on entry into, and progressions through, the labour market. The weight of evidence of my study indicates that, for the majority of research participants, the old transitions to adulthood have broken down. Post-school transitions exist at many levels: the transition into work; the transition into trade unionism; "the transition into the

working class wisdoms of working cultures" (Willis 1988 : 271); the transition to residential independence; the transition to consumerism and to the citizenship of things; the transition to adult roles and statuses, to adult domestic careers of 'going out', courtship, marriage and parenthood. The fracture in these transitions had enormous implications for the lives of study participants as they left school and moved towards adult autonomy. Capitalism, in and for itself, could offer no alternatives to the young working class, and the political representatives of the ruling class reneged on their side of the 'unofficial social contract' when the traditional transition routes to working class adulthood were fractured by the crisis of unemployment. What generally characterises the past decade of policy interventions are unsatisfactory exercises in socialisation, containment, and social control, mobilised through an increasingly authoritarian 'law and order' state. The Manpower Services Commission, for example, primarily through incursions into education and vocational training, sought to establish a new curriculum for young people and for post-school transitions. Under the management of this centralised and largely unaccountable state agency, (un)employment training schemes were expanded into a compulsory post-school containment programme which ensured that, for many, schemes became the normal prelude to (un)employment.

Youth (un)employment training policies formed only one strand in the wider matrix of institutionalised economic and social insecurity which moulded participants' post-school transitions. The collapse of the youth labour market, and the loss of employment opportunities upon which to structure adult independence, resulted in the majority of participants becoming more, not less, dependent upon their parents and families.. Their positions were exacerbated by the fifty or so changes in benefit regulations which, since 1979, have resulted in an overall reduction in living standards (Kirk *et al* 1991 : 39). Moreover, the barriers to residential independence experienced by study participants must also be understood within the context of the deteriorating housing situation which has confronted the young working class since 1979. The Conservatives' ideological push for privatisation was responsible for a major restructuring of the nation's housing stock. The

policy of encouraging home ownership, and the removal of millions of properties from local authority ownership through the 'right to buy', were revealed by the 1985 Housing Act, which sought to maximise the 'right to buy' incentive by offering potential purchasers substantial discounts of between 60% and 70% on council house purchases. In the meantime, the average local waiting time for a council house (for a couple with children) has recently been extended from three to over five years (Shelter 1993). My study suggests that these and other policy strategies have engendered inter-connected and cumulative forms of structured inequality.

Political policies, practices and perspectives are historically specific and the intersection of biography and history forms a significant focus for my thesis; however, history and biography applies as much to the researcher as to the researched. Thus, my own biography forms part of this study, for the thesis also represents a significant chapter in my own history. Having emerged from prison in 1979, to undertake youthwork in Hartingleigh, my personal transition is such that I am now studying the processes of which I formed a part. However, despite certain similarities between my own experiences of growing up in a disadvantaged inner city environment and those of my study participants, it was necessary for me to make a leap of the Sociological Imagination in order to connect with their social worlds, and I hope that, in so doing, I can carry the reader with me.

The main body of data was collected ethnographically between 1985 and 1990, although the original 'data-base', entrée into the field, and 'insider status', were derived from my residence in the study area and my former employment there as a detached youthworker. Thus, although not at that stage formally engaged in sociological research, 'data' has been derived from research participants since they were originally contacted, at the point of school leaving, in 1980, as part of a community-based youth project. Consequently, the dramas, despair and proactive resistance, which I shared with study participants over the ten year period of my project, form part of my own consciousness

and were connected at the intersection of a significant portion of my own history and biography.

Hartingleigh, my study area, is one of nineteen wards within the Inner City boundary of Manchester, as designated by the City Council. In Chapter One, I explore the historical and social context of participants' post-school transitions by setting them within the broadest sweep of history. In this, I briefly explore the transformation of Hartingleigh from an agricultural community to the urban nightmare it became as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution and the development of industrial capitalism. For a study of contemporary Britain, starting in feudal times may be considered at best eccentric, at worst irrelevant, but 'King Cotton', as the 'pacemaker' of the new industrial order, saw Lancashire and, in particular, Manchester, at the epicentre of the "most fundamental transformation of human life in the history of the world". It was a transformation that engendered a new system of production, a new form of society and, most importantly, a new exploitative economic relationship - class society. The historical threads of disadvantage, exploitation and class inequality, engendered by the transformation to industrial capitalism, are explored in terms of their contemporary manifestations within Hartingleigh's socio-economic structure. Hartingleigh is, for example, one of several Inner City wards characterised as an "economic and social problem area", as defined by Greater Manchester Council research. The Chapter continues with an examination of the roots of the parent cultural values of collectivism and community resistance, and explores how these historical traditions informed contemporary community initiatives. The formation and development of the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project, for example, may be viewed as a contemporary manifestation of working class cultural traditions informed by the desire for collectivism and community resistance. The significance of the Project for my study is that it provided my original employment as a detached youthworker, supplied a research identity, entrée to the field, data-base, and a host of invaluable contacts and resources.

Chapters Two to Five are divided into the chronological phases within which my research evolved and eventually came to fruition. In part, this is an autobiographical/methodological (research) journey as it encompassed a ten year period of my life. In Chapter Two, the first phase (1979-1982), I outline the background and origins of my data-base, and the contacts fostered with the young people from Hartingleigh, who eventually became the participants in my research. In 1980, I collaborated in a Youth and Community Project initiated survey of fifty school leavers from the 'catchment area' of the Project. Although I did not realise it at the time, my involvement in these early contacts with the young people of Hartingleigh was to provide the starting point for, and basis upon which, my subsequent research developed. I also established many contacts, personal as well as 'professional' relationships, and these were to greatly facilitate my eventual fieldwork and, on occasions, provide crucial access to 'backstage' areas of data acquisition; informal areas of social life that may well have eluded other types of researchers less involved in, or acquainted with, the community.

The first phase of detached youthworking for the Project also significantly influenced my disposition towards a participatory methodology. The principles and practice of, so-called, 'permissive youthwork', containing the avowed emphases of empowerment, advocacy and community participation, meshed neatly with a family of participatory research approaches derived from the ethnographic/participant observation traditions within sociology.

Chapter Three, the second phase of my study (1982-1985), fully explores the contours of the ethnographic tradition within social research and attempts to make explicit the theoretical scaffolding within which my study would be constructed. In the second phase, I undertook undergraduate study and, during the three years as a sociology student, I was drawn to participant observation because of its emphasis on a humanistic and empathic research encounter, an emphasis which fitted neatly predilections I had acquired from detached youthwork principles and practice. Participant observation studies offered a rich

tradition of providing depth analyses of social worlds from the perspectives of research participants. However, a critical component has also been explored as a necessary element in the analyses of 'lived experience' in order to display the relationship between participants' individual experiences and the generative structures of social life. The methodological task I was to set myself in my apprenticeship as a 'critical ethnographer' was to display the structural, ideological and related issues which impinged upon and shaped participants' status sequences and choice patterns during the life course ("to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two").

The period of the third phase of my evolving study (1985-1986) saw me leaving University to re-enter the urban environment of my home community. In Chapter Four, I provide an outline of the preliminary sampling and fieldwork conducted during the twelve month period of the third phase. It was an exploratory ethnographic journey which began in Hartingleigh with the young people (who were now young adults) with whom I had established friendships and informal contacts as a result of my detached youthwork during the first phase. These contacts had been consolidated during the frequent trips home during the undergraduate years of the second phase. Thus, by the time I began the third phase of preliminary fieldwork, I had not only established an easy rapport with many of those who would become study participants, but had also developed relatively open and informal access to their wider social networks. My friendships provided the necessary 'street credentials' and 'insider-status' which allowed me to begin the process of systematically documenting the variety of local adaptive responses to the new 'broken' transitions.

During the third phase of preliminary sampling and fieldwork, I was able to trace, formally contact and interview, a total of thirty-nine (20 male, 19 female) members of the original survey group of fifty, who, as school leavers, had participated in the Project's 1980 Youth and Community Survey. Out of these contacts, I was able to sketch some broad patterns in terms of study participants' post-school transitions. There were three notable

patterns of post-school transition which broadly conformed to a typology originally identified by Roberts (1986). These were: Traditional Transitions, from school directly into primary employment; Protracted Transitions, from school to primary employment, *via* combinations of post-school experiences which included unemployment, underemployment, and government inspired schemes and special programmes; the third, and most common pattern, involved a Cyclical Transition from school into a cycle of unemployment, schemes, special programmes, youth jobs, work in the informal economy, more unemployment, more schemes, and so on. Generally, this latter transition preceded the slide into disillusionment, cynicism, long-term unemployment and labour market withdrawal.

By far the largest group among my study participants were those who had moved from school through cyclical transitions and had then entered the ranks of the long-term unemployed. My preliminary fieldwork suggested that the long-term unemployed 'coped' by restricting social networks to others in a similar position; they recognised and built on a common sense of identity and reduced labour market commitment. Preliminary fieldwork also suggested that, although waged employment remained a crucial aid and symbolic reference point in the transition to adult roles, statuses and identities, to those for whom employment was only a distant and diminished possibility, alternative status systems were proactively explored, constructed and pursued. My preliminary fieldwork revealed that significantly large numbers of study participants had evolved alternative modes of post-school transition and that some had sought out and developed sub- and anti-employment subcultures. Evidence drawn from preliminary fieldwork made it clear that involvement, whether real or potential, in these alternative career routes enabled participants to offset threats to their identities and psychological well-being posed by their objective labour market positions. The non-conventional 'strategies for survival' not only provided alternative routes to income, but also for defining status, identity, meaning and time-structure, and thus served as proactive alternatives to the 'latent functions of employment' identified by social-psychological research. Alternative careers and

transitions enabled some study participants to preserve their social and psychological well-being in a situation of profound disadvantage and prolonged unemployment.

Chapter Five provides an overview of the main body of research conducted during the fourth and final phase of my study (1986-1990). The Chapter highlights the difficulties, strengths and limitations, of participatory research, and I explore some of the personal consequences of conducting intensive fieldwork in one's own 'back yard'. I also examine the host of formidable ethical, political, and confidentiality implications and ramifications of conducting research into law-breaking amongst the long-term unemployed. The Chapter also provides an overview of the post-school movement of study participants into and out of employment/unemployment, explores the main explanations for the causes of unemployment, and examines the theoretical implications of the terms 'trajectories', 'transitions' and 'careers'.

Each of the different modes of post-school labour market transition identified amongst participants reflected a complementary pattern in terms of entry into and progress through adult domestic life. Chapter Five compares and contrasts the different modes of transition and paves the way for detailed exploration of the different modes in succeeding Chapters. Chapter Six provides a detailed examination of Traditional Transitions, Chapter Seven explores the more common Protracted Transitions, and Chapter Eight the most common Cyclical Transitions into long-term unemployment and labour market withdrawal. Individual responses within each of the separate modes of post-school transition are explored with case studies and ethnographic references, which seek to examine the relationship between history and biography, the mediation of inter-relationships between labour market and 'domestic career' transitions, and trends in government policy, the economy, local labour market conditions, housing and the family.

In recent years, the avalanche of youth research literature has concentrated on post-sixteen progressions. Under the impact of the vanishing youth labour market, the

traditional routes to adult roles and statuses have been broken. Within this broad body of research, some preliminary attempts have been made to explore and document the 'coping' and 'survival strategies' of young adults in high unemployment areas. However, little has been revealed about the use of the informal economy, the development of alternative enterprise cultures, or the recourse to petty and/or serious crime. Similarly, little has been revealed about the processes involved in the proactive development of these sub- and anti-employment subcultures, or the strategies and alternative transitions involved. Chapter Nine of my thesis provides a typology of the locally generated 'alternative career' options, supported by case studies and other ethnographic material, which provide an outline of the progressive development of such strategies by research participants.

For those participants involved in the development and pursuit of alternative transitions, such strategies were brought into being and articulated alongside the development of other subcultural concerns. Subcultural styles, for example, were often 'homologous' with alternative transitions and careers and provided a symbolic fit between the values and life style of the group, the subjective experience of its members, the recreational use of proscribed drugs, and the musical forms utilised to express or reinforce its focal concerns. In the Tenth and final Chapter of my study, I explore the development of innovative subcultural styles among study participants, and their peers, and examine how these gave meaning to, and reflected, an oppositional mode of consciousness, expressed through the relationship between alternative careers and subcultural style.

Of all the post-sixteen progression routes, the movement through cyclical transitions into long-term unemployment, the sub-economy, and acquisitive crime is the most under-researched. The noticeable gap in the existing literature may be partially explained by problems of access and the potentially controversial nature of research in this area. Nevertheless, through detailed exploration of these alternative transitions, I hope to have provided some contribution towards a more comprehensive knowledge of the 'career' points through which this progression occurs and to have lent greater overall

understanding of options available to, and 'choices' being made by, the long-term unemployed.

This study does not purport to be an authoritative, or definitive, examination of post-school transitions, or long-term unemployment, but is a descriptive account of a participant observation study of one specific group of unqualified, minimum age school leavers in a high unemployment Inner City area of Manchester. The study seeks to document how one particular group of young people have negotiated their transitions from school into adulthood against the backcloth of diminished opportunity during the Thatcher decade. My research has been unashamedly exploratory for, in many respects, what I encountered -

> " ... had never been presented with sufficient clarity and distinctness ... the sheer descriptive task had to come before all other considerations" (Laing 1960 : 18).

I have attempted to present an inevitably partial and fragmented glimpse of the realities which engaged the young people who became my research participants. At best my study has attempted to "interpret the world as it appears to them" (Matza 1969 : 25). Utilising a participatory method has, I hope, allowed me to give voice to participants' own attempts to understand their new social condition, as it has allowed me to record their endeavours to create meaning and sustain identities from the consistencies and contradictions they have encountered.

BEGGARS CAN'T BE CHOOSERS

VOLUME I

CHAPTER ONE

THE HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

"An account of social reality must be provided which adequately comprehends the life-worlds of research subjects while firmly situating those worlds within their broader social context. I take it to be axiomatic that this broader social context includes the historical antecedents of the situation under study." (Jenkins 1983 : 22)

"Ragamuffin know ya 'istory know ya culture." (The Ruthless Rap Assassins - Hulme, Manchester 1990).

1.1 Hartingleigh : A Brief History

During the reign of Edward I (1272-1307), Manchester was an obscure township built at the confluence of the rivers Irwell and Irk ...

"with a wooden-towered church presiding over the fortunes of a small manor-house." (1)

The manor house was owned by Robert Gradeley, Lord of the Manor of Manchester. Hartingleigh formed part of the great forest which encircled Manchester at that time. There was woodland, oak, ash, and elm where Hartingleigh now lies; there is even record that the eagle nested there. Even to this day, nearly 700 years later, Hartingleigh Clough shows to the imaginative eye what Hartingleigh forest might have once looked like.

The forest, according to a return made on the death of Robert Gradeley, Lord of the Manor in 1291, extended for over seven miles, covering nearby suburbs in the Northern part of the city. A later survey, made in 1322, states that the forest was worth 53s. 4d. *pannage* (that is the actual 'produce' of the forest, such as mast, honey, etc.) and that the trees themselves were worth £133 6s. 8d. if they were cut up for timber. However, it would be inaccurate to imagine a picture of the medieval Hartingleigh peasantry gathering the honey and felling the trees of this great forest. For Hartingleigh forest was part of the demesne of the Lord of Manchester and "all the profits of the earth accrued unto him". The forest was also a deer warren and was capable of grazing two hundred fallow deer;

the hunting of these, which belonged by medieval law to the King, had been granted to the Gradeleys and, being a royal privilege, was very strictly preserved. The River Irk was subjected to the same restrictions, the fishing rights being strictly reserved to the Gradeleys.

The medieval history of Hartingleigh reflects the medieval history of England; a place of extensive forests gradually being cleared and small towns surrounded by narrow strips of cultivated land, tilled by the peasantry - a peasantry tied to the soil and surrounded by the fruits of a fertile earth to which they had no rights with a Lord of the Manor hiring out his rights to the man who could pay for them. In short, it was a highly organised feudal society where the greatest changes were to lay in the land itself; in the substitution of spacious forest and wild deer leaps by rows of houses, new building estates and the tame urbanisation of Hartingleigh Clough. Apart from 'the Clough', there is nothing in Hartingleigh which survives its medieval past. Hartingleigh, a village on the outskirts of a rapidly growing industrial city, was by the 19th century indistinguishable from its neighbouring suburbs. The settlement of villagers in Hartingleigh during the Middle Ages was chiefly pastoral, the exceptions being the wardens and foresters who were employed to guard the deer belonging to the Lord of the Manor. The community was engulfed by the industrialists who set up their textile and dyeing mills on the banks of the Irk, just as the ploughlands and pastures were engulfed by the tide of houses that followed. According to Beales (1958), the Industrial Revolution,

> "replaced one social system or one civilisation by another ... A civilisation based on the plough and the pasture perished - in its place stood a new order, resting ... on coal, iron and imported textile materials." (Beales 1958 : 30)

Cotton being the 'pacemaker' (Hobsbawm 1975 : 56) of this new industrial order saw Lancashire, and in particular Manchester, at the very centre of,

> "the most fundamental transformation of human life in the history of the world." (Hobsbawm 1975 : 13)

Not only the 'pacemaker' of industrial change, cotton was also the basis of the newly emerging urban conglomerations which could not have existed without industrialisation. They expressed a new form of society, industrial capitalism, based on a new system of technological production, the factory, embodying a new exploitative economic relationship, class society, and a new form of social organisation, the great industrial city. In short, the Industrial Revolution,

> "represented a new economic relationship ... a new system of production, a new rhythm of life, a new society, a new historical era." (Hobsbawm 1975 : 65)

Labour in this new age of industrial capitalism increasingly took place in the big cities. According to Hobsbawm:

> "In 1750 there had been only two cities in Britain with more than 50,000 inhabitants - London and Edinburgh." (Hobsbawm 1975 : 86).

This was at a time when the estimated total population of England & Wales was five and a half million. By 1801, the national population had almost doubled and there were eight towns and cities, including Manchester, with more than 50,000 inhabitants, although still only 33% of the total population lived in a town of any size. However, by 1851, this proportion had risen to 50%, and by 1891 nearly 75% of the national population lived in the urban industrial conurbations (Miller 1979 : 28). For the first time, the census in 1851 reported an aggregate 'urban' population which exceeded the rural population (Lampard 1973 : 4). Thus, at the mid-point of the nineteenth century, with a total population of eighteen million for England & Wales, more people were living in town than in the country. By 1861, there were 29 great industrial towns and cities with populations of over 50,000, eight of these with populations over 100,000 and four over 250,000 (Miller 1979 : 28). According to Lampard, "the distinctive achievement of Britain in the latter part of the eighteenth century was to inaugurate the Industrial Revolution, her no less remarkable feat in the first half of the nineteenth century was to accomplish the first urban transformation" (1973 : 4). Manchester vividly reflected both of these profound historical changes.

From 1760, the City of Manchester expanded from the area generally considered to be the City Centre to include the outlying towns and villages. These today form the districts of Manchester. Between 1760 and 1830, Manchester effectively multiplied tenfold in size, increasing its population from 17,000 to over 180,000 inhabitants during this period (Hobsbawm *op cit*). The rapidly expanding cotton industry, fired by coal, powered by steam, and concentrated largely in the mills of Lancashire, was increasingly concentrated in these rapidly expanding regions of population. By 1838, out of a total of 1,600 mills in England, 1,200 were in Lancashire (Mathias 1969 : 133). The mills were increasingly concentrated in the more populated regions, in places where roads and canals made it easier and cheaper for getting in raw materials. Other 'external economies' also developed as Manchester expanded as a marketing centre for cotton manufacture and sales. There were, for example, the specialised service industries such as the bleaching and dyeing firms to be found in Hartingleigh and later the machine-making shops and machine servicing facilities which grew up in the shadow of the great mills in the Irk Valley.

Rapid expansion in this period meant that the City of Manchester, like all the industrial towns and cities, grew unplanned, lacking even the most elementary public services such as water supply, sanitation, lighting, street cleaning, open spaces and so on. The response to the consequences of this rapid unplanned industrial urbanisation is captured in a series of what Williams (1963 : 99) has described as the 'industrial novels'. Written at the middle of the nineteenth century, these provide vivid descriptions of the conditions and circumstances of life in an unsettled newly industrialised society. Charles Dickens' famous description of 'Coketown' from the novel *Hard Times* (1854), for example, vividly evokes the human consequences of this rapid urbanisation based ultimately on utility and the quest for financial profit:

> "It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it ... It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye, and vast piles of buildings full of windows where there was a rattling and trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down,

> like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness. It contained several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another, inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work, and to whom every day was the same as yesterday and tomorrow, and every year the counterpart of the last and the next ..." (Dickens : 1969 edition : 65).

Nor were the consequences of rapid industrial urbanisation merely a question of poor architectural aesthetics, daily grind and impoverished living conditions. Air pollution from the great factory chimneys and water pollution from sewage and industrial effluence produced an appalling toll of deaths from respiratory and intestinal disease (Hobsbawm 1975 : 86). Few towns had appropriate drainage systems; where sewers existed, they were designed only for rainwater. In the north of Manchester, for example in Oldham Road and St. George's Road, a population of 7,095 had access to only 33 toilets (Miller 1979 : 156). In the Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population (1842), headed by the famous sanitary reform campaigner Edwin Chadwick, he said:

> "The annual loss of life from filth and bad ventilation is greater than the loss from death or wounds in any war in modern times." (quoted in Miller 1979 : 157)

After 1830, the mass migration into the City from the surrounding rural areas produced recurring epidemics of typhoid, cholera and tuberculosis. The latter did not in general attract the great publicity attributed to 'King Cholera' or 'Irish Fever' (typhus) but, according to Miller (*op cit*), it was almost exclusively an urban disease, the "captain of the armies of death", accounting for one-third of all deaths in the early century. It was the increasingly documented and publicised nature of the social ills of the new industrial City which led eventually to the rudiments of a Welfare State (Roberts 1960). The early 'sanitary reform movements' being given impetus by, for example, the horrific symptoms and apparent ignorance of class distinctions of 'King Cholera'. According to Dorothy Wordsworth:

> "One visible blessing seems already to be coming upon us through the alarm of cholera. Every rich man is now obliged to look into the miserablebye-lanes and corners inhabited by the poor." (quoted in Miller 1979 : 157)

In 1845, Frederick Engels published a vigorous attack on the urban-industrial system, through a general analysis of the evolution of industrial capitalism, its social impact and its political and social consequences. His account of urban social conditions in 'The Great Towns' was based as much on personal field work, particularly in Manchester and Salford, as on documentary and statistical analysis. He argued, along with many other Victorian social observers, reformers and revolutionaries, that the appalling physical conditions in the great industrial cities were having severe effects on the health, physique, and moral and social relationships of the working population.

> "The cottages are old, dirty and of the smallest sort, the streets uneven, fallen into ruts and in part without drains or pavement; masses of refuse, offal and sickening filth lie among standing pools ... the atmosphere is poisoned by the effluvia from these and laden and darkened by the smoke of a dozen tall factory chimneys ... in each of these pens containing at most two rooms, a garret and perhaps a cellar, on the average twenty human beings live ... for each one hundred and twenty persons, one usually inaccessible privy is provided ... in the working-men's dwellings of Manchester, no cleanliness, no convenience and consequently no comfortable family life is possible; ... in such dwellings only a physically degenerate race, robbed of all humanity, degraded, reduced morally and physically to bestiality, could feel comfortable and at home." (Engels 1979 : 93; 94, 96)

However, historians do not all accept the typicality or extent of the conditions described by Engels, but the critics' objection to Engels is often only their reluctance to admit his facts. Many local contemporary observers, as well as those who visited Manchester from abroad in those years, including bourgeois liberals, expressed a sense of horror in language as inflammatory as Engels' own. The famous French liberal, Alexis de Tocqueville, for example, in 1835, wrote of Manchester in the following terms:

> "Civilization works its miracles and civilized man is turned back almost into a savage." (in Mayer (ed.) 1958 : 107-8)

Similarly, the American observer Henry Colman, writing about Manchester in 1845, expressed a deep sense of moral and personal outrage at what he witnessed:

> "Wretched, defrauded, oppressed, crushed human nature lying in bleeding fragments all over the face of society ... Every day that I live I thank Heaven that I am not a poor man with a family in England." (in Briggs 1963 :116)

As well as these observers from abroad, other local medical commentators, such as Dr. Kay-Shuttleworth (1832) whose statistical study of the "moral and physical condition of the working classes employed in the cotton manufacture of Manchester", provided further contemporary testimony of the appalling physical, social and working environments of those "impoverished artisans" in nineteenth-century Manchester. Manchester, after London, being at that time a central site for the investigation and documentation of the early evolving structure and social consequences of the urban-industrial system. Carlyle (1840; 1843), Disraeli (1844; 1845), Cook-Taylor (1842); Faucher (1844) and later Marx, among many others, visited Manchester in order to examine and investigate the discontinuities and disarticulations of the newly emerged urban-industrial system. Each in their different ways critically appraising what they encountered. Robert Southey, for example, as early as 1829 gave his verdict in the following terms:

> "The immediate and home effect of the manufacturing system carried on as it is now upon the great scale, is to produce physical and moral evil, in proportion to the wealth it creates." (quoted in Williams 1963 : 41)

By 1850, the area which now constitutes Hartingleigh Ward, my study area, contained two "small impoverished and overcrowded settlements" similar to those described by Engels. In the north of the Ward, a settlement had developed at the junction of Rowmarch Road and Hartingleigh Road, associated with the textile and dyeing industries in the Irk Valley. In the south of the Ward, an arm of development stretched along Newham Road from the city centre and some secondary service industry had developed in this area along the Rowmarch canal and the newly constructed railway system. The beginnings of the Newmarch Heath brewery were also established by this time. However, until 1885, Hartingleigh was a separate township from Manchester. During the 1870s, the problems of pure water supply and sanitation (referred to by Engels earlier in the century) grew much worse during the next decade. The impact of a growing population and unplanned, haphazard, urbanisation meant that houses in Hartingleigh were erected cheaply and quickly, often by 'small proprietors' to house their workers. Again Dickens'

description of 'Coketown' in the 'industrial novel' *Hard Times* (1854) captures the inhumanities of Victorian civilisation embodied in the "piecemeal" construction of workers' dwellings, "fostered and sanctioned by a hard philosophy, the aggressive formulation of an inhumane spirit." (Leavis, quoted in Williams 1963 : 104):

> "In the hardest working part of Coketown; in the innermost fortifications of that ugly citadel, where Nature was as strongly bricked out as killing airs and gases were bricked in; ... the labyrinth of narrow courts upon courts and close streets upon streets, ... had come into existence piecemeal, every piece in a violent hurry for some man's purpose, and the whole an unnatural family, shouldering, and trampling and pressing one another to death." (Dickens 1969 edition : 102)

An article in *The Times* of 8 February 1871 on the problems of administering the census, further illustrated graphically the haphazard nature of urbanisation:

> "There are many towns containing long lines of cottaged streets, formed by the gradual coalescence of buildings erected by several small proprietors, and in such streets it's not uncommon for each proprietor to give his little road a distinctive name, and to number the houses it contains from one upwards, without the smallest regard to the numbers in the vicinity." (quoted in Pahl 1971 : 20)

Local Government barely existed, and there was no adequate provision for even basic services. Hartingleigh and the nearby townships of Newmarch Heath, Bradford, Rusholme, etc., were governed as District Boards of Health under the Public Health Act of 1848. The growing populations of these townships reflected the demographic trends of all the industrial cities, particularly in the Midlands and the North; the expanding populations creating problems too big for the limited powers of the District Boards of Health. Chief of these problems was the expense of laying down a proper system of sewage treatment; it was this factor which primarily impelled the districts contiguous to Manchester to seek entry into the city. In 1885, nearly fifty years after the incorporation of the original borough, the first extension of the boundary took place with the addition of Hartingleigh, Bradford and Rusholme.

During the later half of the nineteenth century, there was rapid development in Hartingleigh and by 1895 most of the Ward was urbanised. The industrial uses in the

south of the Ward expanded rapidly as the development of railway branch lines took place. The brewery had expanded and there were brickworks, quarries of red sandstone, chemical works and the railway carriage and wagonworks had been built. Alongside the Rowmarch canal, more industry had developed and housing built along Newham Road. The area west of King's Road and around Chicken Lane was completely built up by this time with rows of terraced housing, 'one up, one downs', and 'back to back' houses, and further housing development had taken place along Rowmarch Road, north of the original settlement. The development of the cotton weaving, spinning and dyeing mills had largely facilitated the rapid urbanisation of Hartingleigh in the early nineteenth century. After 1850, however, other specialised service industries based on machine making and machine servicing grew up, especially in the Irk Valley. One local historian recorded unfavourably the attendant changes which had taken place during his lifetime:

> "To a youth entering upon his teens, a century seems an age, but to a man looking back upon a long life it seems but the measure of a few months. And yet in these days of rapid motion and change a hundred years compresses more into its history than a thousand of those primeval periods when men and their dumb servants plod monotonously through all the days of their life, surrendering themselves to the sexton at the appointed time to make room for successors, who followed in their footsteps from the cradle to the grave ... But nature never pauses or slackens speed and so the famous oak trees of Hartingleigh, and the farmsteads that dotted the landscapes, disappear one by one, and the cultivated fields become barren, the hedgerows thinned and leafless. But of all men in the world James Watt has the most to answer, for when steam was applied to machinery, factories and the factory system took the place of domestic occupation. Small tradesmen were gradually absorbed into greater proprietorships. The pleasant noise of the handloom and the cheerful hum of the winding wheel almost drowned in the song of the caged lark were heard at further intervals, while the great factories made havoc of the old landmarks and became the sunless estates where willing slaves toiled with their last strength for scant supplies of bread and clothes." (Wentworth, *Middleton Guardian*, 29th January, 1885).

By 1914, additional housing in the northern part of the Ward, the building and expansion of Marton Hospital and the further development of housing and heavy industry (mainly engineering and chemical works) served to complete the development of most of Hartingleigh (see section 1.7). Very few houses were built during the period between the two world wars and it was not until after the Second World War that any significant change occurred. By 1960, much of the original terraced housing had become obsolete

and a programme of clearance and redevelopment was launched by the City Council to deal with this (see section 1.3). According to City Council documents, the majority (87%) of housing in present day Hartingleigh has been built within the twenty year period since 1964. Consequently, much of the housing is council owned. However, some of the older terraced housing was retained, particularly in two areas around Hartingleigh District Centre and in the extreme north and south of the Ward. There are also some small areas of inter-war privately-built dwellings dispersed throughout the Ward. Today much of the central and northern parts of the Ward contain relatively new council dwellings typical of most inner city areas. They take a variety of forms from multi-storey flats to low-rise housing developments.

1.2 Hartingleigh : The Roots of Community

Hartingleigh is one of nineteen Wards located within the inner city boundary as designated by the Manchester City Council. It is situated to the north and east of the City Centre, approximately two miles from the commercial centre of Manchester.

The Ward boundaries are predominantly formed by natural geographical features. The River Irk in the west, the remains of Hartingleigh Clough to the north and the railway system in the south. To the east, the Ward boundary runs along Hillington Street from Hartingleigh Clough and then follows the line of a small river known locally as Marton Brook to Rowmarch canal and the railway in the south. The Ward boundaries contain parts of several areas that are known more locally by their district names. The biggest of these districts are Marton on the eastern boundary, Collington and Moat Pitton to the north and Barkers Green in the south-west of the Ward.

For older residents, however, the real heart of Hartingleigh beats within a triangle of major roads in the centre of the Ward.

> "This triangle of three roads once enclosed rows of clearly defined streets, with smaller back streets and entries. In them dwelt working class families, some very poor, some not very poor, and others tuppence ha'penny a week better off than most." (Kay 1987 : 40)

It is this area that contains many of the 1,100 or so remaining pre-1919 terraced houses surrounding Hartingleigh District Centre. These houses form an interlocking network of older style terraced streets, some with small garden frontage with brick or locally quarried red sandstone walls but mostly with front doors that open onto the pavement. These streets have retained the traditional rows of high walled backyards, many of which have been utilised, in the modernisations of recent years, to house single storey kitchen extensions. Beyond the backyard gates run the traditional 'entries and ginnels' parallel to the streets at the front of the houses.

The 'Old Market' of Hartingleigh can also be found in this part of the Ward. Dating back to the 1920s, the old market has a distinctly Dickensian air about it. The market consists of a small network of rickety stalls selling a hotch-potch of groceries, household goods, cheap children's toys, and vegetables. On Wednesdays, the stalls are rented by second-hand dealers who sell virtually anything from second-hand clothing to discarded household furniture. The 'Old Market', where 'bartering' retains a legitimate place in the business transaction, remains something of an anachronism in the high technology nineties, even more so when contrasted with the business practices and spatial structure of Hartingleigh's recently constructed superstore with its computerised checkout points and 'drive-in' parking facility.

During the course of my field work, conversations with the remaining older residents of Hartingleigh revealed how communities within these terraced streets, containing families that had lived for several generations in the area, had developed informal kinship and community ties and networks. As Willmott and Young noted in Bethnal Green in the 1950s: "Long residence by itself does something to create a sense of community with other people in the district." (Young and Willmott, 1957 : 105)

This sense of community in old Hartingleigh expressed itself in various ways - I was told for example of informal street 'collections' of money for funerals or marriages of residents. There were also the informal matrilocal support networks generated between female members of mother-centred extended families. These networks, involving grandmothers, mothers and daughters living in the same areas over several generations, facilitated the sharing of domestic and child care routines, as well a providing emotional/psychological support. There were stories of street parties and bonfire nights celebrated by residents building a huge bonfire in the centre of the cobbled street itself. 'Corner shops', unlike the new superstore, would provide free credit or 'tick' for street residents so that goods could be obtained and paid for at the end of the week when "the wages had been paid to the men".

Mrs. Pringle, a resident of the older part of Hartingleigh for over eighty years revealed the profound sense of pride that had evolved within the community over several generations but which she believed had been destroyed with the demolitions in the years of clearance and redevelopment. "You was proud to live here then, even though it was supposed to be rough ... You had good neighbours ... you knew everyone ... and we kept our houses clean, and the entries ... it used to be a good place to live." Joe Kay similarly recalled the street in old Hartingleigh where he was born and had grown up.

> "Like many other streets it was clean, and so were the back entries. The front doorsteps and backyards were washed, and the flags cream-stoned on Friday evenings or Saturday mornings." (Kay 1987 : 40)

Much of this sense of community pride referred to by Mrs. Pringle, Joe Kay, and the other older residents of Hartingleigh, appears to mark part of the divide between the 'rough' and 'respectable' working class. Symbolic markers of 'respectability' within the community developed out of the nineteenth century concern with hygiene and sanitation. 'Lime washing' backyards and entries, for example, was a hangover from the sanitary reform campaigns in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, particularly after 1842 when

Chadwick's 'Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population' conclusively established the relationship between insanitary conditions and infectious disease, particularly typhoid and cholera. Later, a frequently lime-washed backyard was an indicator of moral integrity and respectability within the community. 'Cream-stoning' or 'donkey-stoning' the front doorstep and surrounding pavement was a similar ritual frequently enacted by overworked working class women to signal cleanliness, moral hygiene, and therefore respectability.

> "If you didn't have a clean step, well, you were beyond the pale. And you swilled all your flags, didn't you? After you'd cleaned your steps and your windowsill and donkey-stoned them. And mostly the neighbours used to do them more or less together, 'cos they'd say, "Are you swilling Mrs?" And you all came out so all t'water run down gutter at same time." (Gatehouse 1985 : 22)

Sometimes domestic work was inherited from overworked mothers at a fairly young age by the daughters of the household serving an early apprenticeship in domestic labour. As Joe Kay's 'chronicles' recall:

> "My sister Irene - then only twelve years old - took over one of mam's regular Saturday morning jobs. With a bucketful of hot soapy water she washed the front and backyard steps and flags. She finished the cleaning with a rubbing stone, a cream stone. When it all dried it looked clean and spotless." (Kay 1987 : 83)

The nostalgia for the past clearly evident in Joe Kay's *Chronicles of a Hartingleigh Lad* (1987) is a nostalgia for a lost sense of place, a lost sense of community and community pride. However, it must be remembered that this sense of community pride was based largely on the domestic oppression of the women. Much of the civil and community pride (still evident in the traditional terraced areas of Hartingleigh) was at the cost of an endless round of domestic labour undertaken by the women within the community. Again, Joe Kay's chronicles provide a graphic illustration of the sheer physicality involved in maintaining 'decent standards' within the home thereby sustaining one's 'respectability' with the community:

> "She would get up at six in the morning and fill the big boiler in the kitchen with buckets of water. Then she would chop wood and get coal to make the boiler fire. When I got out of bed and came down the narrow stairway later in the morning the kitchen would be full of steam and she would be furiously swirling the 'dolly' in the tub washing like a human washing machine. After hours of washing and scrubbing with a

> hard bristled brush, came the job of wringing the clothes. Overalls, bed sheets, the lot went through the large cast-iron framed wringing machine, appropriately called the mangle. The big wooden rollers would creak and grind as they were turned by hand; the work was hard enough to break the back of Hercules. The ironing was done using two large smoothing irons heated on the living room fire ... My mam was always on her hands and knees, scrubbing the floors and stairs. She did this every week with a bucket of hot soapy water and a large tough looking scrubbing brush." (Kay 1987 : 57; 82)

According to Oakley (1976), it was industrialisation that produced the domestic 'housewife' role, with the working man as a sort of 'absentee husband' (Dennis *et al* 1956). Men were increasingly separated from the intimate daily routines of domestic life as work was increasingly separated from the home.

> "The burden of maintaining family life falls entirely upon the mother." (Bosanquet 1899, quoted in Young and Willmott 1957 : 18-19)

According to Oakley, industrialisation had the following lasting consequences for women:

> "The economic dependence of women and children on men; the isolation of housework and child care from other work. Hence, through the allocation to women of housework and child care, through modern definitions of the role of housewife and the role of mother, industrialization has meant the restriction of the woman-housewife to the home." (Oakley 1976 : 59)

Thus feminist research has revealed how the unacknowledged labour of women in working-class communities sustained the sense of community pride and community identity referred to by Joe Kay. Much of this was a factor of the transition to industrialisation and the separation of male employment from the home and the daily round of domestic responsibilities. I examine the implications of contemporary unemployment on these traditional patterns later in my study. Here it is sufficient to note how most of the elderly residents, particularly the women, still living within the older terraced areas, to whom I spoke during my field work, regretted the passing of the old ways and the old sense of community pride and identity. The informal kinship and community ties were demolished along with the spatial structures that had sustained them.

> "Most of it has been demolished ... leaving it stripped bare of life. I used to have friends and family all round here, now it's all been pulled down, they've gone ... it's lonely now, ... I don't half miss the old days". (Mrs. Pringle : Taped Interview)

However, in later years, it was these same remaining terraced areas that became the focus for the regeneration of a new sense of community identity in the period immediately following the extensive clearance and redevelopment programme of the 1960s and 1970s. A new community impetus developed which eventually led to the establishment of a locally defined and managed purpose-built youth and community centre in 1981. The background to this development in Hartingleigh's more recent history is examined in detail in section 1.8; here it is sufficient to point to the thread of history which connects the community pride and local networks of old Hartingleigh and the desire after clearance and redevelopment for a renewal of this lost sense of community identity. Hartingleigh in the 1980s and 1990s like the old Hartingleigh that evolved as a consequence of Manchester's urban-industrialisation is a 'stony desert' which its inhabitants have "had to make habitable by their own efforts." (Hobsbawm 1969 : 87)

1.3 Contemporary Hartingleigh

> "The old neighbourhood of Hartingleigh has now disappeared, but I remember it well; I was born and grew up there. The cobbled sreets, the Jubilee Chapel, old Flod's Mill with its giant chimney - a permanent landmark, solid and unchangeable, or so it seemed in those days. I recall the cluttered rows of houses and lively corner shops with a bit of 'tick' at the ready - now gone forever, scattered by a changing world and charging bulldozers ..." (Kay 1987 : 4)

The period between 1971-1977 saw much of the old Hartingleigh District Centre, referred to by Joe Kay and Mrs. Pringle, demolished creating a huge crescent shaped area of land in the very centre of the Ward. It is bounded on one side by the main Rowmarch Road which runs from the centre of Manchester, through Hartingleigh, and then onto Rowmarch, a large old cotton town a dozen or so miles from the city centre.

Between 1977-1982 a large superstore was constructed on this vacant area of land, together with a shopping centre of sixteen new shops, some deck access council flats and an indoor and open-air market, locally called the 'new market' to distinguish it from the original or 'old market' site still situated in the remaining traditional terraced area of

Hartingleigh. This construction work was part of council planning in the post-1964 era of clearance and redevelopment and this same period also eventually saw the construction of Education, Welfare, Careers and Social Services and private offices in purpose-built blocks adjoining the superstore and markets. Other projects programmed for implementation on the same site have been shelved under the current public spending constraints imposed by central government on local government. These were to have included a Cultural Centre, a Health Centre, a Recreation Centre, additional shops and a new licensed club. A terse footnote in the City Council documents relating to these projects states that: "It is now unlikely that these proposals will be implemented in the short term."

Thus there remains a large area of cleared land to the rear and side of the superstore and shopping/market centres that has never been officially utilised since the demolition of the terraced streets that formerly stood there. However, this 'L'-shaped area of land, particularly the section to the rear of the superstore, has, over the years, provided an informal meeting and play space for the children and young people of Hartingleigh. This area locally known as 'the wreck' is one of several spaces within Hartingleigh that have been colonised by groups of children and young people. These sites are recognisable by their graffiti and permanently erected crude football areas. They provide a gathering space, a place for play and conversation; a space free from adult supervision, where 'doing nothing' is a creative, negotiated, imaginative exercise. (Corrigan 1976; 1979(a); 1979(b))

More than 1,100 pre-1919 terraced houses still exist in Hartingleigh. The largest number of these are concentrated in two areas around Hartingleigh District Centre. Approximately 60% of these houses were included in improvement programmes by the City Council. In the King's Road General Improvement Area scheme, home improvement grants were made available by the City Council in April 1976 to facilitate the modernisation and refurbishment of the properties. The majority of the 453 dwellings eligible for home improvement grants under the scheme were without inside WCs or

bathrooms. By March 1981, 35% were 'committed to improvement', mainly by the City Council and by Housing Associations. In addition, the City Council undertook general environmental improvements to the area, including traffic management schemes and the general landscaping of sites. Eventually, as a result of this process of 'gentrification', the King's Road area developed the local reputation of being the most 'respectable' district within the Ward.

In January 1979, phase 2 of the City Council's Housing Improvement Programme declared the area around Canton Street, a 'Housing Action Area'. This area contained 185 houses of which 177 required modernisation when the area was declared. By March 1981, 18% of these houses had been improved and a further 26% were committed to improvement.

Beyond Hartingleigh District Centre and the remaining terraced streets that surround it lies the bulk of the council houses that have been built since 1964. These are grouped into three officially designated estates called the Chicken Lane, Marton and Canton estates. However, local residents have over the years developed informal community sub-divisions within these estates and locally there are nine recognised areas, each with their district names and local affiliations.

Of particular note is the Chicken Lane estate which is comprised mostly of deck-access flats. Local authority housing allocation decisions at the time of rehousing tended to exaggerate distinctions between the 'rough' and 'respectable' working-class, thus reproducing the distinction on the council estates between the desirable and undesirable in residential patterns. This is a process that has been documented elsewhere (Baldwin and Bottoms 1976; Gill 1977; Jenkins 1983). As a result of this process, the Chicken Lane flats developed a reputation as being the 'roughest' part of Hartingleigh. Locally, it became known as 'the Jungle', "the place where all the animals live". The young from the estates however inverted this negative labelling process so that to be known as a person

from 'the Jungle' took on an affirmatory status identification that was particularly associated with young working-class male machismo.

Hartingleigh Ward contains over 3,000 council dwellings (around 70% of the total number of dwellings in the Ward), 87% of which were constructed since 1964 as part of the City Council's programme of clearance and redevelopment. City Council documents show that council housing in the Ward is fairly evenly divided between houses, flats and maisonettes. Council provision covers the variety of types of housing to be found throughout the city, including multi-storey, balcony access and deck access flats; walk-up, deck access and balcony access maisonettes; and over 1,000 council houses of one to six bedrooms.

The contrast between the familiarity, neighbourliness and appearance of the older terraced areas of Hartingleigh and the Council estates is extremely marked, the Council estates generally offering a more remote and impersonal environment for its inhabitants. Flats on the Chicken Lane estate, for example, offer the anonymous spatial structure of a windswept, litter-strewn amphitheatre. Harrison (1983) captures the atmosphere in his description of the Hackney housing estates in North London:

> "Quite apart from their structural faults many ... have a dirty down-at-heel feel about them: a scattering of refuse across courtyard, murals of graffiti, and a battered, stained look about brick and concrete, wood and metal. These things, common to most inner-city areas, are the outward sign of a house that is not in order. The causes are multiple: poor design, bad-management, worker-management conflicts in refuse and repair services, seven lean years of public spending restraint, community and family collapse." (Harrison 1983 : 210)

The deck-access facility on the Chicken Lane estate has produced a series of 'no-man's land' anonymous stair-wells and walkways. Most of these dead areas are unlit and hazardous for negotiating, especially at night. The women and elderly residents on the estate feel this as an acute problem that affects their neighbourliness and general mobility. According to Peter Willmott:

"The post-war programme of clearance and redevelopment in Britain's towns and cities not only broke up existing local networks but usually re-developed the old districts in physical forms which made it difficult for people to get to know their new neighbours." (Willmott 1989 : 13)

1.4 Hartingleigh : Demographic Structure

In terms of total population, Hartingleigh is one of the smallest Wards within the inner City boundary. In 1985, a population survey carried out by the City Council showed the number of residents in Hartingleigh Ward to be just over 13,000.

In 1978, the City Council carried out a similar population survey of Manchester; this gave a total population figure of 9,822 for Hartingleigh Ward. This figure revealed a decrease in population of over 4,000 from that derived from the 1971 National Census. In 1981, numbers again derived from National Census data showed that the total population of the Ward had decreased by almost 42% between the years of these two National Censuses. This was part of a more general decline in population over the whole city of 17.5% Three major factors accounted for this reduction in Hartingleigh's population between 1971-81. Firstly, there was a general trend in population movement away from inner cities in this period. Secondly, there was a reduction in average household size, a fall which occurred nationally as well as locally. Thirdly, and most importantly, population decreased in Hartingleigh between these years as a feature of the clearance of large numbers of terraced housing during the main period of Council redevelopment, especially with the demolition of the pre-1919 terraced housing in the old Hartingleigh District Centre.

Between the years of 1981-85, the overall population in Hartingleigh increased by 2% from a figure of 12,878 to just over 13,000, whereas the number of people in the City fell by 2.5% from a figure of 437,663 in 1981 to 432,912 in 1985. Overall the figures reveal a great deal of movement in population especially out-migration between the years 1971-1981 when clearance and redevelopment were at their peak, thus providing a crucial

quantitative indicator of the perceived sense of social dislocation inhabitants claimed to have experienced at that time.

1.4.1 Age Distribution of the Population

In terms of the age distribution of the population, Table 1, derived from 1981 census data, shows that the age distribution of the Ward's population closely resembled that of the City as a whole, with only slight variations in the 0-15 and 60-65+ age groups, which were slightly higher than the City average.

TABLE 1 : HARTINGLEIGH - Age Distribution by Population

Age Group	*Hartingleigh*		*Manchester*	
		%		%
0-4	817	6.3	23,039	5.9
5-15	2,167	16.8	68,754	15.7
16.24	2,076	16.1	73,765	16.6
25-34	1,638	12.7	58,716	13.4
35-44	1,253	9.7	43,021	9.8
60/65+	2,585	20.1	82,518	18.9
TOTAL	12,878	100.0	437,663	100.0
Males 75+	220	1.7	7,489	1.7
Females 75+	606	4.7	18,461	4.2

Source: Hartingleigh Ward 1981 Census Information produced by Manchester City Planning Department

In the years 1981-85, there was, however, a significant increase in the number of young children. The 0-4 age group increased by more than 38% compared to the City average rise of 20%. There was also an increase in the number of people aged 75 years or over of 5%.

1.4.2 Place of Birth of Residents

Figures derived from the 1981 Census reveal that a high percentage of residents in Hartingleigh were born in the United Kingdom compared to the City average. Of the

12,878 residents included in the Census, 93.8% (12,059) were born in the United Kingdom. The Census also gives details of households according to the birthplace of the 'head of the household'. As would be expected, the majority of people in Hartingleigh lived in households whose head was born in the United Kingdom. Only 0.2% of the population in Hartingleigh lived in households where the head was born in either the New Commonwealth (this includes Commonwealth countries in Africa, India, the Caribbean, Bangladesh, the Far East, and parts of the Mediterranean) or Pakistan, compared to a City average of 7.9%.

By comparison, some of Manchester's inner City wards contain very high percentages of households headed by persons born in the New Commonwealth or Pakistan; Longsight, for example, contains over 30%, Hulme 28.4%, Moss Side 28.7% and Whalley Range 24.5%

TABLE 2 : HARTINGLEIGH - Place of Birth of Residents

Number of persons born in:	*Hartingleigh*		*Manchester*	
		%		%
UK	12,059	93.8	388,623	88.8
Irish Republic	441	3.4	18,135	4.1
Old Commonwealth	10	0.1	692	0.2
Caribbean	47	0.4	6,263	1.4
Indian Sub-Continent	28	0.2	3,349	0.8
Africa	38	0.3	2,811	0.6
Far East	45	0.3	2,380	0.5
Other New Common-wealth (1)	4	0.03	759	0.2
Pakistan	7	0.05	4,975	1.1
Other	180	1.4	9,676	2.2

Source: Hartingleigh Ward Area Information, City of Manchester, City Planning Office (no date)

My study therefore does not have to confront any of the profound problems experienced by ethnic minorities in the inner City. However, it is worth noting that in a decade of general high unemployment, it is black and Asian youth who have borne the severest brunt of the recession. In November 1982, for example, the Commission for Racial Equality reported that 60% of Afro-Caribbeans who were available for work in the 16-20 age group were without a job (*The Guardian*, 12th November, 1982). Various studies have documented the connections between the recession, race, structural inequality, crime and punishment. (Box 1987; Muncie 1984; MacLeod 1987; Pitts, 1988 : 121-134) According to Pitts: "Black children and young people are the victims of a predatory and unjust system of justice and punishment" (1988 : 134). The mechanisms of this are outlined by Box:

> "The police discriminate against those social groups who have become economically marginalised during the recent recession. In particular, the unemployed, among whom ethnic minorities are over-represented, are treated *more harshly, and are arrested and* referred to court more often." (Box 1987 : 168)

Once in a court, a black British male is eight times more likely to receive a custodial sentence and a black British female six times more likely than whites facing similar convictions. (Home Office, 1986)

1.5 Hartingleigh : Socio-Economic Structure

The following outline is derived from City Council documents relating to the 1981 Census. It also contains information from the 10% Small Area Statistics in the Census (i.e. those based on a 10% sample of households), which provides socio-economic information about Manchester's households, about the industrial and socio-economic structure of the City's resident population, and about means of travel to work.

The Census of 1981 classified the population into 17 socio-economic groups (SEGs) based on assumptions about social and economic status. For the sake of simplicity, these socio-economic groups have been aggregated into broader categories, as follows:

TABLE 3: Socio Economic Groups

Occupation of Household Head	*SEG*	
Professional and Managerial	1, 2, 3, 4, 13	Bank Managers and Accountants
Other Non-Manual	5, 6	Teachers
Skilled Manual	8, 9, 12, 14	Electricians
Semi-Skilled Manual	7, 10, 15	Assembly Line Workers
Unskilled Manual	11	Labourers
Armed Forces/inadequately described occupations	16, 17	

Source: Hartingleigh Ward 1981 Census - Information produced by Manchester City Planning Department

Socio-economic structure can be classified in a number of ways. The following section is based largely on just one of these. This method takes people in private households and classifies all persons in each household according to the occupation of the stated 'household head', regardless of the occupations of other people in the household. Where the head of the household is retired, the classification is made according to the previous occupation of the head. Where the head of the household has never worked, then the household is unclassified. This is a less than perfect method of categorising socio-economic features and has been extensively criticised in recent years (Goldthorpe 1983; Stanworth 1984; Duke and Edgell 1987). Most obviously, the method of locating married women's class position through male 'heads' of households has been criticised as "intellectual sexism" (Acker 1973). Critics have argued that the practice of making general claims about class from research focussed on 'male household heads' is not justified and that it closes off some of the more interesting aspects of the relationship between gender and class (Acker 1980; Delphy 1981; Allen 1982; Garnsey 1978; Britten and Heath 1983). Nevertheless, for the limited purposes of illustrating the basic contours of Hartingleigh's socio-economic structure, the method provides an adequate indicator of occupational class composition in the Ward prior to the severest period of the recession.

Table 4 below illustrates the occupational class structure of Hartingleigh according to the occupation of the stated head of household. These figures differed slightly from the City average, revealing the occupational class composition of the ward as biased towards manual occupations. For example, only 7.3% of the household heads in Hartingleigh fell within the professional and managerial category of occupations compared to a City average of 10.5%. The more affluent residential wards on the south side of Manchester show much higher percentages of persons in households where the head is classified as professional and managerial. Affluent Didsbury, for example, has 26.7% in this category, Withington 23.3% and Brooklands 17.6%. Similarly, there was in Hartingleigh a lower proportion of persons in the other non-manual category, 11% for Hartingleigh compared with the City average of 13.2%.

TABLE 4 : HARTINGLEIGH - Socio-Economic Structure of Households

	% of Persons in Households by Occupation of Head of Household	
	Hartingleigh	*Manchester*
Professional and Managerial	7.3	10.5
Other Non-Manual	11.0	13.2
Skilled Manual	29.9	28.7
Semi-Skilled Manual	19.9	17.0
Unskilled Manual	7.5	7.8
Armed Forces/Inadequately described occupations	3.0	2.9
Head of Household never active	21.3	19.9
	100.00	*100.00*

Source: Hartingleigh Ward 1981 Census Information produced by Manchester City Planning Department.

Conversely in 1981, there were slightly higher than average proportions in the skilled manual and semi-skilled manual categories for Hartingleigh as compared to the City averages. However, many of the skilled manual and semi-skilled manual occupations for Hartingleigh's workers existed at the time of the 1981 Census in the northern tip of the

more extensive manufacturing area of East Manchester (see Table 5; Section 1.7). This was an area that faced a series of closures and subsequent redundancies as the 1980s wore on, resulting in a contraction of employment prospects for Hartingleigh's skilled and semi-skilled workers (see Section 1.7).

1.5.1 Household Tenure

The socio-economic structure of Hartingleigh is reflected in other social indicators such as household tenure, car-ownership and mode of travelling to work. Figures derived both from 1981 Census data and the 1985 Population Survey carried out by Manchester City Council reveal a higher than average proportion of households in Hartingleigh in Council-rented property. Over 60% of the households in the Ward rented their accommodation from the Council compared for example to 4.6% in more affluent, residential Didsbury.

1.5.2 Car Ownership

Similarly, the overall car ownership rate in Hartingleigh was below average for the City. Over 72% of households in Hartingleigh, or 8,286 people, did not have access to the use of a motor car. Again, this figure can be unfavourably contrasted with the circumstances in other Manchester wards. In Didsbury, for example, over 65% of households enjoyed car ownership.

1.5.3 Travel to Work

Again utilising data from the 1981 Census and the 1985 Population Survey carried out by Manchester City Council, it was evident that the percentage of working residents in Hartingleigh, travelling to work by car was significantly less than in the more affluent wards in the south of the City. 28.2% of Hartingleigh's residents travelled to work by car compared with almost 60% of residents in Didsbury. Almost 43% of Hartingleigh's residents travelled to work by bus compared with just over 17% of the residents from Didsbury.

1. 6 Hartingleigh : An Economic and Social Problem Area?

The Greater Manchester Council (GMC) produced several surveys between 1971 and 1983 of its county structure in order to highlight and prioritise areas within the Greater Manchester County deserving of special assistance under various aid schemes directed by central government. In the early 1970s, for example, the GMC produced various surveys which ranked electoral wards according to socio-economic status as defined by multi-variate analysis of the 1971 Census data. A variety of other statistical analysis techniques were also utilised to produce a ranking of wards in order to define the county's "economic and social problem areas" (GMC Issue Report 10: The Definition of Economic and Social Problem Areas, no date). Overall, the Report highlighted the problems of "social deprivation" in the Inner City wards.

A number of physical and social characteristics were recognised as being typical of deprived or 'problem' urban areas. These included variables such as the percentage of households with more than 1.5 persons per room; percentage of households without exclusive use of hot water, bath and WC; percentage of single-parent families; and percentage of economically active persons not in employment, etc. In 1971, Hartingleigh (though its boundaries were different) fell within the highest category of wards defined as economic and social problem areas.

In 1983, the Planning Department of the GMC published a policy background paper (83/7 Economic and Social Problem Areas: GMC 1983) which examined the changes between 1971 and 1981, as shown by comparing the respective Census data for those years. Generally, it was found that most of the areas which were worse off in 1971 still had the worst problems in 1981, though the nature of the problems had changed in the ten year period. Housing conditions, for example, as measured by lack of basic amenities, had improved, a reflection of the wholesale clearance and redevelopment programmes undertaken in the inner-city wards since 1971. However, the major and most significant change in those indicators used to define the problem areas was the huge increase in the

proportion of people unemployed. The problem areas were found to have much higher levels of unemployment than other areas. Mainly because of this fact, Hartingleigh remained in the top 25% of wards characterised as being in the category of economic and social problem areas. Most of the inner-city wards of Manchester were similarly represented in the top 25%. The GMC Report concluded that: "The inner areas of Manchester continue to represent the largest concentration of problems in the County" (GMC 1983 : 18).

Almost ten years after the GMC Report was published, a new survey conducted by Peck and Emmerich (1992) at the University of Manchester's School of Geography revealed that Manchester was still locked in a "poverty trap" (Kelly : 1992). The survey argued that Greater Manchester will remain burdened by chronic long-term unemployment and a devastated manufacturing base because, "the city is locked in permanent economic and social decline". The report revealed that Manchester's pool of unemployed labour is equal to three-quarters of the size of the entire manufacturing workforce. Almost one in seven are out of work and more than a third of the City lives in poverty as defined by the Department of Social Security benefits take-up.

The survey illustrated how Manchester's manufacturing base only made a partial recovery from the recession, and, even at the peak of the recovery in 1989, the conurbation was still carrying two-thirds of the unemployment accumulated in the first half of the decade. Much of the vaunted recovery in the City in the second half of the 1980s was "illusory", and, as a result, the labour market has become divided into three tiers. The top tier consists of stable employment in the higher echelons of the business and financial community. The second is largely composed of manufacturing where long-term structural recession has been accelerated by large-scale labour shedding as a result of improved technology (see also Section 1.7.1). According to Peck and Emmerich, those workers remaining within the manufacturing sector, "are faced with stagnant or falling wage levels and an almost permanent state of underemployment". Finally, the report

continued, at the "bottom of the heap" are the victims of these processes - the unemployed (Recession, Restructuring and the Greater Manchester Labour Market, SPA Working Paper 17, School of Geography, University of Manchester 1992).

1.7 Hartingleigh : Employment and Unemployment

Greater Manchester is typical of many of the older industrial areas of the United Kingdom. Just as Manchester was one of the inaugural industrial cities, so it has been at the forefront of the economic recession. A recession which has moreover taken the greatest toll on those areas that were at the commencement of the industrial revolution.

There has been a severe contraction of Greater Manchester's industrial base resulting from the general processes of de-industrialisation, world economic depression, lack of competitiveness, recession in the UK, substitution of capital for labour, the rise of new industrial countries and the monetarist economic policies that were pursued after 1979 by the Thatcher-led Tory governments. These factors produced unprecedented levels of general unemployment, and a virtual collapse of the youth labour market. These latter developments have only been partially disguised by the thirty or so changes in the methods for calculating unemployment figures, or the inauguration of a plethora of government schemes and special programmes for the young and long-term jobless. The implications of these broad-based structural changes, including the general contraction of Manchester's industrial base and consequent employment prospects, are examined at a more local level in the following section.

According to Hartingleigh Ward Area Information, "there is no recent information where people in Hartingleigh work". However, by examining the range of employment possibilities that existed in and around the Ward, it is possible to build up a picture of the kind of jobs that have been available during the period covered by my study, and also to assess the implications of changes in the local economy in terms of their effects on local

employment. At the time of the 1981 Census, Hartingleigh had a relatively high proportion of its working population employed in manufacturing. (Table 5)

TABLE 5 : HARTINGLEIGH - Sector of Employment

	% of population in employment	
	Hartingleigh	*Manchester*
Agriculture	0.0	0.2
Energy and Water	1.1	1.5
Manufacturing	33.5	26.9
Construction	9.1	7.7
Distribution & Catering	21.0	20.0
Transport	6.7	8.0
Other Services	28.6	35.6
	100.0	100.0

Source: Hartingleigh Ward: 1981 Census Information, produced by Manchester City Planning Department

According to 1981 Census data, 33.5% of the available workforce of 4,426 were employed in manufacturing, compared with 26.9% in the City as a whole. The distribution and catering industries were also important sources of employment for Hartingleigh's working population, though a lower than average proportion of Hartingleigh's resident working population were employed in 'other services', which include, for example, banking and insurance, sections of the City's employment base least affected overall by the recession.

The main industrial area for Hartingleigh was, in the early 1980s, located in the extreme south of the ward alongside the railway system and Rowmarch Canal. This area represented the northern tip of the much more extensive manufacturing area of east Manchester, and it was this section of Hartingleigh Ward which, at the time of the 1981 Census, contained the main concentration of manufacturing industries. In this area, there was a proliferation of light and heavy engineering works and chemical industries which had, since the 1940s at least, been the traditional work places for Hartingleigh's indigenous

working population. There was other industry located in the Irk Valley to the west of the Ward, most of which was actually situated in an adjoining ward but which, up until the early 1980s, nevertheless provided employment for Hartingleigh's working population. The industry in this area consisted mainly of small engineering works. However, there were also some other industries of which the major employers included CWS Biscuits, Phillips Rubber and the Northern Feather Works; these closed between 1985 and 1987 under the impact of the recession. These latter industries had, since the early 1980s, been commonly associated with the employment of Hartingleigh's young people and married women in fairly unskilled productive capacities.

1.7.1 Trends in Manufacturing Industry

The effect of "the worst recession for fifty years" (GMC, 85/10, 1985 : 1) on industry in Greater Manchester is reflected in the take-up of industrial land. A report from the Greater Manchester Council based on a survey of the supply of, and demand for, industrial land in Greater Manchester illustrated how the demand for land for new industrial premises had dramatically declined. In 1979, for example, 21.3 hectares of land was developed for new industrial use. In Manchester by 1984 only 3.7 hectares was under construction. (Table 6).

TABLE 6 : The Development of Industrial Land in Manchester and Salford

	1979	*1980*	*1981*	*1982*	*1983*	*1984*
	HECTARES					
Manchester	21.3	17.7	12.9	6.1	8.1	3.7
Salford	21.8	14.6	15.2	13.9	6.8	4.0

Source: GMC County Planning Department, Policy Background Paper 84/13, Industrial Land Supply and Demand: 1984

This trend in the reduction of the development of new industry and therefore new employment in Manchester has been exacerbated by an overall decline in the City's existing manufacturing sector, traditionally a major source of employment for Hartingleigh's

working population. According to a report published by the Anti-Poverty sub-committee of the Manchester City Council Planning Department:

> "There has been a dramatic decline in the number of jobs, with manufacturing, the traditional employment base of the City suffering the most severe decline. Between 1961 and 1983, 150,000 jobs were lost, a decline of 36%." (*Poverty in Manchester*, City Planning Department 1986 : 5)

The local decline in employment in manufacturing industry reflects a national trend in manufacturing as a whole. Between 1951 and 1981, the total number of women employed nationally in manufacturing fell by over 30%. This represents a loss of over 800,000 jobs in the thirty years between 1951 and 1981. In the same period, total male employment in manufacturing fell by 23%, representing a reduction of 1.34 million jobs between 1951 and 1981. (Hart, 1988 ; 50)

A report published by the Greater Manchester Council on manufacturing industry in Greater Manchester (Policy Background Paper 85/10, 1985) indicated that, although major closures and redundancies in manufacturing industry in Greater Manchester had steadied, employment available in manufacturing would continue to decline (GMC 1985 : 16). The report suggested that in recent years industrial retrenchment (including investment in capital stock and new computer-controlled manufacturing and administrative systems) had taken place. This had produced a levelling of the initial dramatic rate of closures and bankruptcies, but at an increased cost of labour shedding; indicating a divergence between the needs of the surviving industries and the supply of available labour. Of the twenty-five firms surveyed in the report, fifteen reported a downward trend in employee levels between 1980 and 1985, with eight firms anticipating further falls in staffing levels and an additional four expecting them to remain static. The report further indicated that in many cases the existing production levels could be maintained or increased without concomitant increases in employment levels. This appears to be a reflection of the national trend in manufacturing output and employment as reflected in the Graph. (Table 7)

Thus the overall picture to emerge from the report was that of investment in plant and machinery leading to increased productivity followed, paradoxically, by a reduction of the labour force. The report concluded that the local economy,

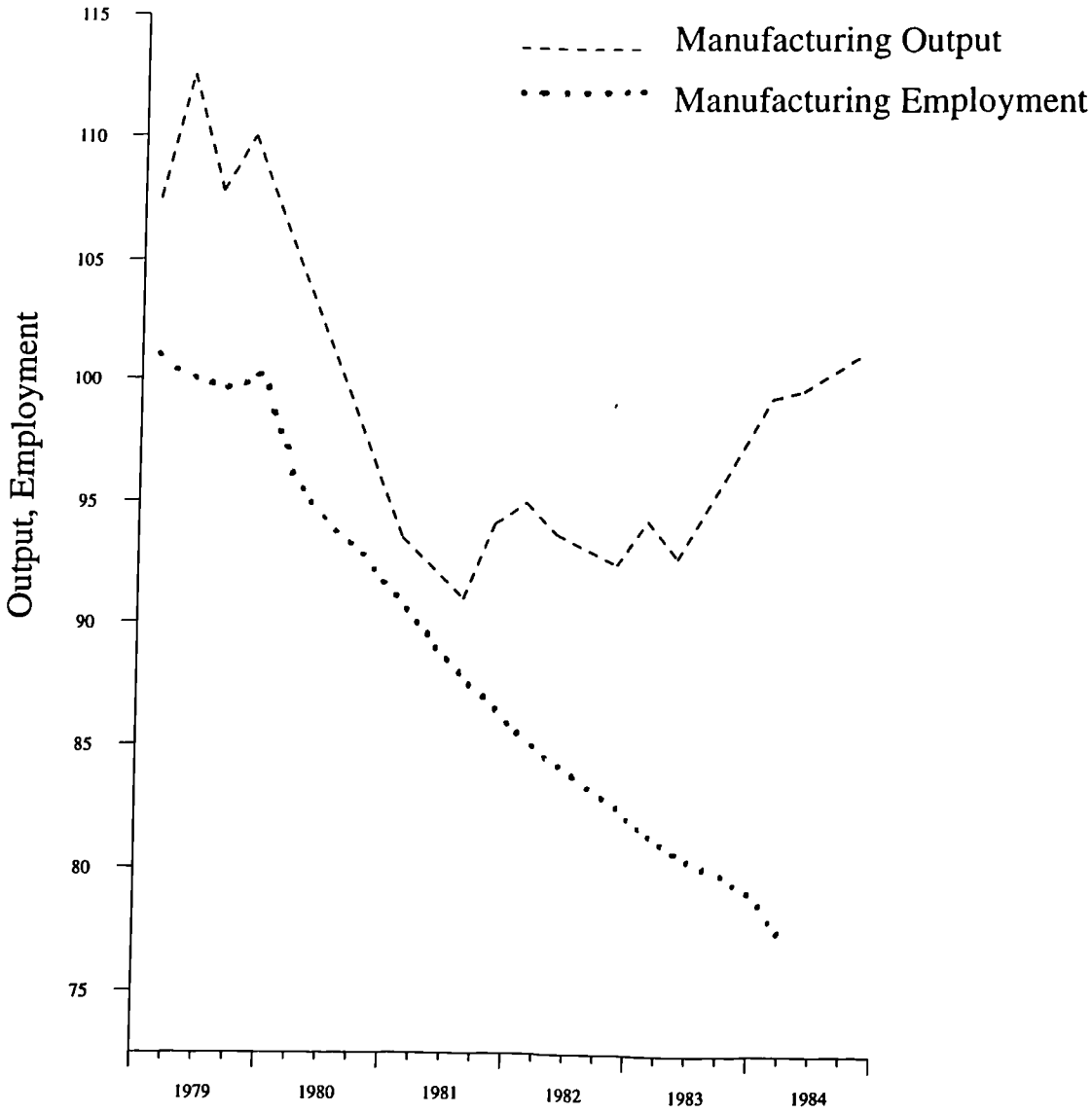
> "can now maintain high levels of production with much lower levels of employment than was the case in previous decades ... the Greater Manchester economy can no longer fully employ the local labour force and further increases in production will not enable a return to full employment ... This raises the possibility of an unemployed residue which may exist for the foreseeable future." (GMC 1985 : 2; 16) (my emphasis)

1.7.2 Unemployment

During the Thatcher decade unemployment increased from 1,447,000, or 5.5%, in July 1979, to a post-war peak recorded in January 1986 of 3,408,000, or 14.1% (GMBATU Facts and Figures : September 1986). Until 1990, the seasonally adjusted figures showed a fairly unbroken downward trend although unemployment began to climb as the end of the decade approached, reaching a new peak of over 3 million in February 1993. However, since 1982, thirty or more Government adjustments to the way unemployment figures are calculated have highlighted the scope for manipulating - or fiddling - the figures. Sir John Boreham, head of the Central Statistical Office until his retirement in 1985, admitted that: "Governments ... don't like publishing statistics that show their policies aren't working" (*New Society*, 28th February 1986 : 362). In October 1982, for example, attendance at Job Centres became voluntary and the count moved to unemployment benefit offices; this manoeuvre effectively removed 190,000 from the unemployment statistics (*New Society*, 5th February 1988).

The government manipulation of the figures has reduced the unemployment total by over 400,000 (GAMBATU Facts and Figures : September 1986). Similarly, the Unemployment Unit estimates that three-quarters of the 400,000 people on government schemes and programmes would be counted as unemployed if none of the changes in calculation had been made (*New Society*, 5th February 1988).

TABLE 7 : Graph of national manufacturing output with manufacturing employees in employment 1980 = 100



Sources: Employment Gazette, August 1984; Financial Times, 14th February, 1985.

Government figures are based on the 'claimant count'. This is the number of people claiming benefit on the second Thursday of each month. However, these figures exclude the long-term sick, early retired, the temporarily benefit-stopped, students, and those

people on Government schemes or programmes. In addition, since many women are not entitled to claim benefits if married, or cohabiting with a partner who claims or is in employment, or are not considered 'available for work' due to child care/domestic responsibilities, it is likely that the figures grossly underestimate the numbers of women who are unemployed. Figures quoted in the *Employment Gazette* (October 1986) indicate that unemployment amongst women may be underestimated by as much as 53%.

Figures published by the Planning Department of Manchester City Council show that unemployment rates in the City have consistently outstripped the national figures. The unemployment rates for Manchester between 1980-1989 have been almost double the national rates. For example, during the unemployment peak in January 1986, Manchester had 45,568 claimants, an unemployment rate of 24%, or almost one in four of the City's active workforce (*Unemployment in Manchester*, Manchester City Council, City Planning Department, February 1986 : 1). The overall unemployment rate for Manchester, though high, conceals large areas of the inner City where the unemployment figures are significantly above the City average. Monthly bulletins issued by the City Council Planning Department provide a breakdown of the unemployment statistics by electoral ward. These figures show, for example, that in January 1986 male unemployment in Hulme stood at 62.9%. Approximately two out of three of economically active males in this area were unemployed.

More than one in five of all economically active people in Manchester as a whole are unemployed, 48% have been unemployed for more than one year and 23% for three years or more. (Economic Studies Group, City Planning Department, *Unemployment Bulletin*, October 1987)

1.7.3 Young Persons Unemployment

The unemployment of young people is a dramatic feature of the Thatcher years. It is a decade that has witnessed an unprecedented rise in the rates of joblessness among the

young. National figures reveal that a third of all those unemployed in the last quarter of 1987 were aged under 25 (*Employment Gazette*, January/February 1988). Without the special training schemes and programmes, the overall unemployment rate for young people might well be nearer 50% (Hart 1988 : 1). In addition, changes in the rules for claiming benefit (the basis upon which unemployment rates are calculated), such as the abolition of unemployment benefits for 16 and 17 year olds, mean that most young people in this age group have been removed from inclusion in the statistics (Roll 1990 : 27). Unemployment of young people in the 1980s has been compounded by the rising numbers in this age group, reflecting the demographic 'baby boom' of the 1960s.

Employment accessible to young people has declined rapidly. In 1974, 61% of 16 year olds were in primary occupations such as manufacturing; almost ten years later this proportion had shrunk to only 18% (Ashton and Maguire 1983). A third of those aged under 25 and unemployed have been out of work for over a year (O'Donnell, 1985). In parts of Manchester's inner City, unemployment rates among the young exceed the national figures; for example almost three quarters of young people eligible for work in the Crescents, Hulme, are unemployed (GMC Policy Background Paper 85/1 1985 : 5). In other parts of the inner City, unemployment rates among the under 25s exceed 50%, particularly in Hulme, Rusholme, St. George's, Hartingleigh and Central Salford. Unemployment is not a temporary phenomenon in these areas; 36% of the inner City's young unemployed have been out of work for over a year (GMC County Planning Department, Local *Unemployment in Greater Manchester, Analysis by Age and Duration*, 1985 : 5).

1.8 HARTINGLEIGH : Youth and Community Project

> "Repairing the damage the system does to people, that's only half the story. The other part is giving the community confidence in itself." (Powell, in Seabrook 1984 : 71)

"The Youth and Community Centre would consist of a building of approximately 6,000 square feet which would include a large hall capable of being used as a Saturday cinema,

kitchen, toilets, office, stores and meeting rooms. Two full-time Neighbourhood Workers would be employed to work from the Centre and directly with existing groups. The workers would be expected to offer support to tenants on the estates with the aim of helping them to identify their own needs and work towards the meeting of those needs.

> "The immediate neighbours of the proposed site are either involved in the Project or are fully behind our application. The mere fact of a locally defined and managed Project being able to attract funding on this scale, for a facility which would be used and managed by the community would really boost self-confidence and stimulate local activity in a way that no statutory provision could ever hope to."
>
> (From: Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project: 1980 Urban Programme Circular - Application for Funding, Section Eight, Section Fifteen) (my emphasis)

As I have outlined in the previous sections of this chapter, Hartingleigh is a predominantly white, working class area with high levels of unemployment. The catchment area for what became known as the 'Youth and Community Project' is made up of nine locally recognised districts within the three officially designated Council Estates of Hartingleigh, plus three small areas of terraced properties that are mostly owner-occupied though a small proportion are let by Housing Associations or private landlords. There is no local industry as such, though, until recent years, there were two or three small factories on the boundary such as the Northern Feather Works, CWS Biscuits and Phillips Rubber, all of which closed between 1985 and 1987 and which employed mainly women and young people. The four or five remaining engineering works situated in the extreme south of the Ward and in the Irk Valley have been steadily reducing their labour force since the late 1970s and it was these and other now defunct factories that were traditionally the work place for the indigenous population (section 1.7).

By 1977, the character of Hartingleigh had dramatically changed from a large collection of 19th century traditional terraced streets, housing working class families, who had in the main lived for several generations in the area, to a district dominated by Council-built estates (sections 1.2; 1.3). In the post-war period, industry based on medium and heavy engineering and manufacturing had been the main sources of local employment, but from

the 1970s onwards, these were badly affected by the recession with a dramatic effect on local employment (section 1.7). By 1977, most of the industry had gone or was shedding labour and three-quarters of the traditional housing stock had been demolished to be replaced by new Council properties. Many of the new intake of inhabitants were not indigenous to the area, and the scarcity of recreational and social facilities exacerbated the lack of community identity and homogeneity, particularly on the estates. Unemployment was by 1978 beginning to rise and there were among the case load of social service workers reports of problems of vandalism and isolation in certain sections of the estates.

In the older terraced areas of Hartingleigh, these problems led residents to form 'pressure' and 'provider' groups which eventually led to a series of meetings. At first, these took place informally in the homes of local residents but an impetus towards a more formal structure and organisation evolved. A local Day Centre, whose manifest function was to provide support for people recovering from mental illness, became the focus for the launching of an initial steering group for 'The Project', as it later became known.

Apart from concerned individuals who were attracted to meetings via leafletting and flyposting, seven groups and organisations formed the nucleus of the Project's steering group. They were:

1. ***Canton Street Action Group***: a pressure group originally organised to fight for improvements in the housing and environmental conditions in one of the three remaining terraced areas of Hartingleigh. Subsequently, this group emerged as one of the most well organised and influential groups in the struggle for both improved conditions in their immediate neighbourhoods and later in the formation of the steering group which eventually led to the funding and establishment of a purpose-built Youth and Community Centre in Hartingleigh. The Canton Street group was led by Jim Donovan, an experienced Community activist, who later became the Project's Neighbourhood Worker.

2. ***Queensbridge Court Tenants Group*:** was originally formed around issues relating to the method of heating Council properties on the Chicken Lane Estate. This group was led by Marie Hulton, who became one of the Project's urban aid funded youth workers.

3. **Canton Estate Parents Group:** was originally formed around issues concerning the lack of general facilities for children and young people on their estate, and also because of difficulty with access for prams, etc. The main spokesperson for this group was Gail Hindle, who also became active within the Project as a Youth and Community Worker.

4. ***The National Association of Women's Clubs*:** opened a branch at the Hartingleigh Day Centre as a result of requests from local women.

5. ***Gingerbread*:** opened a local branch in 1977, again at the Day Centre, as a result of local demand.

6. ***A Youth Club*:** was formed by a group of people from the Canton Street area for physically handicapped and able-bodied young people in 1978 - again drawing on the already over-stretched resources of the Day Centre.

7. ***Marton Lane Estate Residents*:** came together to press demands for facilities for young people on their estate, sections of which were plagued by a spate of window breaking, harassment of the elderly, etc. between 1975 and 1977. This group was led by Tony Boyle, who was later similarly recruited as a Youth Worker by the Project's Management Committee.

It was apparent that the Day Centre was the only real physical resource in the area and this was inadequate because, housed in a rear section of the Old Hartingleigh Swimming Baths, it suffered from lack of adequate resources and space. The property generally was in a state of deterioration due to age. The primary function of the Day Centre was to provide support for people recovering from mental illness, and,. as such, it lacked any real facilities for either youth work or community organisation.

1.8.1 Origins of the Project

Hartingleigh's resident Community Development Officer met representatives of the various provider and pressure groups in 1977 and an initial steering group was formed. The general conclusion that was reached at this and other subsequent meetings was that the area was in need of more and improved facilities for its residents. Coincidentally, at this time, Central Government announced proposals for directing extra finances, over a four year period, towards inner city areas. Manchester and Salford was one area chosen for special assistance. Eighteen of Manchester's Inner City Wards, including Hartingleigh, were targeted and subsequently various programmes, including self-help schemes by voluntary organisations, were financed.

The steering group for the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project was informed, through the Community Development Officer and a sympathetic local councillor, that funding would be available to local groups through the Urban Aid Programme. There were therefore several factors fundamental to the formation of the Project. These were: many people in Hartingleigh had identified areas of need and had begun to organise to meet those needs; there was a Community Development Officer resident in the area; the only available resource, the Day Centre, was not able to meet the demands for social and recreational facilities; funding had become available for local groups; the local Labour councillor was sympathetic to the needs and demands of the Project's steering group. Thus political, social and economic circumstances produced the impetus for local initiatives in the campaign for improved facilities. At the same time, politicians nationally as well as locally became aware of the need to support these initiatives and made available funding and other resources.

1.8.2 Formation of the Project

The individuals who came together to form the initial steering group were drawn to the Project with various motives and dispositions. An early Project memo reveals that:

> "The initial steering group are not all representatives of local pressure groups, but some are people with a more holistic and perhaps political perspective. As a result, the project's aims are not purely the acquisition of physical resources for the area but a greater feeling of community belonging and identity."

The lack of social homogeneity which appears to have been manifest in Hartingleigh in this period of social dislocation during the latter stages of redevelopment provided a crucial impetus to the formation of the project. As one of the Canton Street Action Group representatives was later to explain: "What we wanted, as much as anything else, was to recreate the sense of Community that had existed before the bulldozers moved in".

The steering group began to meet on a weekly basis at the Day Centre; by late 1978, the group had become a registered charity, elected a Management Committee, and adopted a constitution embodying the various aims and objectives of the Project. A prioratisation of needs was developed, and it was decided by the Management Committee that the Project would aim to provide: a Neighbourhood Worker; a Community Centre; an Adventure Playground; and a Drop-In Centre for young people to be called the 'Indoor Street Corner' (in addition to the Community Centre).

An initial application was made under Phase 17 of the Urban Aid Programme and also to the Manpower Services Commission "in order to get the ball rolling".

In 1978, the constitution of the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project was accepted by the Charity Commissioners. In the same year, the Project's Management Committee appointed its first full-time paid employee, Jim Donovan, through Urban Aid Programme funding. The Neighbourhood Worker moved into the Project's newly acquired offices (a room in the house of a sympathetic resident on Rowmarch Road). The Project also acquired the defunct, single-storey, one-roomed Percy Street Police Station as the 'Indoor Street Corner' and started several part-time youth workers with Manpower Services Commission funding. This same period also saw the Project's first application to

the MSC for funding for an administrator refused. It was at this point, later in 1979, that my involvement with the Project began.

The brief from Jim Donovan, the Project's Neighbourhood Worker at that time, was for three youth workers, including myself, to involve ourselves in an 'outreach' (Powley 1974; Marks 1977) capacity with the school leavers and young unemployed of the district. We were to survey the area, establish contacts, and generally publicise and create an awareness of the aims of the Project. Jim Donovan was also keen to involve potential young users in the creation of their own 'space' within the Project's evolving aims, so we were to periodically "feed back" what the young people wanted in terms of facilities, etc. to the regular Management Committee meetings. It was also hoped that we could enlist support and practical help for the renovation of the 'Indoor Street corner' and with the organisation, building and staffing of the proposed Adventure Playground.

It was in this initial period of living and working in Hartingleigh as a 'detached youth worker' (Rogers 1981; Goetschius and Tash 1967) that I became involved in the administration of a local questionnaire-based survey of the young people of the area. Although I did not realise it at the time, my involvement in these early contacts with Hartingleigh's young people was to provide the 'data base' and starting point for my subsequent research. In those early days, I also established many contacts and personal as well as professional relationships. These were to greatly facilitate my eventual fieldwork, and on occasions provide access to 'backstage' (Goffman 1959) areas of data acquisition which may well have eluded other types of researchers less involved in, or acquainted with, the community.

There were several 'community self-surveys' (Wormser and Selltiz 1951; Weiner 1972; Lees 1975) undertaken by the Project at that time. They were designed to highlight community needs and emphasise priorities. There were surveys of, for example, the elderly, young people, 'toddlers and mums', and the disabled. These surveys provided

information which was fed into the Project's evolving aims as well as providing background and support for the Project's campaigns for resources and facilities. On occasions, applications for funding for specific resources would be supported by reference to the survey results, thereby strengthening the case for funding. My own role and participation in the administration of a questionnaire-based survey of fifty prospective school leavers in the area is examined in more detail in Chapter 2. Here, it is sufficient to note that the survey was to be utilised by the Project's Management Committee in its application for Urban Aid funding.

Section Two of the Urban Programme Circular 17 application form asks: "What brief evidence is available of the social need in the area? Give statistical details if available". It was decided at a Management Committee meeting convened to discuss the Project's application for Urban Aid funding to utilise the local youth survey in support of the application for funding towards a purpose-built Youth and Community Centre. The qualitative and statistical detail of the survey were included in Section Two of the application and highlighted the high levels of youth unemployment in the Ward, the propensity towards drug and solvent abuse among the sample group, and the high level of self-reported truancy and criminality, particularly amongst the young males in the sample - providing evidence of the 'social need in the area'. The Project's surveys of the requirements of the elderly, 'toddlers and mums', and the disabled were also utilised to validate the 'social need' for a purpose-built Youth and Community Centre in Hartingleigh. The application was for £87,500 Capital Expenditure (land, building costs, furniture and equipment) and £14,090 per annum non-Capital Expenditure (employees' salaries, administrative expenses, rates, heating, lighting, etc.). The application, together with a supporting six thousand signature petition from local people, direct support from local political figures, and informal lobbying by the Community Development Officer, was eventually approved, finance was secured and building work began late in 1980. By 1982, when I left Hartingleigh to begin undergraduate studies as a mature student at the University of York, most of the Project's original aims with regard to physical resources

had been achieved. There was a permanently funded Neighbourhood Worker, a Youth and Community Centre, an Adventure Playground, and an 'Indoor Street Corner'. At this time, the Project, though still largely dependent on volunteer practical and administrative help, nevertheless boasted nine Urban Aid funded workers and seven MSC staff, drawn mainly from the local community.

1.8.3 Hartingleigh Youth and Community Centre

The Community Centre consists of a main hall/gymnasium, meeting room, lounge, dining room, three offices, shower rooms (now converted for graphics and dark room), toilets (including adaptions for the disabled and very young), a fully equipped kitchen, storage space and a viewing balcony. Outside there is a car park and fenced play area. Although very large (6,000 square feet), the Centre is badly built and unattractively decorated, the internal walls being unplastered breeze block. The roof is badly designed and constructed causing leaks that have had to be repeatedly repaired. The door and window frames have never been fully secure since the Centre opened, especially the huge set of Marley doors, fitted to divide the hall and lounge from the dining area - these have been virtually inoperable since the day of opening. To make matters worse, the Centre had a fire in January 1986 causing extensive damage. Though much of this damage was later rectified through the City Council's Direct Works Department, the major structural damage to the roof, windows, and walls of the Hall have not been rectified. The Centre was decorated in 1987 with the help of large numbers of volunteers but, because of the fire damage, the decorative work served only to highlight the structural inconsistencies. This creates a general air of decrepitude in the main area of the Centre; constraints by central government on local authority funding does not allow for the major structural refurbishment that is required and the situation remains unresolved. In essence the problems reflect the fact that the initial allocation of Urban Aid Funding for the construction of the building was 26% less than the amount originally applied for. Nevertheless, despite these handicaps, a great deal of valuable social and community work has taken place, and continues to take place, at the Centre.

The Centre has been instrumental in supporting many local groups and initiatives; from the local Angling Club's successful bid for control of the local reservoir, cleaning and stocking it and providing a facility for local anglers, to campaigns by local people over single issues such as landscaping, bus shelters and the cleaning of the area. The Centre has come to provide a meeting place for local people, organisations and groups and for some autonomous users who rent the premises for 'one-off' events such as wedding receptions, parties, discos, etc.

The Centre eventually evolved a formal structure and timetable involving a variety of 'user groups' and facilities. For example, there is the 'Luncheon Club' which in 1982 was providing a two course meal and cup of tea for seventy pence to any local person from Monday to Friday. There are also social clubs for the elderly; dance classes for children; a councillor's surgery; women's keep fit; a mothers and toddlers group; various martial arts classes; a support group for the families of alcoholics; a 'Junior Club' for the under elevens;' an 'Intermediate Club' for the eleven to fourteen age group; a 'Senior Club' for the over fourteen age group; a 'Whist Club' for the elderly; various art classes; a young unemployed club; the 'Hartingleigh Wurlitzer', a local magazine group; basic education classes for people with learning difficulties; and the regular Saturday fund raising Jumble Sale. The Centre is also the base for all Project staff meetings, working party meetings, for the Adventure Playground staff and facilities, as well as the community work undertaken by the Neighbourhood Workers.

Apart from the formal timetable of facilities offered to user groups by the Centre, there is a wide variety of informal or incidental community work and activity offered under the umbrella of the Project. In the years since the Centre opened, the management group, volunteers and other members of staff have increasingly become involved in offering advice and support to groups and individuals; consequently, there is much individual 'case work' undertaken in this way. Areas of advice and support can be sought and given on matters of housing, welfare and benefits rights, the law, drug and solvent abuse, and

women's health and welfare. There is other work undertaken by the Project as a whole which does not fall into any specific category but which is the result of combined effort. There is for example the subsidised annual holiday abroad organised for local young people and financed mainly by local fund raising. In recent years, the Centre has taken groups of between twenty and thirty young people to Ibiza, Benidorm, Torremolinos and Majorca on subsidised two-week holidays. There are also play schemes organised by the Project during each of the school holidays (except Christmas), where activities and events are organised for school age children between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. with a free lunch provided. The local Summer Festival organised on a combined basis by Centre staff and volunteers was always my own particular favourite. It usually involved several days of *ad hoc* events culminating in a rock festival performed in the Adventure Playground by local bands, followed by a fancy dress parade around the area. These occasions were chaotic and exhausting but provided the perfect excuse for hours of semi-anarchic enjoyment by many sections of the community.

1.8.4 Hartingleigh : A Community?

"There are two contrasted views about the role of the local community in modern societies such as Britain. One is that the personal mobility and the geographical spread of people's lives make it an anachronism. The other is that on the contrary it is alive and healthy. The issue is relevant because attaching the community prefix often takes for granted a sense of common purpose, a capacity to come together to meet common ends or the existence of local networks available to provide help and support. It assumes in other words that despite the complexities of the modern world local communities are, or are capable of becoming attachment communities." (Willmott 1989 : 9)

The concept of 'community' is one I have drawn on extensively in these opening sections outlining the historical and social context of my research. It is for example a concept that underpinned the origins and formation of the steering group that mobilised support for the funding and construction of the Youth and Community Centre; just as it

is a concept which informs much of the work, social events and activities which take place within the boundaries of the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project. However, it is a term that is infuriatingly nebulous: Hillery (1955), for example, examines no fewer than 94 definitions. It seems appropriate then to examine more closely the concept of community and attempt to delineate its defining characteristics with particular reference to my study area.

According to Willmott (1989), community can refer to two dimensions, 'territorial/interest' and 'local/non-local'. The territorial community can vary in size from a few streets to a group of nation states such as the European Community, although in terms of official policy and indigenous recognitions the most frequent scale is small and local. The 'community of interest' - or what is sometimes called 'interest groups' - can refer to groups that share common characteristics or dispositions, as varied as ethnic origins (e.g. the Asian community) or sexual predilections (e.g. the 'Gay' community). The two dimensions of territoriality and interest need not be mutually exclusive; for example, although interest communities are often dispersed geographically, they can also exist within small local areas, for example the 'Gay' community in San Francisco. On the other hand, a local territorial community might contain several interest communities, for example an Asian community, a 'Gay' community and a Business community. The two dimensions territorial/interest and local/non-local refer to collectivities of people. However, there is, maintains Willmott (1989 : 4) a third notion contained within the common use of the word and this he calls the 'community of attachment'. It contains two key elements:

> "One has to do with the extent and density of social relationships, the second with perceptions, with the extent to which people feel a sense of identity with a place or a group and of solidarity with their fellows living in it or sharing its interests or characteristics." (Willmott 1989 : 4)

Willmott's definition of 'attachment community' containing the two main elements of interaction and perceived sense of identity comes very close to the sociological conception of neighbourhood as defined by Keller, which, like Willmott's definition:

> "emphasises the notion of shared activities, experiences, and values, common loyalties and perspectives, and human networks that give to an area a sense of continuity and persistence over time." (Keller 1968 : 87).

Willmott acknowledges that the two terms are interchangeable at a local level (1989 : 5)

The contemporary trends in personal and residential mobility, communications, car-ownership, clearance and redevelopment work in favour of what Willmott describes as 'communities of dispersal', or 'dispersed social networks'. Thus, what Webber (1969) has similarly described as 'community without propinquity' (quoted in Cohen and Shinar 1985 : 16) mitigates against the development of the local attachment community. Paradoxically, other current social trends, including demographic changes increasing the proportion of older residents, plus the trend towards long-term unemployment, indicate that, in Hartingleigh at least, residents are spending more time in their immediate localities, thereby strengthening the sense of community attachment and neighbourliness. The architecture in parts of Hartingleigh's Council estates, particularly in the high-rise and deck-access flats and deck-access maisonettes, work against the informal neighbourly contact traditionally associated with the older terraced streets. Nevertheless, as well as the Youth and Community Centre, other sites in Hartingleigh offer potential landscapes within which regular interactions between residents can occur. The pubs, the three market sites of Hartingleigh, the formal and informal play areas, and the shopping centre which borders the 'new market', all provide areas within which a sense of neighbourliness is articulated.

> "Regular residents ... inevitably get to know each other by sight. They meet shopping, standing at the bus-stop or walking in the street, and do learn, over time, the public habits and time-tables of people they do not know by name and probably never visit at home. Recognising and being recognised by others creates a sense of belonging." (Wallman in Willmott 1989 : 14)

In the past, in the traditional working-class communities, long-residence and having kinship ties have been the characteristics which have encouraged the growth of local attachments and loyalties. In the earlier sections of this chapter, I have explored some of these affiliations as they existed in the traditional areas of Hartingleigh and how these, in turn, gave impetus to the formation of the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project. In

the newer estates, however, this type of community identity is based largely on the regular, though superficial, contacts between residents. Nevertheless, according to Wallman (1984), even superficial interactions can engender a sense of 'belonging', identification with, or attachment to, the locality.

Moreover, Abrahams (1986) distinguishes between the traditional community or neighbourhood, based on long-residence, shared loyalties and kinship, and friendship ties, and a new 'neighbourhoodism' based on, "attempts to mobilise old and new residents alike in order to protect amenities, enhance resources and .. wrench control of the local milieu from outside authorities and vest it in local hands" (Abrahams, quoted in Willmott 1989 : 16). As I previously outlined in Section 1.8, the three council estates in Hartingleigh were significant in providing input into the formative stages of the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project *via* a tenants' group, a parents' group, and a residents' group, as well as the groups and individuals drawn from the estates who mobilised themselves in a variety of capacities on behalf of the evolving Project. Thus, much of what Willmott delineates in his analysis of community appears to be applicable to Hartingleigh, particularly his outline of the characteristics that are said to constitute a community of attachment. These characteristics appear to be especially manifest in the period when Hartingleigh's residents, both those who lived in the traditional terraced areas and those who were drawn into the Project's campaigns from the newer council estates, combined to press for local facilities and resources.

After redevelopment, Hartingleigh Ward evolved from a local territorial community to a community of interest *via* the focus provided by the Project's campaigns. The traditional bases of solidarity evident in the older Hartingleigh community in combination with the new neighbourhoodism of the estates provide clearly identifiable modes upon which communities of attachment are based. In this sense, Hartingleigh can be said to be an attachment community in the terms outlined by Willmott, with the Project and the

Centre providing a consistent focus and articulation of this perceived and experienced sense of community.

The Project and the Youth and Community Centre are now a firmly established and integral part of Hartingleigh's social life. Despite the periodic crises over funding under the continuing political and economic climate, the Centre, and the Project as a whole, continues to provide crucial services not only for the young people who form the basis of my study, but for the community as a whole. The very young, women, the elderly, the disabled, mothers, anglers, sports persons and tenants' groups, all continue to benefit from the services and facilities provided by the Project. The community has been strengthened and community ties and networks reinforced through the continued interaction between the Project and the residents of Hartingleigh. The ultimate aims of the Project, as set out in the constitution, remain the same as they did when the Project was originally founded by the community in 1978:

> "To promote for the benefit of the people of Hartingleigh Community in the City of Manchester, without distinction of race, sex, or political belief or religious or other opinions, by associating with the Local Authority, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education and provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants." (Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project Constitution: Section Two: 1978)

Or, in the words of one of the residents, the Project "tries to get people together so that they can bring back some of the old neighbourliness and help each other" (*Hartingleigh Wurlitzer*, April 1987 : p.13).

For those who play an active part in the day to day working of the Project, for those who use the facilities and resources, and for those who may just occasionally drop in to the Centre for a 'brew and a chat', the Centre, embodying the Project's ideals of neighbourhoodism/community, remains both geographically and perceptually at the heart of Hartingleigh.

1.9 University and Home : Contrasts and Contacts

> "Every Saturday evening at around 5 o'clock a queue begins to form outside a north Manchester bakery. Within an hour it is 30 deep. Whatever the weather young people, women with children, and pensioners jostle for places. The bargain on offer? Stale bread. By Monday it would be unfit for human consumption and have to be sold to pig-breeders. But for the people in the queue, it will be made to last well into the following week." (*Divided Times*, Child Poverty Action Group : Summer 1986)

During the period of the 'second phase' (Chapter Three) of my evolving research project (1982-1985), I found myself leading an increasingly dichotomised socio-cultural existence. My time was apportioned between my 'student life' as an undergraduate in the Sociology Department at the University of York and my 'family life' with my wife and two growing children in our terraced house in old Hartingleigh (see Section 1.2). Student life consisted of lectures, seminars, essay deadlines and exams; family life of domestic responsibilities and my continuing affiliations with the Youth and Community Project in Hartingleigh.

Often, because of the flexible timetabling at York, my week could be equally divided between home and University, between my 'family life' and my 'student life'. I soon developed a weekly routine of train travel that allowed me to return home most weeks from Thursday evening until Monday morning, the frequent train journeys allowing ample opportunity for reflection, the preparation of essay plans, writing up lectures, and catching up on essential reading. These weekly trips, together with the generous University holidays, enabled me to maintain steady contract with the Project - which by this time had established itself within the newly built Youth and Community Centre (see Section 1.8.3), the Centre providing much of the youth and community work undertaken by the Project.

Through my continuing involvement with the Project, I was able to maintain frequent contact with many of the young people with whom I had worked during my three years as a youth worker (see Chapter Two). The Sunday soccer match continued to provide a highlight to the week (Chapter Two, Section 2.4) along with frequent, sometimes

memorable, trips to Old Trafford to watch Manchester United. Though I kept no formal records of my contacts at this time, I maintained ongoing informal friendships with several groups of young people. My home, though now less of a central meeting place, was still open to callers and there were frequent visitors who would call individually or in small groups for a chat, to drink tea, or watch videos. My new status as a 'mature student' was generally accepted, and on occasions, like Parker (1974 : 216), I was congratulated on "having such a cushy number". By this time, my wife too was working part-time for the Project, and occasionally some of her 'group' of teenage girls would also drop in.

I was still strongly committed to the Project and would take most opportunities to 'help out' on a voluntary basis. My record collection, for example, was often called upon for fund raising discos, and there were youth nights at the Centre and young, unemployed 'drop-ins' to be staffed. The annual sponsored holidays to Spain also proved to be valuable in cementing friendships and informal contacts with many of the young people who would later participate in my study. By now the local pubs too had become important meeting and recreation sites for the young people of the area and, though less important in my detached youth working days, the move from being fifteen (in 1980) to early adulthood had taken many 'off the streets' and 'into the boozer'.

My student life occurred within the genteel atmosphere of a University campus situated in the picturesque rural outpost of the ancient walled City of York; my family life within the rapidly deteriorating social environment of the north side of Manchester's inner City. On my frequent visits home from the sedate atmosphere of campus life, I could not fail to notice the deleterious trend in social conditions within Hartingleigh's council estates. Apart from the Saturday night queues for stale bread noted by the Child Poverty Action Group's observer, quoted at the beginning of this section, the "most profound economic crisis that has been experienced in post-war Britain" (Bates *et al* 1984 : 1) was manifesting itself in a variety of forms on the streets and in the homes of Hartingleigh. According to Harrison (1983), the inner city is:

> "Britain's most dramatic and intractable social problem ... here are concentrated the worst housing, the highest unemployment, the greatest density of poor people, the highest crime rates ... the inner city is the social antipodes of middle-class Britain ... devoid of almost every feature of an ideal environment." (1983 : 211)

Three closely related factors contributed to define the problems of Hartingleigh at this time. Firstly, as an area traditionally dependent on manufacturing industry for employing its indigenous population, the dramatic decline in Greater Manchester's industrial base in the 1980s resulted in unprecedented levels of general unemployment (see Section 1.7) and a virtual collapse of the youth labour market (see Section 1.7.3). Secondly, as an area of particularly poor housing containing a mixture of Victorian terraces and more modern council housing - some of which is considered locally to be of the worst possible design - the deteriorating conditions on the estates were exacerbated by the effects of cuts by central government in local authority spending. Essential repairs, maintenance, and modernisation projects were shelved in the period leading up to the mid-1980s, resulting in a spiral of decline and decay. Empty properties awaiting repair, particularly the flats on the Chicken Lane Estate (see Section 1.3) were badly vandalised, and many were burnt out completely, lending a general air of decrepitude to the area. Thirdly, Hartingleigh is an area of higher than average concentrations of manual workers - low-skilled, unskilled, or de-skilled - and, as industries which were formerly the area's traditional employers declined, this resulted in workers becoming effectively 'stranded' in their poverty. Lack of skills, transport or savings meant workers were unable to travel outside the district in the search for jobs (see Sections 1.5.2; 1.5.3).

As the recession deepened in the early 1980s, the social consequences were intensified by the monetarist economic policies pursued by successive Thatcher-led Conservative governments. From the outset, the first Thatcher administration asserted that: "Public expenditure is at the heart of Britain's economic difficulties" (HMSO 1979 : 1) The Tory government sought to reduce public spending in the interests of promoting growth in the private sector: "Higher public expenditure cannot any longer be allowed to precede, and thus prevent, growth in the private sector," (HMSO 1979 : 1-2)

As a consequence, the years from 1979 saw an unprecedented degree of central government interference in local government (Edgell and Duke 1991). The prime motive was an obsessive concern with monetary targets and the desire to make local government play a role in achieving them. Local authorities were, for example, required to cut the volume of their spending in 1981-82 to 5.6% less than the 1978-79 level, and by a further 4% in 1983. Councils which resisted these cuts were punished with financial penalties. At the same time, central government's overall contribution to local authority spending, the rate-support grant, was progressively cut, from 60% in 1980-81 to 56% in 1982-83. The successive Thatcher-led governments "imposed rate-capping, cuts in public expenditure, toughened up welfare benefit entitlements, and cracked down on 'scroungers' - all of which ... contributed to making life in the inner-city hellish." (Box 1987 : 121)

The social consequences of the recession coupled with the draconian Tory approach to local government finance were documented in various local publications and press reports in the mid-1980s. A study published in 1986 by Manchester City Council (*Poverty in Manchester*) revealed that nearly 50% of the Inner City's population were dependent on supplementary benefits or upon incomes below supplementary benefit level compared with 18% in 1972. The study highlighted the particular problems within the inner City wards, revealing, for example, that one man in three was unemployed, over 60% of all children of school age were receiving free school meals, and over 50% of council tenants were in receipt of certificated housing benefit (1986 : 10).

Other studies highlighted the connections between the new deprivations and ill-health (*Health Inequalities and Manchester 1985*; *Manchester: A Picture of Ill-Health* 1985). These studies showed that Manchester's population, particularly in the Inner City wards, now suffered the highest percentages of death rates in the country. The studies were widely publicised in articles in the national press on 13.11.85; *The Daily Telegraph* carried the story under the headline, "Illnesses have geographical link claim"; *The Daily Mail*, "City that's bad for your health"; *The Daily Express*, "Shock survey on misery

city"; *The Guardian*, "Premature death toll tells in Manchester". In contrast, Jeremy Laurance in *New Society* (11.7.86) sympathetically reviewed the studies under the heading, "Britain's poor face bigger death risk".

Other reports in the local press in this period of the mid-1980s highlighted the various consequences of unemployment and social deprivation, for example, unemployment and the increase in suicides amongst young people (*Metro News* 9.10.87; *Manchester Evening News* 16.10.86); poverty and tooth decay amongst toddlers and primary school children in North Manchester (*Manchester Evening News* 16.7.86); the increase in physical violence towards the children and wives of unemployed men (National Children's Home, North West Regional Office 23.9.86; *Manchester Evening News* 23.9.86); increases in local teenage pregnancies (*Manchester Evening News* 9.5.86; *Poverty in Manchester* 1986); increases in local prostitution (*A.M. Weekend* 8.8.86) and increases in local crime rates (*Manchester Evening News* 4.10.86; *Sale and Altrincham Messenger* 17.10.86; *The Daily Mirror* 10.7.86). The connection between long term youth unemployment and the increase in recorded crime rates in the Inner City wards was acknowledged by Manchester's Chief Constable, James Anderton, in his Chief Constable's Report (1985):

> "Burdens on police in Greater Manchester have grown against a background of alarming unemployment ... for all age groups throughout the area, but with a much larger problem in the inner city. Perhaps of more telling significance, from the standpoint of law and public order, is the fact that the figure for long term unemployment among the ... younger age groups in the worst affected parts of the conurbation ... ranges from 50% to a staggering 80% or more." (Chief Constable's Report 1985 : 3)

It was the stark contrast in socio-cultural environments I experienced in the journeys between my student life in picturesque York and my home life in north Manchester's declining Inner City, which provided my early impetus towards formulating a research project located in the local community. It was the community of Hartingleigh, the Project, the Adventure Playground, the 'Indoor Street Corner' and the Centre which provided me with the origins, the context, the substance, the sustenance and the early skills and self-confidence to formulate and undertake this research. It is for these reasons that I

have spent a good deal of this opening section in attempting to provide the reader with a glimpse, albeit an imperfect and fragmented one (*cf.* Hebdige : 1988) of the community of Hartingleigh and my involvement in it.

In the following Chapter, I will begin to outline the contexts and sources from which my study has been derived as well as the combination of methodological approaches utilised in order to acquire and accumulate the material upon which the study rests. This is of necessity a biographical as well as a methodological journey, beginning in 'Phase One' (1979-1982) with an exploration of my detached youth work practice for the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project. For it was youth work which provided the starting point, 'data base' and methodological orientation for my evolving study.

Footnote

(1) The brief outline of the mediaeval history of Hartingleigh is drawn from a series of articles written by Hilda M. McGill, who was Librarian of the Blackley Library on Rowmarch Road. They were published in the *Middleton and Blackley Guardian* between December 1938 and April 1939. Hilda McGill was Librarian at Blackley Library from 1938 until 1951; afterwards she was appointed organiser of "Work with Young People in Manchester", a socialist charitable organisaton which sponsored youthwork activities between 1950 and 1965. Later she was Librarian of the Great Hall in Manchester's Central Library. She died in December, 1984.

Information about Hartingleigh's post-mediaeval history is drawn from:
BARLOW, Allan D. *History of Collington and Hartingleigh*
(published by City of Manchester Cultural Services Department - no date)

CHAPTER TWO

THE EVOLUTION OF A RESEARCH PROJECT
THE FIRST PHASE 1979 - 1982

2.1 Introduction

The approach utilised in my study of the young people of Hartingleigh is woven from a variety of disparate theoretical and methodological strands. The weaving of these strands took place in four distinct phases over an eleven year period between 1979 and 1990.

In the first phase, between September 1979, when my family and I originally moved to Hartingleigh, and September 1982, when I began undergraduate study, it was youth work, and, in particular, my early employment as a detached youth worker within the Hartingleigh Youth and Community Project which provided the initial introduction to many of the young people who would later participate in my research project. As well as furnishing an early 'entrée into the field', a negotiable research identity, and a host of invaluable contacts and resources, the role of detached youth worker also facilitated an initial commitment towards a non-hierarchical research role and methodology. Similarly, the community self-surveys initiated by the Project during the early days following its formation provided another strand in the evolution of the approach, I was to later formally adopt when my research 'officially' began in 1986. The community self-survey, like the non-hierarchical youth work approach, is characterised by a commitment towards a democratic educational process, a form of social investigation which involves the people as co-workers and co-investigators (Freire, 1972 : 78). It was the survey of the young people of the area, initiated by the Project in the early months of 1980, which was to provide the 'data base' and starting point for my subsequent study.

Out of an early immersion into the radical trends and perspectives which had been gathering pace during the 1970s in welfare, community politics, and particularly youth

work theory and practice, the latter following from the optimism of the social democratic vision enshrined in the Albermarle Report into the Youth Service in England & Wales (HMSO 1960), evolved my commitment towards a family of methodological approaches which have variously been described as collaborative dialogue (Mulkay 1985); co-operative inquiry (Reason and Heron 1986); experiential analysis (Reinharz 1983); citizen research (Beresford and Croft 1984; 1986); and participatory research (Hall 1981; Hall et al 1982; Maguire 1987; Stanton 1989). Each of these approaches seeks a reciprocity between researchers and researched, a dialogue or living process involving reciprocal sharing (Freire 1972). My evolving commitment towards a collaborative or participatory model of investigation has its origins in this period, in the inherently empathic, non-hierarchical principles and practice of detached youth work.

The increasingly significant role which youth has come to play in the industrially advanced societies has been examined in depth by social historians (Gillis 1974; Springhall 1977, Humphries 1981; Pearson 1983). However, we do not as yet have an adequate, much less a standard, history of the British Youth Work. This fact is magnified when analysis is made of the limited historical studies of youth groups, movements, and organisations that have been produced. These expressions of youth work activity are virtually without exception produced as interpretations by the adults who supervised or controlled it. This seems especially pernicious where, though most youth organisations have historically stipulated 'participation' in some form or other as a worthwhile objective, few appear to have achieved it. It seems important then to examine the practice of youth work from a specifically historical perspective in order to understand the sense of profound bad faith in which, arguably, a great many of us adults do our work with young people. There is a guilt involved in practising youth work and youth work methods from the ostensible aim of <u>participation</u> - whilst unwittingly perpetuating an historical emphasis on containment and control or the three Rs - "repression, rescue and rehabilitation" (Clarke 1975).

2.2 Youth Work : The Historical Context

Youth work has a long history throughout which "many distinguished men and women worked for social reform" (Evans 1965 : 3-4). Altruism here, as in other areas of social reform, being tempered by other motives:

> "to equip an industrial labour force with appropriate attitudes and habits, to introduce the young to responsible democratic behaviour ... to win rather than coerce their adherence to our society's dominant values and beliefs" (Davies 1986 : 92).

Youth organisations as we know them emerged in the latter part of the 19th century. Boys' and girls' clubs, the Boys Brigade, the Scouts and Guides, the YWCA, and the boys' sections of the YMCA, partly emerged in response to the "... hopes and fears of an apprehensive middle class struggling to consolidate its position against what were perceived as threats both at home and from abroad" (Springhall 1977 : 14). At home, the expanding influence of socialism, the growing strength of the Labour Party, and signs of deepening class division, coincided with an undermining of business confidence from the industrial competition of America and Germany. Moreover, there were renewed concerns about the developing military strength of Germany. The combination of internal and external threats led to a renewed social and cultural emphasis on the establishment of national unity. For Baden-Powell, the founder of the Boy Scout Movement, this emphasis lay in the " ... hope for valuable results from scouting in the direction of ultimately solving the class differences" (Baden-Powell 1929 : 24-5).

The impetus towards national unity was informed by more general concerns with the problems of disciplining, monitoring, and incorporating the massive social and political presence of the urban working class, particularly after the extension of the franchise in the latter third of the 19th century (Pearson 1983 : 230-231). As one local community activist and former youth worker has asserted:

> "The values of the Youth Service going back to the industrial revolution have been from a middle class ideological base and basically from middle class fears of large groups of working class young people" (de Bariod, in Gillespie et al 1992 : 36).

From this perspective, Blanch (1979) has argued that the Boys Brigade and the Scout movement were consistently used to generate a commitment to empire and the restoration of imperial pride and effectiveness following the Boer War. The question of cementing national unity in the latter part of the 19th century is seen by some social historians as a question of establishing the hegemony of the dominant ideology over the rising generation (Gillis 1974 : 141-144; Springhall 1977 : 15; Blanch 1979 : 114). Early youth work, under the "humanitarian gaze of the reforming philanthropists" (Muncie 1984b: 2), sponsored almost exclusively by the middle and upper classes (Davies 1986 : 94), had an important and significant role to play in inculcating dominant values. Like many others, William Smith, founder of the Boys' Brigade, was overt in his intention of promoting " ... habits of obedience, reverence, discipline, self-respect and all that tends towards true Christian manliness" (quoted in Davies and Gibson 1967 : 38). These were habits that were to be secured through quasi-military uniforms, drilling and military manoeuvres. In the wake of the Boer War and the nationalistic fervour prior to the First World War, the Boys Brigade and the Boy Scout movement provided a model authority for 'organising' working class males. Nor were the girls neglected. Youth work, it was assumed, could help develop girls' 'essentially feminine characteristics', divert their social and especially their sexual precociousness and extend their skills in the home-based domestic arts (Dyhouse 1981 : 105-114; Bunt 1975 : 15-17).

These emphases were complemented by a welfaring tradition inherited from the various nineteenth century philanthropic reform movements whose general intention was to rehabilitate working class youth in the light of two specific and relatively new developments; the evolution of the concept of juvenile delinquency from the mid-nineteenth century onwards (May 1973; Gillis 1974; 1975) and in the latter part of the nineteenth century the socio-historical construction of 'adolescence' containing notions of various medical and psychological attributes (Gillis 1974 : 114; 1975).

2.2.1 Juvenile Delinquency and Adolescence

The concept of juvenile delinquency can be traced to the moral panic about juvenile gangs in the early nineteenth century. One of the earliest official panics being launched in 1816 when the Society for Investigating the Alarming Increase in Juvenile Delinquency in the Metropolis published its report (Muncie 1984 : 34). Whether the crime rate was increasing at this time remains statistically unsubstantiated, but it was a contemporary conviction that the number of 'street arabs' who sought a living in London's rookeries needed to be removed and retrained to conform to bourgeois notions of obedience, family dependency and factory discipline.

May (1973) has revealed that young people were only singled out from adults as a distinctive legal and criminal category following a number of reports on the insanitary conditions and over-crowding in prisons. In order to reduce the numbers in existing prisons, new forms of incarceration such as the 'hulks', the reformatories, and the Parkhurst Prison were constructed in order to provide additional forms of custody for the young. Any consideration of protecting the young was largely incidental at this stage. It was only through tackling the problem of a rising prison population that the apparently unique needs of the young were revealed. The major institutional control of the nineteenth century, the reformatories, was achieved through the Youthful Offenders Act of 1854. With it the concept of juvenile delinquency was established whereby it was argued that youth should be afforded different forms of punishment than their adult counterparts. The social construct of juvenile delinquency was thus given legal status (May 1973 : 7), youth now being viewed as neither child nor adult, comprised of vulnerable individuals in need both of care and control.

Philanthropic concern was directed not only towards 'delinquent youth' but was also able to encompass orphans, the illegitimate, and the abandoned. Because crime was believed to be generated from the conditions of working class life, these sections of youth were seen within a continuum of delinquency as pre-delinquent or near-delinquent. It was

no longer necessary to have a criminal act to justify intervention and control; all aspects of working class socialisation were now legitimately open to the "the humanitarian gaze of the reforming philanthropist". The view of working class youth as a potentially troublesome section of the population was more the result of bourgeois redefinition of what it meant to be young, rather than a reflection of any fundamental shift in the actual behaviour of young people (Muncie 1984 : 36; May 1973 : 16).

The highly influential work of Mary Carpenter (1851; 1853), for example, embodies the distinction made at the time between two classes of problem children; the 'dangerous classes' and the 'perishing classes'. The former were acknowledged offenders, the latter potentially so. As a result of these views, she recommended the establishment of reformatory schools for the former and industrial schools for the latter. Each were to supply bourgeois morality, religious influence, discipline, the inculcation of "industrious habits", and the creation of dependence which would secure the delinquent and pre-delinquent a return to the bourgeois notion of 'childhood'.

These developments remain vital for understanding the continuing contradictions in the status of young people and in the definitions of their potential delinquency. As 'juveniles', young people could not only be punished, but were also in need of continual surveillance, according to a model of dependency provided by the child-care routines of the bourgeois family. The mid-Victorian controversies of whether to control or care for the young of the 'labouring and criminal classes' still forms a major contour of the terrain in which the debate over juvenile justice policy takes place today. The designation of a separate 'juvenile' section of the population not only demarcated a particular period in life, but also defined it as problematic. The early theoretical formulations of the 'problem of youth' tended to be largely deterministic (Muncie 1984 : 38-40):

> "It was the failure of working class socialisation to nurture and discipline the child that was the root cause of what was seen as the progressive career of the delinquent child" (Muncie 1984 : 38).

Thus, rationality was denied to youthful behaviour, and delinquency was explained as an inevitable feature of the moral bankruptcy of working class standards of child-rearing. These views informed the philanthropic reformers in the mid-Victorian era, the "child-savers" (Platt 1969) who increasingly sought to intervene on behalf of the children of the "dangerous classes", because the -

> " ... conditions of existence, the independence and worldly knowledge of the young offender violated the images of childhood held by the social investigators and philanthropists" (Muncie 1984 : 37).

Such definitions of the 'problem of youth' were to make an equally significant shift at the turn of the century with the emergence of notions of adolescence (Gillis 1974 : 95-131; 1975). Adolescence was originally a 'discovery' of the professional middle classes. From the mid-nineteenth century, the children of the bourgeoisie found their independence undermined by extended periods of secondary education. With a fall in the rate of child mortality, the affluent middle classes began to limit the size of their families. Their investment in a long and expensive education for their children became carefully planned and protected. As Gillis (1974) argues, "What were historically evolved social norms of a particular class became enshrined in medical and psychological literature as the 'natural' attributes of adolescence" (1974 : 114). The "storm and stress" of adolescence was soon incorporated into explanations of delinquency and deviancy. Although historically related to the desire to regulate the increased period of dependency of middle class youth, the notion of turbulent adolescence was transposed onto all youthful behaviour. Young people were viewed as 'naturally' inclined towards idleness and depravity and consequently in need of supervision and control during these years of maturation. In 1904, the American child psychologist, G. Stanley Hall, influenced by social Darwinism and a medical model of child development that borrowed the imagery of pathology, infection and treatment, effectively secured the connection between youth and deviance by arguing that, "adolescence is pre-eminently the criminal age", a period characterised by "uncivilised savagery" (1904 : 325).

Aside from concerns over national unity and the restoration of imperial pride, preoccupation with the critical nature of the teen years contributed to the creation of youth movements such as the Boys Brigade and the Scout movement, designed to "inspire and preserve the health and idealism of the young" (Gillis 1975 : 97). The same concerns contributed to the fears of the "child savers" about the vulnerability of the adolescent, and the consequent desire to provide protective controls over this fourteen to eighteen year age group.

However, the concepts of adolescence and 'organised' youth had little or no connection with the actual conditions of life of most working class teenagers. They were needed in factories as soon as compulsory schooling was completed and the experience of secondary education that gave birth to the concept of adolescence rarely reached them. Gangs of working class youth identified by researchers such as Humphries (1981) and Pearson (1983), the 'Peaky-blinders' in Birmingham and the 'Scuttlers' in Manchester, for example, stood outside of the bourgeois consensus. The notion of adolescence and delinquency were displaced onto them and served to exaggerate their deviancy. At this time, many traditional forms of working class leisure, gambling, street trading, public bathing, street football, and general 'loitering', were increasingly subject to surveillance and criminalisation (E. and S. Yeo 1981). The unorganised and therefore independent young were stigmatised as delinquent (Gillis 1975 : 122). As Blanch notes, the principles of 'organised youth' were most popular with those who were already 'organised', i.e. middle-class youth and the children of skilled workers. A majority were excluded from youth organisations and youth clubs because membership fees could not be afforded, or, more importantly, because the principle of being organised was alien to their cultural background (Blanch 1979 : 116). As Gillis points out:

> "The contrast between the military style of the Brigades and Scouts on the one hand and the costuming of corner boys and girls on the other served only to create in the public mind an awareness of differences within the youth population, which, because they no longer followed class boundaries in an obvious manner, could be interpreted as moral in nature" (Gillis 1975 : 122).

Thus the end result of the move to organise youth was only to highlight the divisions within youth and make its 'delinquent' element more visible and detectable.

Changing perceptions of youth and the power of the moralistic "child-savers" to place their definitions into the public arena brought fears of a working class youth crime wave even though the actual behaviour of such young people had not really altered (Springhall 1985). Images of the 'innocent adolescent' and 'dangerous delinquent' were constructed which provided a framework in which the legitimate traditions of working class youth could be seen as delinquencies and middle class fears of youth unruliness could be substantiated. Indeed the early youth work sponsors were often 'realistic' and 'pessimistic' about what could be 'achieved' with the children of the dangerous classes. In the late 1870s, for example, the Girls Friendly Society maintained that it could not rescue young working class women after they had morally "fallen" (Dyhouse 1981 : 109). Davies (1986 : 94) argues that what guided the work of the ruling class sponsors of philanthropic youth work at the turn of the century was a conception of a "residual deviant section of the working class". They thus established within youth work a tradition of two of Clarke's (1975) three Rs mentioned earlier, namely, "rescue and rehabilitation", which, though its targets changed, persisted throughout the twentieth century. Philanthropically sponsored youth work was never challenged in any fundamental or organised way for at least half a century. Middle and upper class philanthropists were left to determine policies, making state intervention unnecessary until after the Second World War (Davies 1986).

2.2.2 The Era of Optimism

Youth work's philanthropic sponsors did not have complete control however. Springhall (1977 : 89-95), for example, notes various forms of resistance by the 'unorganised', and therefore implicitly 'deviant', sections of the young working class towards the organisation and quasi-militarianism of the Boys Brigade and Scout troops, often resulting in violent confrontations. Other forms of resistance included non-attendance and a refusal to participate in youth work facilities. Later these were the young who were targeted by the

Albermarle Report (HMSO 1960) as the "unattached". Using the same term, the same point had been made as early as 1950 by the Westhill College Study of Birmingham's youth (Reed 1950). Even when participation was evident "large numbers fall away" (Russell and Rigby 1908 : 367), especially where "a standard of discipline" was maintained (ibid : 91). In many cases, resistance through lack of voluntary participation was devalued by being defined as passivity, especially in the case of girls (Davies 1986 : 97). Even when working class young people did come in from the street, their actual use of facilities often diverged from what the sponsors intended:

> "We joined the Scouts, two weeks before the summer camp; we went to Brighton - it was brilliant, first time we'd been to Brighton. We packed it in soon as we got home though - I couldn't handle the uniforms and all that" (Maz - taped interview).

Eggleston (1978 : 117) has similarly noted that in their approach to youth service facilities, early school leavers, the "uncommitted members", adopted an instrumental attitude to the resources and facilities. According to Davies (1986 : 97) evidence suggests that young people did resist youth work's more ambitious attempts to remoralise them, demonstrating how:

> "Without fundamentally shifting the power relations in this policy area, they retained some real leverage on what was offered to them. Philanthropic and later state policy-makers thus had continually to tack to the changing winds of adolescent interests and styles - a fact which, in conditions of crisis, raised serious questions amongst state policy-makers about youth work's ability to achieve the wider economic, political and ideological purposes ascribed to it" (Davies 1986 : 97).

State provision for the young evolved slowly after the Second World War, and it was not until the Albermarle Report in 1960 that recommendations were made for greatly increased spending, a national building programme, more training and employment opportunities for full and part-time paid staff, and a greater Local Education Authority commitment. However, the importance of the Albermarle Report went beyond these recommendations in seeking to adapt youth work's image, style and philosophy to a new age and new post-war culture. The Albermarle Committee included such luminaries as Richard Hogart and Pearl Jephcott; the Report's recommendations and social democratic

tone suggesting that considerable input was provided by these people seeking to, "drag some of its most influential and philanthropically-inclined sponsors into the middle of the 20th century" (Davies 1986 : 99).

In the years following the Albermarle Report, hundreds of experimental projects were set up throughout the country. Highly contemporary activities were encouraged by the Report, including "skiffle and washboard groups" (Para. 193). Also instituted by the Report were drop-in centres, workshops and peripatetic (detached) workers catering for young people's "social needs in the unconstrained way which they appear to seek" (Para. 186). For the first time, state provision for youth sought to meet the needs of the young in their own terms. Space was created for newer progressive forms of practice, including the detached youth work projects which allowed for a distinctly radical break with the more patronising and moralising emphasis of youth work's past philanthropic sponsors.

Modern youth work and youth work projects owe a great deal of their character to the 'renaissance' of the early sixties when the youth services were responding to the Albermarle Report. In the post-Albermarle period, other significant influences began to enter the youth work arena exploiting the new space in emphasis and practice created by the more experimental approaches (Ewen 1974). Influences were derived from the critical theory and critical politics of the 'new left', the alternative vision of 'the counter culture', community politics, radical welfare, and the general heady optimism of the nineteen sixties. Pearson (1977) illustrates what was happening to welfare and social work generally during this period:

> "At this time ... we find the emergence of welfare client groups (or groups of potential clients), who pose traditional welfare problems as politics: Claimants' Unions, Gay Liberation, Women's Liberation, Mental Patients' Unions, Child Poverty Action Group, various community and neighbourhood control movements, squatters, Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners (PROP), and, in the United States the Mental Patients' Liberation Front and the Insane Liberation Front" (1977 : 95).

In youth work these trends were reflected in reports from the Youth Service Development Council in the late 1960s. The Report published by the Department of

Education and Science in 1969, for example, explicitly linked young people's generally negative attitude towards the youth service to (what appeared at times to teeter on the brink of) a radical analysis, indicating a (theoretical at least) break with the social democratic emphasis of the Albermarle Report. The Report argued that many youth clubs were run by "do-gooders" trying to, "indoctrinate (the young) into a particular way of thought". The paragraph continued by arguing that, "to the young adult the present service often becomes irrelevant" (1969 : Paras. 30-40). For the YSDC, the wider context of the problems of non-attendance and take-up of facilities and resources offered by the youth service in the 1960s was the young's "... frustrations ... often based on a feeling of helplessness in the face of a property owning society in whose values and priorities they do not share or indeed wish to share" (1969 : Para. 48). Later, the YSDC Report quoted approvingly the evidence of the National Union of Students:

> "However, much lip service may be paid to the idea of young people challenging the accepted values of the community; there is an underlying complacency that these values are, in themselves, absolute and beyond challenge" (1969 : Para 201).

It was clearly not the case that these newer, more radical emphases in youth work completely supplanted more traditional approaches derived from youth work's long history. New movements co-exist with traditional practices, and a single agency may contain practitioners, administrators, and others who understand their tasks and the problems they confront in completely different ways. What is notable is that, by the early 1970s, it was the ideas which emerged from new left politics and the counter culture, ideas brought to youth work by the influx of new workers who had been participants in the turbulent politics of the 1960s, which gave impetus to some of the most significant innovations in work with children and young people. In the ten years after 1969, the practice of youth work was largely influenced and shaped by political and professional movements beyond youth work. While some had a direct and obvious impact on the practice of youth work, others were more oblique, lending a way of perceiving and understanding young people rather than offering a direct prescription for action. What

they shared was an optimism about the possibility of effecting positive change as a result of participation in the lives and neighbourhoods within which they lived and found their working environment. For youth workers, a major strand in this developing optimism grew out of the principles and practice of detached youth work.

2.3 Detached Youth Work

Detached youth work started in this country in the early 1960s with a tacit admission of failure and the search for a remedy. What was implicitly admitted was the failure of the conventional systems of youth provision to 'reach', 'absorb' or to 'control' a substantial proportion of the youth population by existing means. This admissison of failure was closely linked to renewed contemporary concerns over the timeless problem of 'delinquency'. Those young people who rejected the conventional services and provisions available, or who were excluded because their attitudes and behaviour, were judged to be unacceptable, and were defined as "unreachable" or "unclubbable" (Davies 1986 : 96). Collectively labelled the "unattached" (Morse 1965), these were the 'non-conformist', 'asocial', 'anti-social', 'deviant' young.

To be unattached or unclubbable was, in the early youth work literature, more or less equated with being delinquent or, at least, pre-delinquent (Russell and Rigby 1908; Springhall 1977). Although, as previously discussed, concern with delinquent behaviour amongst young people has a long history, contemporary concern about delinquency was constructed partly from these historical antecedents, wherein the legitimate traditions of the working class young were perceived as 'delinquencies', and it was delinquency that was to provide a motivating factor in the creation of the youth work specialisation now known as detached youth work.

Concern with the specific forms of group or 'gang' delinquency (one of the motivating factors in the emergence of detached youth work, particularly in the United States) is somewhat recent, and is related to the rapid urbanisation of society and the growing

visibility of the problems of the inner city. In the United States, for example, juvenile crime became a significant political issue in the post-war period, and for the Kennedy administration it contained, in 1960, two of the most pressing political problems to be confronted. They were unemployment, especially amongst blacks and Puerto Ricans, and the endemic problem of the unequal position of black Americans which spawned the civil rights campaign. Out of concern for these problems, emerged the President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime in 1961. One of the most influential members of the Committee was Lloyd Ohlin whose study with Richard Cloward (Cloward and Ohlin 1960) provided the intellectual rationale for a 'Mobilisation for Youth' programme that set a tone and provided the theoretical background for detached youth work in the States, and which, in turn, informed the politicians who developed the US youth and poverty programmes.

Detached youth work, originally known as 'gang work' or 'street club work' originated in the USA in the 1940s when youth clubs, settlement houses, and other agencies providing services and programmes for the young, 'detached' a worker to work with one or several groups of youngsters, in many cases with a particular local 'gang', outside the walls of the agency - in their territory, on the streets. Detached work methods were, for example, developed by the New York City Youth Board out of necessity in its work with street gangs in the city, as the more conventional youth work approaches had been tried without any measure of "success" (Galea 1982).

The mandates given to the youth workers thus employed, like the motives for their employment, were a mixed bag. Detached workers were told to 'reach out' to the unattached and unclubbable, to 'befriend' them in order to facilitate changes in socially undesirable behaviour. In some cases, the youth worker was charged with the task of changing attitudes and behaviour to the extent of making them acceptable to the structured programme of a youth centre. Other workers were given resources and facilities to enable them to provide street gangs with their own independent recreational or sports

programmes, to keep them permanently away from the conventional youth services in the area in order not to disturb their orderly conduct.

Some detached youth workers were specifically employed to prevent 'gang wars', others to combat drug addiction, vandalism, or muggings. Later, women workers were employed to work with the 'debs' of street gangs and eventually with girl gangs (Campbell : 1984). It was generally accepted that the target was a specific and often notorious group, and that the method was group work, combined with one or another form of individual counselling.

What was new and challenging about the new youth work approach was that the work had to be carried out in the territory of the target group, largely under conditions determined by them. Up to then, youth provisions and programmes offered their resources and facilities on conditions and according to rules laid down by the agencies themselves. Youth workers were held accountable by their employers for maintaining the prescribed conditions and for enforcing the rules. The young people who wished to make use of the services had to adapt to the conditions set by the agency. Objectives and methods of youth work in these settings were determined by the service agency and reflected conventional values, norms, and expectations. Detached youth work, in contrast, offered a service without a clearly structured setting. There were no club-rooms with opening and closing hours, age limits, admission procedures, membership cards, and a formal curriculum of activities, just as there was no clearly defined identity for the youth workers.

The detached youth worker had to seek out the 'target group' in their territory, establish contact, and repeatedly explain and demonstrate in a wide variety of situations their role, function, objectives and methods. The structure of the task could not depend on the visible support of buildings or equipment, providing a basis for rules, procedures, and accountability. The worker had to carry the structure of the task around in her/his head,

conveying the existence of any such structure to the target group in interaction. The condition for success was the ability of the youth worker to establish a working relationship with the target group. The development of a working relationship depended upon the worker's personal qualities and abilities. The worker had to establish a role and 'image' as a youth worker, to show an ability to act competently and effectively in difficult situations, as well as to relax, have fun, refrain from 'poking your nose in', interference or 'hassling'. The detached youth worker had to gain the confidence, trust, and respect of the target group, attaining their co-operation, whilst at the same time preserving a measure of personal autonomy.

All this had to be done, at least in the critical initial phase of early contact, with only one resource: the youth worker's own experience, values, and personality. Moreover, the detached youth worker's chances of survival and success depended upon an appreciation of any group's individual characteristics, potentialities, limitations, frustrations, and the group's 'life-style', social background and cultural milieu. The operative norms and values, attitudes and stereotypes, and the physical conditions and economic realities that dominated and shaped the lives of the young people, as well as their parents and neighbours, also had to form part of the internal appreciative resources of the detached youth worker.

In the early stages of the development of detached youth work in the United States, there was very little training available for this complex and demanding type of youth work. However, by the early 1960s, President Kennedy's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime (1961), profoundly influenced by the persuasive presence of Lloyd Ohlin of the Columbia School of Social Work, set a tone and gave a theoretical background for training programmes for detached youth workers (Pitts 1988 : 64).

Cloward and Ohlin's study, *Delinquency and Opportunity* (1960), in particular was a great influence on the President's Committee. Their study, followed from pioneer work

in the sociology of delinquency by the Chicago School (e.g. Shaw and McKay 1929; Thrasher 1927). Cloward and Ohlin explained working class juvenile delinquency as a collective solution to discrepancies between culturally induced aspirations among lower class youth and the possibilities of achieving them by legitimate means (1960 : 82). The discrepancy between expectation and reality, argued Cloward and Ohlin, resulted in a collective alienation which in the delinquent gang is manifested as an alternative opportunity system for the achievement of status and/or gain. Cloward and Ohlin proposed a typology of differential responses via a criminal subculture, which was largely devoted to securing material gain through illegitimate opportunity structures, in order to achieve socially valued success goals; a conflict gang subculture, based on an alternative status system of toughness and violence; and a retreatist subculture, based on a withdrawal from socially ascribed goals into drug and alcohol abuse. Cloward and Ohlin's study of the association of delinquency with opportunity was partly based on their contacts with a lower East Side 'Settlement House' project in New York, designed as a delinquency prevention programme. This in turn developed into the far larger 'Mobilisation for Youth' project. Based on the assumed connection between delinquency and thwarted aspiration, it sought to expand job and educational opportunities for the young in the lower class slums. However, project workers with the Mobilisation for Youth programme quickly came into conflict with established power structures and, as a compromise, the emphasis was shifted to preventing delinquency through training programmes and the employment of detached youth workers.

In Britain, detached youth work made its 'debut' in the early 1960s following from recommendations in the Albermarle Report. Attempts to reach the 'unattached', to club the 'unclubbables' were often based in the informal drop-in 'Expresso' coffee bars of the early sixties. The popularity of these sites for youth culture did not extend much beyond 1965 and most projects were "unmonitored and unevaluated" (Ewen 1974). Although in some cases fairly elaborate monitoring and research did accompany the projects, and were

even their principal object (Spencer 1964; Morse 1965; Goetschius and Tash 1967; Smith et al 1972).

The same period saw the emergence of the new breed of youth worker, "... a brave, and often very young, missionary who went out alone into the streets, pubs, and inevitable coffee bars to meet and befriend the unclubbable youth" (Baldock 1982 : 2). Contemporary literature testifies to the difficulty of this new style of youth work and the enormous strain its demands put on the individual workers. Personalities like 'Jumbo' of the Paddington Project (Baldock 1982), Mary Andes of the Bristol Project (in Spencer 1964), the anonymous untrained twenty-two year old worker in the 'Seagate' experiment (in Morse 1965 : 15-72), and Paul Stepney's account of the Cavendish Youth Club in Swindon (Stepney 1978), provide vivid accounts of the dilemmas, confrontations, and successes in this early pioneer work with the unattached. When later these now older workers were absorbed into the mainstream of youth and community work, they had a stimulating and radicalising effect quite out of proportion to their relatively small numbers.

The growth of detached youth work in Britain shifted in the late 1960s post-Albermarle period from the voluntary to the statutory sector, from the settlement houses, churches, and other charitable organisations, to the Education Departments and Youth Service. The definition of the task, and appropriate training facilities, differed widely from place to place. Two major developments in the statutory sector broadened the scope of detached youth work and, if anything, added to the range and complexity of the task, without, however, doing much to define and circumscribe the role more clearly.

One such development was the impact of community work on youth work in general and the youth service in particular (Baldock 1980; Leissner 1975; Francis *et al* 1984). While it had for some time been understood that the detached youth worker is 'in the neighbourhood' or, if not that, at least wherever young people 'hang out', it gradually became accepted that detached, as well as other forms of youth work, should attempt to

work with, as well as in, the neighbourhood or the community (Cox 1970; Leissner 1972; Powley 1974). Implicit in this was a conflation of the idea of community with territorial neighbourhood which partly reflected something of the influence of the Chicago School's conception of a 'natural area'. It can be said that the full implications of the community work approach were neither fully understood, accepted, or applied in practice (Leissner 1980; Davies and Crousaz 1982).

The second more recent development was the adoption of Intermediate Treatment established by the 1969 Children and Young Persons Act (Pitts 1988 : 35-39). The concept of Intermediate Treatment (I.T.) in the so-called "era of rehabilitative optimism" (Adams *et al* 1981) anticipated an end to a custodial system for juveniles, and its replacement by care and treatment in the community (Leissner 1977). I.T. was linked to early youth work and community projects as part of an explicit agenda concerned with the reduction of delinquency. The Wincroft Youth Project (Smith *et al* 1972) which operated in North Manchester was one such delinquency prevention project.

Wincroft's rationale suggested that juvenile delinquency was associated with inner-city multiple deprivation. Using community work, community youth work, and detached youth work methods, Wincroft identified 54 boys most at risk, described them as 'participants', and maintained contact with them using 'detached work' methods developed in the street gang work undertaken by the New York City Youth Board. This involved using, in the three years of the Project, 156 students and volunteers as detached workers in order to contact the peer groups within which the 54 participants were located. The workers in the project maintained contact with 600 young people in order to be able to work with the 54 target clients in their peer groups. The project recognised the importance of the peer group and the more extensive local adolescent networks as a potential generating milieu for juvenile crime. The role of the worker was to identify the needs and wishes of the target groups and to facilitate problem solving, and the development of recreational and social/educational activities. The emphasis was on

opening up access to opportunities based on the assumption that much of the apparently 'delinquent' behaviour of the participants was based on lack of access to opportunity and hence 'normality'.

Wincroft's major achievement was that over a three year period sustained contact was maintained with those young people specifically selected because other more orthodox professionals had been unable to maintain contact. The project had operated 'on the streets', without premises, and to this day offers the most comprehensive description of British detached youth work available. Despite its success in making a significant impact on participants' offending (Smith *et al* 1972 : 255) and its influence on other projects adopting the detached work method, its effect on I.T. as a whole was muted (Pitts 1988 : 77-79).

Thus in Britain as well as the USA, early detached youth work projects tended to be more or less explicitly linked to 'delinquency' management and prevention. Later projects, influenced by the more sophisticated sociological critiques of juvenile crime developed, for example in labelling and deviancy amplification theories (Lemert 1951; Becker 1963; Schur 1971; Wilkins 1964) were far more circumspect about adopting such clear identifications with surveillance and social control. Despite their liberal appearance, community-based intervention and treatment programmes were criticised for "widening the net" for "potential delinquents" and justifying an expansion of social work surveillance and assessment of working class family socialisation (Thorpe *et al* 1980 : 16). According to Box (1987):

> "The majority of adolescents caught up in these programmes have not been judged guilty of any offence, but have been identified, by experts, as 'in need' or 'at risk' of committing offences. This form of preventive intervention sails very close to being soft, subtle socialisation by employees of the state" (1987 : 112-113).

As a result of these debates within youth work theory and practice, youth work has in recent years generally taken two forms (neither of which, in the actual practice of youth work, are mutually exclusive). The first following from Edwin Schur's (1971) 'radical non-interventionist' approach to delinquency has come to be known as 'non-directive youth work'. Non-directive youth work can be contrasted with a second, social democratic tradition within youth work practice. This second tradition espouses intervention out of 'concern' for working class youth. Within the social democratic traditions, youth 'policy' is viewed as the structural organisation of notions of welfare, with the aim of organisations being to encourage and provide opportunities, particularly for the working class young. Non-directive youth work poses itself against social democratic youth work practice in terms of the ways in which the worker interacts with the groups worked with:

> "It constructs a practice which listens more, and intervenes only in the terms and forms agreed by working class youth itself" (Corrigan 1982 : 2).

In its most extreme libertarian guise, particularly as manifested in the work and critiques developed in the early 1970s, this form of youth work was important in revealing power relationships within youth policy and youth practice. It drew on historical studies of the development of youth work practice which revealed the relationship between youth policy and the nature of the capitalist economy, exposing the need for social control in an otherwise liberal state (see Section 2.2). The theory of culture associated with the non-directive youth work strategy understands the nature of working class youth culture as a progressive force, a 'problem' for the capitalist cultural hegemony. Progressive youth workers thus informed became wary of interventions on behalf of national youth policy, since youth policy is viewed as part of the way capital interferes in working class youth culture in order to 'repress, reform or rehabilitate' it. In actual practice, non-intervention in youth work is difficult to sustain when, for example, confronted with the more recessive traits apparent in working class youth culture, the violence, racism and sexism of much of the encountered behaviour and beliefs. Radical non-intervention then becomes an excuse for inactivity, a negation of the detached worker's role. Thus in day to day practice,

intervention at certain points becomes inevitable with the guiding principles for the detached youth worker 'in the field' being adapted according to the task, goals, and mandates of particular workers in particular locations when confronted with specific problems.

This leaves a view of social democratic youth work as neither progressive nor oppressive but a terrain of class struggle which is, in day to day terms, full of contradictions. The worker within the social democratic mode views youth work practice as assisting in development. Youth work and social education grew hand in hand as active policies and practices, and recent examples include the introduction of anti-racism and anti-sexism programmes into youth work practice (Macken and Ritchie 1984; Taylor 1984). Moreover, social democratic youth work does at least attempt to challenge the subordinacy of working class youth through radical democratic notions of participation and self-determination. As Fuchs and Jones emphasise:

> "An acceptance of the right of young people to take part in all decision making processes is an essential pre-condition for any effective changes in the way that community organisations respond to the needs of their younger members and potential members" (1986 : 4).

The libertarianism that underlies a non-interventionist approach sees any form of intervention as in the interests of capital, painting a picture of a youth worker frightened to move in any strategic direction for fear of becoming an agent of social control. However, many of the more progressive elements within the practice of detached youth work have sought, in recent years, to intervene in communities to create the possibility for participation in youth practice and policy (Mark Smith 1981; Boaden *et al* 1982; Feek 1982; National Youth Bureau 1981; Foster and Shaw 1981; Fuchs and Jones 1986); thereby attempting to facilitate the empowerment of young people as "creators not consumers" (Mark Smith 1981). It is only through this kind of involvement and intervention, through such progressive developments as the 'enfranchisement' projects, advocated by the National Youth Bureau (1981 : 6), that youth workers may intervene to

involve target groups in practice that does at least attempt to challenge the structured subordinacy that is a social and political fact of life for many young working class people in high unemployment areas, such as Hartingleigh.

In immediately local terms, for example, the Greater Manchester Youth Service has been quite explicit in directing forms of youth and community work intervention that leads to the empowerment of young people. In the "philosophy and practice of the youth service", for example, specific guidelines are provided for youth work practice that facilitates -

> "... the maximum participation by young people in the management of the service ... boys and girls should participate fully in decision making about the organisation of youth provision; ... young people should serve on area and district committees and be encouraged to participate in their deliberations ..,. [they] should be involved in the appointment of staff ... each club or organisation should be controlled primarily by members committees or through other arrangements which give young people substantial control" (Manchester Education Committee 1982 : 2).

This is the paradigm of delinquency prevention organised through participation, and enfranchisement; intervention through empowerment. Following the General Election of 1979, there was, however, a significant sea change in youth policy. Under the impact of radical-right ideology, 'law and order' returned to the political agenda and there was a profound 'moral' backlash against such 'permissive' youth work practice.

2.4 Detached Youth Work in Hartingleigh

In Hartingleigh in the early days of my employment by the embryonic Youth and Community Project, I was guided in my early encounters 'in the field' by the loose and unstructured brief offered by the Project's Neighbourhood Worker, Jim Donovan. The early mandate given to me and my three co-workers was to "get out there", establish contacts with the school leavers and young unemployed and publicise and create an awareness of the developing aims of the Project as a whole. We were to inform potential users of the possibilities for them to organise in order to win resources, and facilities such

as the proposed Youth Centre within the evolving Project. We were also encouraged to seek out practical help and support for the renovation of recently secured premises for an 'Indoor Street Corner' which, it was hoped, would develop into a self-managed 'drop-in centre' for the young unemployed of the area. Similarly, we were to enlist support, if possible, for the construction and eventual staffing of an urban-aid funded Adventure Playground, the site for which had already been negotiated from the Council by the Project's Management Committee.

What followed in these early days of my youth work practice was an easy routine of touring the district, initiating early contacts and gathering an increasingly informed cartography of the formal and informal sites where children and young people gathered for their social play and recreation. In this early period (Autumn 1979), my co-youth workers, Gail Hindle, Marie Hulton, Tony Boyle and I would, through local knowledge and information gathered from 'key informants', map out the major areas where young people gathered and 'hang-out with the kids', talking, 'having the crack' (a local expression for extreme sociability) and generally getting our faces known. For Gail and Marie, who had been born in Hartingleigh and lived there all their lives, this was less problematic than for Tony and myself. Tony in particular became the butt of much defamatory humour because of his beard, substantial girth, and pronounced Geordie accent. Nevertheless, Tony's physical presence and no-nonsense approach commanded a grudging respect, especially amongst 'the lads', and Gail and Marie's 'insider status' provided them with an easy command of most situations. My own acceptance in these early days was facilitated by a measure of footballing skill and a general 'street savvy' I had acquired from my own urban working class childhood in Manchester. Quick wits and a deft right foot were survival characteristics I had learned in my childhood on the Benchill Estate in Wythenshawe, at one time the largest municipal housing estate in Western Europe, in Salford Six, the "Classic Slum" (Roberts 1971) and later, when my parents were rehoused, during my adolescence on the Partington overspill estate in the extreme south of the Greater Manchester conurbation. As my outreach work progressed, I came to accept that

my background was a positive attribute, and I became increasingly confident in utilising aspects of style, linguistic constructs, and my knowledge of the culture and ecology of Mancunian urban working class life, in my 'face to face work' on the streets of Hartingleigh.

I spent many hours in these early days of working for the Project kicking a football and "having a laff" (Willis 1977), playing loose unstructured games on the streets and wastelands of Hartingleigh. The memorable Sunday 'kick-about' on 'The Wreck' (Chapter One, Section 1.3), one of several sites that I would regularly visit on my 'rounds' of the area, was a major point of contact. 'The Wreck' had, over the years since the demolition of the terraced houses which formerly stood there, become an important informal meeting and play space for the children and young people from the nearby council estates. On Sundays in particular, local young people from the estates would gather at around mid-day and gradually an informal soccer match would develop. This game would continue throughout the day and in the summer months into the evenings, new players joining in when the pubs closed, or when the televised highlight of 'Match of the Day' had finished, as others left when called home for meals, or to meet up with mates and girlfriends, etc. The age span of players would range from six to forty plus, the numbers playing varying from ten to twenty a side. These games, often lasting for six hours or more, would provide me with valuable opportunities to meet up with the extended networks of teenagers from the nearby estates, enabling me to consolidate or expand on contacts established earlier in the week.

The youth worker role has provided a ready research identity and notable access for participant observers seeking to investigate the social world of the urban young (Gill 1977; McRobbie 1978; Parker 1974; Jenkins 1983; MacLeod 1987). Jenkins (1983), for example, was able to construct his ethnographic study of working class youth life styles on a large housing estate in Belfast out of the initial role, identity, and contacts furnished by his previous employment as an outreach youth worker with the school leavers and young

unemployed on the 'Ballyhightown' estate (1983 : 16). Similarly, Howard Parker (1974) initially encountered the 'Roundhouse Boys' of his study of 'down town' adolescent male delinquency in Liverpool's inner city whilst working as "... a residential dog's body 'go and play with the kids' community youth worker at a country holiday centre for Liverpool 'street kids'" (1974 : 15). Parker's acceptance into the network of the 'Roundhouse' group would have been highly unlikely if his 'credentials' as an 'O.K. guy' had not been checked in these opportune early encounters at the 'Sandhills' holiday centre. Parker acknowledges the importance of the non-hierarchical philosophy adopted at the holiday centre in creating a 'highly favourable atmosphere' for the original contacts with the boys who would eventually form the basis of his study (1974 : 214).

In this initial period, 1979-1982 of living in Hartingleigh and working for the Project, myself and my co-workers successfully established street contacts, recruited help, organised and managed the 'Indoor Street Corner', and established a user-run Adventure Playground. Most importantly, from the point of view of my future research, I was able, in this early period of detached youth working, to establish my credentials as 'OK', that is, among other things, "as a stand up guy" (Polsky, in Becker 1963 : 171 : Note 7), "knowing the score about theft behaviour" (Parker 1974 : 16). This 'insider status' is crucial for any ethnographic research into the social world of the urban young, as once conferred and confirmed it allows the researcher relatively free access to 'backstage' situations (*cf.* Goffman) and information normally prohibited to the 'straight' adult outsider (Parker 1974 : 215).

One aspect of my own biography was extremely important in establishing my 'insider status', facilitating an easy acceptance by the 'unattached' from Hartingleigh's Council estates and, moreover, coincidentally furnishing me with the necessary 'credentials' with 'key informants' who were, or would later become, engaged in fringe or full time illegal activity, people who would later become important participants in my future research.

In 1979, prior to moving to Hartingleigh, I had been released under parole licence from a three years and three month prison sentence after serving almost two years imprisonment. Shortly before being released, I was assigned for parole supervision to Martin Bloxham, a probation officer from the area where I was to live. In my case, parole supervision was to last for two years. Martin was a good friend of Jim Donovan, the Project's neighbourhood worker, then a major figure in the Project's Management Committee, and it was this informal contact between my parole supervisor and Jim which had, to some extent, worked in my favour when I had originally applied for the youth work job. At this stage, apart from Jim Donovan, neither the Project's Management Committee, my co-workers, nor the young people I worked with, were aware of these details of my background. However, this situation was to change dramatically as a result of one of my fortnightly visits to see Martin at the Probation Offices in nearby Moat Pitton. Whilst waiting in the reception room to be called in for my appointment, four lads, Maz, Digger, Willie and Berksy, sauntered in smoking what smelled suspiciously like a 'joint'. I was, as they say, 'gobsmacked'. I had previously encountered the lads in my early weeks of street work for the Project and on several occasions played soccer with them and a larger group from the 'Jungle' estate (see Chapter One, Section 1.3), locally considered to be the 'roughest' estate (Marsden 1976) in Hartingleigh. Unbeknown to me, two of the lads were attending appointments with probation officers at the Moat Pitton offices under 'supervision orders' (Muncie 1984 : 159-161) imposed as a result of various juvenile court appearances. Before I had time to concoct a suitable story to 'front out' my presence in the probation offices, the receptionist in her cool, neutral, but efficient receptionist's voice, announced: "Mr. Craine, your probation officer will see you now".

My twenty minute interview with Martin in his ground floor office was punctuated by one or more of the lads peering in through the security mesh on the windows - winking and giving me the heavy duty 'thumbs up'. Later, when I met the lads outside, I swore them to secrecy, explaining that I was now 'straight' and desperate to hold on to my job

with the Project. They, in reply, issued veiled hints at blackmail: "It's going to cost you, Crainey".

Despite the attempts on my part to conceal my background, it quickly became apparent to me in my street work that 'the word was out' that I was an 'ex-con', although, in fairness to the lads, no one at the Project ever learned of my past history, and it was not until 1986 when my research was officially under way that I was obliged to reveal the details to the Project's Management Committee. Thus, there were key figures on the streets in Hartingleigh who now knew something of my background. Rather than diminishing my position as a youth worker, being a person who had experienced life in the 'big house' served instead to enhance my standing and reputation. At the ripe age of 29, I was now officially recognised as 'one of the crew'. Thus vetted by reliable sources, I found it progressively easier to move into a wider acceptance until I could casually knock on doors and gain entrance and acceptance into the extended domestic and social networks of the young people of Hartingleigh, many of whom would later play an important part in my future research.

By that time, my home too had become an established meeting point and often there would be up to twenty people of various ages crammed into my front room 'having a brew and the crack'. Again, the 'He's OK' epithet was important, particularly in terms of the accounts and discussions that took place of various illegal matters. Like Wallace (1987) I had to "... ignore some of the less officially sanctioned practices that were going on both in the so-called 'black' economy and elsewhere" (1987 : 8). Since my 'credentials' had been established by reliable sources, it was taken for granted that I could "be relied on to say nothing since I 'knew the score'" (Parker 1974 : 215). Inevitably, friendships became part of the logical development of youth working in such a loose, unstructured, and non-hierarchical way. The reciprocal nature of friendships forming a further strand in my developing commitment towards a participatory, collaborative research method.

Many participant observer studies have similarly been augmented by the developing friendships of field-workers with their research participants (Patrick 1973 : 13-17; Parker 1974 : 16; Ditton 1977 : 17; Wallace 1987 : 8; MacLeod 1987 : 6-7, 166-171; Hobbs 1988 : 10). The reciprocity involved allowing researchers access to 'backstage' settings, conversations, and information which might otherwise have not been available (Polsky 1971; Klockars 1975; Ditton 1977). In many cases, the development of personal involvement is a necessary precursory feature of entrée into and acceptance in 'the field':

> "I was already close friends with many Clarendon Heights residents prior to the beginning of my research. Without this entrée into the community ... I would have faced massive problems gaining the trust and respect of my subjects (MacLeod 1987 : 6-7).

Similarly, Whyte (1943) in his classic study found his acceptance with the 'Norton Street Gang' and within the 'Cornerville' community "depended on the personal relationships I developed far more than upon any explanations I might give" (1955 edition : 300)

Although I am now only an infrequent visitor to Hartingleigh, the friendships I formed during my youth work there have endured. It was these same friendships which were later to form the basis of my study by allowing me informal access to the material from which my research project would be constituted.

Detached youth working in Hartingleigh in this first phase (1979-1982) of my evolving study brought me into the lives and homes of many of the young people who would later become participants in my research in 1986. Much of my time in this early period between September 1979 and September 1982 was spent in a variety of capacities, liaising between young people on the street and the evolving Youth and Community Project, organising and running a football team, helping out with various projects connected to the Indoor Street Corner and Adventure Playground, and generally coaxing greater involvement and participation from the young people in the community.

However, the overriding impression I was left with at the end of this first phase of living and youth working in Hartingleigh was of the considerable alienation of the majority of young people from the wider society that surrounded them. Often I heard this expressed by older members of the community in terms of phrases that located manifestations of youthful social behaviour in psycho-pathological terms - 'everyone's going mad'. Later by the mid-1980s, the local youth sub-culture would gain national prominence and the notion of 'MADCHESTER' take on an affirmatory cultural significance that drew in affiliates from throughout the country in terms of its leading edge in music, fashion and sub-cultural style (*The Guardian* 21.4.90 : 24-25). The mass hedonistic escapism involving a mutated collectivism achieved through multi-drug use and 'trance'-dancing to a highly technologised musical form commonly labelled 'acid-house' - later transmuted into 'rave culture' - had its original roots in the urban alienation of Manchester's young working class (See Chapter Seven, Section 7.86; Chapter Ten, Section 10.3).

However the alienation of the young working class of North Manchester cannot be understood in a vacuum. Theirs was a youth culture that evolved within a specific historical, economic and social context, a context that has its roots in the collectivist traditions of the parent culture but which was subsequently mutated, through urban dislocation, in the era of clearance and redevelopment, and through unemployment, at the end of the post war boom of the 1960s and early 1970s; coincidental, but nonetheless significant, socio-economic upheavals which have weighed most heavily on the youth of the economically disenfranchised urban working class.

Of necessity the changes outlined in Chapter One have to be restated throughout this study in order to give meaning to behaviours and interactions at an immediately local level. As the old industrial centres, such as the manufacturing area of East Manchester, lost investment and employment, so the traditional opportunities for both the indigenous adult and youth labour force evaporated. High inflation rates and dwindling productivity

produced closures and labour shedding on an unprecedented scale. These in turn affected public expenditure pressures at both a national and local level. Moreover, the structure of the welfare state which had been established in the post-war economic consensus came under increasing fiscal and ideological pressure.

By 1979 a new Conservative political regime had emerged under Thatcher with programmes of deregulation and privatisation which represented a fundamental break with the post-war Keynesian consensus (Edgell and Duke, 1991) As a result, the life-transitions of the young working class were no longer to be structured through employment opportunity but rather through containment and socialisation schemes under the 'new curriculum' for youth. The implications of post-1979 policy for youth are examined in Section 2.6; here it is sufficient to note that all of these factors form part of the social and historical context I outlined in my opening chapter, and which were to have profound implications for the life-course transitions of the young working class of my study area.

2.5 The Community Self Survey

From the point of view of my future research, its 'data base', and my evolving methodological disposition, the community self surveys initiated by the Youth and Community Project in this early period of detached youth working provided a further strand in what would later become my research project.

According to Van de Lest, the community self survey is defined as -

> "... a form of social investigation carried out with the assistance of members of the public who are themselves the object of the investigation so that they may get to know and understand their own situation differently and better" (Van de Lest [no date] : 3).

Wormser (1949) emphasises the central role of members of the community in participating "in every phase of the investigation" (1949 : 5).

There were several community self surveys initiated by the Project in its early stages of development (see Chapter One 1.8.2). Designed to highlight needs, emphasise priorities and support various applications for funding, the community surveys provided valuable information that was fed into the Project's evolving aims as well as facilitating community participation in problem definition and solution. Hendriks (1968) argues that through the self survey, "a representative group in the community is confronted with the local situation and requirements" (1968 : 85). The community self survey thus differs from an ordinary survey in that, "the focus is on a democratic educational process" (Lambert and Cohen 1949 : 6). Writing explicitly about education and social change, Freire (1972) similarly argues for the rationale of the community self survey without actually using the term: "The methodology proposed requires the investigators and the people (who would normally be considered objects of that investigation) to act as co-investigators" (1972 : 78).

Early in 1980, it was decided at a Project Management committee meeting to undertake a survey of the young people in Hartingleigh. The survey was to serve a variety of purposes. Firstly, and most importantly, the survey was to furnish information to be utilised by the Project's youth workers and Management Committee in assessing needs and priorities for formulating policies for youth work activities in the area. Secondly, it was anticipated that the survey would enable youth workers to consolidate existing street work contacts as well as seeking out new prospective users of proposed facilities. Through the survey, we were to publicise the general aims of the Project as well as seeking out greater local participation in existing resources such as the Adventure Playground and Indoor Street Corner. We also hoped to encourage a measure of involvement in the planning of activities and facilities for the proposed Youth and Community Centre. Thirdly, the survey was to be included in the application to the Manchester Metropolitan District council for a grant, under the Urban Aid Programme, for funding towards the construction of the proposed Youth and Community Centre to be sited in the Canton Street area. Finally, the survey was also to form part of a (later aborted) assessment project by Gail

Hindle, one of the Project's youth workers, who at that time was engaged in part-time undergraduate studies at Manchester Polytechnic.

Initially, a sample group of one hundred and eighteen young people was drawn from the three secondary schools that serve Hartingleigh. This sample group was compiled on the basis of two criteria. Firstly, that the young people would be leaving school the following Spring or Summer (1980) without formal qualifications. This criteria was introduced out of a general ethos of 'positive discrimination' and on the basis of our street work experience, which revealed that over ninety percent of the young people we contacted were 'unqualified early leavers'. Secondly, the young people to be included in the sample group were to be residents within the boundaries of the electoral Ward of Hartingleigh, the district to be served by the Project's proposed Youth and Community Centre.

Eventually, after some lengthy discussions between my three co-youth workers, Gail, Marie, Tony, myself and the Project's neighbourhood worker, Jim Donovan, who was also to help out with the survey, it was decided to reduce the original sample group to a more manageable number of fifty on the basis of three new criteria: firstly, those who after initially being contacted by Gail and Marie had agreed to participate in the survey; secondly, those who lived within the closest geographical proximity to the proposed site for the Youth and Community Centre; and thirdly, on the basis of a prior commitment to achieve an equal representation of girls and boys in the final short-list. Between January and May 1980, the final short-list of fifty, consisting of twenty-five girls and twenty-five boys were 'formally' interviewed in a variety of locations of their choice, at home, in school, on the street, in the drop-in centre, or the homes of one or more of the youth workers and neighbourhood worker who had administered the survey. Apart from the 'formal' questionnaire-based interviews, there were a series of 'informal' unstructured interviews, subsequently followed by a variety of informal group meetings and discussions held with one or more of the youth workers and Jim Donovan at the Indoor Street Corner drop-in centre and in our homes.

Each of the five Project workers involved in the survey had selected ten young people from the short-list of fifty to work with, particularly in the first stage of questionnaire administration. My part in the administration of the questionnaires was an early informal introduction to the mechanics of quantitative information gathering, a task I intuitively disliked, providing a further early impetus towards a softer, more collaborative mode of researching. My practical task was to interview ten boys from the short-list of fifty. There was some choice in who we were to contact and work with as we were encouraged to utilise existing street work contacts in our selection of interviewees. My choice of participants was based on those boys with whom I had already developed some rapport in my street work, particularly through playing football. In fact seven of my group formed the nucleus of a football team that I had helped to form. After numerous hiccups and false starts, they had begun playing on a formal weekly basis against other local youth teams in the period leading up to Christmas 1979. Maz, Digger and Willie were three of the boys I had developed particularly good working relationships with (since September 1979 when my contract with the Project had begun) on the strength of our shared enthusiasm for both playing and watching football.

Apart from furnishing valuable background material for the Project's application for Urban Aid Funding, the survey also enabled the Project's workers to introduce new potential users to the Project and help them become acquainted with existing facilities. Out of our contacts with the survey group, developed a youth committee, the members of which elected two representatives (one female, one male) to join the Management Committee of the Project in order to feed the requirements of the youth group in to the Project's evolving policies. Representatives of the youth committee were also encouraged to attend Project staff and working party meetings in order to air their views and define their needs with Project workers. The survey had also enabled the Project's workers to introduce themselves to the 'unattached' in non-street work contexts, in the schools and in their homes. Also through attending interviews and meetings in the various homes of the Project's workers, barriers to participation were removed and the 'unattached' were

encouraged to contact us informally as they required. Input into the planning stage of the Youth and Community Centre was achieved *via* the youth committee and the later structured timetable of activities at the Centre for the 'Senior Club' of over-fourteen year olds was largely determined by the youth committee. These aspects of detached youth working policy were inspired by the notion of empowerment contained in the Greater Manchester Youth Service guidelines (Manchester Education Committee 1982; 1983; 1985).

The material generated by the questionnaire survey, apart from providing statistical (and qualitative) 'data' for the application for funding for the Centre, also served, in a more general way, to acquaint the youth workers with a partial view - a general social profile - of the young people with whom we were working on a daily basis. The questionnaires had been constructed by Gail Hindle in collaboration with Jim Donovan and were largely drawn from the Individual Questionnaire utilised in the third follow-up of the National Child Development Study undertaken by the National Children's Bureau in 1974 (Fogelman ed. 1976). The questions dealt with a variety of issues that could be broken down into six groups. The first group of questions were intended to furnish information about the participants themselves, such as involvement in spare time work, pocket money, leisure activities, trouble with the police and courts, drug taking, smoking and drinking, and political awareness. The second group of questions dealt with relationships within and attitudes to the family. The third group of questions dealt with neighbourhood amenities and home study. The fourth group was concerned with the child in school and examined sex education, educational self-ratings, and truancy. The fifth group of questions examined participants' attitudes to school, including attitudes to school punishment and school leaving. The sixth group of questions examined future education and employment, including reason for leaving school, future work, sources of information about jobs and desire for further/higher education (Appendix A).

In Phase Three of my evolving research project (1985-86) I sought to locate and examine the 1980 Youth Survey data through a search of Youth Centre documents. Unfortunately, I was unable to trace the coded data. However, I was able to dig out 44 of the original completed questionnaires and these, together with the contact addresses, provided me with a ready resource and starting point for my subsequent study. Manual coding of the 44 available questionnaires from the original sample of 50 reveals, for example, the high levels of drug abuse, school refusal, and significant involvement with the police and courts, amongst the group.

However, the twin notions of individual and community empowerment, enshrined both in the detached youth work role and in the community self survey with its emphasis on community problem definition and solution, were subsequently subjected to significant critical reappraisal. This was in the late 1970s which saw a new era of radical-right ideology, and an ideological assault on the so-called permissiveness of the 1960s ideas and institutions.

2.6 Permissive Youth Work : The Backlash

2.6.1. Law and Order

The paradigm of delinquency prevention organised around the principle of empowerment, as developed in youth work practice in the post-Albermarle period, was subsequently subjected to a scathing critique from the 'Moral Right Wing'. This was part of the moral backlash which accompanied the repoliticisation of crime and punishment in the period leading up to the 1979 general election campaign. Just before the election, a journalist asked Margaret Thatcher what would be the most important task to be undertaken by a Conservative government. Without hesitation, she replied that it would be, "the restoration of the rule of law". A Thatcher-led Conservative landslide produced an influx of right-wing backbench MPs who held profoundly reactionary views on 'law and order' issues. One example was Warren Hawksley who at the committee stage of the 1982 Criminal Justice Act sought to introduce 'flogging' for the 10-plus age group for an offence

he described as 'provocative language'. According to Pitts (1988), Margaret Thatcher inevitably chose law and order as "... the central motif with which to adorn the rich ideological tapestry of her right-wing populism. Within this rhetoric 'lawlessness' was presented as both a cause and a consequence of the contemporary social malaise" (1989 : 40).

What came to be known as the 'law and order campaign' was given further voice by Patrick Jenkin, then the Minister of State for Health and Social Security. At a conference in Sheffield on Intermediate Treatment (July 1979), paraphrasing the Duke of Edinburgh, he directed the attention of conference participants to: "The avalanche of lawlessness threatening to engulf our civilisation" (Jenkin 1979). Such apocalyptic visions served to generate public support for tougher penalties for juvenile crime. In the same period, James Anderton, Chief Constable for Greater Manchester, was quick to offer his own ideosyncratic solution:

> "Penal work camps where through hard labour and unrelenting discipline they [young offenders] should be made to sweat as they have never sweated before and remain until their violence has been vanquished by penitent humiliation and unqualified repentance" (Anderton 1979).

The Thatcher government and its right-wing supporters' sabre-rattling rhetoric about law and order, crime and punishment, drew heavily on ideas developed by an emergent right-wing intelligentsia in the 1970s. These were the "new realists" (Brewer and Lait 1980), the "intellectuals for law and order" (Platt and Takagi 1981). Patricia Morgan (1978), for example, warned of a delinquent syndrome of "New Barbarianism" -

> "... a conglomeration of behaviour, speech, appearance and attitudes, a frightening ugliness and hostility which pervades human interaction ... a delight in crudity, cruelty and violence" (1978 : 13).

The source of this New Barbarianism of increasing juvenile crime and diminishing moral values was, according to Morgan, located in a "New Establishment" of: social workers, the emergent social sciences, town hall planners, sociology departments,

educationalists, psychologists, teachers and other exponents of what she described as the "New Socio-Psychological Expertise" of child care and education. It was the failure of common sense and the triumph of liberal intellectual modes of child-rearing which, in her view, had led to a moral collapse and a "criminal and delinquent onslaught on public life" (*ibid* : 9); and was, furthermore, "the logical outcome of the theory and practice of the past couple of decades" (*ibid* : 191). Morgan's views were echoed by a letter to *The Daily Telegraph* (25 October 1979) in which an outraged Baroness similarly took issue with "... the theories of those false prophets of permissiveness at whose door must be laid a considerable part of the blame for the rise in crime over the last two decades" (Quoted in Pearson 1983 : 10).

The 'youth question' has provided a preoccupying focus for a number of social anxieties throughout the whole of the post-war era. One can immediately think of the 'moral panics' (S. Cohen 1973) which have surrounded the emergence of various working class youth groups - 'folk devils' - such as the 'Teds' of the 1950s, the 'Mods and Rockers' of the 1960s, the skinheads and football hooligans of the 1970s, the 'punks' and 'black muggers' of the 1980s, and the 'ravers' of the acid-house subculture of the 1990s. There is, however, a much longer history of attempts to arrest the feared 'new' and 'unprecedented' subcultural development among the young working class (Humphries 1981; Pearson 1983; E. and S. Yeo 1981). Various historical studies have documented how social preoccupations with 'mounting social disorder', especially among the artisan and labouring young have crystallised at moments of more general national anxiety (See Section 2.2; Gillis 1974; Springhall 1977; 1985). According to Pearson (1983), the preoccupation with the 'youth question' has served as: "A convenient metaphor for wider social tensions which attend the advance of democratisation" (1983 : 230).

Both Humphries (1981) and Pearson (1983) seek to question the 'nostalgic amnesia' through which contemporary manifestations of youthful disorder are reported and responded to as unprecedented events. Relevant to the arguments that emerged from the

'Moral Right' in the late 1970s is Pearson's 'twenty year rule'. He notes how the more abbreviated timescale of two decades, or 'Twenty Years Ago', is invoked to convey a largely fictionalised and romanticised past against which may be contrasted any contemporaneous manifestations of the 'descent into lawlessness'. In a series of backward glances through English social history, studies by Pearson (1983), Springhall (1985), and the collection of essays edited by E. and S. Yeo (1981), illustrate how forms of youth leisure in the earliest periods of emergent capitalism clashed with the moral demands of the emergent bourgeoisie. All three studies trace moral panics and the demonisation of working class youth to a long standing dispute between the materially disadvantaged and the privileged moral centre of society. As Pearson, in particular, has demonstrated, fears and anxieties about social ruin have been harnessed for ideological purposes for over three hundred years. From the 'black muggers' of recent times, through the 'skinheads' and football hooligans' of the 1970s, to the 'Teds' of the 1950s, the 'bag-snatchers' of the 1930s, the 'Irish hooligan' of the 1890s, the 'garotters', 'costermongers', 'street arabs' and so on back to the 1600s, Pearson examines and exposes the basis of 'respectable fears' concerning 'law and disorder'. At each historical moment, such factors as youth unemployment (and ironically in the 1950s and 1960s, the 'affluence' of youth), 'debasing amusements', the breakdown of family life and community controls, a 'permissive education' system, leisure provision accessible through greater freedom, affluence and mobility, and 'the demon drink' were feared to be causes of working class youth's increased hostility towards the wider society. This was in turn taken as evidence for a growing moral degeneration, an erosion of social discipline and a breakdown in the 'national character' (Springhall 1985).

2.6.2 Socialisation and Containment : The 'New Curriculum' for Youth

In more recent times, the mobilisation of a moral panic over the 'New Barbarianism' has provided the radical right with an ideological smokescreen behind which lay classicist social and economic doctrines - what Denis Healey, in 1983, described as "Sado-

Monetarism" - which began to challenge the left/liberal assumption that Keynesian economic intervention and a gradualist policy of wealth distribution were the ways in which liberal industrial democracies might be regulated (Pitts 1988 : 44). In terms of national youth policy, radical right 'anti-statist' ideology led to a fundamental reappraisal of state commitment to social democratic youth work. According to Davies (1986), following the Conservative election victory in 1979, the Youth Service was set a test "... in these hard times, contribute effectively to the socialisation and containment of the young or forfeit state endorsement and material support" (1986 : 110).

Indeed, withdrawal of funding *via* constraints on local authority spending was already under way. Some argued that the future of the Youth Service was profoundly at risk (D.I. Smith 1979 : para. 4.4); twelve months later, the same National Youth Bureau researcher argued that the service was becoming so 'threadbare' that it had little relevance to the young people who needed it most (D.I. Smith 1980). The post-1979 Conservative governments were uncompromisingly committed to 'rolling back' rather than increasing state responsibility for youth work provision. After all, the Youth Service continued to rely on those apparently 'permissive' approaches which the radical right generally saw as positively subversive (*Times Educational Supplement* 26.3.82).

Eventually a Review Committee was appointed, chaired by Alan Thompson (Thompson Report 1982). However, even before the Report had been delivered to him, Sir Keith Joseph, as the Secretary of State for Education at the time, was keen to lay stress on the 'socialisation and containment' roles for youth work, and had already issued a circular emphasising his "hope" that the "resources and skills of the Youth Service will be made available and incorporated effectively in YTS schemes" (Department of Education and Science, 1982). Eventually, through a process of financial starvation, some of the more pliant sections of the Youth Service were colonised by the Manpower Services Commission (Scott 1984).

The impact of radical right ideology was from the outset unmistakable. Baker, the Senior Civil Servant for the Youth Service at the Department of Education and Science, laid out the new ground rules as early as June 1978:

> "With so many competing claims on public expenditure ... any new look at the role of the Youth Service ... must inevitably involve an increased emphasis on social objectives. Society's needs may have to be defined in terms more or less unpalatable to young people" (Baker 1978).

Despite the resistance by youth workers through the tiny Community and Youth Workers Union, the MSC broke through some previously rigid organisational boundaries, especially in the early 1980s, through the Community Programme's temporary work schemes. In Hartingleigh, however, the political experience of community activists on the Youth and Community Project's Management Committee at least ensured a degree of grass-roots control over the recruitment of MSC funded workers during the Project's early period of organisation. As Jim Donovan explained:

> "At that time we didn't understand what was happening, but we knew we wanted to keep control over the direction the Project was moving in ... the money was being offered, it seemed pointless not to take it ... most of the people who ended up getting a wage out of the deal were working voluntarily anyway ... most of them were local ... and most of them knew what we were about and what we were trying to do ... Urban Aid and MSC money was useful .. we weren't in a position to turn it down."

In the early 1980s, the MSC sought to expand its influence across the board, not least between the public (educational) and private (industrial) spheres (Coles 1988). Schools and further education institutions as well as youth service facilities were most obviously affected. Moreover, by investing heavily in an organisation such as the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, for example, the MSC also acquired considerable influence in the juvenile justice field (Somerville 1983; Morris 1983).

Primarily through education and vocational training initiatives (the 'new vocationalism') the MSC sought to develop a 'new curriculum' for young people (Edwards 1984). This

large, centralised, and unaccountable state agency increasingly sought to define the specifics of programmes and practices, internal structures and administrative arrangements, as well as staff conditions of service (including their professional autonomy), salaries, and the terms of workers' relationships with young people (Davies 1986 : 117). However, the relative autonomy of grass-roots developed community structures, such as the Project in Hartingleigh, through a combination of political street wisdom, guile, and occasionally, outright duplicity, sought to maintain some control over these incursions, placing the MSC simply in the role of fund provider. Sometimes, this meant deliberately submitting false documentation about fictitious socialisation and containment projects which MSC funded workers were supposed to be involved in. Complementary strategies were also devised in tandem with other Youth and Community agencies in Greater Manchester to subvert the relatively minimal levels of accountability. However, in a more general sense, the MSC was succeeding - certainly by the mid 1980s - in defining for youth agencies generally such key problems and concepts as youth unemployment, skill shortages, and indeed skill itself. Thus, in this ideological sense - particularly in terms of redefining the curriculum of public education - the MSC was encroaching on some of the most resistant of organisational boundaries (Edwards 1984; Walker and Barton 1986). Indeed, its activities were threatening to undermine the very institution of schooling as handed down from the 19th century and to eliminate the grey areas of contradictory purposes and relatively relaxed forms of accountability built into these key state instruments for containing and socialising the young (Edwards 1984; Rees and Atkinson 1982; Walker and Barton 1986; Bates *et al* 1984; Coffield 1984).

Key decisions were taken at the highest levels - often with a minimum or no consultation. Examples include the launching of the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) with an accompanying threat to set up MSC-funded technical schools if the Local Education Authorities did not comply; the transfer of funding for non-advanced further education from LEAs to the MSC; and the introduction, and then extension, of an 'employer-led' two-year Youth Training Scheme. Together, these initiatives suggested

that, despite the radical right's anti-statist rhetoric, a central state strategy was evolving to establish a new political consensus: "A consensus which involved a belief that education must be made more accountable to the needs of industry" (Coles 1988 : 2).

The full significance of the MSC as a central state strategy for youth provision (Davies 1986) emerged only gradually. The vocational training initiatives were developed during mass youth unemployment when the overall strategy of 'youth training' was perceived as a response to youth unemployment; since then, public conception has often been at variance with government assertions of the need to see the various schemes as "improving the start in working life of young people" (Coles 1988 : 183).

By the late 1980s, the MSC had financial control over TVEIs in schools. It had control of the YTS which offered two-year training to nearly half a million youngsters between the ages of 16 and 18. It controlled the budget of 25% of all non A-level post-16 education in the country, as well as directly funding a number of other initiatives which fell within the parameters of further education. David Young was once Chairman of the MSC and close confidante of ex-Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher; as Secretary of State for Employment until after the General Election of 1987, he was therefore technically in charge of the Manpower Services he once headed. Thus:

> "He was either directly or indirectly responsible for many, if not most, of the structures through which ... young people pass in the 1980s. As Chairman of the MSC and Secretary of State, he can ... be said to have presided over the restructuring of the transition from childhood to adulthood" (Coles 1988 : 6).

Apparently accidentally, the MSC moved in less than a decade from a quite limited role in labour planning and retraining to: "the pivotal responsibility for containing and remoralising the young" (Davies 1986 : 132).

2.6.3 The Police and the New Curriculum

Such strategic central planning not only sought to remodel the shape of long- established Youth Service and educational structures but also existed in other policy areas.

Deliberate attempts were made in the late 1970s and 1980s to promote the preventative role of the police. This extended its role well beyond a traditional concern with catching law-breakers into the domains of the school, youth service, and educational welfare (*Socialist Teacher* 1983; Department of Education and Science 1983; Davies 1986). During the 1980s, senior ministers and police officers frequently endorsed these efforts to increase police influence, particularly within the schools (*Times Educational Supplement* 2.4.82; Boseley 1985; Passmore 1985; Lodge 1983; Home Office 1980).

Youth work too was seen as a fruitful area for police involvement and attempts were made to colonise certain aspects of the Youth Service and its practice. It was revealed that in about 40% of Local Education Authorities, the police were running at least one youth club (Department of Education and Science 1983). They were also involved in the sponsorship of holiday play and activity schemes as well as weekly meetings and weekend camps which amongst other things provided training in various aspects of police work! This particular section of the DES Report was something of a standing joke at the Centre in Hartingleigh and, after photocopies of it were handed out at a Youth Group meeting, participants staged highly caricatured theatrical displays of: 'training to fall downstairs whilst resisting arrest'; 'training to concoct elaborate confessions'; 'training to kick the shit out of some poor bastard'; and so on, with Tony Boyle, one of my co-youth workers, taking on the role of Greater Manchester's Chief Constable and, 'training to receive messages of divine retribution from God'.

Youth workers at grass roots similarly expressed strong opposition to police involvement in Youth Service provision which was viewed as particularly insidious because police officers were often operating out of uniform in a voluntary capacity during their off-duty time (Sharron 1984). In Mancester there was strong opposition to these attempted incursions, youth workers' representatives demanded that police policies for youth work activity be made explicit and called upon youth and community workers in the field to refuse all co-operation with the Greater Manchester Police attempting youth work

(Greater Manchester Youth and Community Workers 1982). Their stand was subsequently endorsed by the Greater Manchester Council who established a Working Party of the Police Committee to investigate and report on police involvement in youth work (Greater Manchester Council 1984).

The Report of the Working Party revealed the lack of clearly stated police policy for youth work and highlighted a reply from James Anderton to the Police Committee in which the Chief Constable stated that: "Arguments between theory and practice should surely be settled by reference to results achieved" (1984 : Para.37). However, the Working Party raised the question; was the achievement of 'results' to be defined in terms of the clearly demarcated roles outlined for youth workers by the Manchester Education Committee's philosophy and practice of the youth service (1982) or in terms of that which "facilitates the achieving of policing objectives"? (*ibid* : Para 38). Clearly the Working Party took the latter view, defining the attempted involvement by the police in youth work practice as, "a dangerous extension of police functions"; viewing their responsibility for detecting and preventing law-breaking as seriously in conflict with any attempts at participation in youth and community work (*ibid* : Paras. 36-39).

Significantly, the Working Party also warned the police that, at a time when they were benefiting from the current political climate, they should not attempt to use their privileged position and resources to 'colonise' youth work activities which had suffered financial cuts (Sharron 1984). Subsequently, it was revealed by the Greater Manchester Police Monitoring Committee (28 January 1985) that the police had, for example, invested £100,282 expenditure in youth work provision between 1982 and 1984. Their report highlighted -

> "... the iniquity of the police having such resources available when LEAs with responsibility for the Youth Service are denied adequate resources by Central Government policies and action" (Quoted in Report of the Chief Education Officer to the Continuing Education Sub-Committee, 11 March 1985 : 2).

However, as a result of sustained efforts by youth work activists, there was virtually a 'blanket non-take-up' of the facilities and resources offered by the police (Greater Manchester Youth and Community Workers 1985). From July 1984, police expenditure on the Youth Service was consequently withdrawn (Report of the Chief Constable to the Police Committee, 6 July 1984).

From its overall tone and presentation, it is clear that the GMC Working Party Report into police involvement in youth work did not share the Greater Manchester Police's view of itself as politically neutral in respect of community involvement or policing (1984 : Para. 40). Furthermore, the Report sought to question the implicit and taken-for-granted notion of the police's essentially benign role in the lives of young people. Later, the recommendations of the Working Party were codified by Manchester Education Committee (1985) and distributed on plastic cards to be carried by youth and community workers in the field. The Code of Practice provided unambiguous guidelines for "youth workers in their dealings with the police" and served to strengthen their role as "friends and advocates" (Manchester Education Committee 1985 : 4).

The attempted incursions by the Manpower Services Commission and the police into education and youth work were inspired, in part, by the pervasive right-wing ideological climate and, also in part, by the renewed concerns over youthful lawlessness especially after the street riots and disturbances in 1981 and 1985 (S. Hall 1981; Solomos 1986). The inner-city 'uprising' (Kettle and Hodges 1982) made a profound and lasting impression on policy makers from the Prime Minister down (Solomos 1986). Although marginally alternative official perspectives on these events did struggle onto the agenda (Scarman 1981), the desire of central government to get a grip on 'youthful lawlessness' made the preventative role of the police in education and youth work just one element in an increasingly punitive and authoritarian law and order state that was being assembled (Scraton 1985). In most obvious terms, the police forces were re-equipped and retrained

for a much tougher 'quasi-military' response to all forms of public disruption (Lea and Young 1984).

Thus anti-statism was not the only defining characteristic of radical right policies in the 1980s (*cf* Gamble 1988); contradictorily, they also contained an authoritarianism which actually required major increases in state power. The expansion of the role of the police and the Manpower Services Commission being obvious examples of how, paradoxically, the increase in state intervention was shaped by those same economic forces which had so crucially accentuated the radical right's hostility to state activity. Given the fundamental threat to capitalism and ruling class privilege which the crisis in the economy was seen to pose, strong government, based on an authoritarian state, was essential to uphold existing economic and political order, and maintain dominant values and beliefs (Hall *et al* 1978; Pitts 1988).

The authoritarianism of the radical right's policy strategy inevitably focused on the young. Both the 1982 Criminal Justice Act and the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act were weighted heavily against them. According to Pitts (1982), the 1982 Act effectively demolished "... the remaining barriers which keep juveniles out of the mainstream of the penal system and ... abandons the notions that young people are sent to penal establishments for treatment or rehabilitation" (1982 : 12). The Act did encourage shorter Detention Centre sentences ('short, sharp, shocks') but now the emphasis was unambiguously upon 'retribution, punishment, control and crude deterrence' (Davies 1986 : 83).

The 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act provided the police with new and extended powers, providing them with greater scope for stopping, searching, detaining and arresting suspects on the streets, legitimising police intrusions into what traditionally had always been the social space of the male working class young. The Act also provided for the "detention ... and questioning of persons including juveniles aged ten to 17" (Smith 1986).

Moreover, the Act provided the police with extended powers of entry and search without a warrant, including the right to search and seize property and 'evidence' including personal files and records. As a National Youth Bureau guide to the Act pointed out: "This will have direct implications for many youth workers and particularly those in charge of youth clubs" (Smith 1986).

Apart from these attempted incursions into education and youth work, a third and no less significant area in which the police increasingly took on a wider role was in dealing with young people refusing to attend school. Only exceptionally has working class youth non-conformity expressed itself in serious disruption. Specific examples have occurred such as pupil strikes (Humphries 1981) and street disturbances (Kettle and Hodges 1982). However, there is a long and largely unrecorded history of unorganised individualistic working class youthful resistance to the constraints of school attendance (Humphries 1981; Corrigan 1979).

By the time of the second Thatcher government in the mid-1980s, under the impact of radical right ideology and policy changes, the aspirations of the Seebohm Report (1968) for an unambiguously social work service for non-school attenders had long since receded. Coventry was one Authority which had acted on the Seebohm proposals (Payne 1983). However, changes there indicated that dominant policy preferences had radically shifted, not just from a social work model based on welfarism, but also from education welfare as a whole. Partly this can be understood as one facet of the radical right's wider condemnation of welfarism in general and the social worker in particular (Morgan 1978; Brewer and Lait 1980). The social worker had been specifically targeted by Morgan as the 'special practitioner' of the permissive, 'New Establishment' which was, in her view, responsible for moral collapse (1978 : 37). In Coventry, resort was made to a school attendance service, often dependent on staff with police experience (Department of Education and Science 1985; Payne 1983). According to Payne, the service had unmistakably 19th century overtones of 'kid-catching' (1983 : 90-110). Here as elsewhere

social work was no longer to be trusted to achieve the degree of containment required for young people in the 1980s. This was one tiny part of a wider restructuring of youth provision which saw a move from welfarism towards punitive juvenile justice, from community based judicial responses to custodial measures (Tutt 1982; Pitts 1988). What Pitts characterises as the 'rise of vindictiveness' (1988 : 40-59) is best illustrated by Morgan's (1978) impassioned plea for the whole business of child care to be removed from permissive educationalists and social workers, and for a return to traditional moral values and common-sense. In this plea there is a sub-text, a greater emphasis on 'segregation and deterrence', with 'institutionalisation' a central plank in the strategy:

> "If we have to lock more children up in the future than in the recent past to cure them, then, cynically, we know that institutionalisation is a good way of knowing exactly where they are, what they are doing, and that one is temporarily safe from them provided they do not escape. In the last analysis custody - whether comfortable or not - is a good means of self defence" (1978 : 115).

A circular issued by the Home Office (1980) demonstrated how wide spread police pursuit of truants was. In North Yorkshire, for example, police co-operated at a local level "in respect of children suspended from school", while in a number of other areas, "a high degree of co-operation" was reported between the police, schools, and the education service in dealing with truancy. In Cheshire, it was reported that head teachers were co-operating with the police to identify truanting pupils; this included accompanying police visits to places where truanting pupils congregate. In North Wales, patrols of supermarkets, cinemas, and licensed premises were introduced in order, "where necessary, to return truants found in such places without authority from school". By 1982, 75% of Local Education Authorities reported that there was regular contact between the police and the education welfare service "probably due in part to the fact that some of its members were formerly police officers" (Home Office 1983).

By 1989, Manchester had its own pernicious version of policing 'school refusal': "plain clothes, undercover truancy patrols" which were operating primarily in defence of property

in the City centre. Manchester's Chief Education Welfare Officer, Brian Field, maintained that the truancy patrols, "do nothing to deal with the root causes of truancy or the problems of young people ... it would be better if the police called them crime prevention patrols, because that is clearly what they are" (*Manchester Evening News* 13.9.89). However, the police did not have complete control of the situation. Stockport Education Welfare Department revealed that four cases which had been referred to them had proven untraceable as "the youngsters had all given false names".

Non school attendance was by 1985 a sensitive issue for state policy makers, a draft circular issued by the Department of Education and Science (1985) explicitly acknowledged that school refusal was, "a matter of local and national concern". There were shifts in responsibility which sought to introduce new agencies and tougher legal procedures for dealing with truancy (Cross 1984; Lamb 1984; Baker 1985). In Leeds, for example, juvenile courts, utilising a non-social work use of discretionary power, pioneered an approach based on repeatedly adjourning cases involving persistent non-attenders. These procedures, accompanied by the threat of care orders which implied the removal of the child from the home, were used as a deliberate tactic to pressurise the non-attender into conformity (Cross 1984; Lamb 1984; Baker 1985).

In the criminalisation of truancy what was consistently, perhaps wilfully, overlooked were the internal deficiencies of the schools and education system: schools whose physical and institutional structures were crumbling; schools with high rates of teacher turn over; schools situated in those parts of the country where mass youth unemployment was further undermining an educational practice which, at its very best, held only a tenuous relevance and credibility for significant numbers of its pupils. Instead new strands in a much wider evolving system of punitive youth policy were implemented against school refusers.

An analysis developed which started from a view of the non-attender as in some way defective, the classic reactionary strategy of blaming the victim (Ling 1983; Mongon

1983; Walker 1990). Non-attendance became inexorably linked to the wider behavioural problems of disruption and of delinquency itself (Ling 1983; Department of Education and Science 1978). Central government funding was provided for the creation of withdrawal facilities - 'sin bins' - for pupils labelled disruptive, but significantly money was provided from non-education sources, the DHSS and MSC, even though what was being provided was supposed to be 'substitute schooling' (Youth Social Work Unit 1983; 1984). Statutory education provision was transferred to full-time intermediate treatment or day-care schemes for the persistent school refuser (Community Projects Foundation 1985). According to Edwards *et al* (1984), such Projects tended to slip into being educationally-based facilities and "full up with truants", whereas their design was to contain juvenile law breakers. In the last instance 'residential care' was resorted to for the habitual non-attender. In each of the 'remedies' applied, classification of the problem overwhelmingly depended on psychological perspectives. There was a gradual shift in focus from remedial education to 'treatment', largely based on behaviourist psychology such as 'behaviour modification'. Sometimes as a result of psychological labelling the return of pupils to mainstream education was prevented (Advisory Centre for Education 1980; 1981). One implication of the anti-educational approach was to inhibit any analysis of the schools' internal deficiencies (Mongon 1983) or indeed the deficiencies inherent in the wider socio-economic context, some of which are most crucially articulated and critically contested within the structures and practice of education (Bates *et al* 1984; Corrigan 1979; Humphries 1981; Willis 1977).

2.7 Permissive Youth Work in Hartingleigh

> "Permissiveness as a technique ... mut be distinguished from permissivenes as an ideology. Permissiveness is a technique to keep open a relationship where the [participant] will break it off if subjected to the disciplines that normal adolescents would accept" (Smith *et al* 1972 : 264).

In Hartingleigh, Project youth workers evolved an informal policy of turning an increasingly blind-eye to the growing numbers of disaffected young 'school refusers' who availed themselves of day-time facilities at the Youth and Community Centre. The

Project's Indoor Street Corner was also similarly utilised as an informal resource centre by school non-attenders. The trend towards school-refusal was a familiar phenomenon during my youth work practice and one which gathered pace as the recession deepened, with the ages of those who refused school attendance dropping significantly between 1979 when I started youth work in Hartingleigh and September 1982 when I left. Examination of the 44 questionnaires from the Project's s 1980 school leavers survey traced from Project records during the Third Phase (1985-86) of preliminary sampling and field work, reveals, for example, that 32 participants in the survey (18 male and 14 female) had refused school, particularly in the final compulsory year. By 1982, it was noticeable that there was a significant drop in age of those utilising Project facilities during school hours, with one or two youngsters developing a pattern of persistent non-attendance whilst still in their first year of secondary education.

By the time they had reached their fourth and fifth year of secondary schooling non-attenders had usually evolved a variety of strategies with which to either conceal or validate school absenteeism. One common ploy was to attend only for registration - in the morning and again in the afternoon - allowing the school refuser to 'have it away', 'do one', or 'skive off' in between. Other strategies included the parental 'sick-note' written by a friend or compliant adult who would be recruited to act as a substitute parent to give the note the necessary degree of authoritative handwriting. Sometimes older unemployed users of the 'drop-in' or Centre facilities would be drawn into collusion with sick-note writing, or in more urgent circumstances non-attendance could be validated by the nominee parent telephoning the school on behalf of the school refuser. These 'phone calls were timed to coincide with teaching periods in order that teaching staff would be unable to answer them personally, enabling messages to be left *via* school secretaries, etc.

When school-refusal could no longer be sustained because of attendance agency, school, or occasionally parental, intervention, the subsequent attendance would be desultory and usually subversive. Researchers have documented a wide variety of

informal strategies utilised by recalcitrant pupils for 'winning space' within the framework of formal school attendance. These include: "skipping the classes that you want to miss" (Corrigan 1979 : 18); "expressive antagonism" (Willis 1977 : 124); "dossing, blagging and wagging" (*ibid* : 26); "having a laff" (*ibid* : 29); "wearing jewellery and make-up, and 'winding up' teachers" (Griffin 1985 : 18-21); "smashing school desks" (Humphries 1981 : 81); "assaulting teachers" (Humphries 1981 : 86); "complex and elaborate graffiti" (Coffield 1991); "arson" (Coffield 1991 : 78-83); even "rioting" (*Daily Mirror*, 24.2.82). Rioting and arson in schools, though historically documented (Humphries 1981), are rare occurrences, the most prevalent oppositional strategy is that of limiting educative demands to a minimum:

> "By the time a counter-school culture is fully developed, its members have become adept at managing the formal system and limiting its demands to the absolute minimum ... in many cases this minimum is simply the act of registration" (Willis 1977 : 26-27).

Most of the habitual school refusers who used the Indoor Street Corner as a drop-in centre were young teenage boys drawn mainly from the council estates in Hartingleigh. Some girls did occasionally utilise the resources at the drop-in but their numbers were few and their use minimal. The general pattern of school refusal among teenage girls in Hartingleigh was instrumental or opportunist, taking a day or afternoon off now and again for specific purposes, such as meeting friends or boyfriends who had already left school. The female habitual school refusers were more usually to be found at the Centre which by 1982 had established a specifically 'girls only' resource within the Youth and Community Project. This small room in the Centre was the base for the Project's four female youth workers, two of whom were employed full-time, and two part-time. Nevertheless, the overall number of teenage girl school absentees using the Project's resources at any given time, perhaps five at most, were minimal compared with the fifteen or twenty teenage 'lads' who could be described as habitual school-refusers. Although Gail and Marie, my co-youth workers at the time, were aware of another four girls who systematically avoided school in order to contribute to domestic and child-care routines in the parental home,

usually with the parents consent, or, as was the case with three of the girls, active parental encouragement. This was a more privatised form of school refusal and, because it was parentally sanctioned and relatively 'invisible', drew less official attention than the non-attendance of the 'lads'. Other researchers have similarly noted the underlying 'domestic apprenticeship' explanation for "girls having time off to help in the home" (Bates *et al* 1984 : 52). Humphries (1981 : 66) points to the historical continuities, though Bates *et al* emphasise the gender bias and inequality of the contemporary domestic division of labour: "The apprenticeship in the home of boys and girls, and the material tasks done are not shared evenly and prefigure their unequal futures" (1984 : 52).

Reasons for refusing school both in my face to face youth work in Hartingleigh and in the replies recorded in the Project's 1980 questionnaires cover the varieties outlined and explored by Humphries (1981), including "opportunist", retreatist", and "subsistence" truanting. "Opportunist truancy" is described by Humphries as an occasional form of resistence to the hidden educational curriculum of "compulsion and constraint". It involves infrequent absconding in order to enjoy the adventure and excitement of a day free from educational imposition. In terms of my youth work practice in Hartingleigh, these were the intermittent non-attenders who would occasionally take a day or part of a day 'off' simply to relieve the boredom, monotony and meaninglessness of school life; young people who nevertheless felt sufficiently intimidated by parental supervision or the invisible structure of school authority not to refuse school on a systematic basis; the "ordinary kids ... who neither simply accept or reject the school but nevertheless comply with it" (Brown 1986 : 4).

In contrast to the occasional and spontaneous nature of opportunist absenteeism, "retreatist truancy" tended to be incessant and deeply ingrained. These were the habitual school refusers whose motives appeared to be "inspired by a profound aversion to various aspects of school" (Humphries 1981 : 64). Some of the most important personal reasons influencing habitual school refusal were -

" ... a desire for independence and adventure, fear of a particular teacher or lesson, victimisation because of poverty, difficulties with learning, and a search for freedom ... away from the regimental school routine (*ibid*).

These motives could be significant in prompting intermittent or opportunistic non-attendance. However, while the opportunist is generally able to comply with school attendance, the retreatist, "experienced such deep-seated feelings of discontent that regular attendance became an intolerable constraint" (*ibid*). This antipathy may be reinforced by, "severe dislocations in the child's family life, arising from the separation or death of parents or unfair treatment at home" (*ibid*). Several of my research participants conform to the characteristics outlined by Humphries. 'David Lindsay', for example, through reference to his 1980 Project questionnaire provided the following explanation for his persistent school refusal: "I don't like some of the teachers who get at me ... when I'm at school I'm worried about getting into trouble." In contrast, 'Paul Skeman' emphasised the independence and adventure of his absenteeism: "I go drinking and 'toking' and having a laugh ... 'jumping' trains, going to the river, the graveyard, into the City Centre or just watch TV ... play pool in the Pub."

In the case of "subsistence truancy", non-attendance was provoked by poverty and deprivation. In writing about the period from 1889 to 1939, Humphries is emphasising a time in working class childhood before the minimal provision of the Welfare State. Subsistence truancy was therefore a feature of the profound necessity of able bodied working class children to participate in full or part -time work during school hours to supplement the family income. For school age girls, subsistence truancy involved domestic work, "helping overworked mothers with domestic chores and child-minding duties" (1981 : 66). As previously outlined, there are obvious historical continuities; several girls known to Project youth workers had regularly refused school in order to facilitate parental employment by 'looking after' younger siblings; in these cases ensuring the maintenance of their mother's part-time or full-time job, a vital source of family

income. In part, the necessity of girls' school refusal in order to undertake child-care routines is a consequence of the 'new poverty' of the 1980s and 1990s and a further indictment of Government policy, certainly with regard to welfare benefits and pre-school child care provision.

Instead of formal education, approximately fifteen of the male school refusers known to Project youth workers had chosen 'careers' of unskilled part-time work or intermittent 'social' and 'acquisitive' crime. Humphries (1981b) defines social crime as -

> "... the innumerable minor crimes against property committed by working class children and youth which were condoned by large sections of the youth and parent cultures as legitimate despite their illegality (1981b : 24).

In his discussion of 'crime and acquisitive mobility', Morris (1985) maintains that: "What acquisitiveness there is relates ... to the phenomenon of 'survival' crime within the welfare ghetto" (1985 : 14).

These 'careers' conducted during school hours were not intended to contribute in a direct sense to the family's living standards, although indirectly this is what they did; rather, they were pursued in order that individuals could earn money to spend on themselves and their friends. Nevertheless, such careers can be understood as economic truanting in the terms outlined by Humphries (1981) for, under the conditions of the 'new poverty' of urban deprivation, the money earned from helping on milk rounds (2 cases), market retailing (one case), and other more socially proscribed modes of income acquisition such as petty theft (four cases), and shoplifting (6 cases), were the <u>only</u> sources of income for these young people. They were youngsters with consumer aspirations just like as any other teenagers, perhaps even more so than most, in as much as expensive 'designer' sportswear and clothing, the dominant subcultural style at the time, offered compensatory routes to self-esteem and status amongst their peers. However, what differentiated these young people were their domestic circumstances in which there were

no 'spends' or 'weekly allowances' enjoyed as a right by school aged children from more affluent families. 'Spends' or 'weekly allowances', or indeed Reebok trainers at £70 a pair, simply could not be provided from the overburdened and overstretched budgets of their typically unemployed and therefore state benefits dependent parents.

In Hartingleigh during this First Phase (1979-1982) of detached youth working, the developing manifestations of school refusal and 'social crime' on numerous occasions brought Project youth workers into conflict with the attendance agencies and the police. However, the various codes of practice issued by the Greater Manchester Youth Service provided unambiguous guidelines for dealing with these agencies of youth containment (Manchester Education Committee 1982; 1983; 1985). The progressive detached youth work role emphasised by the Project was informed by the codes of practice as well as a clear understanding that, in the circumstances in which most of the young people we were working with lived, school refusal and social crime represented: "A quite rational, ameliorative or even adaptive response to immediate frustrations and oppressions" (Davies 1986 : 143).

In terms of intervention by youth and community workers on behalf of young people in their dealings with the police, the directives from the Youth Service have been quite perspicuous:

> "The City Council have expressed their support for the role of youth workers as <u>friends</u> and as <u>advocates</u> on behalf of young people (Manchester Education Committee 1985 : 4) (my emphasis)

As such, youth and community workers were directed to when necessary, "act as an advocate when a young person comes into conflict with the law" (*ibid* : 1). This may involve among other things: asking the arresting officer why the arrest is taking place; taking note of the number or numbers of the officer or officers involved; finding out the police station to which the arrested person is being taken; making detailed notes of the

incident and circumstances surrounding the arrest; contacting possible witnesses; arranging legal representation; contacting parents, etc. (*ibid* : 2).

On numerous occasions during the course of my youth work practice in Hartingleigh, my co-workers and myself were able to intervene on behalf of youth group members or affiliates who found themselves in conflict with the police and courts. This is not an uncommon role for youth workers to take, but in terms of my future role, as a sociologist conducting research with the same young people in Hartingleigh, it was significant in cementing vital bonds of trust which in turn facilitated important aspects of 'data' acquisition. As Parker (1974) has similarly illustrated:

> "The message was always, "I'm on your side" ... If anybody was going to Court ... I would come along with them ... This ritual became well established, not least because I had a car, could help out with the technicalities and ... was willing to stand bail. Sitting for a couple of hours ... in an alien world was a great consolidator of my loyalty to [them]" (1974 : 216).

As well as providing refuge for young school refusers and providing assistance and support for young people in court cases, Project youth workers were also occasionally able to intervene to prevent apprehension and arrest. For example, a spate of 'joyriding' or 'burn outs' by the lads from the estates occurred spasmodically over a twelve month period during my final university year (1984-1985). These incidents frequently resulted in night-time car chases around the district, particularly in and around Hartingleigh district centre. The car-park of the superstore situated there was a readily convertible race track where young males would display their driving skills and prowess, practising 360 degree skids or 'wheelies' before eventually vandalising and setting fire to the stolen vehicles. Occasionally the police would attempt to pursue and apprehend joyriders in a variety of police vehicles and vans. On these occasions, a cat and mouse chase would result with the joyriders taunting the police into various blind alleys on the estates, where vehicles would be abandoned allowing the occupants to 'leg it' to the safety of numerous walkways and flats on the estates.

More than once, young males known to detached workers would appear at the Centre or outdoor street corner for refuge from the pursuing police. On such occasions, workers, whilst not condoning such activities, nevertheless, were again able to follow Youth Service guidelines established by the Greater Manchester Youth Service code of practice (Manchester Education Committee 1985):

> "The police can be refused entry to a club or centre (1985 : 3) ... Youth Centres are private premises to which the police do not have automatic right of entry. They should not expect ... to make contact with young people in connection with an offence unless they have a search warrant" (*ibid* : 2).

Moreover, should advocacy by Council employed youth workers on behalf of young people in their charge lead to the youth worker being prosecuted, and it appeared that the youth worker acted in a "reasonable and lawful manner", then the Council: "... will assist in obtaining legal advice and ... provide financial help" (*ibid* : 4).

The directives from the Greater Manchester Youth Service were not designed as an open invitation to collaborate in urban lawlessness, but were premised on a sympathetic understanding of the realities of life as it is to be found in a rapidly deteriorating inner-city urban environment such as Hartingleigh. Formal youth provision under present economic constraints can only tentatively attempt to recreate the values and integrity of traditional working class communities. Youth work cannot realistically hope to adequately compensate for the glaring lack of basic necessities of life such as jobs, money, meaningful education, and a pleasant environment. Every day in my detached youth work, I would encounter the whole gamut of manifestations of urban malaise and alienation among the young working class. Multi-drug, alcohol and solvent abuse, racism, sexism, violence, and petty crime in isolation from other considerations may appear contradictory, senseless and incoherent and of course, as in any other social domain, there are contradictions, illogicalities and incoherence. However, when framed within the broader sweep of history, ideology, and political economy, the culture of working class youth in North Manchester is rendered more comprehensible.

Crime and social dissent are an indictment of a social order which is unequal, unjust and criminogenic. Some sociologists have phrased this in terms of the "egoistic imperatives" of "possessive individualism" which characterises capitalist market philosophy (Taylor 1981). To the young people I worked with the contradictions lie in a society that preaches the virtues of individualism, democracy, self-advancement, and equality of opportunity, whilst presenting them with a wholly different material and cultural reality. There is no equality of opportunity or real democracy for the young people of Hartingleigh and precious little scope for creative, meaningful, individual expression in terms familiar to middle-class observers. In this context, school refusal, social disorder, and criminality can be related to social distress, to slum conditions, unemployment, and a poverty that is exacerbated by the glitter and sparkle of consumer Xanadus and nightmare shopping malls whose contents are largely unobtainable except through illegality.

As youth workers in such a context, the guidelines and directives issued by the Greater Manchester Youth Service, apart from validating intervention on the basis of friendship and advocacy, further served to facilitate intervention under the rubric of community education. As such, the youth worker's task was to "... help young people to understand the nature of society by providing political education" (Manchester Education Committee 1982), and "... community education must contribute to the creation of an equal society" (Manchester Education Committee 1983 : 1). These directives extend the complexity of the task for progressive youth and community workers to one of, "agitator, advocate, broker, and informant" (Street 1984 : 16). For, as Corrigan has argued in his defence of progressive youth work:

> "It is not possible to 'hold' all of the social relations that construct subordinacy and transform them through the intervention of youth work ... instead we can ... <u>challenge</u> that subordinacy through the <u>intervention</u> of youth work" (1982 : 3). (My emphasis)

The starting point for any challenge to subordinacy through youth work intervention is respect for the validity of the understanding the urban young have of their own situations

and circumstances. This above all else guided my youth work practice in Hartingleigh, just as it would later guide my research orientation, in order to: "... comprehend and illuminate their view and to interpret the world as it appears to them" (Matza 1969 : 25).

'Knowing the score' is the main self-affirming asset the urban young possess in the face of an often alienating and increasingly authoritarian social structure. In the world as it appears to these young people, their indigenous understandings, qualities, and capacities are often more authentic to them than those of the adults attempting to work with them. In Hartingleigh rather than relating to the young people in terms of their academic labelling processes: the new underclass, the excluded, the marginal or peripheral, or even as the most stigmatised of their generation, a youth work practice developed at the Project which operated within, and was organised around a different hypothesis -

> "... that they already knew a great deal, had some sharp understandings and explanations of how and why things happened to them as they did, and possessed some quite sophisticated skills for applying this knowledge and these insights" (Davies 1986 : 142).

For even at quite a young age the people I worked with in Hartingleigh had developed their own "survival strategies" for avoiding "hassle" (Roberts *et al* 1982a), and negotiating constraint, as well as winning free-space and status. Though sometimes different from, alien to, and often in open conflict with, those of the adult or professional outsider - including their teachers, the school attendance agencies, the police, and the probation officers - these strategies were not necessarily any less valid or meaningful in the world as it appeared to them. Nor, as was sometimes suggested by those professional agencies they encountered, was this disproved by the tendency of such strategies to lead them into greater conflict with the schools or the law. On the contrary, in my experience, many were never caught, or were caught infrequently enough to justify the overall efficacy of a particular strategy for survival. Coming out 'ahead of the game', having 'done one', was good enough reason for 'staying in the game'. Given how the balance of power was weighted so heavily against them, what was remarkable was how comparatively rarely

things did seriously 'come on top' - that they were apprehended or punished for rule-violations of one kind or another; further justifying to them just how expediential were their autochthonous analyses and survival strategies.

Aside from the constant problems over funding and despite its obvious appeal to right-wing elements within successive Conservative governments, the reactionary theorising and policy formation of the past decade or so have made little impact on the theory and practice of detached youth work in the field. Face to face work in Hartingleigh indicated that, despite the ideological and policy shifts of the post-1979 election period, at the grass roots of youth and community work considerable leverage could still be exercised, not only on behalf of young people, but perhaps more importantly, by young people themselves.

Thus, these were just some of the ideas and influences that would form important strands in my future research orientations. The emphasis on participation and empowerment, both as an inherent feature of detached youth work, and in the community self-survey with its focus on community problem definition and solution, provided significant strands in my early disposition towards that broad family of research approaches that have come to be known as "participatory research" (Stanton 1989).

Later, in the Second Phase (1982-1985) of my study, during my years as a sociology undergraduate, I was to receive a systematic introduction into the theoretical and empirical bases of the qualitative tradition within social research, a tradition that has been revived since the 1960s ferment within sociology and which is manifested in the utilisation of ethnographic research methods such as participant observation. As a result of these undergraduate studies, participant observation would provide another strand in the tapestry of my evolving methodological commitments. Participant observation is itself a "sociological subculture" within the mainstream of sociological research methods (Roberts

1976 : 252), an empathic perhaps even 'permissive' approach which has, in some forms, much in common with the non-hierarchical principles and practice of detached youth work.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EVOLUTION OF A RESEARCH PROJECT

THE SECOND PHASE 1982-1985

3.1 Participant Observation

In September 1982 I left Hartingleigh, after three years of outreach work with the Project, to begin studying at York University as a sociology undergraduate. This excursion into the heady heights of higher education followed partly as the result of a good A-Level result in Sociology, which I had studied part-time at my local further education college the previous year, but, most importantly, as a result of considerable encouragement from Jim Donovan and Gail Hindle at the Project. It was during these three years as a 'mature' student in the Sociology Department at York that I was to encounter a more formal and systematic introduction to the theory and practice of 'qualitative methods' in general and participant observation in particular.

The principal method utilised by anthropologists and sociologists to conduct research in natural settings is participant observation. The method -

> "... was forged in the study of small homogeneous societies in which the anthropologists lived for an extended period of time, participated in them, learned the language, interviewed and constantly observed" (Powdermaker 1966 : 285).

Sociologists have similarly utilised the method to study situations within their own societies by taking on an authentic social role and identity as a member of the social group or organisation being studied. Participant observation is characterised by a period of intense social interaction between the researcher and the researched when data are systematically collected. Participant observation is not merely a method of conducting field research, but is also a role utilised by the researcher who is the "main instrument of data collection" (Burgess 1982 : 45). According to Becker's often cited definition, the task of the participant observer is to gather data by -

> "... participating in the daily life of the group or organisation [s/he] studies. [S/he] watches the people [s/he] is studying to see what situations they ordinarily meet and how they behave in them. [S/he] enters into conversations with some or all of the participants in these situations and discovers their interpretations of the events [s/he] has observed" (1958 : 652). (My inserts).

The 'Chicago School' of the 1920s and early 1930s is generally credited with having originated the participant observation tradition within sociology. W.F. Whyte's study of 'street corner society' marks a continuation of the tradition into a 'second phase', with a major expansion in the 1950s and 1960s heralded by the 'naturalist revolt' within the work of the neo-Chicagoans such as Becker, Geer, Strauss, Polsky and others. The work of this 'third wave' was taken up in Britain by Downes's (1966) study of delinquency, and Cohen's work on deviance (1971; 1973), and is particularly associated with the 'sceptical revolution' (Willis 1980), institutionalised by the National Deviancy Conferences (see for example: S. Cohen (ed) 1971; Taylor and Taylor (eds) 1973; Rock and McIntosh (eds) 1974). Other participant observation studies in Britain in this period include Plant's (1974) examination of drug-taking in an English town; Patrick's (1973) in depth, covert study of Glasgow gangs; and Parker's (1974) study of adolescent male criminality in inner-City Liverpool. By the mid-1970s, participant observation studies in Britain can generally be associated with work on subcultures, deviancy labelling and amplification theory and the overall agenda of the National Deviancy Conferences.

Phil Cohen's influential study of working class culture and youth culture (1972) set the terms for much subsequent participant observation work in Britain in the areas of youth, youth culture and youth subcultures (Mungham and Pearson (eds) 1976; Hall and Jefferson (eds) 1976). Dubbed by Brake (1980) as the 'British New Wave', the work produced by researchers such as McRobbie, Willis, Hebdige, and Corrigan at Birmingham University's Centre for Cultural Studies set a new agenda for the sociology of youth, linking theories of social structure derived from aspects of contemporary Western Marxist theory to a transactional/interactional model of deviance imported from American interpretivist sociology. By the end of the 1970s, however, changes in the situations of

working class teenagers came to preoccupy sociological investigations and participant observation studies in the area of youth culture/subculture dried to a trickle. Researchers in the 1980s were concerned more with the effects of changes in employment, vocational training, and education, and recent ethnographies have sought to examine the effects of youth unemployment on the transitions to adult roles and statuses; see, for example, Jenkins's study of young people in a housing estate on the outskirts of Belfast (1983); Wallace's study of the effects of employment and unemployment upon young people's transitions to adulthood on the Isle of Sheppey (1984; 1987); Griffin's study of young working class women's transitions from school into the job market, with particular reference to the influences of gender and family life on their experiences after leaving school in Birmingham (1985); Coffield *et al*'s research examining the lives of young people in 'shit jobs' and on 'Govvy schemes' in the North East of England (1986); and, more recently, Stafford's study of working class teenagers in Scotland taking part in an MSC training workshop with particular reference to gender (1991).

At University, I found myself increasingly drawn to participant observation because the studies I read which utilised the method provided rich and colourful contrast to the grey tomes dealing with abstract social theory which I was also to unavoidably encounter during my three years as a sociology undergraduate. In one particularly frenetic period, for example, I vividly remember avidly consuming Humphreys's (1975) covert study of male homosexual encounters in public toilets, Patrick's (1973) covert study of the male subculture of Glasgow gangs, and Klockars's (1975) study of the 'Professional Fence', as relief reading when grappling with a project dealing with esoteric aspects of Pasonian Functionalism (Parsons's four function (LIGA) framework for functional analysis).

As a former state-defined, prosecuted and incarcerated 'deviant', I also delighted in the irony of my new role - actually being encouraged (and paid) to study the lives and social situations of other 'deviants' such as the 'Marihuana User' (Becker 1963; Young 1971); mental inmates (Goffman 1961); working class anti-school subcultures (Hargreaves 1967;

Lacey 1970; Willis 1977; Corrigan 1979); pool hall and ethnic minority 'hustlers' (Polsky 1967; Pryce 1979); the professional criminal 'underworld' (L. Taylor 1984); the fiddlers of the 'informal economy' (Ditton 1977; Henry 1978; Mars 1982); and the social world of the inner-city adolescent (Patrick 1973; Parker 1974; Gill 1977). Although I was not to realise it at the time, these and the many other participant observation studies I would subsequently read during, and after, my excursion into higher education, would provide strands in my evolving commitment towards a participatory research method for my future study in Hartingleigh. Of particular relevance, in view of the way my own project emerged in parallel with my reading, were the various forms of 'naturalistic research into subcultures and deviance' (Roberts 1976 : 243) produced by the 'Chicago School' (e.g. Anderson 1923; Cressey 1932; Thrasher 1927; Shaw and McKay 1942; Shaw 1930; Zorburgh 1929), the later 'neo-Chicagoans' (Becker 1963; Goffman 1959; 1961; Irwin and Cressey 1962; Lemert 1967) and the studies in the late 1970s of youth, youth culture, and youth subcultures produced by the 'British New Wave' of participant observers (e.g. Hall and Jefferson 1976; Mungham and Pearson 1976; Willis 1977; 1978; Corrigan 1979; McRobbie 1978; Hebdige 1979). The emphasis on a humanistic and empathic research encounter fitted predilections I had acquired from my youthwork practice in Hartingleigh (Chapter Two, Sections 2.4; 2.7). Participant observation studies offer a rich tradition of providing depth analyses of social worlds from the perspectives of research participants - in contrast to the traditional quantitative approach of the sociological research literature, which has, according to Mulkay (1985) -

> "... become unnecessarily dominated by a particular kind of empiricist monologue, derived from the natural sciences" (1985 : 9).

3.2 Participant Observation: Involvement and Detachment A Brief History

The history of participant observation is interdisciplinary and multifaceted. Arising out of sociology and anthropology, it has seen the development of a range of interests, modes

and orientations. In many respects, participant observation is the most basic form of social researching with a history "almost as old as writing itself" (Wax 1971 : 21).

One of the major contours of debate within the method involves the balance between subjectivity and objectivity or, more generally, between involvement and detachment. The origins of systematic field research within the social disciplines occurred against a background of a dominant insistence on objectivity and detachment as the newly emerged social disciplines sought, in the 19th century, to emulate the methodology of the established natural sciences (Von Wright 1971). The social and humanistic disciplines were primarily theoretical (detached), and where they had made empirical inroads, these were either quantitative (experimental, statistical) or religious (missionary) in nature. This made the methodology seemingly external to the research subjects (Wax 1971; Adler and Adler 1988).

3.2.1 Anthropological Fieldwork *Roots*

In anthropology in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, researchers began venturing 'into the field' to gather data personally. Boas, for example, initiated visits to field sites for the collection of natural language texts, surveying a broad area by spending about a week in each location. Although he did not live among his 'subjects' or learn their language, he advocated these practices for his students (Rohner 1966; Wax 1971). Malinowski originated the contemporary anthropological practice of making extended visits to single research sites. He lived in native villages and spoke their dialects, although he did so in the manner of a 'petty European lord;' descending into their midst. Despite his residential location and use of 'native language', he did little to achieve parity, to participate in the activities of his 'subjects', or to explore their subjective perspectives (M. Wax 1972).

During the same era as the Chicago School of participant observers were producing their spate of innovative work, anthropologists were making far greater strides in forging their contemporary version of ethnography. Students of Boas and Malinowski went out

into the field to study a variety of cultures by residing amongst the 'natives', speaking their language, and generally remaining less aloof. Malinowski's students followed his immersion/detachment/immersion *dictum* of spending a year or more in the field, withdrawing for some months, and returning for another extended period, whereas Boas's students had no such formula. What they had in common, however, was the extablishment of long-term field relations with a single group. This was the period in anthropology during the early part of the 20th century in which the movement to discover and document the cultures of isolated tribes - before they were transformed or destroyed by the onset of Western technological culture - first originated (Harris 1968). Much of the work produced by European anthropologists in this period has, however, been subsequently subjected to critical reappraisal. Critiques have pointed to the ways in which anthropological ethnographies have been distorted by 'cultural bias', 'European colonialism', and 'ethnocentrism'. Malinowski's depiction of the 'savage society' and the 'savages' (1926; 1927; 1929), and Boas's 'Primitives' (1911), for example, were refuted by the spate of anthropological critiques developed by nationalist writers after the political independence of colonial nations (e.g. Asad (ed) : 1973).

3.2.2 Sociological Fieldwork Roots

Sociological fieldwork roots can be traced back to the mid-19th century and the intrepid 'social explorers' who began to venture into the "unknown continents", "the jungles", "the Africa's" of the slums of Salford, Manchester, and East London (Keating 1976). Special attention was drawn to the wretched mental and physical condition of the young 'nomads' and 'street urchins'. The most celebrated sighting of a working class youth subculture in this period occurs in Mayhew (1851) in a section devoted to the quasi-criminal 'costermongers'. The costers were street traders who made a precarious living selling goods from barrows. These original 'barrow-boys' were distinguished by their elaborate style of dress - beaver skin hats, long jackets with moleskin collars, vivid patterned waistcoats, cable cord trousers, "made to fit tightly at the knee and swell gradually until they reached the boot, which they nearly cover". Their boots were an object of special

pride often, "tastily ornamented ... with a heart or thistle surrounded by a wreath of roses, worked below the instep". They wore a distinctive red, "King's Man" neck scarf knotted at the throat (Mayhew 1969 edition : 51). This style was known in the coster idiom as looking 'flash', or 'stunning flash'.

The mass of detailed observations of urban street life assembled and collated by the 'social explorers' led to the British social reform movement and eventually formed the basis for philanthropic and legislative action. Charles Booth's study of the social conditions of the urban poor drew on a combination of statistical data, direct observation, and extensive interviewing. In gathering his data, Booth lived for extended periods in the lodging houses shared by his subjects (Emerson 1983; Keating 1976). Beatrice Webb and her husband, Sidney, also wrote on the living and working conditions of the poor of London, making frequent forays into the everyday lives of the urban working class. Although they did not live with them, Beatrice Webb took employment in a 'sweatshop' to experience first hand the conditions (Bulmer 1984; Emerson 1983), leaving, "a most interesting description of her experiences as a participant and observer" (Wax 1971 : 26).

In America, DuBois, under the sponsorship of the University of Pennsylvania, where he was an Assistant Professor of Sociology, undertook fieldwork in the black slums of Philadelphia in the late 1890s. His 'fieldwork' consisted of living, with his new bride, in the heart of the slum although he utilised structured interview schedules for collecting data. The outcome of his research was the monograph, *The Philadelphia Slum* (1899). These early fieldworkers did not practice participant observation as it is conceived of today. Although they ventured into 'the field', their involvement and parity with research participants was limited and they only touched the surface of the subjective perspectives of the groups studied.

3.2.3 The Chicago School

The flowering of fieldwork in the 1920s and 1930s was accompanied by the first real introduction of, and explorations into, subjectivity and involvement. Sociologists and criminologists at the University of Chicago under the influence and inspiration of Robert Park and a variety of intellectual exemplars sought to develop a distinct and eclectic research orientation. A research orientation now recognised for its focus on urban culture and its analysis of disorganising aspects of urban life, and their impact on rates of 'deviant behaviour' within large urban areas (Rich 1979 : 16-17; Smith 1988). When A.W. Small became one of the founding faculty at the University of Chicago, he introduced a separate sociology department and was joined either as staff or students by G.H. Mead (1894), W.I. Thomas (1895), R.E. Park (1914), Ellsworth Faris (1915), E.W. Burgess (1919), Harvey Zorbaugh (1923), Everett Hughes (1923), Herbert Blumer (1925), Lois Wirth (1926), and W.F. Ogburn (1927). Despite these prominent intellectual antecedents, the creative source for what has come to be known as the 'Chicago School' is difficult to trace. Park is credited with the early research into urban settings and introducing the European, particularly German, tradition of social thought into the curriculum (Faris 1967; Bulmer 1984). Philosophy and anthropology, respectively, were the fields from which practitioners acknowledge cognitive and intellectual influences, and graduate students most frequently indicated Mead (in philosophy) Merriam (political science) and Sapir (anthropology) as influential (Carey 1975 : 160-161). The location of the University in the rapidly growing and changing urban milieu of industrial Chicago was also influential in the development of Park's human ecology (Turner 1967) and Burgess's later systematised ecological communities (Cottrell *et al* 1973). Park and Burgess's influence engendered a host of studies by their graduate students in the inter-war years, concerned with the ecological analysis of deviance and of community, ethnic, and family life, which focused especially on social disorganisation and cultural transmission.

The sociologists active in research at the University of Chicago in the 1920s and 1930s sought to plumb the experiences, outlooks, and social worlds of their research participants.

The distinctive method of the Chicago style was, as Short (1971 : xliv) has noted, based on "... a continuous or monitoring of unfolding events in their natural setting, in contrast both to discrete samplings of opinion or other relevant data by means of surveys". Park, who had studied under Simmel in Berlin, is generally credited with pioneering the method of participant observation, and it was Park who invited his graduate students to get the seats of their pants dirty in "real research":

> "Go and sit ... on the doorsteps of the flophouses; sit on the Gold Coast settees and on the slum shakedowns; sit in the ... Star and Garter Burlesque. In short ... go get the seat of your pants dirty in real research (In McKinney 1966 : 71). (My emphasis).

The methods utilised by the Chicago sociologists in this period varied; the life history, or case study, approach was the primary means they used to strive for empathy and an imaginative participation in the lives of others. This included a mixture of methods, such as formal or depth interviews, informal interviews, casual conversations, observation, the collection of documentary evidence, and some naturalistic 'hanging out' and interaction (Bulmer 1984; Burgess 1927). Thomas and Znaniecki (1918), for example, employed human documents as an ethnographic data source and attempted to lay the foundation for an inductive, comparative, and conceptual framework which would provide theoretical insights into the transformation of a society when subjected to tensions between the former traditional society and the new urban environment.

Considerable contemporary debate exists as to whether the work carried out by Chicago sociologists in the inter-war years can truly be called participant observation, whether it was precursor, or if it was focused on something else (Platt 1981; 1983). Although lacking in the methodological specificity and reflexivity characteristic of later participant observation studies, the work produced by the Chicago School, particularly in the inter-war years can, nevertheless, be regarded as a crucial developmental stage in the evolution of the method (Adler and Adler 1988).

Nels Anderson's study of 'The Hobo' (1923), for example, involved him arriving in Chicago, "almost penniless", by freight train, buying a suit from a, "pawn shop", and securing part-time work as a male nurse in a, "Chicago home for incurables", prior to registering as a graduate student under Park and Burgess (Anderson 1983 : 396-406). It was Anderson's part-time work that provided the introductory contacts with, "men who were or had been hobo (that is, migrant workers)" (1983 : 402). Later, when his research was under way, Anderson took a room in a, "workingman's hotel", in the slum area of the city he identified as, "Hobohemia", which facilitated further contacts with the migrant workers of his study (1983 : 403). Anderson declares in the inroduction to the 1961 reissue of his book that, when he began his study, he had, "never heard of the term 'participant observation'" (1961 : 13). However, despite this fact, his willingness to approximate the life worlds of his research subjects in 'Hobohemia', the collection in a, "natural and informal way" (1961 : 28) the life-histories of 60 hobo's, together with the study of 400 tramps, "met on the road" (Platt 1983 : 382), appears to constitute some of the features of the method, as it is contemporarily recognised.

In sociology, the Chicago School's influence and methodological challenge to, "the then dominant positivism and social determinism" (Thomas 1983 ; 478), gave way, after Park's retirement in 1934, to functionalism and the increasingly sophisticated forms of positivism developed by Parsons at Harvard University and Merton and Lazarsfeld at Columbia University. The Chicago style of urban ethnography consequently declined both in popularity and influence:

> "By the end of the 1950s, it would have appeared to the intellecutal historian that the Chicago School of urban sociology had exhausted itself. Even at the University of Chicago, the intense and humanistically oriented study of the social worlds of the metropolis had come to an end. The older figures had disappeared one by one, and a new generation of sociologists were interested in quantitative methodology and systematic theory" (Janowitz, in Preface to Suttles, 1968 : ix).

Throughout the period following the Second World War, there was little public debate by sociologists in the Chicago tradition with the detractors of observation *in situ* (see for

example Shils 1948). Their most influential advocate, Blumer, spent less time defending fieldwork than pointing out the weaknesses in research based on questionnaire surveys and standardised interviews. Behind Blumer's criticisms, which rested on the illusory nature of standardisation; on the arbirtrariness of the categories used as variables, and on the uncertain nature of behaviour and responses gathered in artificial interview situations, it is possible to glimpse a defence of fieldwork methods. However it was not until 1969, in the introduction to his volume on Symbolic Interactionism, that he provided a cogent defence of participant observation. As restrospective testimony suggests, arguments mounted by the critics of questionnaire surveys carried less weight in the 1940s and 1950s than arguments by the critics of participant observation (Deutscher 1966; LaPiere 1969). Under the impact of the dominance of Parsonian Functionalism and the mathematically sophisticated quantitative survey methodology developed by Lazarsfeld, observational data, considered suggestive at best, were relegated to the initial states of research when researchers, "prepare to gather the kind of data susceptible to statistical treatment" (Barton and Lazarsfeld 1955). According to Wax:

> "The disciples of the new survey sample research, with their emphasis on statistical techniques, formal experimental designs and mechanical data processing, argued that theirs was the scientific sociology" (1971 : 40). (My emphasis)

Thus by 1960, the early Chicagoan emphasis on subjectivity gave way to a new balance between subjectivity and objectivity. Beginning in the mid-1950s, fieldwork researchers began to publish detailed accounts of the conditions and circumstances in which they carried out their observations, and of the practical problems they encountered in getting access to and gathering of their data. These provided readers with estimates of the validity of their analyses. Whyte's appendix to the 1955 edition of *Street Corner Society* is one of the best and most often cited; although Malinowski (1922) was the first professional anthropologist to give his readers a detailed account of how he accumulated data, and what was involved in intensive ethnography. In many respects, the trend towards systematisation of fieldwork practices occurred in response to the critiques and

methodological challenge of positivism within sociology (Wax 1971 : 40; Chapoulie 1987 : 270).

A new generation of fieldworkers had emerged by the early 1960s, once again centered around the Sociology Department at the University of Chicago (Adler and Adler 1988; Emerson 1983; Platt 1983). Here under the tutorship of Blumer, Hughes, Warner, Redfield, Strauss and Riesman, influenced by the anthropological model of research (sociology and anthropology were a unified department for part of this time), an intellectual climate developed which fostered many, now classical, participant-observation studies (see, for example, Becker *et al* 1961; Becker 1963; Davis 1963; Gusfield 1963; Goffman 1959; Roth 1963) and a spate of doctoral and masters' theses, too numerous to mention. The renewed interest in participant observation and qualitative methods generally was partially spawned by Blumer's reconception of the theories of Mead and Cooley which offered a systematic refutation to positivist research in 'social science'. In an article first published in 1962 and often cited, Blumer asserts, for example:

> "To catch the process [of interpretation], the student must take the role of the acting unit whose behaviour [s/he] is studying. Since the interpretation is being made by the acting unit in terms of the objects designated and appraised, meanings acquired, and decisions made, the process has to be seen from the standpoint of the acting unit ... To try to catch the interpretive process by remaining aloof as a so-called 'objective' observer and refusing to take the role of the acting unit is to risk the worst kind of subjectivism - the objective observer is likely to fill in the process of interpretation with their own surmises in place of catching the process as it occurs in the experience of the acting unit which uses it" (Blumer 1969 : 36).

The practitioners of participant observation at Chicago during this later period, together with those who were influenced by them, have been dubbed the 'neo-Chicagoans':

> "I will call them neo-Chicagoans because they have revived the Chicago School's stress on direct observation and fieldwork, have maintained and extended the relevance of the subject's view, and in a variety of other ways have indicated their appreciation of deviant phenomena and their connected enterprises" (Matza 1969 : 37).

As indicated earlier, most significantly this was an era in which participant-observers became reflective about their methodology, leading to the refinement and codification of

prcoedures. Not only did their monographs begin to carry the now standard methods, appendices, and chapters, but a variety of articles, then monographs, and, finally, sets of readings, appeared which explicitly discussed the principles, practice, and problems of participant observation (Becker *et al* 1961; Becker and Geer 1960; 1957; Becker 1958; Miller 1952; Vidich and Bensman 1954; Vidich 1955; Gusfield 1955; Filstead 1970; Gold 1958; Habenstein 1970; Junker 1960; McCall and Simmons 1969; Schwartz and Schwartz 1955; Webb 1966; see also the contributions and research notes published in *Human Organisation*, some of which are reprinted in Adams and Preiss 1960). These articles and readings examined three groups of problems that confront prospective fieldworkers: firstly, the appropriate mode of relations with the population studied at the beginning, during, or at the end, of research; secondly, the problems posed by the construction of analytic categories; and finally, the problems of the validity of the data gathered.

Although the participant observer method comprised a variety of roles having different degrees of involvement with research participants, these all balanced the pulls of objectivity and subjectivity. Ideally participant observers were to get close to participants, share some of their activities, gain trust and confidence, and discover their subjective perspectives and interpretations. At the same time, they were to retain a detached vantage in order to analyse and codify the observations and accounts. In effect they were to strive for marginal roles in their field-settings (Freilich 1970), poised between familiarity and strangeness or friend and stranger (Everhart 1977; Powdermaker 1966). This balancing act was due in part to the pervasive influence of positivistic criteria, such that field researchers sought to enhance the validity and reliability of their methodology (Kirk and Miller 1986).

3.2.4 Involvement and Detachment - Contemporary Fieldwork Practice

Within anthropology, a much broader range of data gathering had been defined as falling within the domain of ethnography. At one end of the spectrum, allied most closely with

the Chicago School in their balancing of subjectivity and objectivity and the use of unstructured depth interviews and participant observation, are the 'immersion' fieldworkers. These researchers attempt to balance the involvement of the friendly visitor with the detachment of the foreigner in the interpretive analyses of native cultures (Rosaldo 1980; Turner 1985), self-consciously reflecting on their research roles and experiences. The immersion anthropologists' epistemology is best enunciated by Geertz (1973) and Wax (1971). Although anthropologists at this time became reflexive about their methodology, it was a decade or more after sociologists had done so. It is widely acknowledged that methodology within anthropology was an underdeveloped non-reflexive area, following a, "conspiracy of silence" (Berreman 1962; Cohen and Naroll 1970; Ellen 1984; Diamond 1980). As a result, each generation of anthropologists had to relearn the experiences of the previous one and there was little accumulation of methodological knowledge (Cohen and Naroll 1970).

Moving in the direction of scientific objectivity, there has been an anthropological trend towards a structured and formalistic approach. Advocating strict scientific controls in the fieldwork process, adherents have utilised quantitative mathematical devices and techniques for kinship analysis, the construction of 'layered taxonomies' and the collection of 'census data' through structured interviews (Naroll 1962; Pelto and Pelto 1973; Werner 1986). The most extreme objectivists are the ethnoscientists who have utilised highly formalised, "elicitation frames" and, "systematic fieldwork" (Werner and Schoepfle 1986a; 1986b). Werner (1983) advocates the use of. "microcomputers in cultural anthropology" for the mathematical analysis of, "data". The ethnoscientists seek to establish precise linguistic boundaries, to parallel, to draw on, and to complement the sociolinguistic movement predominant in ethnomethodological sociology. In so doing, they narrow the focus of fieldwork to a concentration on denotive meanings. Through structured interviews, they seek to elicit taxonomies (Frake 1964), "componential analyses" (Goodenough 1956), "folk definitions", (Keen 1985); reducing rich cultural traditions to a matter of semantics (Casagrande and Hale 1967; Lounsbury 1956).

Within sociology in the period following the spate of participant observation studies by the 'neo-Chicagoans' in the early 1960s, there was a massive upsurge in interest in social theories and methodologies concerned with the 'micro-processes' of social life (Knorr-Cetina 1981 : 1; Hammersley and Atkinson 1983 : 1; Fielding 1988 : 1). Renewed interest in Verstehen (Truzzi 1974); Germanic (idealist) theorists such as Simmel, Dilthey, Webber, Husserl and Schutz; social phenomenology (Berger and Luckman 1967); symbolic interactionism especially through Blumer's reconception of the theories of Mead and Cooley (Blumer 1969), and manifested in the ethnographic work of Becker and other subcultural and labelling theorists; ethnomethodology (Garfinkel 1967); cognitive sociology (Cicourel 1973); and existential sociology (Douglas and Johnson 1977), manifested in the 'everyday-life' sociological fieldwork of Douglas (1976) and Johnson (1975), resulted in an advancement of the frontiers of sociological subjectivity.

Although the subjectivist movements did not replace the more balanced epistemology as the dominant mainstream in sociological participant observation, they nevertheless pulled the classical approach in that direction. Many now acknowledge, for example, that the objectivist goal of not influencing the setting is more ideal than real and should be modified to a relativistic scale (Jarvie 1969):

> A detached, objective attitude is unsatisfactory as way of getting data; it puts an impossible strain on the researcher and limits the kind of knowledge that can be thus gained" (Clarke 1975 : 114).

Some researchers influenced by feminist methodological critiques have advocated a move "beyond subjectivity", and for, "the use of the self in Social Science" (Kreiger 1985). This stance parallels the radical hermeneutical branch of anthropologists who also focus on studying themselves and their feelings and experiences as well as the research setting and their relations with informants (Crapanzano 1985; Dumont 1978; Rabinow 1977). Similarly existential sociologists have urged participant observers to supplement observations and the accounts of participants with the feelings and experiences accumulated in the field (Douglas 1976; Johnson 1975). As a result of this general trend,

the test of validity within participant observation studies has come to rely less on objectivity and detachment and more on the researchers' closeness to the data (Manning 1982). It is now a convention amongst sociological participant observers to include personal reflections on the researchers' roles and relationships in the field in order to demonstrate the degree of involvement with the setting and with participants (Stafford 1991; Warren 1988).

In reflecting on this sociological tendency towards involvement and subjectivity, it is ironic to note that, as previously examined, some anthropologists have been involved in a corresponding trend towards quantification (Agar 1980), although some anthropologists regard their discipline as the one most likely to ethnographically bridge the quantitative, qualitative, divide (Ellen 1984). In some respects, it is not surprising to note how contemporary sociological participant observers are embracing a more subjectivist stance, since its earlier practitioners grew out of an objectivist base and even in their divergence modelled themselves upon, or were at least influenced by, their dominant hypothetico-deductive ancestry. Even the Chicago School is not exempt from such critical scrutiny; Harvey (1987) for example has traced an empirical "quantitative tradition" in the Chicago School of Sociology between 1900 and 1950. More recently, Martin Hammersley has argued for "... the feasibility of the positivist model of theory, the model which ... gives us the best hope of producing effective explanations for social phenomena" (1985 : 250). In contrast, the subjectivist trend within sociological participant observation since the late 1960s has been interpreted as, "one of progressive liberation from these early fetters" (Adler and Adler 1987 : 13).

This is not to imply that the mainstream research orientation and funding power within sociology as a whole has shifted. On the contrary, despite the challenge to the 'normative paradigm' from the 'interpretive paradigm' (Wilson 1970); the methodological critique of 'anti-positivism' (Kitsuse and Cicourel 1963; Cicourel 1964; 1968); the subsequent trend towards 'naturalism' (Denzin 1971); the adoption of qualitative methodologies (Van

Maanen 1983; Burgess 1984; Walker 1985; and the utilisation of a 'social definitionist' as opposed to a 'social factist' approach (Ritzer 1975; Troyer and Markle 1982); participant observation remains a "... sociological subculture ... a more humanistic and empathic enclave within the mainstream" (Roberts 1976 : 252).

The most recent trends within the practice of ethnography derive partly from this self-conscious rejection of positivist assumptions and imageries, and also, on a more elusive level, from the attempt to enunciate explicitly interpretive methodological procedures. In part this derives from a deepening appreciation of the unavoidably reflexive character of field research.

Several themes have contributed to this increasingly self-conscious attention to the reflexive nature of the participant observer method. Firstly, analyses of the actual interactional processes of being 'in the field' have taken on a more close-grained, self-aware character. Thus some participant observers now not only recognise but display and celebrate the essentially "in-the-world, no-time-out" (Emerson 1987) character of participant observation, as of all social interaction (Berger 1981). Secondly, a number of scholars, drawing out the full implications of Geertz's (1973) insistence that ethnography is essentially "inscription", have begun to examine in detail the rhetorical structure of the text, paying close attention to the ways in which interpretive dominance, and authorial authority, are established within the text (Marcus and Cushman 1982; Clifford 1983a; 1983b; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Stoddart 1986).

Anthropology, writes Crick (1987), is now in the midst of a reflexive phase thinking about the 'representation of the representation and the writing about writing'. The phase is described as post-modernist; in which there is ...

> "... no magisterial author setting out his or her hard data but, with a new (or perhaps better still 'collapsed') sense of 'subject' and 'object', reflexivity, pluralism, a suspicion of authorial authority, and even heteroglossia. We have a new genre" (Crick 1987 : 270).

The social and interactional processes involved in carrying out participant observation research as a 'practical accomplishment' (*cf.* Garfinkel 1967) constitute one topic in the post-modernist project. Thus, Stoddart (1986), for example, in analysing accounts of fieldwork methods, has highlighted the common use of textual strategies which, "display the features of a domain as they exist independently of the techniques employed to assemble them" (1986 : 15). As Mishler has similarly argued:

> "The perspective of the observer is intertwined with the phenomenon which does not have objective characteristics independent of the observer's perspective and methods" (1979 : 10).

Some analysts have effectively demonstrated the variety of ways in which, for example, classical anthropological accounts suppress the presence of the observer as an active force in recounted events or incidents (Strathern 1987). Rabinow (1983) has similarly demonstrated how anthropological accounts invoke the field experiences of the ethnographer to validate knowledge claims and then obscure the presence and interpretive work of the observer through textual devices such as the third person narrative form:

> "From Malinowski on, anthropological authority has rested on two textual legs. An experiential 'I was there' element establishes the unique authority of the anthropologist; its suppression in the text establishes the anthropologist's scientific authority (1983 : 204).

Although reflexive concern with "ethnographies as texts" (Marcus and Cushman 1982) might seem an indulgence, the post-modernist critique has raised fundamental epistemological problems and highlighted processes of generic interest, a point made by Cicourel in his earliest work (1964). The post-modernist anthropological critique sensitises the fieldworker to problems concerning field roles, the construction of accounts, and the processes of interpretation and categorisation. Post-modern remedial strategies include, "complex collaboration between ethnographer and informant" (Young 1983 : 170). This has been described by Mulkay (1985) as, "collaborative dialogue" -

> "... only by changing and extending the scope of our analytic discourse can we create new forms of interpretative rationality which are designed for and appropriate for the study by human actors of meaningful human action ... through such collaborative dialogue it may be possible for analyst and participant to converse together and to learn from each other, with neither party claiming interpretative dominance .. I suspect that

> this kind of collaboration lies partly hidden behind the text of many sociological studies. I've always thought, for example, that the gang leader Doc should have been given much of the credit for Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (1955); but that, of course, would have been to contravene the supposedly essential distinction between analyst and participant" (1985 : 12 and 15).

The reference to dialogue is also a reference to reciprocity, of recognising relationships (as between participant observer and informant), not, "flattening" them (*cf.* Clifford 1980). In some respects, this viewpoint echoes the notions of empowerment and participation which I outlined in Chapter 2 as characterising a "progressive" youthwork practice (Corrigan and Leonard 1978), which "prefigures the future" (Davis and Cook 1981), and which challenges, "the traditional boundaries between clients and workers" (Mitchell *et al* 1980 : 8). For Taylor, Walton and Young (1975), these issues are inextricably linked to questions of power:

> "For radical researchers, the point about attempting to remain faithful to the researched population is that [s/he] has already taken sides; in the sense that [s/he] is concerned to feed back [the] results, not to the powerful, but to those immediately and directly affected (1975 : 26). (My inserts)

The broad family of participatory research methods (Reason and Rowan 1981) offer something in the way of an escape from the epistemological impasse posed by the post-modernist critique. The are characterised by a commitment to reciprocity, collective and co-operative ways of working, and an emphasis upon empowerment. Co-research with people begins by respecting and valuing their accounts and meanings. People's experiences are frequently presented as 'life-history'; in a more radical form, participants have become co-authors, enabling them to remain the knowing, communicating participants in their own accounts (Carlen *et al* 1985). The 'personal' is also valued in participatory research, rather than as a dangerous bias or contamination of 'data'; personal involvement is recognised as, "the condition under which people come to know each other and admit others to their lives" (Oakley 1981 : 58).

These were ideas I sought to employ in my research in the fourth phase (1986-1990), for example through an approach based on careful, "editing of first-person sociology"

(Blauner 1987). Thus, much of the empirical material in my study is based on utilising taped transcripts which were collaboratively edited and organised by participants, and through which I was able to include participants in the construction of their own accounts. I asked participants to check, alter, and re-order transcripts to make their meanings accurate and clear. In transcribing and punctuating, I attempted to follow the speaker's speech patterns and sought to strike a balance between the strong 'preservationist' impulse in oral history (Painter 1979) and translating into standard middle class English (Coles 1975). Arguably, to strike such a balance is to preserve the reality of participants' world-view To translate, as Coles (1975) has advocated, into "clear-cut, distilled, comprehensible English", would be to separate participants from their reality. Nevertheless, more often than not, transcripts are not presented *verbatim*, but have been collaboratively 'worked up' into a form which was acceptable both to the participants and to myself. This was one element in a general orientation that was informed by an empathic, collaborative mode of conducting field relations, strongly influenced by my youthwork practice; in a general sense, informed by the concerns of participatory research outlined in the foregoing paragraphs, and influenced by the subjectivist trend in social researching examined in this section (3.2).

3.2.5 The Two Traditions

Crucial leverage into the renewed interest in a more subjectivist mode for participant observers was provided by the 1960s ferment in sociology and the "creative disintegration from within of sociology itself in its mainstream form" (Hall *et al* 1980 : 26). In the wake of a sustained theoretical and methodological critical assault, the then dominant, normative, epistemologically positivist approach inherited from Comte, Durkheim and later Parsons, gave way to a "naturalist revolt ... directed against positivism's inability to understand and record human subjectivity" (Willis 1980 : 88). The subsequent "epistemological chasm" (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983 : 3) between what became known as the "two sociological traditions" (Bendix 1971; Von Wright 1971; Dawe 1970) can, according to Von Wright (1971) and Levy (1981), be traced as far back as differences

between the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Each of the 'two traditions' embodies distinct assumptions about human nature, ontology and epistemology. According to Dawe (1970), for example, there are ...

> "... two sociologies: a sociology of social system and a sociology of social action ... They posit antithetical views of human nature, of society, and of the relationship between the social and the individual (1970 : 214).

The two traditions have in recent years been characterised and counterposed in the following ways: positivism versus naturalism; sociological positivism versus German idealism; positivism versus anti-positivism; the normative paradigm versus the interpretive paradigm; a 'social factist' approach versus a 'social definitionist' approach; structuralism versus interactionism; 'macro' sociology versus 'micro' sociology; and quantitative methods versus qualitative methods. According to the framework outlined by Burrell and Morgan (1979), the assumptions about human nature, ontology and epistemology inherent in each of the 'two traditions' have direct implications in terms of methodology:

> "Different ontologies, epistemologies, and models of human nature are likely to incline social scientists towards different methodologies" (Burrell and Morgan 1979 : 2).

Thus the sociological tradition concerned with social system is said to rest on a realist (Footnote 1) as opposed to a nominalist ontology (Footnote 2); a positivist as opposed to an anti-positivist epistemology (Footnote 3); a determinist as opposed to a voluntarist view of human nature (Footnote 4); and a nomothetic as opposed to an ideographic methodology (Footnote 5).

3.2.6 Critical Ethnography

Marx, it has been argued, holds a rather special place in terms of the epistemological chasm between the two sociological traditions; (Footnote 6) thus, Benton (1977) discusses the philosophical foundations of the 'three sociologies'. Knorr-Cetina (1981) similarly accords Marx a special place in the discussion, maintaining that the upsurge in

'micro sociological orientations' in the last thirty years or so has to be viewed as a reaction against the positivism of the 'normative paradigm' (Wilson 1970); that is, the 'interpretive paradigm' (Wilson *op cit*) is viewed as a reaction against structural functionalism, and ' integration theory' (Dahrendorf 1959) and not the Marxist or 'coercion theory of society' (Dahrendorf *op cit*):

> "The founders of the normative-functional integration model are of course seen to be Durkheim and Parsons. Needless to say, in the American tradition of sociological thought in which most recent micro-sociological approaches have originated, the normative model of social order has dominated. Hence, the recent upsurge in micro-sociological orientations must be seen against the contrast of the normative model of order, and not against the contrast of a conflict model informed by Marx"(Knorr-Cetina 1981 : 2).

The categorisation of Marxist theory to a special place in terms of the epistemological chasm between the two traditions in sociology is crucial for a critical ethnography. The task for Marxism-informed interactionists is to develop the critical component inherent in the Chicago tradition of participant observation research (Carey 1975) - a critical component often ignored by contemporary practitioners. As Thomas has argued:

> "By overemphasising the given and not rising above the immediacy of the situation being examined, by accepting as unproblematic the social features observed in a particular situation, and by presenting these descriptions in an often formulistic discursive style, many ethnographers operate from the perspective of naive realism in that there is an assumed correspondence between the categories of analysis and the objects they reflect (Thomas 1982 : 129).

Chicago sociology in the 1920s evolved as a challenge to the then dominant positivism and social determinism It was also a challenge to existing social conditions and policies (Carey 1975). The task for Marxist-informed participant observers is to retain the critical element of Chicago Sociology in order to help display the structural, ideological, and related issues that pattern and shape human social behaviour (Cohen 1972; Willis 1977; Takagi 1982; Young 1980); as Takagi (1982 : 36) has suggested, to display the relationship between individually lived experience and the generative structures of social life. One major criticism of participant observation is that it is a method that is incapable of addressing the broader issues of social structure (Thomas 1982), just as a corresponding criticism of Marxist research is its inattention to issues of social interaction (Giddens

1976). Participant observation, as practised by the 'British New Wave' in the 1970s offered a means of bridging the two positions and correcting at least some of the problems identified in both (Grimshaw *et al* 1980; Willis 1980). I discuss the work of the 'British New Wave' of participant observers in the following section - here it is sufficient to note that the notion of a critical ethnography is crucial for the development of my own study, and that, historically, the possibility for a critical ethnography was created out of the 1960s ferment in sociology and the space created by the declining dominance of an orthodoxy based on structural functionalism, integration theory, the normative paradigm, and quantitative methods (Hall and Jefferson 1976).

3.3 The Sociology of Youth and the British New Wave

The sociology of youth was born between the wars when Mead (1935) and Reuter (1937) and their contemporaries claimed youth as a social phenomenon, a product of specific types of society rather than an inevitable state in bio-psychological maturation. In post-Second World War American sociology, it was Parsons (1942), following from the pioneer work of the Chicago School, who popularised notions of youth and 'Youth Culture' as peculiarly male phenomena. He isolated the, "unique and highly distinctive combination of age-grading and sex-role elements" (Parsons : 1964 : 91) supposedly emerging among American (male) adolescents, and coined the term 'Youth Culture' to describe them.

Sociologists and social commentators in the post-war period conflated youth culture as a social issue and a social problem, so that delinquency research and the investigation of youth culture became virtually synonymous. Sociologists in this period began to view the breakdown of generational relations and the development of 'autonomous' peer group cultures as features of contemporary society in general and not, as the Chicago School's work had implied, a response to the social disorganisation of the urban slum (Thrasher 1927; Shaw and McKay 1942).

Parsons suggested that these developing peer group cultures were local expressions of a distinctive, more broadly-based, generational consciousness which was solidifying around a distinctive 'Youth Culture'. In the 1950s, the main issue pre-occupying youth research was the extent to which the youth culture was rebellious or even 'at war' with mainstream society (Coleman 1961). Functionalist writers in this period viewed the 'Youth Culture' as a homogeneous, functionally mediating, classless, male phenomena which, despite surface appearances of adolescent rebellion and dissent, was essentially adaptive for the maintenance and continuity of the social system and the transition of young people to adult roles and status (David M. Smith 1983). The 'Youth Culture' was said to provide a process of continuing socialisation from childhood roles and family values, and taught independence and the qualities required for adulthood. The 'Youth Culture' was said to functionally reconcile the inconsistencies between values inculcated during childhood (ascription, particularism, community orientation, role diffuseness, affectivity) and the different values, reflecting the more complex needs of the social system, associated with adulthood (achievement, affective neutrality, universalism, role specificity, and self-orientation) (Eisenstadt 1956 : pp. 43-45); Elkin and Westley 1955; Smith 1962).

As outlined in the previous section, functionalism had declined as sociology's dominant orthodoxy by the early 1960s and youth research gained a fresh impetus alongside a new ascendant brand of American deviancy theories. Youth and delinquency research remained intimately related and the broad theoretical influences of phenomenology, symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology became important sources of inspiration for British research in this period. The period of the early 1960s was also important in establishing the pre-eminence of sociological studies within British criminology (Wiles 1976 : 14); studies which can be recognised for their broad attempt to 'humanise' deviance by granting meaning and purpose to delinquent behaviour (Muncie and Fitzgerald 1981). In developing interactional, transactional (labelling), and amplification theories within the

new perspectives on deviancy, attention was redirected away from causal questions (why did s/he do it?) to questions of definition and consequence:

> "How the meaning of deviant activity is built up through complex processes of interaction between deviant and controllers: how ... the moral and political authenticity of deviant action is elided by the interpretive schemes deployed by the agents of social control: and how the creation ... of particular identities for the deviant can have the effect of committing [them] more firmly to [the] deviant role" (Wiles 1976 : 10).

Participant observation became the most common methodological approach, enabling researchers to analyse the deviant's perspective with empathy in contrast to established criminology's model of individualised pathology. Indeed, the strength of the new deviancy theory was the recovery of a human dignity and rationality previously denied to actors by the positivist domination of traditional criminology:

> "New deviancy theory was primarily a radical response to positivist domination of criminology and attempted to recover the 'meaning' in human behaviour denied ... in positivism" (Young 1981 : 286-7).

New deviancy theory was not however without its own problems. Whilst rationalising deviancy, new deviancy theorists provided non-judgmental analysis of young people's behaviour which seemed particularly inappropriate in assessing the more extreme forms of violence and its effect on victims (Carrington 1975; Phipps 1986). This problem was more acute when youth violence was celebrated as a primitive form of political warfare (Piven and Cloward 1982). Moreover, the phenomenological input into the new studies of youth and deviance led to an abandonment, not just of functionalism, but the entire vocabulary of social structure. Labelling theory had located a set of political problems in the analysis of deviance but failed to develop a theory which could adequately deal with them. The political conceptions utilised by labelling theorists were crude. They amounted to little more than a conflict between deviants with one perspective and 'controllers' with a different perspective. Out of the ensuing debates, a 'new criminology' emerged (Taylor, Walton and Young 1973) which resurrected society, arguing for the necessity of situating processes of social action and societal reaction in their precise material (historical, economic, and political) circumstances (Hall *et al* 1978). Analyses of

'crime', for example, attempted to examine the structural constitution of the law, the state, and class relations, at particular historical moments. These connections have been examined in detail in relation to the moral panics concerning 'mugging' (Hall *et al* 1978) and football hooliganism (Ingham *et al* 1978; Taylor 1982).

Since the Second World War, Britain has produced a number of deviant youth groups which, although not necessarily delinquent, have attracted a similar, if not more intense, degree of adult concern and reaction. This more generalised concern about youth was intricately related to the emergence of a 'teenage' culture in the 1950s and a youth culture in the 1960s. While 'teenager' was a term attached specifically to working class youth, the notion of a youth culture suggested that all young people belonged to a homogeneous culture that transcended all other cultural affiliations. Abrams, for example, asserted that:

> "... under the conditions of general prosperity, the social study of society in class terms is less and less illuminating. And its place is taken by differences related to age" (1964 : 57-58).

Such argument was supported by a corresponding trend in sociological theorising which emphasised embourgeoisement and political and social consensus:

> "The conventional wisdom was that 'affluence' and 'consensus' together were promoting the rapid 'bourgeoisification' of the working classes (Clarke *et al* 1976 : 21).

Thus, the notions of a distinctive, homogeneous functionally mediating, classless youth culture emerged most strongly during the period of post-war industrial expansion. Youth was believed to have developed on autonomy expressed not through crime, but through leisure. The accounts produced in the 1950s and 1960s suggested that all young people were suspended -without other points of identity (or division) - in a classless world of consumption, leisure pursuits, and irresponsibility (Parsons 1964; Abrams 1959). Parson's 'youth culture' centered on the conception of a generation who consumed without producing, and whose confinement in age-specific educational institutions was said to remove young people from both the productive system and the class relations rooted in that system. The emphasis on the centrality of age divisions and the stress on

consumption led to a concealment or devaluation of the political dimension (see Murdock and McRon 1976a):

> "The corresponding irrelevance of class inequalities, coupled with the stress on consumption and leisure as the pivots of youth consciousness, was destined to dominate the sociology of youth for the next three decades (Murdock and McRon 1976 : 197).

Not only were class inequalities marginalised in the earlier analyses of youth, but also gender and ethnic inequalities. The subsequent functionalist accounts alongside the more popularised commentaries regarded the concept of 'Youth Culture' as expressing the activities and experiences of all young people. But, for almost 40 years, the presence of women and ethnic groupings in the analyses were absent. The functionalist analysis dealing with a formulation of youth as a homogeneous, classless, phenomenon, subsequently became the target of critical appraisal (Murdock and McRon 1976a). The invisibility of women became a focus of concern much later (McRobbie 1981) with the advent of a specifically feminist input into the sociological enterprise generally.

In the early 1970s under the impact of a revival of interest in newer forms of Marxist theory, there developed within sociology a concerted critique of existing orthodoxy in the area of youth studies:

> "Behind all the talk of 'generation' and 'generation gap', there is the forgotten question of the class structure of society. It is as if, when youth are discussed, social class goes on holiday. But youth are not a classless tribe" (Mungham and Pearson 1976 : 2-3).

The key concern of the subsequent studies by the 'New Wave' was not one of simply, "substituting class for age at the centre of the analysis, but of examining the relations between class and age and more particularly the way in which 'age acts as a mediation of class' (Murdock and McRon 1976a : 24).

In Britain, the emergence in the 1950s and 1960s of a variety of highly visible youth subcultures - Teds, mods, rockers, hippies, skinheads and student dissenters - led to a series of ethnographic studies of subcultural leisure pursuits and styles. It is significant

that the most sophisticated analyses emerged not from studies of 'delinquency' but from ethnographies of leisure and style. In contrast to American research, British subcultural theory is not primarily concerned with delinquency, the main reason being that post-war research in Britain has been unable to discover the existence of 'structured' gangs identified in America by Cohen (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin (1960).

The first British application of American subcultural theory was provided by Downes's study of working class youth in East London (1966). He found little evidence of Cohen's 'status frustration'. Rather, the boys of his study disassociated themselves from the dominant values and aspirations enshrined in school or work and deflected their interests, achievements, and aspirations, to leisure pursuits. Thus, working class boys were distinguished from the middle class boys by the excessive demands they made on their leisure time. The connection between leisure and delinquency, however, only became apparent when leisure aspirations also remained unfulfilled. In Downes's formulation, there was clear continuation between conventional 'teenage culture' and delinquency. This point is significant because it partially explains the processes whereby aspects of subcultural behaviour have been subject to surveillance and criminalisation. Indeed, Downes's study was influential in various respects. Not only did it explore how youth subcultures rely on leisure and entertainment to secure 'cultural space', but it also recognised how experiences and opportunities are structured by the material conditions of class location.

These twin concerns were further elaborated by the various ethnographic studies produced by the 'British New Wave' of subcultural ethnographers and theorists, most notably the sociologists operating within, or influenced by, the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University in the early 1970s (Hall and Jefferson 1976). Their work is characterised by an examination of the 'meaning' of subcultural style through various ethnographic (and semiological) analyses; as well as a theoretical exploration of the political implications and ramifications of deviance through an examination of the

structural and class position of the various subcultures investigated. Clarke *et al* (1976), for example, sought to reinstate class analysis as the fundamental key to unlocking the meanings held to be present in the succession of spectacularly visible manifestations of post-war youth subcultures. They argued that: "Youth subcultures are related to class relations, to the division of labour and to the productive relations of the society" (1976 : 16).

For these 'New Wave' sociologists of youth, the Marxian conception of class relations was central to the analysis. Notions of class and class domination gave rise to conceptions of dominant and subordinate cultures and thereby to ideological or hegemonic domination. The struggle between classes assumes the pattern of a continuous struggle over the distribution of "cultural power". Clarke *et al* (1976) proposed a redefinition of culture, replacing it with the more historically specific conception of cultures; a redefinition that brings into focus the notion that, "cultures always stand in relations of domination and subordination to one another, are always ... in struggle with one another" (1976 : 12-13). Subcultures as a replacement for the functionalist conception of 'youth culture' embodies the idea that cultural groups, mediated through social classes become 'class cultures'; subcultures can then be analysed as 'sub-sets' of these class cultures. Subcultures are therefore "... smaller, more localised and differentiated structures within one or other of the larger cultural networks (Hall and Jefferson 1976 : 13). Subcultures thus have to be viewed in relation to, or as a distinctive part of, the wider class cultural networks:

> "Subcultures must first be related to the parent cultures of which they are a sub-set ... They must also be analysed in terms of their relation to the dominant culture (1976 : 13).

Although youth share certain disadvantages and are accorded minority group status, their opportunities are markedly unequal, differentiating them more fundamentally than any supposed 'unity of youth'. The differences in access to life's chances minimises any likelihood of a common sense of identity and the power of the New Wave's critique of the

existing orthodoxies emphasised the need to abandon the 'mainstream' writing that had largely evolved from functionalism's previous theoretical dominance in youth studies.

The New Wave sought to explore the basic importance of class inequalities in 'shaping' subcultural responses. It sought to replace the concept of youth culture with the more specific notion of subcultures. Subcultures could then be analysed in terms of their relation to parent cultures and, through that, to the tensions with, and accommodations to, the dominant culture. In the formation of subcultural styles, the group is likely to draw upon the cultural resources provided by the parent culture. Sets of traditions, habits and values, provided and established by the adult sections of the class, are passed on to its young people through the family, neighbourhood, and community. Thus, for example, the concern of the self-proclaimed 'Northside Jungle Crew' from Hartingleigh's Chicken Lane Estate for local identity, territory, and toughness involved a re-working in subcultural form of inherited traditions acquired from the parent culture. Believing that they came from the toughest estate in Manchester held great value for those who were dispossessed of other perhaps more legitimate modes of acquiring, "dignity stature, and a sense of importance" (Parker 1974 : 33). Moreover, denied the traditional means of asserting working class masculinity, i.e. industrial labour, some participants reinvented the valorisation of manual labour, 'grafting', into a deviant activity, petty crime. Placing these elements together, Clarke *et al* argue -

> "... to locate youth subculture in this kind of analysis, we must first situate youth in the dialectic between a 'hegemonic' dominant culture and the subordinate working class 'parent' culture, of which youth is a fraction" (1976 : 38).

The development of a complex Hegelianised 'Western Marxism' informed by the writings of Luckacs, Gramsci, the Frankfurt School, and the publication in English of Marx's early writings, particularly the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, and the *1987 Inttoduction of the 'Grundrisse'* provided the theoretical possibility for a cultural analysis within the Marxist tradition. An analysis which did not lapse into an over-deterministic reductionism overly dependent on the base/superstructure, metaphor

(Hall 1977). By re-examining the key issues within Marxist thought, particularly questions about the relative autonomy of culture and ideology and their material, social, and historical conditions of existence, the 'New Wave' proposed that the dynamics of class struggle could be 'read' in the semi-autonomous terrain of culture and particularly within sub-cultural style. According to Clarke and Jefferson (1976):

> "Class conflict has increasingly shifted to the terrain of a struggle for the control of cultural as well as material resources. It is within this location that we see the symbolism of working class youth cultures as representing ... a signification of the struggle for cultural hegemony" (1976 : 157).

The meaning of subcultures and 'subcultural style' and its oppositional implications can be located and, in Hebdige's (1979) terms, 'read' in the terrain of cultural struggle and subcultural stylistic 'resistance'. The version of subcultural analysis that evolved from this position (and which can be successfully counterposed to the theoretically and empirically deficient functionalist accounts of the post-war period) emphasised ways in which the shared experiences of (predominantly male) adolescents in particular class locations were collectively expressed and negotiated through the active 'construction' and 'reconstruction' of distinctive leisure and entertainment based 'life-styles'. Subcultural styles are made up of an amalgam of elements drawn from two main sources -

> "... the situated class cultures ... [of the family and neighbourhood] and the 'mediated' symbol systems sponsored by the youth orientated sectors of the entertainment industry" (Murdock and McRon 1976 : 203).

As Hebdige's (1979) work illustrates, these elements are not taken over 'raw'; on the contrary, subcultural styles are the product of a cumulative process of transformation through selection and redefinition, within which objects, symbols, and activities are stripped of some, or all, of their conventional connotations and reworked, "by members of the group into a new and coherent whole with its own special significance" (Clarke and Jefferson 1976 : 157).

In Hartingleigh, for example, up to the mid-1980s, the dominant subcultural style was the "cult of the casual" (Allen 1984), reflected in the thoughtfully matched combinations

of designer clothes and sportswear: Pringle and Pierre Cardin sweaters; LaCoste shirts; Farrah trousers; Gabicci jumpers; or Tachini tracksuits, items of clothing that were conspicuously displayed to enhance social standing and peer group status. This has been described as the "struggle to keep up appearances" (Veblen 1919 : 399 - See also Veblen 1970). The casuals were the young wearers of these expensive designer clothes whose labels indicated finely graded degrees of being 'sound' or 'sorted' which offered psychological compensation for the multiple deprivations of the council estates. The style represented an exaggerated response to economic stringency and the dominant Thatcherite 'spiv' ideology of yuppie mobility. The expenditure necessary to sustain the style *à la mode* was often met illegally through hoisting (shoplifting) or grafting (petty theft). Thus, to possess the genuine articles with their all important labels and logos verified both their enormously high price and the degree of the wearer's success in one of the various alternative careers available within the local sub- or anti- employment subcultures. Designer clothes were a sartorial demonstration of one's success as a 'grafter', 'hustler', or 'hoister' (see Chapter Four), and thus provided compensatory routes to self-esteem and status.

The 'new wave' contributors to the sociology of youth in the 1970s were similarly concerned with subcultures as the expressive forms and rituals of subordinate groups; with the dialectics of image and self-image construction. Youth was said to construct its own images within the relatively autonomous cultural space of subcultures. These images became recognised, distorted, stereotyped and appropriated, by the market, the media, popular social commentary, and sociologists. Youth in turn, and in response, changed that image in order to recover symbolic, and actual, space, territory, self-image and self-esteem - but always against the "fundamental base-rhythms" of class conflict (Clarke *et al* 1976 : 41).

Since subcultural styles are viewed as 'coded' expressions of consciousness, the major act of analysis, according to Hebdige (1979) for example, is 'decoding' or 'reading the

style'. This is based on a notion of uncovering the meanings attached to the constituent elements of subcultural style and mapping the relations between them; providing a method for understanding the embedded defiance, contempt, and resistance in which "... experienced contradictions and objections to ... ruling ideology are obliquely represented in style" (Hebdige 1979 : 133). Hebdige, by drawing on Barthes's (1972) application of semiotics, a method rooted in linguistics (Hawkes 1977), attempts to 'deconstruct' and demystify the phenomenal forms of subcultural style.

The emergence of spectacular male working class youth subcultures during the post-war period was 'read' as signalling an end to notions of consensus; representing an 'oblique' gesture of 'contempt or defiance', a form of 'semiotic guerrilla warfare' (Hebdige 1979). This challenge was not pitched at the level of material resources or control of the means of production but was articulated in the form of class struggle in a cultural terrain, and may be interpreted in terms of a struggle over the rights of consumption and consumption identity versus class identity. Various studies chartered the nature of capitalist economic and social reorganisation in the post-war period (Clarke *et al* 1976 : 20-24). These changes in economic and social arrangements produced transformations in the nature of working class culture generally and, specifically, on the youth of the class.

> "Aspects of these changes and the responses of the young to them became crystallised into distinctive styles of youth culture (Clarke and Jefferson 1976 : 139).

Phil Cohen (1972) established a mode of interpretation in this tradition when he proposed an original formulation of how the emergence of a succession of youth subcultures in the East End of London in the late 1960s was linked to the disintegration of working class communality in the period of post-war social and economic upheaval. Cohen's work took as its starting point the insight that "... mods, parkers, skinheads, crombies all represent in their different ways an attempt to retrieve some of the socially cohesive elements destroyed in the parent culture" (1972 : 23). For Cohen, the youth of the parent culture affected by the socio-economic transformations in the post-war period

attempt to resolve the shifts in working class cultural forms in order to regain communal solidarity and cultural consistency. Cohen noted the interplay between youth's efforts to participate in affluence, and the new hedonism of consumption, and the traditional puritanism of the working class community. Cohen places the subcultural responses in their cultural context, raises the influence of material contradictions, and proposes an 'ideological resolution' of an imaginary or 'magical' kind. Subcultures because they operate in the terrain of cultural struggle cannot confront the economic source of these contradictions; instead they attempt to relocate in an 'imaginary relation' the real relations which their members cannot transcend.

Cohen views the mods' 'subversive overconformity', for example, as an attempt to realise the conditions of life of the socially mobile white collar worker, whose recruitment from the working classes had increased during post-war bureaucratic expansion. 'Skinheads', on the other hand, were viewed by Cohen as a reaction against the contamination of the parent culture by middle class values and a reassertion of the integral values of working class culture, "through its most recessive traits - its puritanism and chauvinism" (1980 : 84). Reviewing Cohen's work, Hebdige maintains that:

> "Here at last was a reading which took into account the full interplay of ideological, economic, and cultural factors, which bear upon subculture. By grounding his theory in ethnographic detail, Cohen was able to insert class into his analysis at a far more sophisticated level than had previously been possible. Rather than presenting class an as abstract set of external determinations, he showed it working out in practice as a material force dressed up, as it were, in experience and exhibited in style" (1979 : 78)

As Hebdige's observations reveal, the commitment to a Marxist conception of the essential role of class in the analysis, developed alongside the utilisation of participant observation by the New Wave in its subcultural studies. The evocative ethnographic accounts contained in the work of Cohen (1972), Willis (1977, 1978), Hebdige (1979), and Corrigan (1979), for example, reveal a rich variety of responses. Paul Corrigan's exquisite three pages on 'Doing Nothing' (in *Resistance Through Rituals,* Hall and Jefferson (1976 : 103-106), for example, is perhaps the most evocative of all. The

banality and boredom of wet pavements in the inner city on a Saturday night are transfigured by all the excitement of 'doing nothing'. Doing nothing becomes packed full if incident shaped by the transforming implementation of "weird ideas", which cannot be understood from their intrinsic properties. The 'something in nothing' takes its meaning from its context; the reality is socially constructed and contrived. Nevertheless, the wider context informs the situation in as much as 'doing nothing' becomes a major activity because, "the alternative activities are usually expensive or controlled by someone else". In fact, the implementation of weird ideas emerges from, "one of the most material experiences of working class male youth - nothing" (Corrigan 1979a : 7).

The contributions of the British New Wave to the sociology of youth were characterised by an analysis which, whilst recognising the central importance of a Marxian conception of class relations, at the same time fully acknowledged the lived values and meanings which differentiated members of youth subcultures from their parent culture and the dominant culture to which they frequently stood opposed. The critical and philosophical tensions which exist between the experiential accounts produced by the participant observation method and the macroscopic analysis of historical and other external determinants provided a significant area for theorising and debate. Willis's attempt to provide a rounded explanation of why working class kids get working class jobs (1977), for example, is in many respects close to Giddens's (1976) theoretical attempt to explore the dialectical relationship between 'structure and action' via his theory of 'structuration'. Giddens's approach acknowledges that the most pressing theoretical task for sociologists is a theory of social life that simultaneously embodies social action and social structure. Giddens has expressed this notion through his conception of the 'duality of structure':

> "In the theory of structuration, 'structure' is conceptualised as the generative rules and resources drawn upon by actors in the production and reproduction of systems of interaction. The key idea linking production and reproduction is that of duality of structure, by which I mean that structure is both the medium of generating interaction ... and the reproduced outcome of it" (1977 : 14).

Willis's study, whilst taking account of the more or less determining impact of wider sets of relations, nevertheless remains rooted in a critical ethnography which offers an opportunity to examine how participants in a given social setting actively create meanings which generate the human practices out of which social structures emerge. Willis's study recognises that whilst specific features of capitalist society work to restrict the educational and occupational aspirations of working class boys, to quote these structural determinants does not identify the ways in which the boys actively use such features as sources of meaning to create and recreate working class culture and life-chances; Willis's utilisation of a participant observation method 'softening' the determinism associated with traditional Marxist analysis. Willis's study reveals that there is a qualified voluntarism at work by which the boys actively 'choose' to go towards an 'impoverished future'. The 'oppositional' school counter culture voluntarily accomplishes the induction of manpower into the unskilled levels of the productive process. The importance of Willis's study is that it has stressed the continuity of the school culture with the wider class culture, and drawn attention to the deep moving processes of regeneration among the class, the most important of which occur at the site of the school.

3.4 The British New Wave : A Critique

As long ago as 1976, Murdock and McRon pointed out that the 'new' subcultural analyses perpetuated a tradition rooted in deviancy and delinquency research by -

> "... focusing on the deviant rather than the conventional, on working class adolescents rather than those from the intermediate or middle classes, and most crucial of all, on boys rather than girls" (1976 : 204).

Despite the acknowledged sensitivity of much of the work produced by the New Wave, and the innovative dual commitment to both agency and structure, their accounts can be shown to be deficient in several respects (David M. Smith 1981, 1983, 1984; Brake 1980, 1985; Roberts 1983; McRobbie 1981; Cohen 1980; Dorn and South 1984). In the main, the empirical explorations of the New Wave have subordinated ethnographic detail to a prioristic and occasionally vulgarised explanatory formulae.

3.4.1 Determinism

Male working class subcultures were interpreted by the New Wave ethnographers as systems of resistance to dominant ideologies without due regard to the question of the 'meaning' of the subcultural group for participants. Theories were established *a priori* and not really 'risked' in the ethnographic encounter, the established theoretical formulae preventing any independent discovery of meaning that might flow from fieldwork. By taking subcultural styles as symptomatic evidence of structural contradictions within capitalism, the work of the New Wave reveals a tendency towards determinism and reductionism. Motivational accounts are interpreted in ways that may bear no relation to the sense intended by those who provide them. As Rock (1978) has similarly argued: "Life worlds have been translated into little more than the surface manifestation of a deep grammar which is known *ab initio*" (1978 : 605-6).

Similarly, Jenkins (1983 : 5-15) in a brief critique of the Marxist informed theories of cultural reproduction contained in the work of Bourdieu (1979) and Willis (1977) traces the source determinism he discerns in Willis's (1977) study to a "deterministic materialist epistemology" (1983 : 8). Jenkins argues that, despite the attempt by Willis to restore a degree of voluntaristic autonomy to the practice of working class youth within the framework of class analysis, ultimately both Willis and Bourdieu are trapped by "... the determinacy of their philosophical framework and inevitably they reproduce that determinism within their ... analyses" (Jenkins 1983 : 8).

3.4.2 Middle Class Subculture

Although the New Wave attempted to reinstate class oppression as the key to understanding subcultures, the most visible and arguably counter-hegemonic manifestation of youth culture in modern times was the largely middle class 'counter-culture' of the 1960s, essentially a product of affluence and social privilege. The counter-culture can be said to have offered a more direct and explicit challenge to the values of the dominant culture than the mods, Teds, or skinheads. Despite conceding that it may not be possible

to examine middle class youth culture in the same theoretical framework as used for the working class (Hall and Jefferson 1976 : 60), the following fourteen pages are then taken up with just such an attempt. The challenge to dominant values presented by the counter culture is rendered illusory and ultimately "profoundly adaptive to the system's productive base" (1976 : 65).

The counter-culture is said to represent just the type of precursory social forms that a healthy post-Protestant capitalism needs. Analysis in terms of the dialectics of class conflict is, according to Musgrove (1978 : 162), quietly abandoned in favour of a primitive variety of (left-) functionalism (Young 1981a). The recent emergence of youth groups based on an affirmatory stance towards dominant values, the 'Sloanes' and their various factions and splinter-groups, would be equally difficult to accommodate within an explanatory framework based on class conflict (Brake 1990). According to Toby Young for example (writing in 1985):

> "Today's teenager is no longer promiscuous, no longer takes drugs ... designer labels have replaced the protest badge as a symbol of peer group recognition ... Today's teenager has discovered something a little more pleasant than poring over the garbled philosophy of third-rate continental novelists ... It's dinner for two at the Chelsea Wharf, a Porsche, and an American Express card, even if ... [they] ... can only gaze at them in the pages of Harpers and Queen" (1985 : 246-247).

3.4.3 Race

The separate nature of racial oppression, of race as a focus for the articulation of subcultural response, is similarly 'glossed over' in the attempt to render all responses as manifestations of class tensions. Hebdige's treatment is annoyingly elusive. The major part of his study (1979) is taken up by a 'reading' of punk style, though perhaps his most important observation is that white, post-war youth subcultures involve a kind of shadow-boxing with issues of race. Hebdige views punk as "connected at a deep structural level" with the roughly simultaneous emergence of a popular form of Rastafarianism among urban black British youth. It remains as one of the more perplexing features of white, male working class youth subcultures that, though they are sometimes aggressively chauvinistic

(for example, the Teds' involvement in the 1950s race disturbances or the 'paki-bashing' tendency among skinheads), the appropriation of black cultural forms (music, for example) is often a central aspect of their stylistic equipment. Hebdige suggests that white, working class subcultures have been involved in an oblique exchange between the host community and the black presence in Britain, which has accommodated or expunged black style through a succession of different 'subcultural moments': "Played out on the loaded surfaces of British working class youth cultures, [we can watch] a phantom history of race relations since the War" (1979 : 45). However, Hebdige does not really develop this intriguing observation on the questions of youth and race, nor attempt to explain it more explicitly.

Later publications from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies have argued that race and racism, as it exists and functions today, "cannot be treated simply from a sociological perspective" (CCCS 1982). Brittan and Maynard (1984) similarly doubt whether it can be treated from a Marxist perspective, pointing to the possible inadequacies of analyses that reduce racial oppression to class oppression:

> "In maintaining racism ... cannot be reduced to another ... primary level of causation ... we are pointing to serious absences, lacunae, in the traditional accounts of oppression" (1984 : 210).

The dangers of reducing issues of racism to a Marxian explanatory formula are highlighted clearly in some of the contributions of the New Wave. *Paki-bashing in a North East Lancashire Cotton Town* (Pearson 1976) is explained as the response of people who feel their jobs (and women) might be taken by migrant workers. It is not even clear why this 'threat' is responded too most keenly by working class youth. Formerly, the cotton workers of Accrington bashed the new machinery that was threatening their livelihood, now they bash the new workers: "What their action signified, in both instances, was the most rudimentary form of resistance from below to the forces which they imagined were changing their lives" (1976 : 73). The machine-breakers of the 1820s were not

hooligans but class heroes and so - the implication can scarcely be resisted - are their counterparts today (Cohen 1980 : xiii; Musgrove 1978 : 163).

3.4.4 'Ordinary Kids'

Research by the New Wave subcultural theorists and ethnographers has also been criticised for its concentration on -

> "... unconventional fractions of youth, especially working class youth. The fascination for the bizarre, esoteric, the pathological, the marginal elements of youth behaviour and ideology has ... tended to underwrite popular notions about the uniqueness ... separateness and abnormality of youth" (Parker 1976 : 27).

The respectable, orderly, non-deviant and unspectacular elements of working and middle class youth are almost totally ignored within the New Wave's explorations. Subsequent research has sought to remedy this theoretical and empirical lacunae by asserting the presence of 'ordinary kids' in the analysis (Jenkins 1983; Brown 1987). In contrast to Willis's (1977) bi-polar model of oppositional or accommodative responses ('lads' and 'ear'oles'), both Jenkins and Brown offer a more complex, tripartite typology of class cultural responses to the transition between adolescence and adulthood, education and the labour market.

Jenkins's study (1983), for example, presents three 'folk models' of working class youth 'life-styles': the 'lads, citizens, and ordinary kids' of his study title. The 'lads' embody the exaggerated valorisation of masculinity described by Willis (1977). They often come from single parent families and tend to have criminal records. They have attained few, if any, educational qualifications and tend to be in unskilled work or unemployed. They also marry relatively early, and, in the context of 'Ballyhightown', a largely Protestant housing estate in Northern Ireland where the study is based, tend to be militant loyalists. In contrast, 'citizens' are more likely to come from church-oriented 'respectable' families and to have some educational qualifications which enables them to have found skilled manual or white-collar occupations. Unlike the 'lads', the 'citizens' do not have criminal records,

and tend to marry later. The 'ordinary kids' are more like the lads but, unlike the lads, spend more time with females. They are less likely to be unemployed, less likely to have been in trouble with the law, and more likely to marry later.

The significance of Jenkins's study for my critique of the New Wave is the emphasis he places on investigating some of the divisions within the young working class, together with an empathic appreciation of their political and cultural diversity. In contrast to Willis's (1977) implicitly 'lumpen' model of class tensions, Jenkins directs attention away from determinate conformity to a situation in which a predictable future is implicated, towards, "an appreciation of the differing social constructions of reality in which the working class participate" (1983 : 8).

Brown's research (1984, 1985, 1986, 1987) into the 'informal pupil culture' of three working class comprehensive schools in South Wales is similarly critical of Willis's (1977) bi-polar model of pupil conformity/non-conformity. Brown maintains that a simple bi-polar distinction between those who accept or reject the school is a misleading oversimplification of classroom life (1985). Brown's research within the 'informal pupil culture' revealed that pupils recognise at least three different ways of being 'a working class kid in school'. These were commonly recognised in terms of the 'Rems, Ordinary Kids, and Swots':

> "Despite the fact that it may be legitimate to identify the Rems as those pupils who reject the school, and the Swots as those who accept the school, the Ordinary Kids (who comprise the largest category of pupils ...) neither simply accept or reject the school, but nevertheless comply with it. The Ordinary Kids' compliance to school was not based on the premise that if they worked hard at school they could 'get out' of the working class, seduced by the knowledge that a few do succeed, but on their own class cultural desire to become a working class adult in a respectable fashion" (Brown 1986 : 4).

The ways in which the ordinary kids of Brown's study respond to school contrasts with Willis's (1977) depiction of the 'counter-school culture' as being the 'normal' working class response. Willis conflates all other possible articulations and responses as conformist, which leads to an explanation in terms of the success of the school in ideologically incorporating the ordinary kids into bourgeois modes of thought and orientation. Both

Brown and Jenkins's studies show that ordinary kids are not necessarily ideologically duped, revealing such accounts as deterministic, 'over socialised' (Wrong 1967), and inadequate for understanding the ways in which the orientation of the ordinary kids is as much a class cultural response, as the oppositional one which leads to an anti-school subculture. Brown's work reveals that many ordinary kids adopt an 'alienated instrumental' attitude and orientation, characterised by the ways in which -

> "... individuals' 'identities' are divorced from much of what is taught. Their involvement in the school, in terms of identification with its perceived aims, and what teachers 'stand for' is fairly limited ... much of what is taught is perceived as 'irrelevant', and undertaken with a minimum level of personal investment" (Brown 1984 : 4-5).

Thus, for the majority of 'ordinary kids', adopting an 'alienated instrumental orientation' to the school, limited compliance is maintained 'simply to get qualifications'. Their willingness to make a minimum effort is part of an authentic attempt to maintain some command over their own lives, "... to maintain a sense of personal dignity and respect ... and, on their own terms, to enhance their chances of making a working class career when they left school" (1987 : 3).

The ordinary kids of Brown's study believed that modest levels of endeavour and attainment (usually leading to CSEs) would enable them to 'get on' which, in the working class districts of his study area, typically meant boys entering craft apprenticeships and girls low-level clerical and service occupations. Despite these instrumental attitudes which, to some extent, incorporated ordinary kids into the school, they were, "alienated from much of the academic curriculum which was believed to be irrelevant to their present and future lives" (1986 : 5). However, Brown also recognises that the 'vanishing youth labour market' (Ashton and Maguire 1983) has resulted in a, "growing uncertainty and ambiguity in their reasons for working for qualifications" (1984 : 8).

The major decline in youth employment possibilities occurred in 1985 after his research participants had completed their period in secondary education. It was only as they approached school leaving age that they began to understand the problems they would

face. Instrumental attitudes persisted on the basis of educational credentials providing, "legitimate claim to those occupational opportunities which are available" (1984 : 9). However, among younger working class pupils entering secondary education with a clear understanding of their future prospects, 'making an effort' will refer to a much longer time span than for Brown's research participants. Brown acknowledges that, were working class pupils to calculate the value of five years of effort in secondary education with little prospect of securing employment at the end, then there would be the likelihood of increased disaffection. With the possibility of a majority of ordinary kids exchanging an 'alienated instrumental orientation' towards school for the fully alienated orientation characteristic of the anti-school subculture, there is, maintains Brown, likely to be a "... fundamental change in the attitude of even junior school pupils in the direction of an alienated orientation" (1986 : 7).

The final point made by Brown is particularly germane to my study participants. Within my study group, the ordinary kids, who in 1980, though unqualified, could nevertheless be identified with the, "invisible majority" ('who neither leave their names on the school's honours board nor gouge them on the top of their desks'), the process of increasing alienation occurred as a result of their post-school experiences in the labour market. Post-school traditional transitions directly into full-time employment were the outcome for three study participants. Protracted transitions to work, which sometimes took up to seven years, were the outcome for another small minority. Cyclical transitions that produced a "Black-Magic Roundabout" of repetitive patterns of employment training schemes, unemployment, secondary and part-time work, more schemes, more unemployment, and eventually labour market withdrawal, were the outcome for most study participants. Thus, for the majority of young adults in my study group, long-term joblessness, disillusionment, and smouldering resentment were the product of ten years of post-school transitions in a declining labour market (Chapter Four, Section 4.8)

Several participants who could be categorised as 'ordinary kids' in 1980 were, by 1990, fully embarked on alternative 'careers' and survival strategies within the local sub- and anti-employment subcultures, strategies more characteristic of the oppositional, anti-authority orientation of the school counter-culture. For some, who were closer to the 'lads' of the studies by Willis and Jenkins, and the 'Rems' of Brown's research, this oppositionality, the 'alienated orientation', was a logical extension of an oppositional apprenticeship served in education. For the majority, alienated orientations were the consequence of labour market experiences. It does not take a massive leap of imagination to conceive of ordinary kids reorienting their orientations as a result of ten years of, 'shit jobs, Govvy schemes' (Coffield *et al* 1986) and social security hassles (See Chapter Eight).

My study cannot lay claim to exhaustive representativeness, thus these speculative comments will have to be settled empirically, although recent ethnographic enquiries by the massive ESRC 16-19 Initiative does lend some support to the notion of the increasing disposition of 'ordinary kids' towards fully alienated oppositional orientations, especially when linked to parental unemployment -

> "... where there was parental unemployment, the group member could be a significant breadwinner, making a major contribution to the household economy. Somehow or other, in such a situation of tight finances, money was additionally made, begged, borrowed or stolen. Opportunistic theft was routine. All tended to be members of informal local networks which bought and sold televisions, videos, hi-fis and so on, at significantly reduced rates, 'no questions asked'. In such a money-making situation, one could either be a 'principal' or a 'middle man' (Banks *et al* 1992 : 85).

Moreover, evidence submitted by the TUC to the Department of Trade and Industry Select Committee on unemployment (1992) similarly argued that the increases in unemployment recorded in the final months of 1992 were producing damaging long-term social costs:

> "The increasing alienation of groups within society is a symptom of a wider malaise, one caused by the breakdown of the implied social contract between individuals and the State" (quoted in *The Observer* 17.1.93 : 2).

3.4.5 Invisible Women

The absence of women, girls, the domestic sphere, and gender divisions generally constitutes another 'screaming silence' in the New Wave youth studies of the 1970s. The relatively recent studies by Jenkins (1983) and Brown (1987) seek to reinstate girls in their analyses of youth. Almost one half of the 'ordinary kids' and 'citizens' in Jenkins's study sample, for example, are girls (Footnote 7), though Jenkins does acknowledge the difficulties involved for male participant observers seeking to gain access to the day-to-day experiences of girls (1983 : 19-20). In contrast, the studies produced by the New Wave in the 1970s can be shown to be theoretically and empirically deficient in respect of their failure to address the domestic sphere and the role and position of women and girls in the analyses of youth sub-cultural forms (Millman 1975). As a result of these imbalances, the impressive range of studies produced by the New Wave remains relatively restricted, with the 'invisibility' of women and girls in the literature seriously challenging the claim that subcultures represent the 'expressive forms' of all those, "condemned to subordinate positions and second class lives" (Hebdige 1979 : 132). As McRobbie (1981) has similarly asserted:

> "Although 'youth culture' and the 'sociology of youth' - and particularly critical and Marxist perspectives on them - have been central strands in the development of Cultural Studies over the past fifteen years, the emphasis ... has remained consistently on male youth cultural forms ... women and the whole question of sexual division have been marginalised" (1981 : 111).

Thus in the New Wave studies of youth, women and girls remain "invisible, peripheral, or stereotyped" (Brake 1980 : 137).

Until relatively recently little seems to have been written about the role of girls in youth subcultures (McRobbie 1981, 1982; McRobbie and Nava 1984; Griffin 1985; Skeggs 1985; Wallace 1987). Some of the more recent studies have served to counteract the bias. Female youth has been 'discovered' and, moreover, discovered to be conscious, subcultured and sometimes 'resisting' (Griffin 1985 : 19-21; 192-3), rather than the passive, isolated and unsubcultured entities sterotypically portrayed in the majority of

previous studies. The continued 'invisibility' of women and girls in the majority of studies produced by the New Wave in the 1970s was compounded by the fundamental preoccupation with youth as a -

> "... peculiarly and unproblematically male genus - involved in the culture of the street, playground and shop floor, but absent from the domestic sphere and from personal and intergenerational relationships" (McRobbie and Nava 1984 : ix).

This is ironical in as much as the New Wave sociology of youth developed, in part, as a critical reaction to the empirical absences and theoretical deficiencies of the 'mainstream' writing on youth in the 1950s and early 1960s. Whilst the New Wave succeeded in restoring notions of inequality and class based oppression to the theoretical and empirical agenda, at the same time they perpetuated the continued invisibility of women and girls. As Rowbotham (1973) has observed:

> "It is as if everything that relates [to women] ... comes out in the footnotes to the main text ... We come on the agenda somewhere between 'Youth' and 'Any Other Business'. We encounter ourselves in men's cultures as 'by the way' and peripheral. According to all the reflections we are not really there" (1973 : 35).

The invisibility of women in youth culture studies, social research, and sociology generally, has a long history (Abbott and Wallace 1990). It was Montague who, in 1904, first pointed out the, "girl in the background". In an important early paper, Heidensohn (1968) noted the similar absence of women in the sociology of deviance. She argued that:

> "The deviance of women is a non-problem both to the social scientist and to society in general, because so little effort has been devoted to studying it" (1968 : 162).

Whenever public concern is focused on the 'deviant' behaviour of women, as was the case with *The Wolfenden Report* (1956), the Committee established to investigate it recommended that the 'social visibility' of the activities should be reduced, so that public concern could be assuaged. The 'problem' was redefined by rendering it 'invisible'. Heidensohn maintains that the stability and ubiquity of gender differences in crime rates and other records of socially visible deviance have meant that sociologists have uncritically

developed explanatory theories based on, "the male and on masculine forms of acting out behaviour in a social frame" (1968 : 165). (my emphasis)

For Heidensohn, a more meaningful approach would take account of female deviance as an aspect of the female gender role and its articulation with social structure rather than "... trying to make it conform to patterns apparently observed in the male role and its particular articulation with social structure" (1968 : 170). Heidensohn bemoans the lack of past documentation and research, arguing that the literature on deviance contains profound 'blind spots' produced by an overly masculinist theoretical and empirical focus. This essentially masculinist orientation or 'world view' (Glennon 1979; Mackinnon 1982) was built not only into the studies of youth and deviance but, until relatively recently, the whole of the sociological enterprise generally, the unacknowledged sexism of sociology providing the main explanation for the absence of women in the New Wave's studies of youth. The critique that emerged in the late 1970s, emanating from a practical and theoretical engagement with feminism within youth studies, fundamentally challenged the male oriented theoretical models and assumptions as well as the predominating focus on masculine subject matter and topics which, for so long, "have constituted the assumed terrain of Cultural Studies (in a profoundly unconscious and unreflexive way)" (Hall *et al* 1980 : 38).

McRobbie (1981) has pointed to the idea that the male accounts of youth subcultures produced by the New Wave may have been a form of 'displaced autobiography' or 'wish fulfilment' on the part of sociologists such as Hebdige or Willis. She has also raised the question of the experiences that produced or influenced a particular choice of subject matter; what she has described as, "the politics of selection", remained more or less taboo in the participant observation studies of the New Wave. The 'absence of self' and invalidation of 'the personal' runs contrary, not only to a central tenet of the Women's Movement, but also the trend towards reflexivity developed in ethnography since the mid-1950s.

The masculinist focus of research and the concentration on the spectacular and visible forms of subcultural response resulted in the family, gender relationships, and domestic life generally, being overlooked. This tendency has been explained by Frith (1981) as a question of funding:

> "The various groups attracted media interest - and, *via* the media, public interest - as well as attention from police and social workers. Sociologists shared this interest and were encouraged - by publishers, by the availability of research funds - to concentrate their attention on the most deviant youth groups. The most obvious consequence of this has been the absence of girls from most studies of youth culture. Because the most visible examples of delinquency have been found in gangs of boys, the concept of youth culture has become synonymous with assertive expressions of 'masculinity' - hooliganism, violence, etc. It has attained another invisible prefix: (male) (delinquent) youth culture" (1981 : 7) (my emphasis)

However, this argument is inadequate, as Dorn and South proclaim: "Attention was ... concentrated by and where the majority of sociologists -who were male - bothered to look" (1984 : 17).

Most youth groups included girls, but, as Frith notes, the time boys spent with their girlfriends was not regarded as significant (1981 : 7). The relative absence of women 'on the street', where the action was, was not questioned or addressed by the New Wave participant observers. Recent studies cast doubt on the assumption that women really were absent (Shacklady-Smith 1978; Campbell 1981; Griffin 1985). Campbell and Shacklady-Smith in particular demonstrate the routine and full involvement of girls in the 'whole' of youth culture activities, including the part where they seek privacy from the boys. They also participate in the mundane (hanging around) as well as the spectacular (fighting and delinquency - Campbell 1981; crime - Carlen *et al* 1985). The women described in the studies by Griffin (1985) and Skeggs (1985) are not the feminised 'cultural dopes' described by Willis (1978) and Corrigan (1979), into which "Jackie-ideology" (McRobbie 1982) is unreflexively poured, but are just as much subcultural members as the 'lads'. They may appear less 'troublesome' than the boys to those in authority, but often that too is a case of misrecognition:

> "Where the deviance of women is concerned, there may be a syndrome of 'modification' of female deviance within the social system, rather than the 'amplification' of deviance as

amongst adolescent males, due perhaps to certain factors of the female role in society and social perceptions of it" (Heidensohn 1968 : 172).

Both Griffin and Skeggs draw attention to distinctive sub-groups of girls with their own value and status systems, but these were largely unexplored by the New Wave participant observers who perhaps failed to 'see' them except in terms that uncritically adopted masculinist definitions of gender roles. Willis (1978), for example, reinforced the 'peripheral' nature of girls' participation in subcultures by failing to interrogate the silence or apparent marginality, and uncritically reproducing the gender bias of the subcultures he examined:

> "Women were usually accompanied by a man and they did not speak anything like as much as the men. There was a small group of unattached females, but they were allowed no real dignity or identity" (1978 : 28).

The notion of the minimal participation of girls in subcultures is reinforced by a neglect of their contributions and articulations in other social arenas, such as the home or within the family, a point forcefully made by McRobbie, "The lads may get by with ... each other alone on the streets, but they did not eat, sleep or make love there (1981 : 114).

Some work produced in the 1970s indicated that girls were not peripheral or marginal, but located in a different structural position, articulated at the intersection of class and gender (McRobbie and Garber 1976). This work suggested that working class girls were pushed by male dominance to the edges of visible social activity and, because their activities were ideologically different, they were articulated in domains that were less accessible to male investigators. According to Barker (1972), Crichton *et al* (1962) and McRobbie (1978), girls spent more time within the domestic sphere. Frith (1978) suggests three reasons for the absence of girls from subcultures: greater parental control; an emphasis on a 'domestic apprenticeship' as preparation for the life of 'domestic labour'; and a 'leisure career' involving the attraction of a man, marriage, and future domesticity.

In terms of the stylistic appropriation of cultural artefacts discussed by Hebdige (1979), McRobbie (1978, 1981, 1982) argues that the 'cult of femininity' constrains the choice of artefacts in a possible female 'subcultural artillery'. What is available to girls is socially and ideologically constrained by the 'cult of femininity' articulated, for example, through the magazines of teenage girls. It is for this reason, McRobbie argues, girls play little, if any, role in shaping a counter-hegemonic subcultural response: "Their choice in consumption is materially extremely narrow. And indeed the forms made available to them make re-appropriation difficult" (1982 : 267).

One of the most important manifestations of a subculture amongst girls in the 1970s was the 'Teeny Bopper' phenomenon (McRobbie and Garber 1976). However, it too remained largely unexplored because it was confined to the private sphere of the bedroom. Frith (1978) has similarly argued that -

> "Girl culture becomes a culture of the bedroom, the place where girls meet, listen to music and teach each other make-up skills, practice their dancing, compare sexual notes, criticise each other's clothes <u>and gossip</u>" (1978 : 66). (my emphasis)

Here Frith presents an intriguing take on the 'structured absence' of women from the New Wave ethnographies, in that the private domain of girls' bedrooms is largely inaccessible to male researchers. However, he undermines his observations by devaluing women's talk as "gossip", a further indication of the unreflexive discrimination in male sociology in the 1970s.

The position of girls specifically in terms of their position within subcultural analysis seems to imply or reflect a much wider subordination, and more recent studies have attempted to make 'visible' the alternative network of responses and activities through which girls negotiate their relation to <u>male</u> culture and subcultures (McRobbie and Nava 1984). An overall review of the position of girls within the New Wave ethnographies reveals a picture of their minimal participation, of their presence as 'chicks', 'slags', 'hangers-on', or 'side-kicks', at the margins, in the background, but rarely in the subcultural

spotlight. Their activities, when at all highlighted in terms of a specific female response, are considered to be 'privatised' and 'individualised', present only as a result of a relationship with a male or involved in the less accessible 'bedroom culture'. In no case, do their activities imply collective identity, group solidarity, or oppositionality. However, there is now a good deal of evidence to suggest that some girls do articulate a measure of defiance and opposition, drawing on the resources of 'femininity' to do so (Brittan and Maynard 1984; Anyon 1983; Davies 1983; Hemmings (ed) 1986; Coffield *et al* 1986). Researchers suggest that in the educational sphere most working class girls (except the 'successful') find school a dull and irrelevant institution.

The expectations on the part of both the girls and their teachers focus on the inevitability of marriage and the domestic sphere. Since educational achievement is secondary to the popular ideology of femininity, opposition is developed in the context of what they have defined as significant (romance, attractiveness, etc.). According to Brittan and Maynard (1984), 'exaggerated' feminine behaviour within the classroom may not simply indicate conformity to social expectations, but can also signify, "opposition to school which continually tries to control expressions of femaleness in the interests of management and discipline" (1984 : 176).

Thus, girls may utilise ploys such as 'flirtatious' and 'suggestive' behaviour to undermine male authority (Anyon 1983; Davies 1979, 1983, 1984), or seek to diminish the power of the male teacher's presence by addressing him as if he were a 'little boy', or exchange 'good behaviour' for an acknowledgement of 'the personal', that is, for information about the teacher's private life (Davies 1983, 1984). Thus the girls draw on resources that are available to them *via* the culture of femininity in order to construct and reconstruct their identities, thereby challenging the 'decorum and etiquette' of female behaviour expectations (Maynard and Brittan 1984 : 176; Anyon 1983). Other researchers have investigated the 'counter school culture' as developed by girls (Thomas 1980; Walkerdine 1981), which

similarly involves a reappropriation of femininity in order to subvert the conventional frameworks of male authority.

A wealth of factual documentation has been assembled illustrating women's under-representation in all public positions of privilege, influence, power, and authority. Alongside this can be set the absence of material on women's position and 'world view' within sociology (Abbott and Wallace 1990). These two situations are, of course, connected. As Delamont (1980) has argued, there is insufficient research on the public places where women congregate:

> "We have ethnographies of bars, street corners and billiard halls, but not of shops, beauty parlours, coffee or tea rooms, or bingo halls" (1980 : 156).

However, until there is a reorientation of concerns, greater funding, and more women sociologists, this lack will not be easily remedied. The impact of the feminist critique not only of the New Wave studies of youth conducted in the 1970s but of sociology in general is profound. The sociology of youth, like many areas of sociological research and theory construction, has suffered from an over concentration on male concerns and situations. An acceptance of untested assumptions about the social world has informed many areas of sociological research including, as I have tried to show, the New Wave ethnographies of youth. As Hall *et al* (1980) have been forced to concede, the impact of feminism has -

> "... redrawn the map of Cultural Studies, as it is slowly redesigning every area of critical intellectual life. The transformations it has provoked are profound and unstoppable" (1980 : 39).

The validity of experiential data as part of any understanding of social phenomena has been demonstrated by the increasing presence of feminist concerns in the ethnographic approach (Griffin 1985; Stafford 1991; Warren 1988). As Lorna Warren has argued:

> "The fieldwork methods I had chosen were appropriate for feminism since they rejected the objective approach typical of a masculine culture which gives status to science, rationality and an instrumental orientation to one's task (1988 : 22)

This movement has not originated from an idealist concern with subjective experience for its own sake, but rather from an explicit interest with the historical and socio-economic determinations associated with patriarchy:

> "Feminist perspectives helped my understanding of the experiences of home helps and elderly people by placing them in relation to gender and age divisions within a context of oppression and subordination"(Warren 1988 : 22).

Because accounts produced within both functionalist and Marxist sociology could not deal with the specificity of women's experience - particularly in its oppressed form as revealed in the ethnographic moment (e.g. Stafford 1991) - the necessity of a return to the personal, subjective arena (i.e. lived experience) was highlighted.

Part of the ethnographic project for feminists in recent years has been to record and articulate the realities of women's subordination and oppression through the personal, lived experiences of women and girls (e.g. Carlen 1983; Carlen *et al* 1985; Cook 1987b; Coyle 1984; Griffin 1985; Stafford 1991). As such, these studies have counteracted the relative invisibility of women in youth studies in particular and sociology in general.

3.5 Summary and Conclusions

In an earlier section of this Chapter (3.2), I have attempted to discern and trace the contours of the historical development of a subjectivist tradition and orientation for participant observers. The emphasis on a more, "humanistic and empathic approach" (Roberts 1976 : 244), attracted my attention because it meshed neatly with participatory dispositions I had acquired as a result of my detached youth work and community self-survey practice in Hartingleigh (see Chapter Two). Participant observation studies offered a rich tradition of providing depth analyses of numerous social domains from the perspectives of research participants, in contrast to the traditional objectivist approach of the dominant research tradition within sociology largely informed by positivism. Although, as Jenkins has observed:

> "It would be misleading to pretend that there is any such thing as a theoretically innocent ethnography (1983 : 1).

Thus, much of the foregoing material in this Chapter is an attempt to make explicit the theoretical scaffolding within which my study would be constructed. The subjectivist participant observation mode, inherited from phenomenological and symbolic interactionist roots, and based on implicit philosophical assumptions of nominalism, voluntarism and naturalism (anti-positivism), in the light of the obviously overarching influences of gender or other such 'external' determinations as, for example, youth poverty (Kirk *et al* 1991) or 'recession led' (Raffe 1984) or 'structural' (Ashton and Maguire 1983), youth unemployment has to be situated within a more or less determinate social context. Subjectivist accounts of post-school transitions in a high unemployment area such as Hartingleigh cannot be understood without reference to, "the determining matrix of conditions and experiences which shape the life of [the] class as a whole" (Hall and Jefferson 1976 : 14-15). Moreover contemporary youth research provides confirmation that: "Class is still the dominant force shaping ... the nature of transition to adulthood" (Bynner 1991 : 645).

Thus, the post-school transitions from youthful dependence to adult independence remain rooted in structural inequalities associated with social class, gender, and ethnic background and are, moreover, conditioned by other structural factors such as local labour market opportunity (Banks *et al* 1992). The value of the Marxist informed critical ethnography of the British New Wave is that it -

> "... extended the use of qualitative ethnographic methods; highlighted the relatively powerless position of most young people in legal, economic, and social terms; challenged many of the existing assumptions about 'delinquent' and 'non-delinquent' youth; and developed a critical analysis of class" (Griffin 1986a : 21).

The significance of the critical ethnography of the New Wave for my study is that it allows for a subjectivist mode of participatory social investigation whilst at the same time retaining a notion of social structure informed by Sociology's conflict tradition; a notion of social structure which, moreover, shapes and sometimes constrains the voluntaristic

choices of individual actors (Cohen 1972; Willis 1977; McRobbie 1978). Thus, while the individual must be viewed as free to shape actions, destiny, and consciousness, a theoretical orientation derived from the subjectivist traditions of participant observation, these processes take place within a pre-determined historical, economic, ideological and political context which precedes individual volition (Marx and Engels 1935 : 241). Richard Johnson, for example, provides the crucial orienting insight that:

> "It is only through the conscious, social and more or less creative activity of individual men, women and children that the systems of class-cultural relations are reproduced. It is they who within given conditions reinforce in their lives the cultural patterns or make breaks with them. The histories of intention and consciousness (and also of emotional economy and the only-partially-conscious) are necessary components in any explanatory history" (1980 : 48).

Thus, the work produced by the New Wave was characterised by an analysis of youth subcultures which, whilst recognising the central significance of class relationships in shaping a sub-cultural response, at the same time acknowledged the 'lived values' and meanings which differentiated working class youth subcultures from the parent culture within which they were located and the dominant culture to which they frequently stood opposed. The critical and philosophical tension which exists between these subjectivist experiential accounts and the macroscopic analyses of historical and other determinants continues to provide significant areas for sociological theorising and debate (*cf* Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Giroux 1983; Giddens 1976; Johnson *et al* 1984; Jenkins 1983; Wallace 1987; Willis 1977). The main theoretical context within which the debates are set is that of social and cultural reproduction. Willis (1981) has elaborated the distinction between cultural and social reproduction, and here I am drawing on similar definitions provided by the New Wave's theoretical work. Hall and Jefferson (1976), for example, argue that social reproduction is the reproduction of the social relations of production (*cf* Althusser 1971), whilst culture refers to the ways in which people make sense of this through 'lived experience'. Cultural reproduction refers to the ways in which such meanings are transmitted over time.

Willis, for example, insists that the cultural sphere has a relative autonomy (1977 : 171), and that the cultural attitudes and practices of working class groups are not necessarily reflective of, or even traceable to, structural determinations or dominant ideologies. Although the mode of production wields a powerful influence on the attitudes and actions of individuals, people do not simply respond with passivity or indifference to the socio-economic pressures bearing down on them. The cultural level is marked by contestation, resistance and compromise. Culture itself implies, "the active, collective use and explorations of received symbolic, ideological, and cultural resources to explain, make sense of and positively respond to 'inherited' structural and material conditions" (Willis 1983 : 112).

Willis's work shows that subordinate groups may produce alternative cultural forms containing meanings endemic to the parent culture. Termed 'cultural production' by Willis, this is viewed as an active and transformative process although, despite their behavioural and attitudinal innovativeness, such cultural resistance is also reproductive. As Gordon has commented in her review of Willis's study, it may seem contradictory to refer to cultural production as both transformative and reproductive, but -

> "... Willis wishes to move away from an over simplistic either/or model. He points out that there is no clear separation between agency and structure; these cannot be understood in isolation from one another" (Gordon 1985 : 113).

According to Cohen (1968) most sociological theory deals with one of two levels of social reality. The first of social action and interaction, and the second of social structure or system, have remained relatively autonomous spheres in the history of social theorising. There have been few attempts to bring them together:

> "Durkheim was concerned with the second. Simmel tried both, but scarcely succeeded in bring them in relation with one another. Pareto succeeded in bringing them together but his synthesis was a poor one. Marx, who did not really set himself this task, actually succeeded in performing it quite well (1968 : 236).

Bridging the division between structure and agency, resolving the debates between the 'two sociologies', and occupying the space within the 'epistemological chasm' is a task that faces the sociological enterprise and one that is beyond my remedy. Recent attempts include Giddens's theory of structuration and Giroux's theory of resistance. Giddens seeks to explain how, "it comes about that structures are constituted through action, and reciprocally how action is constituted structurally" (1976 : 161). Giddens's theoretical solution is "the duality of structure" -

> "... the essential recursiveness of social life, as constituted in social practices: structure is both the medium and outcome of the reproduction of practices. Structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices and 'exists' in the generating moments of this constitution" (1979 : 4-5).

Social action, the everyday practice of knowing participants, is thus given a prominent position within the analytical architecture.

Similarly, Giroux (1983) seeks a complex theoretical bridging operation between structure and agency, an artificial cleavage which has, he argues, been maintained within theories of social reproduction. Giroux contends that separation of human agency and structural analysis either suppresses the significance of individual autonomy or ignores the structural determinants that lie outside the immediate experience of individual participants (1983 : 119). Giroux insists on the need to admit, "wider structural and ideological determinations, while recognising that human beings never represent simply a reflex of such constraints" (1983 : 38). Structuralist theories which stress that history is made "behind the backs" of the members of society overlook the significance and relative autonomy of the cultural level and the human experiences of domination and resistance:

> "In the structuralist perspective, human agents are registered simply as the effects of structural determinants that appear to work with the certainty of biological processes. In this grimly mechanistic approach, human subjects simply act as role-bearers" (1983 : 136).

Culturalist theories, on the other hand, pay too little attention to how structurally embedded material and economic forces weigh down and shape human experience.

"Culturalism beings at the right place but does not go far enough theoretically - it does not dig into subjectivity in order to find its objective elements" (1983 : 135).

Giroux argues for a rigorous treatment of ideology, consciousness and culture in order to move reproduction theorisations beyond the *impasse* posed by the structure-agency dualism. He proposes a dialectical treatment of subjectivity and structure in which structure and human action are viewed as mutually constituting each other.

In exploring these issues, Giroux, drawing on the ethnographic explorations of Willis, Hebdige, and Corrigan, develops a theory of resistance. He follows the lead of the New Wave ethnographers in examining nonconformity and oppositionality for their socio-political significance. Giroux considers such responses rooted in, "moral and political indignation" (1983a : 289). He acknowledges that not all forms of oppositionality stem from an implicit critique of ideologies of domination, but insists that oppositionality be scrutinised and the resistance mined for its broader cultural significance. In so doing, Giroux sets an agenda for future studies in social reproduction (1983a : 290).

Resistance theory examines the ongoing active experiences of individuals whilst simultaneously perceiving in oppositional attitudes and practices a response to structures of constraint and domination. Giroux suggests that working class subordination is not a simple reaction to the logic of capitalism or capitalist rationality, but rather oppositional cultural patterns draw on elements of working class culture in a creative and potentially transformative fashion. The task is to link oppositionality to participants' explanations and understandings which are contextualised within the nexus of peer, family and work relations out of which resistance emerges (1983a : 291).

In the critique I developed, in Section 3.4.1, of the ethnographic explorations of the British New Wave of participant observers, I argued that one of the flaws in the accounts produced was an over reliance on a deterministic and prioristic materialist epistemology

which often subordinated ethnographic detail and discovery. In contrast, the theoretical explorations of both Giroux and Giddens lay stress on the centrality of understanding possessed by social agents and research participants. Giddens, for example, takes it to be axiomatic to his theoretical model that "every social actor knows a great deal about the conditions of reproduction of the society of which he or she is a member" (1979 : 5).

A further critique of the New Wave of participant observation was its notable neglect of women and girls within the analysis. As my study emerged in parallel with such queries, I evolved participatory strategies to ensure that the women of my study were not marginalised. In recent years, there has been a great deal of debate about the personal relations involved in fieldwork. Feminist researchers in particular have urged ethnographers to stop treating people as 'data' (Reinharz 1983; Stanley and Wise 1983). Similarly, according to Stanton, "there's an understanding that, to people on the receiving end of a survey or questionnaire, distance and objectivity often feel like alienation and intrusion" (1989 : 330). Instead of the objectification of people as 'data' or 'response units', some writers have urged reciprocity between researchers and research participants (Oakley 1981 : 30; Finch 1981 : 70; Mulkay 1985 : 12). Mutuality in research has, moreover, enabled some researchers to move beyond the distinction between analyst and participant. Thus, instead of merely utilising participants' accounts as illustrative material, researchers have actively engaged participants in the process of reproducing that material within the text (Carlen *et al* 1985; Gatehouse Project 1985, 1987; Glasgow Women's Studies Group 1983). Carlen *et al*'s co-authored book, Criminal Women (1985), for example, crosses the boundary between empirical research in the interactionist tradition and autobiography. It has the rare characteristic of allowing the, 'objects' of its analysis - in this case, women who break the law - to go beyond the mere provision of illustrative material for the researcher's own thesis, and to actively engage in the process of reproducing that material. Carlen placed her professional expertise at the service of her four co-authors, professional women criminals, thus enabling them to remain the knowing participants in their own accounts. At the same time, she was able to provoke theoretical

violence by husbands/boyfriends, for example, Anni's genuine warmth and support provided a favourable framework for the unforced responses of research participants.

The 1980s brought many fundamental changes in the lives of the young people of Hartingleigh - in education, training, and the labour market. There was a rapid expansion of the Manpower Services Commission as part of an evolving state strategy for youth which involved the institution of a plethora of educational, vocational, youth training initiatives. There were tougher policing strategies, particularly in the inner city areas and a prominent law and order lobby; repeated disturbances in all of Britain's major inner cities and 'copy-cat' disturbances in many of the smaller towns with increasingly hysterical representations of these events in the predominantly right-wing media. All of these changes affected the lives of my study participants and have been connected with rising youth unemployment levels and diminishing opportunity.

Until the years of the Thatcher Decade, much of the ethnographic work in the subcultural/deviancy tradition was concerned with the complex adaptations of the working class young to structural inequalities at a time of relatively full employment. Since then, the semiotically inclined style analyses of Willis and Hebdige, for example, have been replaced by sobering descriptions and analyses of the nature and consequences of youth unemployment. Part of the change in focus may be attributed to the fact that the cohort of youth researchers is steadily ageing:

> "We have to recognise the dynamism of youth studies in the seventies and early eighties came from people who themselves were close to, and had been personally attached to, youth culture and subcultures" (Chisholm 1990 : 93).

Since Hebdige's innovative study of subculture (1979), there has been little work generated in this tradition. Contemporary youth research has concerned itself with post-school transitions and an examination of a prospective workless or even 'workfare' future for young people in which welfare benefits may have to be earned. The key significance of my proposed study is that it was to address sub-cultural formation at a time of mass

youth unemployment. Because most of the previously examined research on youth was conducted in conditions of almost full employment, it tended to rely on specific concepts of 'work' and 'leisure'. Youth studies in the 1960s and 1970s used 'work' to refer to paid employment and 'leisure' was usually time outside of school or waged work. The entry to adulthood was tied to the post-school transition to a full-time job. In the mid 1980s, some sociologists raised the question:

> "What happens when the transition from school to work becomes a move from the classroom to the dole queue? It is no longer possible to define 'work' simply in terms of paid labour or 'leisure' as 'free time' ... The conditions which produced the youth sub-cultures of the past three decades are rapidly disappearing" (Griffin 1986a : 29).

Both Griffin (1985a) and Willis (1984d) suggest that the traditional transition from school to waged employment has all but disappeared for significant sections of the young working class, as a result of which, they have become trapped in a social, cultural, and economic, "twilight zone" (Presdee 1984), unable to attain traditional conceptions of adult status associated with paid employment.

Similarly, the stark contrast in socio-cultural contexts I outlined in Chapter One (Section 1.9), and which I experienced in these years during the journeys between 'student life' in picturesque York and 'home life' in North Manchester, provided fertile ground within which the seeds of my research project were to germinate. The stark social contrasts provided the opportunity within which, almost unwittingly, I began testing my newly acquired sociological perception. Participant observation was a significant facilitator in this evolution, not only of my ideas about the social world, but of ways of applying these ideas to the social world in order to more fully explore and understand it. Despite its relatively marginal status in terms of the mainstream sociological research tradition, participant observation studies provided valuable depictions of numerous 'unorthodox' social arenas which were instructive and occasionally inspirational in the formative stages of my own work. They highlighted the impact of grand social forces on the everyday level; the processural unfolding of events over time; and the ways in which

social participants impute meanings and negotiate social structure within the situated complexity of their natural settings.

Participant observation's great strength lies in its deep exploration of a topic or area of study. It can yield explanatory insights into the reasons why individuals, groups and organisations act as they do, and how conflicting social forces are resolved. In so doing, it brings these insights and descriptions to the reader with a vividness unattainable with other approaches. It is therefore not surprising that the studies I remember most clearly from my undergraduate years are the vivid ethnographic depictions of youth, youth culture and subcultures, deviance, and urban social life; studies that mirrored my experiences of life in North Manchester and touched most closely my own feelings and emotions.

Before graduating from University in 1985, I had only half-formed the idea of possibly conducting research amongst the young people of Hartingleigh. Encouraged by my established contacts and a measure of academic success, I began to conceive of an ethnographic/participatory study examining the lives and social circumstances of the 'unqualified early leavers' of my home community; many of whom appeared to be making the transition to adulthood without any formal experience of the major structuring influence of primary employment.

In Phase Three of my evolving study (1985-1986), after leaving university and returning to Hartingleigh, I began to undertake preliminary fieldwork with a view to submitting an application for research funding to the ESRC. In this period, I began to trace the original participants in the school leavers survey conducted by the Project in 1980, and also to systematically keep records of my contacts.

Footnotes

1. I realise such definitional terms are the subject of much discussion and there are great areas of controversy surrounding their application. Without wishing to become embroiled in these debates, my use of the terms are by way of overview and generalisation; included in the text to signal my awareness of the parameters of philosophical controversies which are, perhaps, destined to remain unresolved. However, for a comprehensive review of realism, see Keat and Urry (1975 : 27-45) and Levy (1981). According to Burrell and Morgan (1979 : 45): "Realism .. postulates that the social world external to individual cognition is a real world made up of hard, tangible and relatively immutable structures. Whether or not we perceive and label these structures ... they still exist as empirical entities ... the social world exists independently of an individual's appreciation of it".

2. For discussions of the nominalism-realism debates, see, for example, Kolakowski (1972 : 15-16) and Johnson *et al* (1984 : 15-19). According to Burrell and Morgan (1979 : 4), the nominalist position revolves around the assumption that the social world external to individual cognition is made up of nothing more than the names, concepts and labels which are used to structure reality. They are "regarded as artificial creations whose utility is based on their convenience as tools for describing, making sense of, and negotiating the external world."

3. For discussions of the positivism/anti-positivism debates, see, for example, Giddens (1974); Halfpenny (1982); Walsh (1972). A polemical introduction to the anti-positivist view of the scientific method can be found in Douglas (1970 : 3-44).

4. "At one extreme, we can identify a determinist view which regards ... [human] ... activities as being completely determined by the situation or 'environment' ... At another extreme, we can identify the voluntarist view that ... [human activity] ... is completely autonomous and free-willed" (Burrell and Morgan 1979 : 6). In psychology, for example, debate has continued since the 1940s about the model of human nature to be adopted. At one extreme can be located the determinism of Behaviourist Psychology as identified with B. F. Skinner, who has argued: "If we are to use the methods of science in the field of human affairs, we must assume that behaviour is lawful and determined. We must expect to discover that what a man does is the result of specifiable conditions and once these conditions have been discovered, we can anticipate and, to some extent, determine his actions" (1953 : 6). On the other hand, Existential Psychology, as represented in the work of Carl Rogers's "client-centred therapy" emphasises the voluntarism essential for "self-creation": "Man does not simply have the characteristics of a machine ... he is a person in the process of creating himself, a person who creates meaning in life" (quoted in Shlien 1963 : 307).

5. According to Burrell and Morgan (1979 : 6), "The ideographic method stresses the importance of letting one's subject unfold its nature and characteristics during the process of investigation". Blumer (1969 : Chapter 1) provides an excellent discussion of the nature of the ideographic approach to social research. On the other hand, the nomothetic approach to social research is characterised by systematic scientific protocol. It is epitomised in the approach and methods of the natural sciences, which focus on the process of testing hypotheses in accordance with the canons of scientific rigour. B. F. Skinner's Behaviourist

Psychology represents just such an extreme, empiricist, approach. He advocates a functional analysis of the behaviour of organisms (including rats and pigeons) in laboratory contexts, in order to establish exact and specifiable relationships between the organism's observable behaviour (responses) and the environmental conditions (stimuli) that control, affect, or determine it. The variables employed are external, visible, and defined in quantifiable terms. It is the cause-effect relationship emerging from a functional analysis which become the 'laws' of Behaviourism. The practical goal is to be able to manipulate the environmental variables from which predictions are made and then to measure the resulting changes in an organism's behaviour (See Johnson *et al*, 1984 : 32-34; Burrell and Morgan 1979 : 102-105).

6. Whilst not arguing that Marx provided solutions to the essential philosophical dualisms outlined above, in attempting to displace material/ideal, subject/object, he pointed to the possibilities of theoretical advance. Thus, Marx's theoretical strategy involved a rejection of the basic tenets of empiricism and subjectivism, whilst retaining within a critical method, a continuous dialogue with their positive contributions. According to Johnson *et al* (1984 : 145), Marx "accepts the empiricist characterisation of reality as a material objective set of events, while rejecting its associated nominalism and the claim that knowledge is rooted in experience. He aligns himself with subjectivism in viewing the social as a project of human constructive activity whilst rejecting the assumption that such activity is entirely reducible to an interpretative process. Finally, he accepts the constructivist position of the rationalist, Hegel, while rejecting what he regarded as his abstract idealism".

7. Although Griffin (1985a : 6) argues that Jenkins merely fits the girls into "gender specific male categories".

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EVOLUTION OF A RESEARCH PROJECT : THE THIRD PHASE 1985-1986

4.1 Preliminary Sampling - Fieldwork

In the summer of 1985, after a formal University Graduation Ceremony, attended by no less than three generations of my family, I finally left York with my degree to return home to Hartingleigh. By this time, I had discussed my future prospects with various members of the Sociology Department and had tentatively decided to formulate a research project based on my existing contacts with the young people and Youth and Community Project in Hartingleigh. Bob Coles, one of my tutors at York, was particularly influential at this time. It was Bob who initially proposed the idea of utilising my contacts in the local community to conduct research amongst the young unemployed. Bob was involved in a study of youth unemployment in a rural shire county (Coles 1986; 1988) and as such was able to provide early knowledgeable encouragement, support, and background literature for my embryonic project.

Another influential figure at this stage of my evolving study was Jim Donovan at the Centre. Jim was also to provide a good deal of practical support as I began to lay the foundations for my research. With Jim's help, I decided to begin by methodically examining the documents and records held by the Project. These were stored in ten old fashioned, metal army surplus filing cabinets located in a small back room annexe to the Centre's main 'office'. After three weeks of systematic search, I was able to locate various documents pertaining to the formation of the Project (Chapter One,. Section 1.8), together with the original contact addresses and 44 of the completed questionnaires from the Project's 1980 School Leavers Survey (Chapter Two, Section 2.5). In the months that followed, I undertook the task of tracing as many of the

1980 survey group of fifty as possible in order to establish a data base for my embryonic research project.

4.1.1 Preliminary Sampling

Through the contacts I had established in the First Phase (1979-1982) of living and youth working in Hartingleigh, and consolidated during the University years of the Second Phase (1982-1985), I was able to draw up an initial shortlist of eighteen members of the original 1980 Youth Project Survey Group. These were young adults I knew I had immediate access to as fifteen were still living in Hartingleigh and were known to Project staff and youth workers, six of whom had been among my group of ten interviewees in the 1980 survey. The six were Dilly, Mick Kenney, Mick Kent, Coggs, Maz and Digger. Both Maz and Digger had been significant figures during my youth work practice and had played an important role in establishing my credibility with the young unemployed on the streets of Hartingleigh (Chapter Two, Section 2.4). I had maintained regular informal contact both with them and their extended peer group network during the three years of travelling backwards and forwards, between home and university, during the Second Phase of my evolving study. Similarly, during this period, I had also maintained frequent contact with Willie, Tex and Berksy, three other members of my ten 1980 survey group interviewees; also key figures from my period of youth working for the Project. Both Tex and Willie were living in privately rented flats in nearby Collington but remained part of the wider network of Hartingleigh youth who shared entertainment and leisure time in and around the local community and who also went out together as a 'crew' to City Centre pubs and discos.

Berksy was also a prominent member of the 'lads culture' in Hartingleigh during my early youth work. In the year following school leaving, however, he had twice narrowly escaped custodial sentencing as a result of prosecution for various juvenile offences. In 1981, whilst on bail awaiting sentencing for one of these offences, he

made the decision to follow the example of his father and twin brother and enlisted to join the armed forces. In part, this was a somewhat misguided strategy for providing the Court dealing with his case the option for a non-custodial sentence. As a result of army enlistment, he did manage to avoid incarceration; although whether or not the strategy can be considered to have been successful is open to debate for, following his initial army training, Berksy was sent firstly to Germany , then Africa, and then to the troubled province of Northern Ireland. However, he fortunately emerged unscathed from his tour of duty in Ireland and was eventually stationed in York where he subsequently met and married a local girl and, as a result, had, in his own words, "settled down". After completing his period of army service, Berksy found employment in York in a builders merchants. The savings he accumulated during army service, together with his army discharge payment, enabled him to take out a mortgage on a small terraced house where, in October 1986, his wife gave birth to their first child. I was able to maintain frequent contacts with Berksy, especially during my final year at University, when he was still in the army and living in married quarters at Fulford Barracks close the University campus.

The missing member of my ten 1980 interviewees, Charlie Dougan, I was able to trace quickly through his mother who still lived in Hartingleigh. Charlie had also been a prominent member of the 'lads culture' on the streets of Hartingleigh during my early youth work practice. Like Berksy and several of the other 'lads', he had also found himself in a good deal of trouble with the police and courts during his post-school teenage years and, as a result, had been sent to Borstal in 1983. After serving just over a year, he had, following his release, gone to live "down South" in Wandsworth, London, with his cousin Mo. Through workplace contacts supplied by his cousin, Charlie had managed to secure well-paid employment with a major road haulage company and had been working full-time since May 1984. I eventually travelled to London twice to re-meet and subsequently interview Charlie, coinciding

one of these visits with an expedition arranged through the Youth and Community Centre taking the Northside Jungle Crew to Wembley in the Centre's mini-bus.

The Hartingleigh Six, Dilly, Mick Kenney, Mick Kent, Coggs, Maz and Digger, together with Willie and Tex, who now lived in nearby Collington, formed the nucleus of a 'natural group' (Coffield *et al* 1986 : 35) of 'lads' who were originally drawn into the Youth and Community Project from Hartingleigh's notorious Chicken Lane estate, known locally as the Jungle (Chapter One, Section 1.3). This social group of young males, together with associates and affiliates from Hartingleigh's two other council estates, formed the core of the self-proclaimed Northside Jungle Crew. During my detached youth work practice for the Project, the Crew was a loose interlocking network of predominantly adolescent males who had grown up and gone to school together. Although as a social group they did not possess the clearly identifiable rigidity of structure of the American adolescent gangs, identified by researchers such as Cohen (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin (1960), they nevertheless collectively shared entertainment, leisure, and opportunistic theft routines. In the First Phase they had hung out together on the streets before eventually establishing a base both within the Adventure Playground (during the Summer months) and at the unemployed 'drop-in' within the Project's Indoor Street Corner (Chapter Two, Section 2.7).

Now they had reached their early twenties, the Crew maintained a wide ranging network of informal contacts in each other's homes; in the two local pubs which serviced the Chicken Lane estate, the 'Vic' and the 'Crown'; or within their main daytime meeting ground at the 'drop-in'. The flat Willie shared with his girlfriend in Collington was also at the heart of the social network of the Crew, in part due to Willie's anti-employment career of dope dealing. Similarly, Tex's organisation of the hoisting (shoplifting) expeditions which provided alternative careers for several members of the Crew ensured that his flat too was a significant port of call in their social networks.

Aside from the rapport and friendships I had established with the Crew and their associates in the First Phase of detached youth working for the Project, the traditional working class male bonding rituals organised around both playing and watching football enabled me to maintain and consolidate ongoing friendships with this group. Most of the Crew were also part of a much wider network of Manchester United supporters drawn not only from Hartingleigh's council estates but also the large overspill estates ranged throughout the north of Manchester. During the Second Phase (1982-1985), in my free time from academia, part of my own leisure routine involved regular expeditions to Old Trafford, often organised in concert with the Crew, to watch Manchester United's home games. These trips often involved the appropriation of the Project's mini-bus which whenever the transport was available was ostensibly utilised by one of my co-youth workers, Tony Boyle, and myself for "community use". On such occasions, we would fill up the mini-bus with the Crew and their associates and avail ourselves of the opportunity for some "voluntary youth work" at the match. During the football season, this ritualised fortnightly occurrence was one of the minor perks of my continuing affiliation with the Youth and Community Project and one which enabled me to maintain informal contacts with a wide circle of Hartingleigh's young male unemployed and their peers.

Thus within a few months of arriving back in Hartingleigh from University, I had established a reasonable foundation for my research. By December 1985, I had re-contacted and conducted preliminary interviews with nineteen members of the Project's original 1980 survey group. Fifteen of these young people were immediately accessible as they were still living within the local community. I had particularly strong affiliations with six members of this group as they had constituted part of my group of ten interviewees during the 1980 survey. These six young males, together with Willie and Tex in Collington, Berksy in York and Charlie in London, meant that I had re-contacted all ten of my group of interviewees from the 1980 survey. It was now time to widen my range of contacts.

With the assistance of the existing contacts, particularly Maz, Digger, Willie and Tex, and with the help of staff and youth workers at the Centre, I was quickly able to re-contact a further ten members of the 1980 group who, like Willie and Tex, were now living in the Inner City wards immediately surrounding Hartingleigh. These districts included Moat Pitton, Collington, Newmarch Heath, and Marton, areas that were within walking distance of my house and the Centre (Table 8).

TABLE 8 : Residential Location and Sex of Traceable Members of the 1980 SchoolLeavers Survey

Residential Location	Total	Female	Male
Hartingleigh	(15)	6	9
Surrounding Districts (including Moat Pitton, Collington, Newmarch Heath, Marton)	(12)	7	5
Greater Manchester (including Prestwich, Didsbury, Rusholme, Sale, Hulme, Stretford)	(8)	5	3
Outside Manchester (York, London, Oldham, Blackburn)	(4)	1	3
Totals:	**39**	**19**	**20**

Over the next two months, as my detective work improved, I was able to trace and contact a further eight members of the original 1980 survey group who were now dispersed throughout the various districts of the Greater Manchester conurbation, plus two others who were living outside the City in the nearby towns of Oldham and Blackburn. By the end of February 1985, I had traced and contacted thirty-nine members of the 1980 group of fifty. The missing eleven members I could not trace. It was strongly rumoured within the community that two of the eleven had tragically died, one in a car accident and the other as a result of a heroin overdose. However, I was unable to confirm with any degree of certainty whether this was the case. By this time, I was keeping a field diary of my contacts and also utilising the questionnaires

from the 1980 School Leavers Survey as a basis for exploring events and changing circumstances in the lives of these young adults who were now 'participants' in my study.

4.2 Preliminary Fieldwork in Hartingleigh

'Entering the field' in the early months of 1986 was unproblematic. I lived there. My house in old Hartingleigh was just a few minutes walk from the Community Centre and making early contacts and conducting exploratory interviews simply became a question of selecting an appropriate 'venue'. Although there has been at least one rather dramatic recorded failure of an attempt to establish contact with deprived inner city youth (Coffield and Borrill 1983), the literature is generally replete with examples of successful attempts by researchers to establish 'field-relations' with so-called "difficult to reach" young people (e.g. Spencer 1964; Farrant and Merchant 1970; Holman 1981; Gill 1977; Jenkins 1983; Coffield, Borrill and Marshall 1986; MacLeod 1987, etc.). As I examined earlier (Chapter Two, Section 2.4), the youth worker role has provided a ready research identity and notable access for participant observers seeking an entrée into the social world of the urban young. My ease of acceptance and movement within the social networks of the majority of my study participants had been established during the First Phase of detached youth working in Hartingleigh. This entrée into the field had been maintained and consolidated during the Second Phase when I was able to perpetuate ongoing informal friendships with several groups of young people in the community, in part due to my continuing affiliation with the Youth and Community Project.

From February 1986 until May 1986 when I made my application to the E.S.R.C. for research funding, I initiated preliminary 'formal' contacts with all the traceable members of the original 1980 Survey Group. Of the thirty-nine traceable participants, twenty male and nineteen female (Table 8), the most immediately accessible were the fifteen participants (six female; nine male) who were still living in Hartingleigh;

together with the group of twelve (seven female; five male) whom I had traced to the immediately surrounding districts. My field work contacts with the males of this latter group were made easier by their participation in the wider extended network of Hartingleigh 'lads' and I frequently encountered tham as part of the social and recreational 'lads culture' on the estates and in the pubs of Hartingleigh.

4.2.1 Localism

Other writers have noted this sense of 'parochial attachment' amongst working class male informal groups (Willis 1977; Jenkins 1983; Brown 1987). The sentiments expressed by one of 'The Boys' in Parker's (1974) study captures the depth of this sense of attachment:

> "If my family have to move ... I'll refuse to go. I'll never leave round here. I'll always come back ... You can't explain it good enough with words, it's a sort of feeling inside" (1974 : 34)

The parochial outlook of well defined attachment horizons, both geographical and mental, was not restricted to the male informal group. As Stella proclaimed when explaining her attachment to the Marton estate:

> "I love it here ... yeah I know its rough and its got a bad name but I don't care ... I feel safe here; I know everyone and you can get around with no trouble; and there's always someone who'll let on ... Do you know what I'm saying? It makes you feel safe, like you're part of the place or something."

According to Cohen and Shinar (1985 : 14), local neighbourhoods can be classified or defined according to one or more basic elements including an area with specific physical characteristics, especially certain types of housing and clear geographical boundaries; an area with a sense of "psychological unity with shared values, loyalties and perspectives"; an area of particular cultural character that is sufficient to differentiate it from other parts of the city. Fried (1973) emphasises the social relationships as a crucial component in explaining attachment to urban working class neighbourhoods:

> "In this sense the close knit network, locally based within an urban working class community provides the framework of social organisation and the basis of interpersonal commitment and stability in the working class world. This framework establishes the link between localism and close relationships whether they are sustained primarily with kin, neighbours of friends." (Fried 1973 : 114)

My fieldwork in this Third Phase suggested that participants operated at a variety of local scales, larger or smaller depending on the context of the discussion or the person who was seeking the information. Thus within Hartingleigh, participants from the Chicken Lane, Marton, and Canton estates operated at an immediately local level when discussing, or being asked to define, territorial boundaries and psychological attachments. Tracy Smith, for example, who, during the course of my preliminary fieldwork, left the family home on Hartingleigh's Canton estate to live in a privately rented flat in nearby Newmarch Heath, nevertheless continued to define herself in terms of a sub-section of the local community:

> "Well, I live in Newmarch [Heath] now but I still think of myself as coming from the Canton ... well no that's not right. What I mean is I think of myself as being from 'Tavvi Square', ... it's where I grew up."

Tavvi(stone) Square is a sub-section of the Canton council estate. Over the years Hartingleigh's three council estates have evolved nine such locally recognised sub-divisions. These areas represent finely graded degrees of ranking along the rough-respectable continuum. The Canton estate is considered to be the most respectable, with four areas within the estate having the reputation of slightly differing shades of respectability of being: "quite a good area" (Tavvistone Square); "slightly rough but not too bad" (Bevan Close); "a bit posh but not hoity-toity (Atlee Court); and "fairly decent" (Wilson Walk).

Marton estate on the other hand is locally considered to be "rougher than the Canton, but nowhere near as bad as the Jungle". The Marton estate is organised around three squares that are, in contrast to the Canton estate, graded towards the rough end of the continuum. In 1985-1986, the three local areas on the Marton

estate did not contain the empty, boarded up, derelict or burnt out flats which characterised the two main focal areas within the Chicken Lane estate, ensuring a local reputation mid-way between that of the Canton estate and the Chicken Lane estate. However in more recent years, partially as a consequence of the inability of the local authority to maintain its programme of repairs and improvements, and partially as a result of housing allocation decisions, the Marton estate has increasingly developed the kind of moral stigma traditionally reserved for inhabitants of the Chicken Lane estate. To this day, the Jungle is universally considered to be the worst or roughest estate in Hartingleigh, though even here residents distinguish between the two main focal areas within the estate in terms of "dog rough" as opposed to simply "rough". In Chapter One (Section 1.3) I explained the developing reputation of the Jungle as a consequence of local authority housing allocation decisions, which reproduced within the estates a distinction between the desirable and undesirable in residential patterns (*cf* Baldwin and Bottoms 1976; Gill 1977). This process has recently been described by one community activist in the following terms:

> "There was a concentration of problem families that were moved in at the same time and there was no back up resources. There was no proper social service facilities or home help or community nursery, or any proper facilities to support families and the idea seemed to be just create a so-called 'second-class' status - dump all your problem families in one area." (de Bariod in Gillespie *et al* 1992 : 20)

During the Third Phase, for the young women participants who still lived on the three council estates in Hartingleigh, their immediate local affiliations appeared to be oriented towards the smaller sub-sections within the estates, rather than the estate, or Hartingleigh ward, as a whole. As Tracy Smith revealed, even those women from the Canton estate, which has a respectable reputation, defined their locality in terms of one of the focal areas around which the estate is organised. The two young women who were living on the Chicken Lane estate sought to further restrict the definition of their residential location by addressing it in terms of the walkway on which they lived rather than the nearest square, the complete estate, or the totality of Hartingleigh. In part, this was an attempt to distance themselves from the estate's 'rough' reputation,

but also reflected something of the restricted geographical mobility of the young women, as compared with the young men, in my study group.

Domestic and child care routines provided part of the explanation for the home-centred life styles of many of the unemployed women study participants; in broad terms, most of the young women were absorbed into family life. As girls, the domestic commitments became their primary concern.

> "**SC**: 'So who does the housework?'
> **Lynn Chapman**: It's sort of half between me and me mam. I'll do all the cleaning up and she does the cooking, though I do it sometimes. It's only fair 'cause she helps me out with the baby, so I help her.'
> **SC**: 'What about your Tony [Lynn's older brother] and your dad?'
> Lynn Chapman: 'Well, me dad's working and our Tony's always out with his mates.'
> **SC**: 'So they don't do much ...?'
> **Lynn Chapman**: 'Don't be daft, Tony's useless ... and my dad won't help, he just sits there and only moans if we ask him; anyway he works all day so it's not right really'. "

In contrast, the young men in my study were more likely to spend a large part of their day away from the family home, involved in routines which were generally reflected in a wider sense of territorial and psychological horizons. However, this is not to imply that it was all child care and home-centred domesticity for the young women and street hustling and resistance for the predominantly male 'Crew' This would be to fall into the trap of reproducing the theoretical and empirical silence which characterised the New Wave studies of subculture examined earlier (Chapter Three, Section 3.4.5). The silence has been mistaken for the absence of girls from the cultural spaces of young people but some young women did participate in the street life of Hartingleigh and were also involved in the creation of their own autonomous cultural spaces. Moreover, the girls and young women were not automatically locked into domestic roles or the 'Jackie ideology' of 'romance' which often preceded it. On the contrary, individual biographies revealed how relationships were broken, males were 'wound up' and 'chucked', and young women developed a repertoire of defences for resisting, rejecting, and sometimes even caricaturing, male sexual advances:

"He asked me if I wanted to dance. I told him I'd rather eat lightbulbs" (Julie)

"He said I'll drive you home. So I says, 'does that mean you'll want a shag? 'Cause it should be alright - I've been putting this cream on an' the rash 'as nearly gone'. He didn't bother after that" (Stella)

One example of the autonomous social life developed by the women in Hartingleigh is provided by the 'Girls Night Out'.

4.2.2 The Girls Night Out

There were numerous examples of solidarity, mutual support and even resistance amongst the young women in my study during this phase of preliminary fieldwork. Often this was articulated in the home, but the domestic arena was not the only location for mutual support and resistance. Aside from the informal support networks, particularly distinguishable amongst the women on the estates, there also developed within the Project the phenomenon of the 'Girls Night Out'.

During the course of my fieldwork, the 'Girls Night Out' evolved into a monthly institution and involved a variety of female Centre users and staff of various ages. After the obligatory 'pub crawl', the women would usually find their final port of call at 'Foo Foo's Palace' in the City Centre. 'Foo Foo's' is generally recognised as a 'gay' club and is owned and organised by Frank 'Foo Foo' Lamarr, a northern working class 'drag artist' in the mould of a downmarket 'Danny La Rue': "Not so much diamonds and mink dear as rhinestones and rabbit".

One explanation for the evolution of 'Foo Foo's' as a popular venue for the 'Girls Night Out' and 'Hen Parties' for working class women from all parts of the City is that it offers a club atmosphere relatively free from the predatory sexual hassles encountered by groups of women in 'straight' clubs.

'Foo Foo', who provides the focus for the cabaret spots in his club, learnt his trade on the tough 'pub' and working mens' club circuit in the North of England during the 1960s and 1970s. With the growth in popularity of the club as a venue for the working class 'Girls Night Out', he draws on this past experience to modify and finely tune his act in accordance with the new requirements of his now predominantly female audiences., As he confided:

> "Eighty per cent of my business comes from women and I quickly learned exactly what hits the button ... they want me to cut their old man's, or boyfriend's, bollocks off ... it's as simple as that."

In the past, the focus for the comedy in his 'drag' act was geared towards a predominantly 'straight' male audience and was located in humour which articulated the subordination of women - "you know the business, wife and mother-in-law gags, that sort of thing". Whereas in recent years it has been redirected towards a discourse concerned with the objectification of male hetero-sexuality; a coarse satirical treatment of male sexual stereotypes; and a parody of male hetero-sexual insecurities.

Thus 'Foo Foo's' provides a safe context within which sexual oppression is reversed. Men are sexually objectified and ridiculed, for example through the phenomenon of male strippers. Within the club there is also a policy of table waiter service in order to avoid congestion in the tiny bar area. Like the 'cocktail waitress' (Spradley and Mann 1976) in a 'straight' bar, the waiters are specifically employed on the basis of a stereotypical model of (male) sexual attractiveness ('Butch and Beefy', for example - see below). A parody of masculine sexual attractiveness is usually highlighted which appears to playfully explore the interface of 'gay' male and heterosexual male definitions. The waiters are dressed in order to highlight their physical characteristics (tiny leather shorts); to parody masculinist stereotypes (leopard print 'Tarzan' leotard); and to ridicule masculinity, or possibly invert orthodox stereotyping, through a schoolboy (rather than a schoolgirl) outfit, complete with school tie, cap, and short trousers. Apart from the role reversal of 'captive' male

sex objects for the predominantly all women crowd, the waiters also literally 'serve' the women and also serve to provide part of the focus for 'Foo Foo's' cabaret act. Much to the delight of his largely female audiences, 'Foo Foo' utilises 'camp' homosexuality as a searchlight with which to illuminate, exploit, and ridicule the arrogance or insecurity of male heterosexuality:

> "Here come my latest ... two beautiful young boys [spotlights pick out two of the waiters, accompanied by appreciative shouts, whistles and applause from the crowd] ... calm down girls, calm down, you'll only get 'em all worked up ...we don't want any spillage ... haven't you seen a pair of pecs [pectoral muscles] before [shouts to one of the waiters] ... go on Tiger clench your pecs ... lovely ... now do a little twirl for the ladies ... lovely. Aren't they cute ... I used to keep poodles, but have you seen how much a tin of Chappie is? ... Now remember ladies, they're my pets, aren't you dears? [nods to the waiters, then turns and in confidential tones addresses the audience] ... Butch and bleedin' Beefy ... like a pair of bloody bookends ... and just as fuckin' bright [smiles in the direction of the waiters who smile and nod back] ... Don't be fooled ladies [spotlight on the genital area of one of the waiters] ... it's all window dressing ... leotards and leather liederhosen ... I saw that one in the dressing room stuffing a bloody cucumber down his pants, he's all hammer and no nail [nods to the waiters and again addresses the crowd in confidential tones] ... thick as pigshit and common as muck ... where's the Hartingleigh crowd [shouts from the audience] [pouts] ... Oh hello ... [confidential tones] ... Beefy's the bright boy from Hartingleigh ... you can see where he gets it from ... Oh [camp tone] hello there! [waves to the Hartingleigh contingent] ... [confidential tones to the rest of the audience] ... I used to go shoplifting in Mothercare with her mam ... dead common ... [looks at one of the waiters] ... Be gentle with that one girls, he only started yesterday, I had to give him an interview, didn't I dear ... [nod from the waiter] ... checked his references and examined his qualifications ... didn't I Tiger ... [sighs] ... he got the job. That one [points in the direction of a third waiter] ... 'Bernard Beefy Buttocks Barlow' ...asked me if I wanted to see his meat and two veg ... Cheeky sod ... I told him I'm a vegetarian. Bugger the meat, eh girls? ... Just give us the two veg ... Mine're cucumbers and carrots ... [points to a woman in the crowd convulsed with laughter] ... She knows what I'm talkin' about ... don't you love? ... Half an hour in the bleedin' greengrocers trying to make up your mind ... Carrots? ... Cucumbers? ... Courgettes? ... Bugger it, give us ten pounds of each, I'm staying in this weekend ...
>
> ... It's time to give up the meat girls ... carrots and cucumbers, nature's own. An' the thing about vegetables ... you don't have to cook their breakfast in the morning ... They don't get you pregnant, or knock you about and you don't have to wash their bleedin' underpants ... You don't have to marry the buggers or live with 'em for the rest of your bleedin' lives ... though I can tell some of you lot have married some right old turnips ... An' the thing about vegetables is you can choose the size to match your appetite an' eat 'em when you've finished ... So next time he asks you if you fancy a bit, you tell him, no chance, I'm off to the greengrocers" (Taped, December, 1985).

The phenomenon of the 'Girls Night Out' encompasses all ages and reinforces a strong sense of solidarity and mutual identification. As Pollert (1981) has revealed,

women in collective industrial situations often refer to themselves as 'the girls'. The 'Girls Night Out' usually takes place on quiet nights in midweek when babysitters can be arranged and there are few men about. The collective taxis home, dancing around the circles of handbags, staying overnight with friends and the communal sing-songs involved in the 'Girls Night Out' indicate that an autonomous and supportive working class women's culture is part of the social fabric of life in Hartingleigh.

4.2.3 Northside

For the fourteen young men in my study group who still lived in Hartingleigh, or the immediately surrounding districts, a sense of territoriality was of great significance in defining their internal as well as external horizons and was tied into working class masculine notions of 'hardness', of having 'bottle', of being able to 'handle' oneself, of being able to fight, or 'face out', or 'front out', threatening situations. Thus, for those drawn from the Chicken Lane Estate, the 'rough' and 'tough' reputation of the Jungle contained positive attachment connotations in the world as the lads perceived it. Believing they came from "the most lawless estate in the north-west", where "violence and crime is rife" (*Hartingleigh Wurlitzer* 13.7.86), held great status affirming significance, particularly for those such as the Crew, who were denied status in more legitimate social domains:

> "If it comes to a battle and say the lads from Newmarch or Colly [Collington] are getting out of order, then you know who's gonna get it sorted ... There's some real 'nutters' round here, top boys ... Everyone's scared of messin' with us". (Dilly)

The phenomenon of status inversion, of inverting a negative labelling process, such as coming from the Jungle, to render it an affirmatory status identification can also be seen in the following examples drawn from the local football supporters' wider cultural traditions.

Male study participants would often describe themselves as being from the "Northside" (of Manchester). The notion of Northside has wide cultural significance

for the lads from the estates, largely derived from football supporters' cultural traditions. Amongst the national culture of football supporters, North Manchester has developed the reputation for producing 'hard cases', or 'terrace nutters' - Manchester United supporters with a distinct reputation for exaggerated acts of football ground defiance and violence. This reputation can be traced from the mid-1960s onwards when the mythology of the Northside evolved as a consequence of its dominance as the "hardest" section within Manchester United's popular Stretford End terrace:

> "At its height in the mid-seventies, the 25,000 strong Stretford End was generally agreed by players, managers, police and television commentators alike, to be the most fearsome sight in football ... if you were out of work, a school failure with little to do or nowhere to go in your area, there was great appeal in joining up with the Red Army" (Robins 1984 : 85).

Within the folklore of national football supporters, there is the myth that the origins of soccer warfare can be traced to Manchester United supporters burning down the main stand at Carrow Road, the home of Norwich City football club, reported in Robins (1984 : 86). What Robins neglects to mention is that popular cultural mythology claims that the fire was started by the Northside in retaliation for a home F.A. cup defeat by the then second division Norwich City in the late 1960s. The Northside is also held responsible for leading numerous riots and violent confrontations on football grounds throughout the country (Redhead 1987 : 106; Robins 1984 : 84-86; Crick and Smith 1990 : 156-165). Moreover, the Northside section of the Stretford End carried the reputation into and throughout Europe (Crick and Smith 1990 : 160). Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Red Army, particularly the Northside section of the Stretford End, perpetuated a reputation for being "the most violent [football supporters] in Britain" (Crick and Smith 1990 : 156); as United followers went on the rampage at away matches, cars were overturned, shops looted, and battles fought in the street with the police and opposing fans. The violence was often so extensive that the police could not cope and many serious incidents were unattended and took place outside grounds, and were therefore

unreported by the press (Crick and Smith 1990 : 157). Nevertheless, the Stretford End did gain media notoriety and in response to being labelled as "animals" by the press and media, the Red Army took up a new chant: "We Hate Humans" (Robins 1984 : 13; Redhead 1987 : 106).

Amongst the almost mythologised tales recounted amongst Manchester football supporters are stories of the Northside "taking" popular terraces at Millwall, the Kop at Liverpool, and even successfully challenging the notorious football fans of the Glasgow clubs, Celtic and Rangers. These latter confrontations were the result of several visits by the Glasgow clubs and their supporters to play commemorative, testimonial, or friendly games at Old Trafford. After a visit by Glasgow Celtic during the 1984-85 season, for a testimonial game, a friendly played on behalf of ex-Celtic and Manchester United favourite, Lou Macari, a new fashion style was noted on the terraces: "Unless they were ball-watching, even those who sit cosseted in the press box could observe the proliferation of Celtic ski-hats in the North West following the Glasgow club's visit to Old Trafford" (Redhead 1987 : 19).

What Redhead overlooked, or was not aware of, is that these Celtic ski-hats, the terrace chic of the mid-80s, were originally acquired from their owners as a result of violent skirmishes and battles waged by supporters throughout the City for twenty-four hours both before and after the match. In the early afternoon on the day of the game, after word had gone round that large numbers of Celtic supporters were causing trouble in the City Centre, I witnessed research participants and their associates congregating in the superstore car park, eventually to be picked up in a small convoy of stolen cars and vans. Armed with a frightening assortment of home made weapons, they left to scour the City in the search for Celtic supporters. Later that evening, after local news reports of disturbances thought the City, they returned with their wounds and trophies from their battles: Celtic ski-hats as well as scarves,

badges, flags and assorted footballs fans' paraphernalia snatched from their victims. "Taking Celtic" thus became another stand in the tapestry of the Northside mythology.

In some respects, what the boys from the estates were responding to was the mythology of and status identification with the Northside tradition of hardness and territoriality. This tradition can be directly related to the cultural traditions of the parent culture, to working class masculinity, its codes and public honours. Their mobilisation was a defence of psychic and geographical boundaries, a defence of personal as well as social space. The status identification with the Northside tradition can be noted as reflected in the popular Stretford End terrace chant heard form the mid-1970s onwards:

> "We've taken the [Millwall] Flyers,
> we've taken the Kop.
> Fucked Celtic and Rangers,
> we've taken the lot.
> We are the Northside,
> fuck the Southside.
> We are the Northside - Stretford End"

The chant remains the vocal signature of a mass grouping of supporters on the Stretford End terrace at Old Trafford, and is reflective of the territorial network which in the late 1960s, throughout the 1970s, and into the 1980s, encompassed supporters from many of the large overspill estates on the northern side of the City. There has long been an intra-City rivalry between this group and youths drawn from the housing estates in the south, the "Southside", of the City, most notably Wythenshawe, whose young residents traditionally supported Manchester's other football team, Manchester City.

Thus to describe oneself as being from the Northside is not only to locate oneself geographically but also to lay claim to an historical conception of working class male machismo which articulates itself through Mancunian football supporters' culture and traditions. The Northside thus provides a reference point which embodies both

internal and external dimensions. It links the parent cultural tradition of masculinity and hardness to psychological territoriality and local area affiliations, hence the "Northside Jungle Crew".

> "It's not just about football, it's about where you live ... where you come from, an' who you are, an' how you act ... it's not just about football." (Jimmy Bee)
>
> "Northside? ... It's something in here [points to head] and something in here [points to heart]." (Digger)
>
> "I wouldn't be me without it." (J.W.)

According to Hopcraft (1971):

> "The point about football in Britain is that it is not just a sport people take to, like cricket or tennis or running long distances ... It is built into the urban psyche ... It has not been only a game for 80 years: not since the working classes saw it as an escape route out of drudgery and claimed it as their own" (quoted in Redhead 1987 : 116).

However, this is not to romanticise or glorify, the repellent values and dangerous, unacceptable levels of violence of the Crew. Within working class male culture, such values help to reproduce a certain kind of masculinity. This has particular implications for women in the home where symbolic, territorial disputes can all too easily be resolved by male aggression and violence. It can, moreover, have implications for (re)producing a threatening, intimidatory quality to areas of common cultural space, making them unsafe for all, but especially for women. But such masculine values also contain a desperate form of courage; a distorted reverence for the territorial boundaries, surrounding an attempt at dignity, or some mad honour, which faces helplessness, despair and alienation with a real live drama. According to Willis (1990), outside condemnation of the working class young's propensity towards violence without such understanding points up the limits of the "observer as well as the observed".

> "Alternatives to and ideas and plans for the safer resolutions of the compelling dramas of violence should be what exercise our imaginations" (1990 : 109).

4.2.4 Localism : A Concluding Discussion

The young adults' understanding of and loyalty to their home areas has been described as "localism" (Coffield *et al* 1986 : 142-144). It is a perception of clearly demarcated boundaries, psychological as well as territorial horizons which define external space and internal status or security. What was considered to be a participant's locality could vary from a small area within an estate, "Tavvi Square", to a whole estate, "The Jungle", or to a more general notion of coming from or belonging to North Manchester, "Northside". Whatever the exact size of the geographical boundaries, their district, they intimately understood its social and cultural ecology: the markets, shops, clubs and pubs, as well as their self-defined social spaces, such as "the Wreck" (Chapter One, Section 1.3), the superstore car park (Chapter Two, Section 2.7), or the unemployed "drop-in" (Chapter Two, Section 2.7). They also knew the quickest routes through the interlocking maze of walkways, squares, and streets of the council estates; occasionally useful knowledge when, for example, fleeing from pursuing police (Chapter Two, Section 2.7), rival groups, or transporting stolen goods on foot from one location to another. They also understood who were useful contacts, where to "score", who was buying or selling what commodity; and where to go for a cheap colour television or pair of "snide" (stolen) trainers. They also knew who not to offend, who to, or not to, involve, and who should be strictly avoided.

Parochial attachment or localism consists of various contrasting strengths and restrictive features. One weakness of localism is that it can result in a narrow, blinkered, or defensive reaction against those deemed, in some way, to be outsiders. On occasions, this process could result in violent confrontation such as the Northside's defence of territory from invading Celtic supporters. Intra-class conflict highlights the negative face of localism, another example of which occured during the course of my early, detached youth work practice when the young people who were drawn into the developing Youth and Community Project from Hartingleigh's more 'respectable' areas, notably those from the Kings Road district of owner-occupied terraced houses,

were systematically subjected to stigmatisation and exclusion by the majority of young people drawn from the council estates. The exclusion of the 'snobs' and 'shirtlifters' - as the King's Road boys were homophobically called - eventually resulted in serious physical assault in which, notably, the girls from the estates participated (Chapter Six, Section 6.6.2).

Localism can also be seen to inhibit oportunities by locking social identities into restrictive cultural attitudes which limit growth and the capacity for change. Coggs, for example, had developed a marvellous self-taught skill of spray painting in the tradition of the "graffiti artists" of the New York subways (Mailer 1974). These "tags" (elaborate signatures) or "pieces" (from 'masterpieces' or complex wall murals), could transform a mundane and anonymous piece of urban landscape into: "Something wonderful and beautiful for others to enjoy (Prosecuted 18 year old graffiti artist, quoted in *The Guardian*, 21.1.91).

In very recent years, 'Graffiti Art' has taken on an aura of cultural respectability and numerous books (e.g. Cooper and Chalfont 1984; Coffield 1991; Heyne 1987), articles (Sloan-Howitt and Kelling 1990; May 1989; *The Times* 24.8.91), and even a gallery exhibition (Holloway 1989), have been produced on the subject. Such is the respectability of what was once considered to be "Filth Sprouting on the Walls" (New York's Mayor Lindsay, quoted in Mailer 1974) that Charles Saatchi is reported to have purchased "pieces" from New York graffiti artists (Coffield 1991 : 65). Coggs, on the other hand, could not be encouraged to develop his skills by attending Art College: "Fuck that, I've done my school bit, thanks very much". Nor would he consider the alternative option of producing "pieces" on canvas, or board, for submission to gallery exhibitions: "Bollocks, who do you think I am fuckin' Leonardo da fuckin' Vinci. I just spray on walls ... let's leave it at that".

According to Coffield *et al* (1986), localism may operate to restrict possibilities or the chance for alternatives to develop: "Localism operated sometimes as a fortification behind which new ideas ... could be ignored and parochialism flourish" (1986 : 144). However, these restrictive features of localism are balanced by some significant positive characteristics. The young women and men in Hartingleigh and the surrounding districts generally felt psychologically 'at home' within their local neighbourhoods and social milieu. Their expressions of attachment were tangible and heartfelt. Having lived in the same districts for much of their lives meant they were able to draw on a complex web of social relationships and familiar boundaries with which to provide "a ready made system for understanding the world which infused their lives with meaning and coherence" (Coffield *et al* 1986 : 144).

4.3 Friendship and Formality - Contrasting Field Work Roles

During this period of preliminary field work, my field work contacts with the two most immediately accessible groups of participants were characterised by a high degree of informality and spontaneity. Day to day contact was frequent and extensive and I had recourse to a variety of formal and informal sites and locations for observation, participation and depth interviewing. My research role and identity with the participants from Hartingleigh and surrounding districts were relatively unproblematic as I was a familiar face both from my time of youth working for the Project and during the Second Phase when I had often been encountered in and around the Community Centre. The general response from participants to being included in my study group was positive, making my 'hanging about' and various degrees of involvement, largely unquestioned. As I outlined in an earlier section (Chapter Two, Section 2.4), the friendships I developed in the First Phase of living and youth working in Hartingleigh had already established for me a relatively secure position within the informal social networks of Hartingleigh's social and cultural ecology. I had on numerous occasions, for example, been witness to events and situations of illegality, and had been reliably vetted, as a former 'ex-con', to "keep it

buttoned" and not "grass"; the ethical implications of adopting such a non-judgemental field-role are examined in Chapter Five (Section 5.3). The important component in this general acceptance by my study participants was friendship:

> "To some, talking about friendship in relation to social research may seem misplaced. Perhaps to those who have attempted a depth participant observation study such sentiments will seem less irrelevant. All I can say is that this study would not have survived without such reciprocity" (Parker 1974 : 16) (my emphasis)

In contrast to the immediately accessible participants from Hartingleigh and surrounding areas, maintaining regular informal contacts with the eight (five female, three male) traceable members of the 1980 survey group now scattered throughout the various districts of Greater Manchester was more problematic. Several of these participants in my evolving study now lived in areas to the extreme south of the conurbation, such as Rusholme, Didsbury, Stretford, and Sale. Maintaining informal contacts was, therefore, more difficult as it required pre-arrangement by telephone or letter as well as a journey across City which by public transport could take over an hour in each direction. In contrast to the Hartingleigh participants, spontaneity and informality in the conduct of 'field relations' with the dispersed group was difficult to sustain. It became inexpedient to 'improvise' in following up leads, inclinations and intuitions, partly because of their relative geographical inaccessibility but also, perhaps more importantly, as a result of my lack of familiarity, and therefore informality and reciprocity, with the individual members of this group. Unlike the more immediately accessible participants from Hartingleigh and surrounding wards, I had not sustained contacts with the majority of the dispersed group during the Second Phase of my evolving study, as most of them had left Hartingleigh by the time I was at University. During this preliminary stage of field working, my contacts with the dispersed group of eight were, therefore, characterised by their semi-structured formality.

The most inaccessible group, the four individuals who had 'migrated' from Greater Manchester, were the most problematic of all in terms of regular informal contacts.

In the period from Christmas 1985 until Summer 1986, I was, for example, only able to visit Charlie in London twice for long weekends. Berksy I saw four times in this period, three times in York, and once when he travelled to Hartingleigh to visit his parents. However, my relationships with both Charlie and Berksy were friendly and informal, based on our association during the First Phase, and I was therefore able to conduct depth interviews in an unstructured way. They were both also available by telephone which made it easier to maintain contact and fill in gaps, or elaborate on points that had arisen during our meetings.

The remaining two migrant participants, Georgie B. in Oldham and Julie Birchall in Blackburn, I only managed to visit twice each for an evening during this phase of exploratory fieldwork. Nevertheless, these preliminary meetings were of value in enabling me to chart the events and circumstances of their lives since the Project's 1980 survey. My meetings with Julie and Georgie were, however, characterised by a relatively formal and semi-structured approach, again due to my lack of prior contact and familiarity which mitigated against the informality and spontaneity characteristic of my encounters with the Hartingleigh participants. Overall, my contacts with the four 'migrants' from the 1980 survey group were minimal, distinguished by the need for forethought and planning.

During this phase of preliminary fieldworking, I had no fixed routine for conducting interviews, or recording my meetings. My approach was flexible, guided by a desire to put participants at ease in order to ensure relaxed and unforced responses. Apart from my field diary and notes of contacts and appointments, I was now also keeping extensive field notes of my meetings. Day to day contacts with the Hartingleigh-based participants were so frequent, however, that I quickly learned that a process of selection was inevitable, in order not to expend unnecessary time and energy recording every mundane contact or incident. My note-taking would vary according to the participant(s) being interviewed and the context in which the meeting

occurred. After a night in the pub, for example, I would try and write up my impressions the same evening, or some time the following day. In my one-to-one meetings, in individuals' homes, at the Centre, the Indoor Street Corner, or my house, I would either record conversations on a mini-tape for transcribing later, or, if I felt participants' were uncomfortable with this, I would take notes manually, unless I felt it was inhibiting to the person being interviewed; in which case, I would record my impressions sometime later. Generally, the participants I was most familiar with had no objection to being taped, although on those occasions when the conversation drifted into discussion of matters of profound illegality, I was sometimes firmly requested to "switch the fucking machine off".

Apart from providing valuable background material, the questionnaires completed by participants six years earlier, as part of the School Leavers Survey conducted by the Project, served a variety of useful functions in this phase of exploratory field working. For those participants with whom I had had little or no contact in the previous years, or with whom I was less familiar, their 1980 questionnaire not only provided a means for 'breaking the ice', but also served as a vehicle for (re)introducing both myself and my research project. The 1980 questionnaires also provided a focus or starting point from which to elicit information that enabled me to sketch a biographical reconstruction of events and circumstances in the lives of participants since school leaving. During preliminary interviewing, especially with participants I knew less well, the 1980 questionnaires also gave me some semblance of an 'interview schedule' for those occasions when the conversation dried up or a different 'tack' was required.

By the Spring of 1986 I was able to make application to the ESRC for postgraduate research funding on the basis of my "established data base" and the exploratory field work I had undertaken since returning to Hartingleigh in the Summer of 1985.

4.4 Broken Transitions

The series of one-to-one exploratory meetings I held with all thirty-nine participants during the year of preliminary fieldwork enabled me to begin the task of reconstructing and documenting the main incidents, events, and circumstances of their lives in the period from their participation in the 1980 youth survey to the end of this phase of preliminary fieldwork in the Summer of 1986. The years 1980 to 1986 were vital years for my study participants in terms of their personal development and career trajectories. These years encompassed the crucial periods of transition from school leaving to early adulthood, from childhood dependency to adult roles and status. As a result of the information gathered during this twelve month period of exploratory fieldwork, I was able to confirm the impression, largely derived from my familiarity with the lives of the Hartingleigh participants, that the majority of my study group were making the transition from school to adulthood in the absence of the major 'structuring' influence of full-time paid employment (Table 9).

TABLE 9: Employment/Unemployment Amongst Study Participants by Sex (1985-1986)

	Female	Male	Total
Employed	3	6	9
Part-Time Employed	3	-	3
Unemployed-*	11	14	25
Full-Time Education	2	-	2
TOTAL:	**19**	**20**	**39**

(* - includes those participating in Government Schemes)

Structural changes in the economy and in education have greatly transformed the routes followed by young people as they leave school and enter the job market. The traditional routes forged in the post-war Keynesian consensus and relative prosperity held until the mid-1970s. During the 1970s, the levels of school leaver unemployment rose dramatically and the proportion of young people entering full-time employment on leaving school steadily declined. Youth unemployment grew more in

one year, 1980, the year my study participants left school, than in the whole of the previous decade (Raffe 1987). During the twelve month period of my preliminary fieldwork, twenty-five out of the thirty-nine study participants were unemployed. Of the nineteen young women, eleven were unemployed, three were in part-time work, three were in full-time work, and two were at College. Of the twenty young men, fourteen were unemployed, with eleven of this group having been without work for at least twelve months prior to Summer 1985 when I began preliminary sampling. Moreover, a sizeable number had never 'officially' been employed since school leaving in 1980. By Summer 1986, only six of the twenty young men in the study group had found full-time employment. As bad as these figures may seem, however, concealed within the numbers is a gloomier picture of what has been described as "broken" (Griffin 1986a) or "fractured" (Wallace 1987) transitions.

4.4.1 Traditional Transitions

The traditional transition from school directly into primary (adult) employment was largely the norm for most school leavers in Britain until the mid-1970s. Of the nine employed participants in my study group, only three, two female (Denise Weldon and Deirdre Sharp) and one male (John Conleigh) had taken this traditional post-school transition route into primary occupations.

Denise Weldon, for example, had started work as a trainee dental nurse assistant immediately upon school leaving, and, though she had changed employers twice in the intervening years, had remained within her chosen occupation, the successive moves taking her to larger dental practices, better conditions, and higher pay. Deirdre Sharp had similarly taken the traditional route from school into primary employment as a "trainee hair stylist" in an "internationally famous" City Centre, 'unisex' hair studio ... "don't call it a hairdressers." After four years of "on the job" training, she had qualified as a stylist and was at the time of my preliminary fieldwork, earning, with overtime and tips, in excess of £190 per week (gross). In the Summer of 1984, it was

reported that "a low pay target of two-thirds average earnings (i.e. £106.20) is being increasingly adopted in wage bargaining" (*The Guardian* 30.7.84). Both Deirdre's and Denise's earnings compared favourably with this figure, and even more so with the £25 weekly "training allowance" paid in 1983 on the Youth Opportunities Programme. This latter figure was the average weekly sum received by many of their contemporaries in Hartingleigh, whose post-school transitions had typically placed them onto MSC training schemes.

John Conleigh was the only one, of six employed young males in my study group, who had taken this traditional route into primary adult occupations following school leaving. John had secured work as an apprentice within a large footwear manufacturing and retailing concern, situated some twenty-five miles from Hartingleigh in the extreme south of the Greater Manchester conurbation. His brother, who worked in the same factory in a supervisory role, assisted John's post-school transition to work. John's apprenticeship lasted for four years, and at the time of my preliminary fieldwork he was, with overtime, earning wages that were comparable to the national average adult earnings of £159.30 a week (in April 1984).

This broken traditional transition route to employment for Hartingleigh's unqualified school leavers was essentially a feature of the decline in craft and industrial (engineering) apprenticeships, due to the dramatic demise in Manchester's industrial base, from the mid-1970s onwards. Moreover, during the same period, this trend was exacerbated by the unprecedented collapse of manufacturing industry which had traditionally provided semi-skilled and unskilled work for Hartingleigh's indigenous population (see Chapter One, Sections 1.7; 1.7.1). A recent study has revealed that Manchester's pool of unemployed is now equal to three quarters of the size of the entire manufacturing workforce (Peck and Emmerich 1992).

4.4.2 Protracted Transitions

Of the nine employed participants in my study group, six, five male and one female, had made the more common protracted transition into primary occupations *via* various combinations of government training schemes and special programmes, youth jobs, part-time and casual work, and repeated bouts of unemployment. Mick Kent's career trajectory provides a typical example of this protracted route into primary employment.

After leaving school in the Spring of 1980, Mick was unable to find work and was unemployed for seven months before securing a job as a "tea-boy and general skivvy" in a small engineering works. After a dispute with the foreman, he "walked out" of the job in March 1981 because it was "bobbins" (a local expression that embodies deeply-felt, negatively-evaluated connotations). As Mick went on to explain: "The job was fucking boring, the wages was shite and the gaffer was a nutter!"

From March 1981 until January 1982, Mick was again unemployed until he eventually managed to find part-time work as a barman in a local pub. However, after sixteen months, he left the job due to a dispute with the pub landlord over wages and holiday pay entitlement. Mick was again unemployed for eight months until February 1984 when he secured temporary work as a hospital porter through a private job agency. This job only lasted for three months, after which Mick again found himself on the "rock and roll" (dole). Between June and August 1984, Mick was placed on an employment training course in basic office skills. However this did not, as Mick had anticipated, lead into work placement, and Mick was again unemployed until February 1985 when he finally managed to secure permanent employment as a Clerical Assistant in a local government department. He has since been provided with on the job training in basic computing which he believes will provide the basis for a future career. Thus, it had taken Mick over five years of enduring "shit jobs, shit wages, 'monkey' schemes and social security" before he was finally able to secure a

"proper job" with some future potential. Mick's story was repeated in a variety of guises by the other five participants who had similarly made the protracted transition into adult employment, indicating that, for the unqualified early leavers in Hartingleigh at least, protracted transitions had replaced traditional transitions as the normal progression route into adult jobs, and adult independence.

Although, as Roberts (1986) has pointed out, for the minority of young people who pursue further and higher education, economic independence and the transition to adult roles and status has for a long time been the final stage of a protracted transition, a transition delayed by the planned career objective of deferring family formation and entry into the labour market in order to pursue salary-enhancing academic credentials. By the late 1980s, this pattern of delayed economic independence had become a mass phenomenon. In 1974, for example, 38% of 16 year olds were in full-time education or involved in training; by 1989-90, this figure had risen to 75%, with over a third of all 16 year olds entering Youth Training Schemes (DES 1991; Wallace and Cross 1990). Whilst mass youth unemployment has produced an explosion in educational credential seeking, described by one sociologist as a "qualifications inflation" (Furlong 1992), the tendency for many young people to stay on at school, or undertake post-school training, cannot necessarily be taken as evidence for a newly discovered enthusiasm for education. Education and youth training are often viewed as "the best of some rather limited alternatives" (Gray and Sime 1989 : 18). Moreover, options such as Youth Training would be "deserted rapidly if economic and demographic trends restored the option of regular employment to 16 year olds" (Roberts *et al* 1989 : 2).

Schooling has traditionally entailed the twin objectives of personal discipline as well as the accumulation of knowledge. The same can be said of the development of vocational training. It is striking, however that, faced with the massive rise in youth unemployment in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the former was perceived as being

required by those who had traditionally left school at 16. The rise in youth unemployment has produced a massive increase in state policy intervention. In a previous section (Chapter Two, Section 2.6), I argued, following Davies (1986), that these interventions have amounted to an implicit "national youth policy", concerned with the containment and socialisation of the young working class. In the following section, I will argue that these state policy interventions are based on an ideological smokescreen located in a pedagogical model of rectifying deficiency, remedying skill shortages, and instilling work discipline. These interventions have substantially transformed the transitions to work and firmly established vocational training as a central state strategy for youth containment (Massey 1986; Davies 1986).

4.5 Cyclical Transitions

A third discernable mode of career progression from school leaving amongst study participants involves a cyclical transition from school into a variety of government employment training schemes and special programmes, punctuated by periods of employment in youth jobs, secondary labour markets, repeated bouts of unemployment, and back into the training schemes and programmes. The cyclical repetition of training possibilities under the expansion of what has come to be known as 'the new vocationalism' (Bates *et al* 1984; Dale 1985) often precedes the slide into disillusionment, cynicism, and long-term unemployment. People who have endured the cyle of schemes and special programmes and yet return for more have been rather uncharitably described as "MSC junkies":

> "... waiting for their next fix of job search skills and enterprise training with which to conjur up illusions of real and permanent employment" (Coles 1988 : 192).

4.5.1 Youth Training

The provision of a plethora of government inspired training schemes and special programmes - under the management of the Manpower Services Commission - have been extensively criticised since their inception over fifteen years ago, most recently

by, for example, Ainley and Corney (1990); Coles (1988); Dale (1985); Finn (1987); and Maclagen (1992). When the special measures were first introduced in 1975 in response to rising youth unemployment, they were designed to cater for a minority. With youth unemployment continuing to increase, the original Job Creation Projects (JCPs) had by 1976 developed into the Work Experience Programme (WEP). In 1978, the Manpower Services Commission launched the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) to rationalise and oversee provision and training for unemployed youth. The JCPs and WEP were absorbed into YOP which was created out of recommendations contained in the Holland Report (1977). YOP was designed to "enable the individual to do more things, achieve a higher level of skills, knowledge and performance, and adapt more readily to changing circumstances or job requirements" (Holland Report 1977 : 34).

However, in the context of a declining local labour market where there is little requirement for higher skill levels, knowledge and performance, it is difficult to see how YOP could fulfil such goals in an area like Hartingleigh. In part, the scheme developed out of fears of increasing levels of "hooliganism and delinquency" (Sinfield 1981), as well as from motives of concern that young people were becoming "frustrated and disillusioned" (Furlong 1992 : 55), or from fears that, if work habits were not instilled early enough, they would not be developed at all:

> "The state's fear (evident in every MSC report) is that the more successfully the young do survive nonwork, the less they'll ever be willing to do 'real' work" (Frith, quoted in Clarke 1982 : 32).

However, when the special measures under YOP were first introduced, the training and work experience initially overcame some of the disadvantages associated with lack of qualifications. Over 80% of the early YOP trainees found work within eight months of entering the programme (Hirsch 1983 : 36), but the YOP initiative was undercut by the continued rapid rise in youth unemployment. By 1982, YOP was handling 550,000 trainees, well over twice the numbers originally envisaged, and most

of these trainees, over 70% nationally, returned to the unemployment register after completing the programme (Rees and Atkinson 1982 : 7).

As a result of oversubscription, YOP came to focus on the most disadvantaged young people and provided a six or twelve month scheme with dual components. The better component provided work experience on employers' premises. The inferior component supplied remedial education and social and life skills training, in which the emphasis was placed upon the 'employability' of the young unemployed. Both components were extensively criticised, the work component for providing little in the way of training and supplying employers with 'slave labour', the remedial component for blaming the victims.

In 1981, the MSC launched a government-supported consultative document, entitled *A New Training Initiative*, which was a response to the over-subscription of trainees on YOP. In 1983, the Youth Training Scheme, which grew out of the government's initiative, signalled a new direction. As youth unemployment continued to rise, it became less tenable to tackle the problem as one of employability and YTS was designed to provide a "permanent bridge" between school leaving and employment. YTS was at least comprehensive in that it offered all 16 year olds some education and preparation for employment. In 1983-84, for example, most school leavers entered YTS which significantly reduced the national statistics for youth unemployment (Chapter One, Section 1.7).

However, YTS reflected an implicit dual theory of training inherited from its YOP predecessor. On the one hand it sought to instil work discipline, whilst at the same time remedying skill shortages (Wallace and Cross 1990). This provided a bridge with dual carriageways, and it was no surprise to discover that those typically edged towards the inferior streams were ill-served by these developments (T.U.R.C. 1986; Wilpert 1988). The scheme was extended to two years in 1986 and was reinforced by

the removal of benefits entitlement (income support) for those under 18. In this way, in April 1988, 100,000 16 to 18 year olds were compulsorily conscripted on to Youth Training and simultaneously removed from the unemployment register (Stewart and Stewart 1988).

The expansion of Youth Training into a compulsory post-school containment programme for young people meant that, for many, schemes became the normal prelude to (un)employment. Contemporary research indicates that in the process the schemes have ceased to provide their original compensatory function. Class, gender, and ethnic stratification and inequality are simply reproduced within the schemes (Cockburn 1986, 1987; Cross 1987, 1988; West Midlands YTS Research Project 1986; Gayton *et al* 1986; Jones and Wallace 1990). Certainly YTS generated its own internal stratification and inequality originally between Mode A (work experience with employers) and the inferior Mode B schemes (special programmes for those deemed hard to employ). Gayton *et al* (1986) and Cockburn (1986, 1987) have revealed the gender stratification evident within YTS allocation procedures. More recently, the Training Agency's (formerly the MSC) *Youth Training News* (February 1989) showed that the picture of sex segregation presented by Cockburn (1987) had actually worsened, with over 60% of females being allocated just two 'female' types of training (office work and community health 'caring') compared to 10% of male trainees.

There is also strong evidence of racism in terms of scheme allocation procedures (Gayton *et al* 1986; Cross 1987, 1988; West Midlands Research Project 1986). Most ethnic trainees have been allocated the inferior Mode B types of schemes, whilst the majority of trainees on Mode A schemes were white and generally from skilled or professional backgrounds (Gayton *et al* 1986), findings echoed by the West Midlands Research Project (1986) and the studies by Cross (1987, 1988) of ethnic minorities and training policy (see also Jenkins and Solomos 1987). More recently, gender,

ethnic, and class divisions have been evident in the provision of "basic" and "premium" funding of training places (Cross 1988). The inferior schemes completely bypass the "academic track" and are intended for the containment of educational low achievers who are the most vulnerable to rising unemployment (Wallace and Cross 1990).

In the context of massive rises in youth unemployment in the late 1970s, and throughout the 1980s, the various training schemes and special programmes can be seen as serving a variety of implicitly political and ideological functions which have little connection to the provision of opportunity or employment. One of the main functions of the "New Curriculum for Youth" (Edwards 1984) is to conceal the true level of unemployment by reducing the numbers of those officially required to register. The majority of those undertaking one or other form of employment training whilst actually seeking permanent employment, "proper jobs", are not required to register as unemployed for the duration of the scheme. This sleight of hand has effectively removed hundreds of thousands from the officially recorded statistics. For example, in March 1982, there were 348,000 people involved in some form of employment training; by March 1987, this figure had increased to 843,000 (National Institute Review : 1987). According to Gleeson, "YTS is designed to remove large sections of sixteen and seventeen year olds from the labour market, thereby reducing the statistical level of unemployment" (1986 : 383).

Employment training schemes and special programmes have been propagated on the basis of a "deficiency model" (Davies 1986 : 54) of the skills and attitudes of young potential workers. Early schemes, particularly YOPs, offered a wide variety of compensatory programmes, such as "social and life skills training", to combat the so-called, lack of training, skills, efficiency, or "motivation" of young workers. YOP consisted of four different elements: work experience on employers' premises (the appropriately named WEEP); community projects (CPs); the community-oriented Project Based Work Experience (PBWE); and Training Workshops (TWs). Apart

from WEEP, which was eventually absorbed into the Youth Training Initiative as the Mode A option, the other YOP elements concentrated on programmes that were related to work discipline, work preparation, appearance, and punctuality. The aim of YOP could not be to realistically expand employment opportunities, as these depended on factors in the economy which were obviously beyond its control. In this sense, YOP could be seen to be serving an ideological purpose:

> "To present youth unemployment as a problem of faulty supply rather than demand; a failure of the educational system rather than capitalism; a personal problem of joblessness due to lack of motivation, experience or skill, rather than the position youth occupies in the labour market" (Cohen 1982 : 45).

The MSC's booklet, *Instructional Guide to Social and Life Skills*, emphasised the need to "adjust trainees to normal working conditions"; for instructors to check for "alienation in matters of timekeeping, discipline, etc.", and "any unsatisfactory relationships" (quoted in Morgan 1981 : 105-106). Essentially, the young unemployed were viewed as deficient and in need of remedial "treatment" in the form of work discipline, regulation, and surveillance.

> "The Youth Opportunities Programme offers a chance to experience the discipline of work without being allowed any of the advantages that go with it ... (young people) ... are, through the 'training programme', encouraged to believe that it is their personal inadequacies which create unemployment. They are, in effect, less powerful and more atomised on the programme than off it" (Morgan 1981 : 109).

Thus the blame for youth unemployment was shifted to the victims rather than government policy, or the wider effects of the restructuring of industrial capital (Cohen 1982; Morgan 1981; Bates *et al* 1984; Finn 1987; Gleeson 1986).

The schemes and programmes, apart from serving the above implicitly ideological functions, can also be seen to have been designed to preserve young people's labour power as a potential "reserve army of labour" whilst simultaneously deflating their aspirations and wage expectations in accordance with their limited future prospects (Gleeson 1983; Rees and Atkinson 1982; Finn 1984, 1987; Stafford 1981). Some writers have argued that the compulsory component introduced in 1986 can best be

understood in terms of "youth conscription" (Jeffs 1982, 1984; Davies 1986 : 122-128), the schemes and programmes providing cheaply available reserves of vulnerable, non-unionised, labour which has frequently been exploited in low-skilled, dirty, and occasionally dangerous, employment. Between 1979 and 1984, for example, there were twenty-seven fatalities and 979 serious injuries amongst employment trainees (Youthaid Bulletin: October 1984).

Under the varieties of "work experience" training, trainees worked a 40 hour week, for up to a year, with a single employee whilst receiving, in 1981, £23.50 a week training allowance. There was strong evidence that unscrupulous employees were using the schemes as a means of subsidising their recruitment procedures, whilst simultaneously exploiting young trainees (Morgan 1981; Finn 1984). There was further evidence of employers replacing fully-paid employees with a succession of trainees (Morgan 1981 : 102), a fact conceded by the MSC in 1981, when it was acknowledged that one in three employment training positions created had cost a permanent worker a job (Short and Taylor 1982 : 30; Finn 1984 : 21).

The main reasons why the training schemes were introduced is complex. The story began in the late 1970s when unemployment was rising and assumptions about full employment in a mixed economy, based on a post-war Keynesian consensus, were beginning to evaporate. Within the general problem of unemployment, youth unemployment became a particular concern. It had risen dramatically from 1974. In July of that year, there were only 80,000 under-20 year olds unemployed in Britain. Two years later, there were 390,000 (Loney 1983 : 27). Between 1972 and 1977, the number of unemployed 16 and 17 year olds rose by 120% (Frith 1980 : 25). A number of factors pertaining to young people can help to explain the massive state policy interventions that were developed.

> "The threat of political and social unrest by idle, bored, young people was undoubtedly a major theme structuring the nature of the provision" (Stafford 1991: 5).

As I examined in earlier sections (Chapter Two, Sections 2.2, 2.6), the concern with workless youth, particularly the young working class, has long historical roots. Mungham (1982), for example, has argued that from the nineteenth century the connections between workless youth, crime and moral degeneration have gone hand in hand. Examples from the literature of the time are provided by Mungham which express sentiments that have a very contemporary ring (1982 : 30).

Thus the implicit agenda of the New Curriculum for the young working class, especially the unqualified, may best be understood in terms of the containment, socialisation, and social control of a section of the population which has found itself excluded from the labour market, a population that has been characterised using a variety of terms such as the new "underclass" (Dahrendorf 1987; Field 1989; Giddens 1973; Jordan and Jones 1988; MacNicol 1987; Morris and Irwin 1992; Murray 1990); a "Stagnant Reserve Army" of labour (Byrne and Parson 1983 : 136); the "relative surplus population" (Marx 1976 : 797); a population currently surplus to the requirements of capital during the long wave of economic stagnation (Friend and Metcalf 1982 : 23-26); or the "lapilli" of the "Social Division of Welfare" (Mann 1992 : 160). Whichever term is used, it is the young of this section of the population which has been especially targeted for containment under the masquerade of special programmes and (un)employment training schemes (*cf* Loney 1979; Cohen 1982; Stafford 1981, 1991; Rees and Atkinson 1982; Bates *et al* 1984; Finn 1987; Maclagan 1992).

During the Thatcher decade, successive Tory governments pursued economic policies which exacerbated the demise of employment possibilities whilst simultaneously implementing training policies which presupposed their existence. In this context, the implicit ideological agenda can be viewed as resting on the age old concern with the problem of youth (Mungham 1982; Pearson 1983), especially the potentially "threatening" young unemployed working class (Davies 1986; Muncie

1984). As a consequence, the young unemployed working class have been increasingly conscripted onto schemes and special programmes, and kept off the streets, with the provision of "training for jobs" ensuring some relative compliance. Social control is effected through time and work discipline; "containment" (Massey 1986) secured through regulation, surveillance and "schooling for the social order" (Gleeson 1986: 393):

> "The push towards training reform may have little to do with equipping labour with specific technical skills to make it more employable, but perhaps more to do with establishing 'substitute criteria' (vocational preparation, work experience, further education, and so forth) for controlling the aspirations of disaffected people" (Gleeson 1983 : 1).

4.5.2 Youth Training: A Case Study

Almost all of the long-term unemployed participants in my study group had experiences of at least two varieties of training scheme or special programme. In the main, they were left with feeling of profound cynicism about the real purposes of the training initiatives which, in the majority of cases, did not lead to "proper jobs". Their stories show that, even when the search for work was frustrated by exploitation and broken promises by employers within the schemes, and even when the limited employment available was low-paid, dirty, insecure, and sometimes even dangerous, work initially still held a strong grip on their expectations and ambitions. This initial commitment to the spirit of paid employment, even in the face of duplicity on the part of her employers was eloquently summarised by Wendy Fisher whose first YOP placement was in a small regional department store under the Work Experience on Employers Premises (WEEP) component:

> "... YOPs ... At first I thought it was brilliant. After nearly two years on the dole and six interviews, just to get on [the programme], I was chuffed. I liked most of the work we had to do except having to be a cleaner when I wanted to do training as a sales girl. The thing that really pissed me off though was the [department store] manager. He said he'd take me on full-time when I'd finished [the programme] ... but he didn't. Then he said he'd fix me up with another work experience at their other place, but [again] he didn't. In the end, he gave me a part-time job which meant I worked say twelve hours one week and seventeen hours the next. I worked over Christmas full-time, but that was working the dish-washer in the café.

> It was alright but you used to come home ever night stinking of grease ... when I was on part-time I only got £4 plus my social security. Anyway, I did this for a few months but then the DHSS said he [the employer] would have to give me £1.50 an hour, or I'd have to finish or they'd say he was [paying £1.50 an hour] and take it out of my dole. I told him this and he said he'd get me another scheme which he'd already said anyway ... Well I thought as I'd only worked there [since leaving school] and all my mates were on he dole, I'd do it. But he never got me another [scheme]. By now I was really fed up and I just left ... though I had to really or they [the DHSS] would have stopped my money. I enjoyed it there all the same and even though I've finished I know that its me that's lost out really because he's [the manager] just got another [YOP] girl in."

After a further period of unemployment lasting almost a year (from February 1983 to December 1983), Wendy was provided with another MSC programme designed, "to help the long-term unemployed". This was a twelve month work placement secured through the Job Centre in which she was employed as a care assistant in a privately-run nursing home for the elderly:

> "When I started [in the nursing home], first of all I was just cleaning and helping with the dinners. But after a bit they gave me some responsibility and I was working with the old people. It was really hard work 'cause it was shifts ... one week I'd be getting up at five [a.m.] and the next I'd be lying in 'til dinner time. The wages were rubbish but it was more than my dole and there was a free dinner and no bus fares ... I liked working with the old people though some of them were a 'bit gone'. [They] used to mess themselves or throw their food about, so you'd be cleaning up all the time. The woman who ran the place was a right 'grabber'. It was disgusting how she used to rob the old people by taking their pension books. Anyway I got on alright there and I thought they'd keep me on when I'd finished [the work placement]. But in the end, the woman who ran the place said I'd been 'robbing' from the kitchens ... It wasn't true. They used it as an excuse to finish me. But they just didn't want me to be full-time because they [would have] had to put my money up. In the end, I had to leave ... they've just got another girl in ..."

Wendy's response was a deepening sense of disillusionment which prompted an angry response on the next occasion she was offered the opportunity for an employment training scheme: "I was really fed up with it all by then. So next time they offered me a bloody scheme, I told them to stick it." However, after another fourteen month period of unemployment, Wendy was forced to accept a place on an MSC training scheme, this time a community-based scheme concerned with 'urban renewal', which, among other things, involved clearing derelict land, canals and graveyards. Wendy had undertaken the scheme reluctantly under the threat of benefit withdrawal by the "careers bloke at the Job Centre".

Roberts and Parsell (1989) have identified three distinct sectors of training scheme: the sponsored sector; the contest sector; and 'sink schemes'. At the top of the hierarchy, trainees in the sponsored sector have 'employee status' or the possibility of permanent work at the end of the scheme's duration. Many of the better qualified entrants are allocated these training places. The contest sector is less certain, and employers make routine decisions on retention when trainees are nearing the end of the scheme's duration. At the bottom of the hierarchy are those schemes labelled 'sink schemes'. In the main these are community schemes where the chances of employment are virtually non-existent. These placements have also been described as the "detached sector" (Raffe 1987), as they are detached from the process of selection and recruitment within the labour market. Their function has been described as "warehousing" (Roberts *et al* 1988 : 35) or "mopping up" (Wallace 1987 : 23) unqualified early leavers before returning them to the dole queue. Again, Wendy provided eloquent testimony to the futility of the 'sink schemes'.

> "Me and Angela [Wendy's friend] started at the same time. It was terrible, the middle of winter and they wanted us to clean up Marton cemetery. We had to get all this broken glass and bricks and old wood and that and carry it to a skip. There were no gloves or anything and it was freezing. Anyway when the supervisor went away, we all [the twelve members of the community scheme] used to go to the café on the market and play pool."

By now Wendy was thoroughly disillusioned with the whole idea of training schemes and quickly left using 'local knowledge' to preserve her state benefit entitlement, a necessary "tactic for survival", as scheme refusal constitutes the grounds for benefit suspension.

> "In the end me an' Angela [Wendy's friend] stopped going and signed 'on the sick' 'til they forgot about us ... see that way we still got our social and we didn't 'ave to carry on pratting about in Marton cemetery."

The community-based schemes provided numerous "opportunities" for my study participants. Apart from clearing local graveyards, participants were also involved in projects such as clearing derelict land, renovating a boy scouts hut, cleaning and

decorating an old person's home, clearing debris from canals and rebuilding canal walls, demolishing and clearing away redundant boundary walls from the old market, tree planting and grass cutting, and, within a Training Workshop, building, then demolishing and rebuilding a wall. Generally, these schemes were allocated to male study participants under the Youth Opportunities Programme. Wendy's placement along with her friend, Angela, on the community-based scheme was unusual; generally, the girls were more likely to be allocated "feminised caring work" (Wallace 1987 : 24) such as Wendy's second placement in an old persons' home. Other examples drawn from female study participants include helping in pre-school nurseries, office skills and typing workshops organised within the social services department; and "cleaning" placements, such as Wendy's first scheme in a regional department store.

Wendy's experiences of cyclical transition through unemployment and the varieties of employment training provide evidence of the ways in which employers were using YOP as a means of subsiding recruitment, and using trainees as 'slave labour'; directly exploiting the schemes (and naive trainees) to provide cheap and disposable sources of labour. Moreover, the arbitrary discipline procedure employed by the owner of the nursing home where Wendy was placed on her second YOP reflects the point made by Youthaid (1984) that the majority of Work Experience trainees were being concentrated in "small, low-paying, non-unionised workplaces". The lack of recourse to basic employee entitlements, including Union support, in her dispute with the nursing home owner weakened her position. As a consequence, she was unable to defend herself against the accusations that were made, and which eventually provided a pretext for her dismissal and replacement.

Wendy's experiences were not exceptional. Her subsequent outrage was echoed in a variety of forms and in varying degrees by the majority of the twenty-five unemployed participants in my study who had experienced the Youth Opportunities

Programme. Even those who had gained placements on the WEEP component were critical of the exploitative training allowance for doing full-time work, often alongside workers who were paid more than twice as much for the same job.

Training workshops too do not escape criticism. Trainees complained of inadequate supervision and facilities, lack of real training, pointless and repetitive tasks, and of being treated "like shit", "like some sort of moron", "like dirt", by the training supervisors. Maz and Dilly, for example, built a brick wall within their training workshop; after a month's work, they were told to carefully demolish it and clean the mortar from the bricks. After the task was completed, they were again "told" to rebuild the wall, at which point the pair remonstrated with their training supervisor who, in turn, became abusive. The conflict attracted trainees and staff from other parts of the workshop and, when one of the supervisors sought to physically restrain Maz, a fight broke out which resulted in the hospitalisation of two of the training supervisors. Both Maz and Dilly appeared in Magistrates' Court as a result of this incident, but, with the help of a sympathetic solicitor, and a host of witnesses to the incident, recruited from amongst the trainees, they were able to secure "a result", and were found not guilty.

Moreover, aside from complaints and criticisms of the form, nature, and content of the YOP components which actually involved "work" in some form or another, study participants reserved their most derisory comments for the social and life skills training. Often this was a component of the training workshops, and can be seen as an alternative form of minimalist working class education, "secondary schools with ashtrays" (Bynner 1991 : 650). Social and life skills training can be seen as no more than an extended form of personal and social education with no clear relevance to the requirements of any particular form of employment:

> "Inadequate facilities, largely untrained teachers, weak educational structures and low aims, produced an educational outcome that was worth little to most young people involved" (Bynner 1991 : 652).

Most participants who had experiences of this component of YOP complained of the irrelevant and patronising content of the instruction. J.W., for example, left the workshop after spending three days being taught "how to answer the 'phone". Others complained of the "weird" games and psychologically oriented tasks they were required to take seriously:

> "Like games about answering the door to a salesman who wants you to buy an Atom Bomb! What the fuck's that all about?" (Tracy Smith).

> "He said like, what would you do if you saw a battleship coming down Market Street? ... So I says, well I'd sink it with me torpedoes ... so he says 'aah', where would you get your torpedoes from? So I says the same fuckin' place you got your battleship from! ... It was fuckin' mad there" (Davvo).

For the majority of study participants, an embittered and fundamental cynicism was the consequence of their cyclical transitions through the schemes and special programmes. In Wendy's case: "No way will they get me on one again. I don't care how hard up I am, or what they say ... I'd rather go beggin'. I'm tellin' you, on my life, I mean it, I'm never doin' another bloody scheme".

It was primarily the Youth Opportunities Programme which provided the majority of employment training places for my study participants. In addition, the Community Programme introduced in October 1982 had provided the opportunity to experience paid employment for up to twelve months. Only a few of the study participants had entered training programmes under the Youth Training Scheme introduced in September 1983, although many believed that YTS was in fact one of the schemes they had undertaken. Confusion over the naming of schemes was widespread, partly reflecting the "alphabet soup" (Sinfield 1981 : 98) nature of the abbreviated titles of the various schemes. In the main, discussion with participants of their experiences on the schemes and special programmes produced reactions which were ranged on a continuum from unfavourable to bitterly hostile. References were made to the poor working conditions, the failure to provide the amount and type of training promised, the derisory 'training allowances', and various expressions concerned with the sense of

being patronised by trainers or exploited by employers. However, the most common complaint was that 'proper jobs' had failed to follow their participation in the schemes undertaken.

Here it is important to stress the selectivity of their views. The young people in my study were generally those for whom participation in the various training schemes had not been successful, in the sense that secure employment had generally failed to follow their participation. It is likely that, had they been successful in gaining employment, their views about government schemes would probably have been different.

4.6 Transitions and Unemployment

By far the largest grouping amongst my study participants in 1985-86 were those who had made the transition from school into long-term unemployment. Of the twenty-five unemployed participants contacted in 1985-86 (Table 9), seventeen had been unemployed for twelve months or more, six of these being young women. However, it is important to note that defining unemployment amongst women is more difficult than for men because of the complex nature of their relationship to the world of paid employment and the ways in which partnerships with men, care of dependent children, and the assumption of dependency in their partnerships cuts across any clear identification of their employment status (Cragg and Dawson 1984); and I examine the implications of these factors in Section 4.7

Although the government's special measures, examined in the previous section, have sought to reduce unemployment amongst the 16 to 18 year age group (most recently by the introduction of a compulsory two-year Youth Training Scheme), in the years up to 1986, this was accompanied by a steady increase in unemployment amongst the 19 to 24 year olds. During the preliminary stage of my study (1985-

1986), the 19 to 24 year age grouping was that of my study participants and their peers:

> "By April 1986, more than one-third of men and women in registered unemployment were under the age of 25, comprising some 1.37 million would-be workers. Over 900,000 of these young people were aged 18-24 years; one in three of them had been without work for more than one year, and one in twelve for more than three years" (McRae 1987 : 1-2).

My preliminary fieldwork together with regional and national statistics on youth unemployment (Chapter One, Section 1.7) support claims that substantial numbers of the unqualified young are proceeding from school, through youth training, and are then entering the ranks of the long-term unemployed. The areas dependent upon traditional industry appear to be worst affected. According to Willis's (1985) study in Wolverhampton, for example

> "About 90 per cent of last year's 16 year old school leavers who were looking for work could not find it. They have been offered a year on the Youth Training Scheme varieties of work experience plus some off the job training. But they will be tipped back on the dole one year later. Many of them will not find work again before their mid-twenties. Many may never work" (1984a : 475).

By their early twenties, with little work experience, many of these young adults have joined the "hardcore" (Roberts 1987 : 18), as careers officers and Department of Employment training staff often describe them. Evidence suggests that employers prefer young school leavers because, under the MSC sponsorship of employment training, it is financially more advantageous to employ them than young adults who may have grown accustomed to unemployment and "settled into claimant roles" (Roberts 1987 : 18).

4.6.1 The Underclass?

In sociological and political terms, this "hardcore" of the young adult unemployed has been analysed, and categorised using a variety of theoretical models and terms. These broadly seek to locate the young long-term unemployed within a sub-section of the working class. Mann (1992 : 2) has identified and examined no less than twelve such

terms including: the new underclass; marginalised groups or stratum; excluded groups; the reserve army of labour; the relative surplus population; the relative stagnant population; housing classes; the pauper class; the residuum; and more obviously, the poor. These are terms which have all been used to describe a section of society which exists within and yet at the base of the working class. However, according to Mann: "Few of the terms used are located within any coherent theory of social divisions and most are, even descriptively, rather vague" (1992 : 22).

The idea of an underclass is currently the most fashionable term It has recently gained popular currency as a result of prominent dissemination in the national media (see for example: Charles Murray, *Sunday Times Colour Supplement* 26.11.89; Melanie Phillips, *The Guardian* 4.12.92, *The Guardian* 11.12.92; and her similar exploration of "the dangers of ignoring the growth of a British underclass", transmitted on Radio 4, 4.00 p.m., 6.12.92). Gerald Kaufman, Labour Party Shadow Home Secretary at the time, also referred to a "bitter, resentful and angry" underclass in a BBC Television programme broadcast three days before the 1987 General Election (cited in Mann 1992 : 1). Another prominent Labour politician, Frank Field, has produced a book on the emergence of Britain's underclass (1989), in which he argues (like Phillips and Kaufman) that the erosion of citizenship coupled with exacerbated class differences - both products of Thatcherite economic policies - have produced an emergent underclass. These more sympathetic analyses of the aetiology of the underclass make uncomfortable bedfellows with Murray's more widely publicised views. Murray's version of the underclass (1989; 1990) takes marital status, particularly 'illegitimacy' and lone parenthood, violent crime and "voluntary unemployment" as the definitive indicators. According to Mann: "It is tempting to suggest that he sees the underclass as criminally violent bastards who refuse to work" (1992 : 106).

In an earlier section, I have argued that the historical development of youthwork and youthwork practice from its philanthropic roots (Chapter Two, Section 2.2) can best be understood in terms of middle class fears about the children of the "dangerous classes". Moreover, I have argued that the more recent evolution of an implicit "national youth policy" of containment and socialisation, *via* the interventions of the MSC as a "central state strategy" for youth, also reflects middle class fears concerning the young unemployed working class (Chapter Two, Section 2.6; Chapter Four, Section 4.5.1). Similarly, in the context of his research funding and sponsorship by Rupert Murdoch's News International Group and the wide platform for the dissemination of his views through Murdoch's *Sunday Times* colour supplement, Murray's interpretation of the underclass can be seen to be pandering to, and once again reflecting, this well established historical tradition of middle class fears of the 'lower orders', the 'contaminating class'. Murray's view of the underclass as those, "whose values are now contaminating the life of entire neighbourhoods" (1989 : 27) contains the same language of medical pathology as was used by the Victorian Social Darwinists. This same language was later invoked against sections of the working class by policy makers informed by eugenicist theories of social pathology (MacNicol 1987). Not only does Murray's analysis invoke the medical models of the past, "disease", "plague", "contamination" (1989 : 27), but also seeks to draw the same moral distinction, made by his Victorian forebears, between the deserving and ("depraved", "disreputable", "debased", "feckless") undeserving poor.

The essence of Murray's argument is that an underclass exists not necessarily of the poorest but of a different type of poor who are locked into welfare dependency with generous welfare provision a principal reason for the growth in their numbers. Contained within this view is the notion that the underclass chooses and perpetuates its own poverty. This fits neatly with an ideological and theoretical legacy that can, according to Walker (1990), be traced from the repression of vagrancy under the Elizabethan Poor Law, to the workhouse test of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act,

to the 1930s genuinely-seeking-work test, to the more recent 1980s versions contained in the Department of Social Security's "voluntary unemployment rules" regarding non-take up of placements offered on YTS, Employment Training, or the so-called Restart Programme. This latter version in the historical harassment of the undeserving poor is designed to put pressure on the long-term unemployed by compelling them to attend "Mickey Mouse" training (such as "job search skills") under the threat of benefit suspension (contained in the voluntary unemployment rules) if schemes are refused. Murray's analysis blames the victim (Walker 1990) whilst implicitly condemning the state for perpetuating the problem by undermining the ethics of self-help. As MacNichol has noted, the concept of an underclass is periodically resurrected because it has "enormous symbolic importance as part of a broader reformist strategy *within conservative social thought" (1987 : 300), and tends to be* invoked and supported by those who "wish to constrain the redistributive potential of state welfare" (1987 : 316). Thus, despite its descriptive appeal, the concept of an underclass has to be challenged because it invokes historical notions of personal inadequacy, behavioural defects and inter-generational welfare dependency which neatly meshes with conservative views of the aetiology of social problems and their solutions (see for example, Joseph 1974).

What Murray's work highlights is the danger of moving from the identification of a section of society who are enduring social hardship into regarding social hardship as a phenomenon produced by those forced to endure it. As MacNichol, above, points out, such an analysis contains reactionary policy implications such as a reduction of welfare benefits and authoritarian measures to re-educate and remoralise the undeserving poor. Mann's (1992) analysis on the other hand seeks to locate intra-class divisions within the Social Division of Welfare. Mann shows how such divisions evolved as a paradoxical by-product of working class struggles to avoid the debilitating consequences of capitalism, and how exclusionary practices by organised labour were significant in this process. Exclusionary practices among the emergent

trade unions enabled sections of the organised working class to maintain some control over the labour process as a means of collectively avoiding poverty. However, such practices have promoted intra-class divisions which are reflected in the Social Division of Welfare. Mann's historical analysis reveals how the intra-class social divisions were subsequently embodied in social legislation which institutionalised the Social Division of Welfare. According to Mann:

> "Capitalism encourages sectional competition and economistic class struggles. These, in turn, promote intra-class divisions which the Social Division of Welfare comes both to reflect and at the same time enhance" (1992 : 11).

The strongest sections of the organised working class, through gaining access to occupational and fiscal (private) welfare, have reinforced the widening differentials within the Social Division of Welfare. For the weakest sections, excluded from the labour process and access to occupational welfare and pension schemes (or profit-sharing, transport allowances and cheap mortgages), their only recourse is to the most visible and stigmatised provisions of public welfare. Welfare state benefits which provide the least security provide the minimum standard of living for those stranded at the bottom reaches of the class structure and the Social Division of Welfare -

> "all those who are long-term unemployed; most of those for whom periods of unemployment alternate with dependence on casual or part-time work; those participating in the bottom reaches of the 'black economy' outside the tax system; all those who are totally dependent on state benefits ... single parent families on social security; and those people who ... live in households where the standard of living only exceeds the minimum poverty level because of the receipt of means *tested benefits" (Friend* and Metcalf 1982 : 118-119).

The most notable feature of the changing terrain of welfare provision in recent years has been the profound cleavage between sections of the working class at the upper reaches of the Social Division of Welfare and those at the bottom. Those at the upper reaches have benefited from Conservative policy in the areas of tax and occupationally related private welfare and fiscal benefits. Those at the bottom have been excluded from the newer patterns of working class consumption (associated

with, for example, home ownership and private welfare) as a consequence of their dependence on public welfare. As the gap becomes more visible -

> "there is a temptation for middle class observers to identify an 'underclass'. It is a temptation which has to be resisted if the process of 'making' an underclass is not to be built into new state policies. Otherwise the impact on intra-class divisions and the Social Division of Welfare could well be to recreate the sort of distinctions, between those at the top and those at the bottom of the working class, which existed in Victorian Britain (Mann 1990 : 165).

The cleavage in the Social Division of Welfare and the dependence of increasing numbers on the stigmatised provisions of public welfare has produced a growth industry in "scrounger bashing and scrounger phobia" (Golding and Middleton 1982).

4.6.2 Social Security : Scroungers, Scrounger Bashing and Scrounger Phobia

In 1982-83, there were more than three and a half million people in Britain dependent upon unemployment and supplementary benefits (Parker 1982 : 32). Benefits, which are barely sufficient to maintain "poverty line" living standards (Child Poverty Action Group 1987) have become the main sources of income for 50% of people living in the Inner City wards of Manchester (Chapter One, Section 1.9). Those in receipt of benefits are subjected to the most stringent and arbitrary investigations and limitations on earning. Thus, the unemployed in my sample group were extremely discreet about their "jobs on the side" for fear of "grassers" whose 'phone calls or letters to the "social" can lead to "snoopers" being sent to investigate. The motive of informers was assumed to be "jealousy". This has been vividly described in Seabrook's (1982) impressionistic accounts of 'Unemployment'.

Social security abuse is generally regarded by the state as being more blameworthy than income tax evasion or avoidance, and there have been frequent periodic outbursts (moral panics) by the mass media and populist right-wing politicians about "dole scroungers" and the like (see for example: Seaton 1986; Box 1987 : 150-51;

Golding and Middleton 1982; *Daily Telegraph* 14.5.86, "Crackdown on Dole Scroungers"; *Today* 5.12.86, "The Moonlighters who Cost Britain Millions"; *Manchester Evening News* 29.8.86, "Bid to Beat Dole Cheats"; *Marketeer and Discount Trader* 1.4.88, "Swoop on Dole Fiddlers"). In October 1985, Sir Michael Edwardes, former Chairman of British Leyland, Jeffrey Archer, former Vice-Chairman of the Conservative Party, and Lord Young, then the Employment Secretary, all made widely publicised claims (reported in *The Guardian* on 15 and 31 October 1985) with the implication that there were perhaps nearly a million "dole scroungers" who "artificially inflated" the unemployment statistics.

A further 'moral panic' was the 'discovery' of a "Costa del Dole" in the mid-1980s -

> " ... seaside resorts to which, it was said, unemployed young people living on social security were flocking. To discipline what was at most a tiny minority of claimants - none of whom were breaking any law - board and lodging allowance for all claimants under 26 years old not living with their parents were ... withdrawn" (Davies 1986 : 126).

Taking benefits without real entitlement seems tantamount to stealing, whereas tax evasion is regarded as more like not paying the government's bill. This popular attitude is embodied in the disproportionate emphasis placed by Tory governments on anti-fraud investigation by the Department of Social Security as compared with the Inland Revenue. In 1981-82, for example, there were 2,250 fraud investigators in the Social Security compared with 1,870 in the Inland Revenue (Parker 1982 : 33). This, despite the fact that: "Illicit gains from white-collar crime far exceed those of all other crime combined" (Ramsay Clark quoted in Box 1987 : 35).

The income tax system is not heavily geared towards criminalisation in the way that social security fraud is (Cook 1991; McBarnet 1991a, b). Within the income tax fraud investigation system, there is a preference for settlement, or for the use of decriminalising sanctions. There is, according to McBarnet, "an institutional tendency to 'decriminalise' tax violations" (1991a : 34). Dee Cook (1991) has

similarly shown how public discourse and popular ideology surrounding tax assist in the decriminalisation of the law breaking activities of "valuable citizens" (1991 : 7). Popular discourse is based on the different histories of taxation and public welfare and the ideological construction of taxpayers as 'givers' and benefit claimants as 'takers'. Tax evasion enters public discourse as a justifiable fiddle or shrewd business practice, benefit fraud as a despicable form of 'scrounging'. Moreover, As McBarnet (1988; 1991a, b) has demonstrated, activities can be actively decriminalised by the strategies adopted by tax payers and their financial advisers, who manipulate the enforcement of the law towards their own ends. Sometimes these processes occur following detection (Mann 1985), but also pre-emptively by the "management of legitimation" and disclosure of information, in such a way as to both minimise investigation and avoid any danger of invoking criminal procedures at all (McBarnet 1991a, b). According to McBarnet, "economic elites actively use the methods of law to secure immunity from legal control" (1991a : 342).

Supplementary benefit fraud investigations take place within a social context shaped by a Welfare State pulled in contradictory directions. In one respect, the function of welfare benefits may be viewed as an entitlement for the relief of need, a poverty safety-net. On the other hand, the Welfare State's primary function has been seen in terms of protecting the public purse and discouraging dependency. In terms of the latter view, Patrick Jenkin, one-time Conservative Minister for Social Security, argued:

> "The honest and the innocent have nothing to fear from the enquiries of our officials ... Helping genuine claimants ... remains the main function of the Social Security" (Quoted in Cook 1991 : 143).

Thus, the pursuit of supplementary benefit fraud reproduces notions of the dishonest claimant and the nineteenth century distinctions between the ("honest and innocent") deserving poor and the undeserving poor.

Social security for the unemployed was not designed to cope either with large scale or long-term unemployment and evidence indicates that changes in social security policy have actually reduced the living standards of benefit-dependent families, especially the long-term unemployed (Bradshaw *et al* 1983, 1987). According to a study by Piachaud (1991) of the London School of Economics, benefits have been cut by twenty per cent in real terms during the period 1979-1987, with the result that at least three times more people are living in poverty because of unemployment than when the Conservatives came to power in 1979. According to Mack and Lansley (1985):

> "There have been many government policies that have contributed to these trends, the most important being the changes in taxation and social security. Since 1979, the national level of taxes on incomes has ... risen. However, while the low-paid have had to hand over an increased proportion of their wages to the state, the burden of tax on those on the highest incomes ... has fallen. Overall, the well-off and the rich have gained about £2,600 million between 1979 and 1984 from tax concessions. At the same time, there have been several changes in social security that have made those dependent on benefits poorer ... All in all, benefit cuts over the life of Mrs. Thatcher's first term in office amounted to some £1,600 million, most of which represented a cut in the incomes of the poorest sections of the community" (1985 : 5-6).

More recently, figures released on the eve of the parliamentary recess in July 1992 revealed a huge cut in real incomes for all the poorest sections of society (*Households Below Average Income*, HMSO 1992). According to these official figures, in 1988-89, over twelve million people were living on below half-average incomes (the nearest thing to a poverty line). In 1979, when the Conservatives took office, the equivalent total was under five million. The data also showed that 25% of the nation's children were living in families below the poverty line (compared 10% in 1979) indicating that 3.2 million children were now living in poverty. Michael Meacher, Labour's social security spokesperson, argued that the Government had refused to release the report for almost two years as part of a cynical political manoeuvre: "The Government sat on this report until after the general election and published it [on the eve of the parliamentary recess] too late for parliamentary scrutiny" (quoted in *The Guardian* 16.7.92).

Moreover, in April 1993, Donald Dewer (the shadow Social Security Secretary), in answer to a Commons written question, obtained figures which showed that the numbers living on income support, the "safety-net benefit", had more than doubled (to over eight million) from the 1979 figures. In 1979, when the Conservatives took power, there were 4.4 million living on the equivalent supplementary benefit. In 1992, the total was 8.7 million. In the same Commons reply, further estimated projections by the Department of Social Security revealed that 5.7 million people would claim income support in 1993-94 on behalf of themselves and a further 4.6 million dependants; making a total of 10.3 million, or one in six of the entire population, dependent on the minimal provisions of the welfare benefits system (reported in *The Guardian* 17.4.93).

The "hardcore" of young unemployed can be located within the lower reaches of the Social Division of Labour. They are dependent upon the most visible and stigmatised provisions of public welfare to provide the minimum standard of living. Within the inner city, the hardcore can be said to occupy a geographical and psychological "twilight zone" (Presdee 1984). It is a twilight zone between school leaving and adulthood, devoid of any of the material and psychological benefits of waged work. Within the twilight zone, it has been argued that crucial aspects of identity formation, and psycho-social development and functioning are "stunted". This analysis has been caricatured by Buss and Redburn (1983) as, "you lost your job, now you're losing your mind".

4.6.3 You lost your job, now you're losing your mind : The Psychology of Unemployment

Social-psychological research has indicated that employment status remains a crucial aid and symbolic reference point in the post-school transition to adult roles, status, and identities (see for example, Jahoda *et al* 1933; Jahoda 1979a, b, 1981, 1982;

Gurney 1980; Kelvin 1981; Donovan and Oddy 1982; Donovan *et al* 1985; Storey 1982; Breakwell 1985; Hendry 1984; Layton 1986; etc.).

The transition from dependent statuses associated with residence in the parental home, and reliance on parents for material support, to an adult status has in general been closely correlated, at least among working class youth, with getting a job, earning a wage, courtship, leaving home, getting married, and starting a family. Without a job or wage, this process of transition is disrupted. As Wallace (1987) has similarly argued:

> "One of the founding principles of British society between 1945 and the 1970s has been *that of 'full employment'. During this period, it was thought that employment* was available to everyone who wanted it, and this view served to fashion the way in which people left school, started work, and began families. Employment has traditionally been one of the determinants of adult status and citizenship, and it also serves to determine social identities in other respects - which class an individual belongs to, their life styles, and their status as 'men' or 'women', are all determined by the kind of jobs they find" (1987 : 1).

The absence of paid employment appears to have profound implications, not only for the traditional post-school transition routes to adult roles and status, but also for 'crucial' aspects of social identity formation. According to Donovan and Oddy for example:

> "The transition from school to work may well represent a crucial stage in the formation of an adult identity. If an adolescent is denied the chance to take an adult role at this stage in ... development, the adverse effects may be far more serious than when unemployment occurs after an adult identity has been established" (Donovan and Oddy 1982 : 25).

Or, as Breakwell has similarly argued:

> "A person's identity is fundamentally influenced by his or her position in the labour market: attitudes, attributions, and actions which constitute identity can be <u>predicted</u> from that position ... So, no matter how one chooses to define work, it seems to be vital to a person's identity, their sense of self and its evaluation. If one's working life is fraught with difficulties, it can be predicted that identity will be threatened" (Breakwell 1985 501 and 491). (my emphasis)

There is, moreover, a vast social-psychological literature relating to the deleterious effects of unemployment on the psycho-social well-being of the unemployed (see Fryer and Payne (1986) for a comprehensive overview). Many studies embody the highly

influential conclusions of Jahoda *et al*'s famous (1933) study of unemployment in Marienthal, Austria. The conclusions have been summarised by the main author as follows:

> "The study showed that being unemployed is something very different from having leisure time. The unemployed decreased their attendance of clubs and voluntary organisations, their use of the free library, their reading habits. Their sense of time disintegrated, having nothing to do meant they became less able to be punctual ... Budgeting, so much more necessary than before, was progressively abandoned. While family relations continued in established patterns, longer than other relations and activities, there was some evidence that they, too, deteriorated and family quarrels increased" (1979a : 309).

Jahoda has developed a systematic framework for analysing the consequences of unemployment in psycho-social terms. She argues that employment embodies a "manifest function" or "consequence" which is the provision of money; the reduction of income is of course a primary source of the harm that unemployment brings about. There are also a range of other "latent functions" or "consequences" of employment that are, according to Jahoda, linked to psychological well-being, status, and identity formation. Thus employment provides:

> "A time structure on the waking day; it enlarges the scope of social relations beyond ... family relations; by virtue of the division of labour, it demonstrates that the purposes and achievements of a collectivity transcend those for which an individual can aim; it assigns social status and clarifies personal identity; it requires regular activity" (Jahoda 1982 : 83).

The five '"latent functions" or "consequences" of employment are, according to Jahoda: an imposed time structure; regular shared experience and contacts outside the family; links to transcending goals and purposes; a framework for the definition of status and identity; and a framework of enforced activity. Unemployment thus results in a deprivation of access to these five important "categories of experience" (Miles 1983) which, it is argued, inevitably connects to the impaired psychological well-being of the unemployed.

Large scale systematic surveys utilising a variety of measures, scales, and inventories largely derived from Jahoda's original work have indicated unambiguously

that the young unemployed suffer a loss of psychological well-being and functioning manifested in, for example, depression, diminished sense of self, anxiety and other psycho-social disturbances (see for example: Banks *et al* 1980; Banks and Jackson 1982; Jackson and Warr 1983; Jackson *et al* 1983; Stafford 1982; Warr 1982; Banks *et al* 1984; Ullah and Banks 1985; Ullah *et al* 1983; Ullah *et al* 1985; Banks and Ullah 1986; Fryer and Warr 1984; Warr 1987).

However, the 'Deprivation Theory', which has been derived from Jahoda's pioneer work and which is embodied in much of the social psychology of unemployment, has been challenged for its implicit determinism (Fryer and Payne 1984; Fryer 1986a, b), and psychological positivism (Taylor and Jamieson 1983 : 28-34). There is within the 'Deprivation' literature a characteristic search for a given, universal, and historical pattern; a causal relationship between job-loss, loss of access to the socio-psychologically important categories of meaning and experience provided by the five latent functions or consequences of employment, resulting in a loss of psycho-social well-being and functioning. In extreme cases, the psychological deprivation of employment structures may result in instances of "minor psychiatric morbidity" (Fryer and Payne 1986 : 247-249), unsympathetically interpreted by Buss and Redburn (1983) as being "you lost your job, now you're losing your mind".

Taylor and Jamieson (1983) argue that one of the major weaknesses of psychological positivism is its attempt to impose sequences of personal adaptations to unemployment originally observed in the 'gemeinschaft' working class communities of the 1930s on to the experiences of young people who are unemployed in the 1980s. Pahl (1982) has similarly argued that: "attempts by ... psychologists to argue that context does not matter and that extrapolation from studies undertaken 50 years ago can illuminate the present may be dismissed as intellectually unworthy" (1982 : 91).

A variety of studies have underlined and emphasised the special character of the 'new' unemployment of youth. Roberts *et al*, for example, argue that: "Youth unemployment is often less than a calamity for those most seriously affected ... the young unemployed have never anchored their identities to particular occupations" (1982b : 1 and 3). They maintain that the social and economic pressures which produced "job dependence" in the 1920s and 1930s have weakened and that young people are earning renown for their "occupational marginality", preferring independence and novelty to commitment to particular occupations. Roberts *et al* (1982a) go on to cite a 1978 EEC survey among member nations which reports that unemployed 15-24 year olds display exceptional occupational "intransigence".

> "They prove less willing than other age groups to lower their expectations, learn fresh skills and move to different towns, and are more likely to regard it as sound advice to refuse unsatisfying work ... to seek jobs in the black economy" (1982a : 175).

In contrast to 'Deprivation' theories of unemployment, Fryer (1986a) proposes an alternative "theory of agency", the underlying assumption of which is that people are "agents" who -

> "strive to assert themselves, initiate and influence events, are intrinsically motivated and live in a perceived world in which what is attempted depends on their view of the future as well as memories of the past. They try to make sense of what goes on and to act in accordance with these interpretations in line with values and purposes and in the light of estimations of possible scenarios and outcomes" (1986a : 17).

Fryer (1986b) goes to some lengths to point out that agency theory is not a "reductionist, cognitive, psychology which refrains from systematic analysis of social institutions" (1986b ; 31). Fryer maintains that an account of unemployment based on agency theory "emphasises the psychological burdens of material relative poverty and hardship which the employment deprivation theory allows little or no explanatory role" (1986b : 31)

Fryer wishes to separate two claims about the psychological consequences of unemployment which are confused by researchers operating with a deprivation hypothesis. The first claim, with which he can agree, is that unemployment may bring about psychological distress and deterioration. The second claim is that deprivation of the 'latent consequences of employment' causes psychological distress. For Fryer, these are independent claims, the latter view leads to a conception of people as -

> "... dependent beings reliant upon the supportive latent functions of employment for their functioning. When these supports are removed ... their very humanity is diminished" (1986a : 19).

The former view allows for a conception of the person as an 'active social agent' striving to make sense of his or her situation, an active social agent who may well suffer psychologically, not because of the removal of the supportive structures of employment, but rather due to the nature, extent, and effects of material deprivations associated with prolonged unemployment. Evidence suggests, moreover, that rather than promoting physical and psychological health and well-being, some forms of employment may actually diminish it - irrevocably in the case of industrial injuries, disease, and fatalities (McKenna and McEwan 1987).

Ultimately, deprivation theories imply a commitment to "social determinism" (Fryer 1986a : 21) containing a view of the person as -

> "... passive, reactive, extrinsically motivated ... dependent upon an essentially benevolent, supportive though authoritarian employment situation to structure time and goals, dictate purposes, impose social contact and activity, supply ... self-image and provide an external reinforcement schedule to reward the employee-subject's reactions positively or negatively in line with the employers' transcending goals and purposes" (1986a : 21).

Fryer wishes to challenge the deterministic view of the person within deprivation theory, with a voluntaristic view of the person as an active social agent. Empirical work by Fryer and Payne (1984) challenges the deprivation theorists' pessimistic assumption of "the homogeneously negative impact of unemployment" (1984 : 293), by examining instances of "proactive" behaviour which can mitigate against the inevitability of psychological deprivation associated with unemployment.

Proactivity is characterised by "a person choosing to initiate, intervene in or reperceive situations in a way which allows the person ... to act in valued directions rather than respond passively to imposed change" (1984 : 273).

My work in Hartingleigh has similarly indicated that, for those to whom formal employment is a distant and diminishing possibility, alternative status systems, alternative routes to self-esteem (Stager *et al* 1983; Shamir 1986) and, as a consequence, alternative modes of identity formation are proactively explored, constructed and pursued, my preliminary fieldwork serving to confirm the impressions I had formed as a result of informal access to, and familiarity with, the life-styles of the majority of unemployed males in my study group. During Phase One and Phase Two of my evolving study, I progressively became aware of the significantly large numbers of (predominantly, but not exclusively, male) unqualified early leavers who were seeking out and developing sub-employment and anti-employment sub-cultures. These non-conventional routes to income, meaning and identity were progressively constructed from the actual and symbolic resources available within the youth sub-cultures and wider social networks of the local community. Observation and limited (and, on occasions, not so limited) participation revealed the growing involvement of study participants (whether actual, potential, or at the level of fantasy) in a variety of 'survival strategies' and 'alternative careers' within the sub- and anti-employment sub-cultures. These proactive developments appear to offer participants substitute criteria for the construction of status and identity, enabling them to limit and offset threats to their socio-psychological well-being posed by their objective labour market position.

As MacLeod has similarly observed: "For the poorest segments of the population ... the only defence against the dominant ideology [of achievement and material success] ... is to turn it on its head and salvage as much dignity as possible *via* a redefined criteria for success" (1987 : 151).

The sub- and anti-employment sub-cultures not only give access to alternative routes to income, the manifest function of employment (Jahoda 1979), but can also be viewed as providing some of the five "categories of experience" (Miles 1983) identified by Jahoda as the latent functions or consequences of employment. Proactivity in the various survival strategies provides participants with meaning, social contacts, time-structure, and an alternative framework for the definition of status and identity, thus enabling participants to preserve their well-being in the social and psychological 'twilight zone' of prolonged unemployment, wherein the traditional transition routes to adult status and identity have been 'fractured' (Wallace 1987).

Jahoda (1981) has conceded that, in view of the current widespread nature of unemployment, 'institutions' other than formal employment may have "the same psychologically relevant consequences" (1981 : 189). She cites beggars and members of organised criminal gangs as well as those who "work in the informal economy".

> "Such work has for individuals the same manifest consequences as employment and also shares several of its latent functions" (1981 : 189).

Moreover, she argues, such 'work' may in fact be preferable from a psychological viewpoint than unskilled industrial employment as "it requires more initiative and offers more autonomy than low-skilled jobs in industry and may, therefore, avoid the negative consequences on mental health of those occupations" (1981 : 189).

The value for my study of Fryer's (1986a) Theory of Agency and his complementary notion of the person as a psychologically "active social agent" is the emphasis he places on the proactive potential of the young unemployed. The Theory of Agency allows for a notion of resistance or conflict in which historically the poorest members of the working class have frequently engaged (Thompson 1968). The social determinist psychology derived from Jahoda's deprivation theory of unemployment

denies the unemployed the psychological capacity for resistance but, as Mann points out:

> "Whether confronting the Guardians of the Poor Law in the 1830s, rioting in the 1880s, occupying the offices of the Guardians in the 1920s, marching in the 1930s, occupying DHSS offices and empty buildings in the 1970s, or rioting in the 1980s, the poor have hardly been passive" (1992 : 136).

As such, the Theory of Agency can be linked to the resistance theory (Giroux 1983) outlined in Chapter Three (Section 3.5) to provide a framework for understanding the development of non-conventional survival strategies amongst the long-term unemployed participants in my study. The development of alternative careers both within the subculture of the sub-employed and the anti-employment subculture can be understood as proactive developments which enable study participants to resist the negative socio-psychological implications of their objective labour market position. These proactively developed alternative careers are examined in Section 4.8.

4.7 Young Women's Unemployment : A Discussion

As I discussed briefly at the beginning of Section 4.6, although eleven of the twenty-five unemployed participants in my study were women, defining unemployment amongst women is more difficult than for men. This is due to the ways in which their relationships, the assumption of dependency and the overwhelming responsibility for child care blurs any clear cut picture of their employment status. In the period 1985-1986, of the eleven unemployed women in my study group, three were married with pre-school age children, two of whom had husbands who were fully employed. Three of the women were cohabiting with male partners; two of these couples had young children, and in one case the male partner was in full-time employment. Three of the women were lone parents with no regular male partner and two were unattached and did not have children (Table 10).

Thus for several of the young women, especially those who were living with a male partner, full-time paid employment was regarded in secondary terms to that of domestic and child care responsibility. These women regarded employment for themselves as marginal, optional, and it was generally viewed in terms of impermanence. They typically believed that unemployment amongst men was of more serious concern than their own, except for the unattached women who regarded the absence of paid employment in the same light as the young men.

TABLE 10 : Unemployed Women Study Participants (1985-1986)

Name	Domestic Status	Employment Status of Partner	Official Categorisation of Employment Status
Susan Hargreaves	Married Three Children	Partner Employed	Claims as Lone Parent *
Lynn Parker	Married Two Children	Partner Employed	Unregistered
Heather Lawley	Married One Child	Partner Unemployed	Unregistered - Partner Claims
Janet Wallace	Cohabits Two Children	Partner Unemployed	Unregistered
Maggie	Cohabits One Child	Partner Unemployed	Unregistered - Partner Claims
Stella	Cohabits Childless	Partner Unemployed Anti-employment career	Unregistered
Julie Birchall	Lone Parent One Child	-	Claims as Lone Parent
Lynda Willcox	Lone Parent Two Children	-	Claims as Lone Parent
Tricia Hartley	Lone Parent One Child	-	Claims as Lone Parent
Tracy Smith	Unattached Childless	-	Registered Unemployed
Wendy Fisher	Unattached Childless	-	Registered Unemployed

(* - although Susan Hargreaves claimed as a lone parent, she was in fact married and 'totting' from 'the Social' - see Section 4.8.4 for details)

The women varied in the extent to which they considered they needed to have recourse to full-time paid employment. The key factors were whether or not they were living with a man, or whether they had responsibility for dependent children.

The women also varied in terms of the extent to which they sought, and were available for employment. This was again dependent on whether or not they were in a relationship with a male breadwinner, or partner who was claiming benefits on behalf of them and any dependent children.

The unemployed women ranged on a continuum (*cf* Cragg and Dawson 1984) from the two unattached, childless women who registered in their own right as unemployed, claimed benefits, and were more or less actively engaged in seeking paid employment, to those at the other end of the spectrum, the two married women with young children whose partners were working and had not been engaged in paid work for several years. They did not register as unemployed, did not claim benefits in their own right, were not actively seeking paid work but nevertheless expressed the desire for work outside the home. In between these two extreme positions fell the other six unemployed young women in my study group. The exception was Stella who lived in a council flat on the Marton estate with Digger, one of the long-term unemployed male participants in my study. Neither Stella nor Digger were registered as unemployed nor were they actively seeking work or claiming benefits, but nevertheless maintained a reasonable standard of living from his anti-employment "alternative careers" as a musician, 'hustler' (Section 4.8.5), and 'hoister (Section 4.8.6).

Several of the young women did not register as unemployed because of their ineligibility for benefits if their partners were working, or claiming benefits on behalf of themselves and any dependent children. Until October 1982, those who did register were counted among the unemployed even if they were not entitled to claim benefits. Nowadays unemployment is officially aggregated only on the basis of benefit claimants. According to the 1991 *Labour Force Survey,* almost half of those who were seeking work, but not claiming benefits, were married women (*Employment Gazette* September 1992). Other changes which have affected women's eligibility for benefits rests on the notion of availability for work. Prospective claimants can now

be questioned about their child care responsibilities and their arrangements for the care of dependent children. In addition, if a woman is specifically seeking part-time paid employment and is registered as such, she may be refused benefits on the grounds of placing 'unreasonable restrictions' on her availability for work.

There have been numerous critiques of the androcentric nature of research in the areas of youth and youth unemployment. Much of this 'orthodox' research has been criticised for its predominant focus on the experiences of mainly white, young, working class men (Griffin 1985; 1985a, b; 1986; 1986a; Marshall and Borrill 1984). As I examined in Chapter Three (Section 3.4.5), a good deal of this research has its origins in the youth-cultures and sub-cultures tradition. The androcentric focus on male experience has been variously described by feminist critics as the "academic male-stream" (Siltanen and Stanworth 1984); "men's studies" (Spender 1980); the "gang of lads model" (Griffin 1985); the "boys own gender specific approach" (Griffin 1986a); and the "accepted male face of unemployment" (Callender 1987a).

The active job-search principle and the issues of the work ethic and work incentives which are rooted in orthodox/neo-classical economic theory have informed studies of the unemployed and the experiences of unemployment (see for example: Hill *et al* 1973; Daniel 1974, 1981; Marsden 1982; White 1983; Moylan *et al* 1984). Many studies exclude women and women's experiences. Those studies which have included women are either gender blind or gender bound. They either assume that women's experiences are the same as men's or, when women's experiences are considered, it is usually in terms of "gender specific male categories" (Griffin 1985a : 6).

As a remedial strategy, Griffin (1985a) has suggested "turning the tables" in order to focus on women's experiences as a method for understanding more fully the social

meanings of contemporary employment, unwaged work, and unemployment. In many orthodox studies, unemployment is viewed in opposition to full-time waged work, thus unwaged domestic labour is rendered 'invisible' (Deem 1985; Finnegan 1985). Parker's (1971) study of leisure is a classic example of how, when male waged employment is the main defining category for understanding leisure, women's domestic responsibilities become "free-time" (Deem 1985). Since unwaged domestic work is overwhelmingly women's responsibility, occurring within the privatised sphere of the home, most research on work and unemployment has ignored women's experiences. The overwhelming assumption has been that the wage is the major defining characteristic of 'work' (Deem 1984; Finnegan 1985; Callender 1985).

During the past ten years, there has been a shift in attention and a number of studies have emerged which throw light on women's subjective experience in the job market and its interrelationship with gender, identity, and the sexual division of labour (Martin and Roberts 1984; Cragg and Dawson 1984; Martin and Wallace 1984; Griffin 1985; Wallace 1987; Callender 1985, 1987). In the *Women's Employment Survey*, commissioned by the Department of Employment (Martin and Roberts 1984), there is a chapter on unemployment which reveals the complexity of women's self-perceptions in relation to the questions of employment/unemployment. Like several of the women in my study living with employed partners (Table 10), some married women refused to define themselves as unemployed because of the nature and extent of their 'work' within the home; for married or cohabiting women with children, the term 'unemployed' contained pejorative connotations which devalued their domestic labour:

> "I think women are silly to think of themselves as unemployed because running a home is a job. In fact, it's a full-time job. It's a job that's unpaid but I don't see that I'm unemployed" (Cragg and Dawson 1984 : 18).

Single women on the other hand identified with the term. The key variables appeared to be the stage of the family life cycle (the presence of children) and the

presence of a male breadwinner. Women also perceived a divergence between their own domestic situation and that of an unemployed male worker. Even when they expressed a desperate desire to return to paid work to extend the family income or escape domestic drudgery, they still perceived the male as enduring greater hardship, identifying with an ideology which prioritised men's experiences and claims: "I think they take it harder than us. It's their pride, if they're not bringing the wage in, they feel like they're letting us all down. That's why it's not as bad for us, we don't have anything to prove" (Heather Lawley).

My research in this preliminary stage indicated that for the women of my study group employment/unemployment was a complex issue inescapably connected to the pressing domestic concerns of partnerships and dependent child care routines. The male model, both in terms of the experiences of unemployment, and in terms of the variety of adaptive strategies negotiated and enacted by the young men in my study, did not, generally speaking, hold good for the majority of unemployed young women. The lack of recourse to paid employment, coupled with partnership problems and overall responsibility for domestic work and the care of dependent children, had cumulatively negative consequences for several of the women.

Maggie, for example, had enjoyed a relatively full and varied employment record since school leaving. She had enjoyed the experiences of independence, mobility, and financial autonomy, until entering a permanent relationship and giving birth to her first child. After that, she felt "tied to the house", unable to work, and expressed an increasing frustration with the drudgery of domestic labour and the endless round of child care routine. In 1986, she wrote of her experiences in the following terms:

> "My life since leaving school. I have had a varied life. My first job was as a technical assistant in a research laboratory ... [It] was rewarding in the fact that it was interesting. In March 1982 approximately I then moved to London where I became employed in a coffee bar in Soho as a waitress. It suited me as I had left all ties and I was desperate to get away from the family unit which I found suffocating. Although the wages was poor, I was meeting many different kinds of

people and it suited where my head was at. Also being in the 'big City' away from home for the first time gave me freedom from relatives and nosey neighbours and I could do what I wanted and wear any kind of clothes I wanted. I was now living with Mike, a man I had only known for a short time. He had just left his wife and was in a bad state, so I let him live with me. That job lasted until April 1983, in the coffee bar, and we then moved back to Manchester to be near friends and also I was disillusioned with the 'smoke'.

We moved to Rusholme and I was fortunate in gaining employment straight away as an assistant manageress in a reputable restaurant. Catering work is and always has been poorly paid but the duties were various and I was still meeting a cross-section of society. That lasted until January 1984 when I found myself to be pregnant. My baby was born five months later in June 1984. I left work and since then I have not worked for a wage but have become an unpaid 'housewife' and mother. Though I love my daughter, I am unhappy with my life and the work I have to do around the flat. My common-law husband is unemployed and he signs on for us all. He indulges himself during the day in recreational pursuits, smoking dope, so there's not a lot of money and it's a struggle to get by and I resent the fact that he won't help me with the baby.

I do hope to get employment again when my child becomes of school age but in the meantime, it's a struggle to stop the depression I feel. I have been pregnant again but I did not want another baby in this situation as I don't think I can cope. I decided to have a termination, which was very sad. I am now older and probably more disillusioned about my situation and about the prospects of finding a worthwhile job. I see little hope of me being able to hold down a monotonous factory job which involves a lot of routine. Catering and domestic [work] are too poorly paid to be an incentive. I would like work which one had to use one's head and preferably be able to work on one's own initiative. I would be glad just to escape from the housework.

Maggie was not at that time registered as unemployed, as her 'common-law husband', Mike, signed on the dole and claimed supplementary benefits on behalf of the family. However, As Cragg and Dawson maintain: "The demand for employment from women is not apparent from registration figures since many women who want paid work do not register as such. This is part of a more general danger that difficulties of definition and measurement could obscure the reality of the need for paid employment among women" (1984 : 71).

For a clear majority of the unemployed women in my study group, monetary need was central to the desire for employment. For several, financial need was acute, most notably among single mothers and women in partnerships with unemployed or poorly paid men. As Maggie explained:

> "There's never enough [money] ... By the time you've paid the bills and got the food in, there's nothing left over ... I keep thinking I'll get a bit of a job just to tide us over, but she's [Maggie's young daughter] not old enough to be left yet ... And anyway the Social only take it [income] out of your money [supplementary benefit]."

Apart from the direct and often pressing financial need, paid employment was prized as a means of "getting out of the house", to escape the confines of domestic labour and endless child-care routines. In a study of teenage mothers, Simms and Smith (1984) similarly reported that of the 47 young mothers they had interviewed who had negatively evaluated their experiences of motherhood, the majority desired paid employment "to get a break from the baby", and because they got "fed up in the house all day" (1984 : 11): "The majority of them spent their days at home with the baby - in most cases unwillingly ... three out of four would have preferred to work, at least part-time" (1984 : 10).

Similarly, even in my initial early meetings, several of the unemployed women in my study group frequently complained of the boredom, isolation, and frustration that accompanied the prolonged periods of attending to domestic duties. These young women looked to the world of paid employment as a means of escaping the sense of being trapped by the unrelenting demands of young children. Lynda Willcox, who at the time of my preliminary fieldwork, was a single parent living alone in a council flat, was typical of several of the young unemployed women in expressing the desire for employment to provide relief from domestic frustrations and the increasingly diminished sense of 'self':

> "Sometimes I feel like I don't really live anymore. I get so down with the kids ... I'd love a little job, not even full-time ... part-time cleaning or something ... Anything would do ... I'd just like the chance to get out. Don't get me wrong, I love my kids but it'd be nice just to get out of the flat sometimes."

All the unemployed women in my study group had realistic aspirations about the type of work they wanted and expected eventually to get. Typically, they sought unskilled work with limited responsibility, and were prepared to accept low rates of

pay. Although women constituted 40% of the labour force in 1985, they accounted for 75% of those in the lowest paid employment (Federation of Claimants Unions 1985 : 28). Job aspirations were often uncomplainingly constrained by the desire to balance domestic responsibilities. Thus difficulties in obtaining paid employment or work in the informal economy arose not from unreasonable expectations but from a combination of scarcity of suitable types of work and problems in securing adequate child care.

Nevertheless, for a majority of the women in my study group, financial hardship, fruitless job searching, coupled with the pressing need to maintain material standards within the home and adequate provision for dependent children, had resulted in the adoption of various "survival strategies" (Mingione 1983) for supplementing the basic, typically state benefits derived, family income. These "survival tactics" (Coffield *et al* 1983) varied from the legal but undeclared work 'on the side' such as home machining (Jill Souter), part-time bar work and modelling (Lynda Willcox), delivering leaflets Julie Birchall), part-time work on the Markets (Wendy Fisher), to illegal activities such as fiddling the gas and/or electricity meters, fraudulent benefit claims (e.g. Susan Hargreaves), 'dealing' in 'soft' (cannabis) and 'hard' (heroin) drugs (Susan Hargreaves), and 'soft' prostitution as a 'masseuse' in a 'sauna club' (Tricia Hartley).

The most common irregular economic activity adopted as a survival strategy was working 'on the side' without declaring the income to the Social Security, as income is deducted from benefits and may moreover jeopardise benefit entitlement. According to Turner *et al* (1985): "Working 'on the side' when registered as unemployed is morally condoned to a greater degree than most other illegal economic activity ... most people out of work will take any 'side jobs' available" (1985 : 487).

Apart from the constant anxiety caused by fear of detection by those women who occasionally had recourse to the survival strategy of 'work on the side', it is also worth

emphasising that : "Opportunities in the hidden economy are as unequal as those in the regular economy: access to fiddles may well be even less equally distributed than access to conventional rewards" (O.C.P.U. 1978).

According to Wallace and Pahl (1986), the divisions in the 'shadow economy' reflect those in the formal one. It is evident that there is a clear division by gender, with men in general having greater access to "survival strategies", and moreover finding more lucrative forms (Cohen 1982 : 45; Wallace 1987 : 137; Mattera 1985). Thus, even within the informal economy, job potential reflects the diminished access of women as a consequence of the inequalities associated with the domestic division of labour, and lack of access to the street networks which supply the necessary contacts for participation. Unemployment 'careers' are examined in more detail in Section 4.8.

4.7.1 The Domestic Careers of Women and Men

The deepening recession in the mid-1980s, coupled with a general decline in the living standards of benefit-dependent women, resulted in a "deepening of their domestic duties and oppression" (Willis 1984b : 13). For the women in childless partnerships, especially the three women in relationships with unemployed men, three of the unemployed lone parents, and the two unattached childless women still living in the parental home, unemployment had resulted in an increase in their domestic responsibility. These patterns are traditional within working class communities and have been inherited from the domestic precedents established and experienced within the natal home:

> "Male youth were not expected to contribute towards domestic work but could come and go as they pleased whilst they lived at home ... Girls on the other hand ... [were] much more closely controlled by parents and ... were also expected to contribute towards domestic work. It is clear that young women organised their lives around domestic work" (Wallace 1987 : 158).

Amongst the three women in partnerships with unemployed men, I found little evidence of unemployment narrowing the gender divisions of domestic responsibility and domestic labour. In fact, the reverse was the case for Heather Lawley:

> "Since he got made redundant, there's even more to do with less [money] to do it with ... Lisa's [Heather's daughter] under my feet all day and Paul stuck in front of the tele, you can't get down to the cleaning ... I'm glad when he goes out with his mates ... at least I can get on".

The unemployed women in my study group were not highly educated or 'professional' women, nor were they politically sophisticated. They were generally unfamiliar with feminist discourse and analyses, and when 'Women's Lib' was referred to, it was usually in disparaging terms. The ways of describing their social and relationship situations were strongly intuitive, their opinions steeped in familiarity with the embedded domestic patterns derived from their parents and the social milieu in which they moved. There was little reference to theory or political analysis in terms of being critical of their adherence to traditional domestic roles, even in those situations where the conventional 'domestic bargain' no longer applied, that is when the male 'breadwinner' was unemployed and potentially available for sharing child care and domestic labour.

The child rearing women within my study group appeared to be particularly disadvantaged. Of the eleven unemployed young women, eight had one or more dependent children. In contrast, of the eight women who were either fully employed, in part-time work, or were at College, only three had dependent children. Mothers of young children were unable to compete both in the formal and informal labour markets, and when work was obtained, as was the case for two of the women in my study group who had children, it was part-time, unskilled, and low-paid. One of these women, Jill Souter, worked as a home-machinist. However, this employment, as exploitative and poorly paid as it was, came to an abrupt end in October 1986 when her 'boyfriend' was made redundant. He insisted that Jill gave up her part-time job on the pretext that it could lead to investigation and potential prosecution by the

Department of Employment from whom Jill's boyfriend was claiming unemployment benefit on behalf of the family. Jill, however, believed that it was "more to do with his pride". Nevertheless, she was forced (temporarily) to relinquish her job which caused a great deal of resentment and bad feeling within the home.

Some writers maintain that an early "domestic career" of pregnancy and child rearing may be sought by unemployed girls as a means of securing adult identity and independence from the parental home (Willis 1984b, d, 1985; Simms and Smith 1983, 1985; Francome 1983; Campbell 1984). According to Willis (1984b) for example:

> "Many careers officers and social workers ... have noted a trend towards early pregnancy and the setting up of single parent homes. This is ... one way to "get off the register" at the careers office or Job Centre. It cuts out the embarrassments and failures of trying to find work. More positively, child rearing offers a clear role for young women. You are meeting the needs of someone else, and you are achieving a transition to adult status" (1984b : 13).

However, Griffin (1985) adds a note of caution to this analysis by asking is motherhood always such a "conscious choice". For many women, motherhood and monogamous heterosexual partnerships are regarded as inevitable. None of the other alternatives are viewed as socially acceptable or economically viable, leaving little space for voluntaristic choice, at least for the majority of working class women. Although in Manchester, according to Kris Stead, the Health Education Officer, who in 1986 established the pioneering 'Teenage Parent Club': "Some girls are getting pregnant because they need to find a purpose in life. Many of them have been unemployed since they left school and have very little to live for. A baby gives them a reason and a feeling of being needed" (*Manchester Evening News* 9.5.86 : 23).

Stead maintains that early pregnancy increases the opportunities for council accommodation at a time when council waiting lists are extending the normal waiting time to over three years. As one of the respondents in Ineichen's (1981) study of "the housing decisions of young people" maintains: "To get a council house, what you need is to get yourself in a mess" (1981 : 256).

According to figures derived from the 1981 census data, more than 10% of the children in Manchester's Inner City wards lived in lone parent households, compared with a national average of 6.1% (*Manchester: A Picture of Ill Health*, 1985 : 6). Figures derived from the City Planning Department's 1985 Population Survey showed that the proportion of children in lone parent families had increased between 1981 and 1985 to 18%. By 1985, there were over 9,000 lone parent families in Manchester's Inner City wards, most of them headed by young single women, over 75% without full-time jobs. This view of the increasing number of lone parent families in Manchester is supported by the recorded increase in Manchester's 'illegitimacy rate'. This rose from 26.5% of births in 1980 to 38.2% in 1985 (*Manchester: A Picture of Ill Health*, 1985 : 6; *Poverty in Manchester*, 1986 : 3). Moreover, between 1979 and 1984, the number of lone parent families dependent on supplementary benefits doubled (*Poverty in Manchester*, 1986 : 3).

There is further evidence to suggest that 'motherhood' is undertaken by lone parent women as an 'alternative career'. Recent statistics indicate, for example, that the pregnancy rate among under 16s has risen by almost a quarter during the 1980s, and by 35% among the under 15s (Brindle 1992). Other data confirms this trend. In 1981, for example, 12.8% of births occurred outside marriage. In 1991, this proportion had more than doubled to 30.2% (*Population Trends*, HMSO 1992); with over a quarter of all households in Britain being lone person households compared with only one-eighth in 1961 (*Social Trends*, 1991 : 35).

Of the four lone parents in my study group, three were unemployed and dependent on benefits and one was studying full-time at College and was largely supported by her parents. Lynda Willcox lived alone in a council flat in Rusholme with her two young children, Julie Birchall lived in a privately rented flat in Blackburn with her young son, Tricia Hartley lived in a privately rented flat in Marton with a woman friend and her young son, and Lynn Chapman, who was at College, lived with her parents after

having lived with her young son in a council flat for almost two years. At this stage in my preliminary fieldwork, I was able to establish that motherhood had been undertaken as an early 'domestic career' decision by six of the unemployed women, and, moreover, it is worth noting that "precipitous routes" to parenthood have been accepted in some communities for generations (Klein 1964; Wallace 1985). Moreover, two of the women in part-time work who had gone on to form established partnerships with men had become pregnant and had their first child prior to moving out of the family home. Those observations lend some support to Roberts's (1987) notion of unemployment "accelerating" young women's "domestic career" moves. As Griffin (1985 : 56-7) has similarly observed, employment difficulties amongst her study group increased the pressure to "get a man" as part of the process of displaying adult status in the transition from childhood dependency to adult status. As Roberts (1987) has similarly argued: "For young women, marriage and parenthood have always been an alternative route, arguably their primary route, to adult status. Unemployment must make this route appear more attractive than ever" (1987 : 20). A point reiterated by Wallace's research: "The traditional model of the family ... lives on in the imagination ... even when this model is increasingly difficult to fulfil in practice ... Rising unemployment appeared to make such traditional expectations entrenched"(1985 : 24).

There was little evidence of unemployment propelling the young men in my study group into early marriage, cohabiting, or paternity. Freedom from domestic and parental responsibility appeared to be one factor which explained the greater propensity towards sub- and anti-employment 'careers' among the unemployed men as compared with the unemployed women Of the fourteen who were unemployed during the period 1985-86, none were in child rearing partnerships. Six of the unemployed young men were still living in the parental home. Four lived with young women in rented accommodation - none of these couples had children. Two lived in shared accommodaton with other male friends, and two lived alone in rented flats. In

contrast, four of the six employed males were either married or cohabiting, and had at least one child. This observation lends tentative support to those studies which emphasise the central importance of waged employment for young men in the transition to the adult roles and statuses associated with marriage and parenthood.

During the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s, as the age of majority fell, many young couples began to form families by their early twenties (Willmott 1966; Dunnell 1976; Fogelman 1976; Schofield 1973; Leonard 1980). Contemporary evidence suggests that this traditional transition route to adult identity roles and status has been "fractured" (Wallace 1987 : 180). The conventional transition in the life course from childhood dependency to getting married, leaving the parental home, and having children, has been severely disrupted by the unprecedented levels of youth unemployment (Wallace 1987 : 153-180; Griffin 1985 : 44-57; Gurney 1980; Hendry *et al* 1984). What Roberts (1987 : 20) has described as a "deceleration theory" appears to hold good for the majority of unemployed men in my study group, unemployment obstructing and delaying the processes of sustained courtship, marriage and parenthood. As Brah (1986) has similarly argued: "For those unmarried young males contemplating marriage, the lack of a job can mean reduced opportunities for, or a delay in, securing a suitable match" (1986 : 69).

Cohabiting, as an interstitial stage between the family of origin and that of destination, appears to be one emerging form amongst my study participants. Four of the unemployed young men, three of the unemployed young women, and two other women, one in part-time work and one at College, had adopted the strategy of living together, rather than marriage, as a pattern for establishing 'commitment' in their relationships. Cohabiting was not confined to the unemployed study participants. The three participants who had secured a traditional transition from school leaving to employment undertook pre-marital cohabitation after early moves from their parental homes (Chapter Six, Section 6.5.6). According to Roberts (1987):

> "Cohabiting, often but not always, in pre-marital relationships, has become more prevalent ... Getting married and leaving the parental home are no longer the indivisible steps that they appeared to earlier generations, particularly in working class communities" (1987 : 20).

The overall picture to emerge from focusing on the domestic careers of the unemployed men and women in my study group is that of child care and domestic responsibilities constraining the aspirations and opportunities of the unemployed women both in the formal labour market and in the informal labour market. Although it would not be true to say that it was all child care and domesticity for the women and hustling and street life for the men, undoubtedly there was a significant lack of participation in the informal economic networks by the women as compared with the men. As Cohen has similarly argued: "The black economy mirrors almost exactly the official labour market, not least in offering more limited opportunities to girls than boys" (1982 : 45).

There were however some notable exceptions and these are examined in the following sections. Nevertheless, the general picture remains of the majority of unemployed men being connected to the sub-employment and anti-employment sub-cultures and utilising street contacts and opportunities to exploit semi-legal and illegal modes of income acquisition, with women's participation in these spheres being generally limited.

4.8 Unemployment Careers

Despite the claim made by Griffin that researchers have searched "usually in vain" for a "sub-culture of the unemployed" (1986a : 38), studies have indicated that in some high unemployment inner city areas, the young long-term unemployed now constitute a new "underclass" (Coleman and Husen 1985; Ullah 1987; Dahrendorf 1987; Jordan and Jones 1988; Morris and Irwin 1992). Other studies as well as my own suggest that this hardcore group at the bottom reaches of the Social Division of Welfare gravitates into separate social networks (Banks *et al* 1984; Donovan and

Oddy 1982; MacLeod 1987). As early as 1982, Donovan and Oddy warned that: "There appears to be a danger that a social network of 'second class citizens' will develop amongst the youngsters [without work] who will have less and less in common with their working peers" (1982 : 25).

Moreover, a longitudinal study of 1150 (633 male, 517 female) "unemployed urban youths with poor educational attainments", commissioned by the Department of Employment, similarly indicated that the long-term unemployed cope with their "new social state" (Willis 1984a) by firstly, restricting their social networks to contacts with others in a similar position; secondly, by recognising and building on a common sense of identity with others sharing their social circumstances; and thirdly, by reducing their commitment to the orthodox labour market (Banks *et al* 1984 : 345).

My preliminary fieldwork similarly indicated that in Hartingleigh within the social networks of the young long-term unemployed, the pressures to conform to traditional patterns of employment through the pursuit of 'legitimate' work were abandoned in favour of alternatives to be found within the local sub-employment and anti-employment subcultures. Similarly, the commitment of individuals to formal unemployment as a source of income, status, and identity, was progressively relinquished in favour of locally conceived and constructed alternatives.

Such 'alternative careers' may be divided into three broad categories. The first group are embedded within the informal economy which supplies a range of 'fiddle jobs, off the books', in which benefit claims are generally maintained. The entrepreneurial prominence of two local families in supporting and sustaining what I will describe as the local alternative enterprise culture is briefly discussed. The networks that have evolved and are sustained by the local alternative enterprise culture have produced a distinctive subculture; this I have described as the sub-employment subculture.

A second distinctive but overlapping subculture within the social networks of the long-term unemployed is the anti-employment subculture, within which can be located a variety of illegal alternative careers. These are characterised by their adherents' vehement opposition to the 'straight' world. Participants in the anti-employment subculture eschew any form of contact with the world of paid employment, even the fiddle jobs within the local alternative enterprise culture. In practice, the boundaries between the sub- and anti-employment subcultures are crossed by participants *via* an intermediate stage of semi-legal and illegal activities embodied in the careers of 'hustling' or 'totting'; all of these activities are briefly discussed in the following sections.

4.8.1 The Sub-Employment Subculture

At the time of my preliminary fieldwork in Hartingleigh, there were various forms of off the books employment that could be directly linked to the subculture of the sub-employed. These included building work, car repair work, gardening, kitchen portering, painting and decorating, carpet and upholstery cleaning, window cleaning, and four varieties of work that were locally connected to an alternative enterprise culture sponsored by two local families - these were 'barking' (unlicensed street trading), 'touting' (selling tickets and paraphernalia at sporting events and pop concerts), market trading, and 'bagging-up' (horse manure for resale as garden compost).

The above fiddle jobs include some of the legal but undeclared work discussed earlier (Section 4.7) when I examined the 'survival strategies' of unemployed women participants. It is clearly evident that the range of options available to the unemployed males is more extensive than for the women for the reasons previously outlined (Section 4.7.1). However, Julie Birchall was one of the unemployed women who, at the time of my preliminary fieldwork had secured part-time work "off the books" (Mattera 1985) in order to supplement her basic income from single parent

benefits. When I contacted her in 1985-86, Julie lived alone with her baby son. Her work 'on the side' consisted of delivering leaflets door to door for a small weekly income. Julie worked during the summer months of 1985 taking her young son in his pushchair when delivering the leaflets "in order to save on child minding costs":

> "You get five pounds for [delivering] a thousand [leaflets] ... some of the girls hang around in the [shopping] precinct handing them out ... I'm too scared of someone telling the Social, so I just do the streets ... I take 'em round and shove a few through [each of] the letter boxes. If it rains or I get fed up, I just chuck 'em away ... Some days I can do two thousand ... but it's a hassle. I'm always worried in case anyone sees me and reports it ... I always need the money though, what can you do?"

For the women in my study, the extra income derived from the adoption of these 'survival strategies' was generally used to maintain rather than improve existing material standards of living. The mothers in particular viewed the additional income as a family resource and, unlike the majority of men who were in relationships and engaged in illegal activity, not as one to be spent indulgently on themselves. Typically, the unemployed women with families made the collective household needs their predominant concern. In contrast, because of their greater mobility and domestic freedom, all fourteen of the unemployed males in my study group had experienced at least one variety of the fiddle jobs listed earlier and several of the employed males had similarly 'worked on the side' prior to securing permanent employment.

Apart from one or two notable exceptions, the fiddle jobs were generally intermittent, of short duration and of limited availability. At this stage of my preliminary fieldwork, most of the unemployed male participants were either working or had in the recent past worked 'on the side' whilst claiming benefits, and a minority were pursuing or had recently pursued, moderately long-term 'fiddle careers' within a single occupation; in one case, for example, landscape gardening, in another window cleaning and car repair work, and two were regularly employed 'off the books' as labourers in the building trade. Most of the long-term unemployed who formed the

nucleus of the sub-employment sub-culture organised their lives around moves between total dependence on benefits and the various fiddle jobs. A minority were pursuing full illegal careers and identities within the anti-employment subculture, and these are examined a little later in Section 4.8.6.

4.8.2 The Hattons and The Donaghues

In respect of the four fiddle jobs at the end of the list provided in the previous section, namely, market trading, 'barking', 'touting' and 'bagging-up', these occupations are sponsored by two large and well-known families within the local community who act, in a variety of capacities, as informal 'employers' of the unemployed young. The work that is made available through these local contacts is generally short-term, requiring differing numbers of casual employees - some of whom would be recruited from among my unemployed study participants. During the first phase of my study, I was introduced to members of both families and over the years developed a reasonable rapport with them and their immediate associates. Although my meetings with members of both families were superficial and infrequent, nevertheless, as a result of these contacts, together with other local knowledge and information supplied by study participants, I was able to confirm their complex role in the informal alternative employment networks of the community.

The Hattons are a large family of ten, including six brothers, who occupy several terraced houses in the older parts of the Ward. Their familial network extends beyond Hartingleigh to property ownership in the more affluent areas in the south of the City, and individual family members are renowned in both areas for their involvement in a variety of semi-legal and illegal activities, including prostitution, drug-dealing and armed robbery. In terms of the subculture of the sub-employed, the Hattons would intermittently recruit a number of my study participants for a variety of tasks including the previously mentioned bagging-up of horse manure. Bagging up was a relatively minor enterprise organised by one of the Hatton brothers and one for

which a number of my study participants had been recruited, especially in their early periods of post-school unemployment. "Shit-shovelling", as Dilly described it, was significant in providing participants with a sense of the possibility of alternative income acquisition as well as gaining them access to other forms of 'employment' supplied by the Hatton family. After bagging up, the horse manure would be transported to Garden Centres, as well as various suburban neighbourhoods of the City, for sale as garden compost. The horse manure is a commodity freely available to the Hattons, and is obtained from horse-riding stables in nearby Marton. A team of able-bodies males would be employed by the Hattons to bag-up the manure which would then be loaded onto transit vans for transportation to retail outlets. The work not only involved bagging-up and loading/unloading, but also occasionally required personal involvement on the part of participants in 'knocking on" (doors) in suburban areas as compost salesmen. The work was available in monthly cycles and could earn participants a minimum amount of fifteen pounds, for a day's labour in bagging-up and loading, to over fifty pounds if involved in "knocking" on or retail selling.

The Hattons also organise a successful operation following various popular musical groups and bands on national tours. This enterprise produced work that was made available to participants and which involved touting (or selling) black-market tickets, unofficially printed posters and other pop ephemera, usually at inflated prices outside concert venues. The Hattons also organise a similar venture for many major sporting events, particularly football matches as well as 'big games' such as the annual FA Cup Final. In part, the family's organisational base is derived from the retail stalls family members manage on an alternate weekly basis outside the stadiums of both of Manchester's major football teams. These makeshift stalls sell a variety of items including scarves, flags, hats, badges, etc., as well as black market match tickets, to both home and visiting supporters. The Hattons run a small fleet of vans and cars, and study participants would be periodically employed, on a commission basis, as

street touts or vendors, with the Hattons organising transport, 'supervision', and the supply of tickets and goods.

The other family of informal employers are the Donaghues, a large extended family of three generations, the majority of whom are based in properties in nearby Moat Pitton, although two brothers and their families live in Marton on the border of Hartingleigh Ward. Like the Hattons, the Donaghues are well known in the community as a "hard family", on the fringes of the City's criminal community, with established connections in various enterprises, including drugs and 'taxing' (protection). The Donaghues are able to provide casual work in several occupations, most notably as market traders on the market stalls which they own and run, both in my study area and in other parts of the City. These provide regular informal 'employment' for several members of my study group; for two, this was more or less permanent work, off the books, and for several others, work was intermittently provided on a casual basis.

As well as informal work on their market stalls, the Donaghues also periodically recruited study participants as teams of 'barkers'. Barking, also known as 'fly-pitching', is a form of unlicensed street trading that usually occurs in the City Centre, or on the fringes of legitimate markets. The barker is generally accompanied by several 'dogs' (dogouts) or lookouts who, in the case of City Centre barking, provide early warning of police approaching (to enable the barker to close his pitch or stall and disappear into the crowd). The goods sold by a barker are usually held in quantity in a van parked nearby. The barker holds a proportion of the goods in a large suitcase or on a makeshift stall erected in the street. The barker's role is to attract potential 'punters' and encourage the purchase of goods by a constantly shouted or 'barked' patter. At its best, the barker's patter embodies all the major selling strategies of market pitchers and "patter merchanters" outlined by Pinch and Clark (1986),

including the strategy of inferring that the products being cheaply sold may have been stolen:

> (The Fly Pitcher is selling jewellery)
> " ... are they stolen? that's what's goin through yer mind ... are they stolen? mind yer own business ah don't worry about where you people get yuh money from ... don't worry about where these rings an' these chains come from" (Pinch and Clark 1986 : 181).

In fact, the goods offered for sale are rarely 'bent' (stolen) or even 'slightly bent', as is often implicitly claimed. The barker's stock is usually purchased wholesale as discount offers, end of ranges, discontinued lines, etc. from the various wholesale trade and cash 'n' carry warehouses in the City (to which the Donaghues have access as a result of their status as legitimate market retailers). Goods to be 'punted' vary from cheap jewellery, chocolates and sports socks to golf umbrellas and counterfeit 'designer' sportswear and clothing. Wholesale purchases depend on what can be obtained cheaply enough and in sufficient quantities to ensure maximum 'mark-up or profit.

The various forms of sub-employment periodically available to study participants provided access to 'off the books' income whilst simultaneously allowing them to maintain benefit entitlement and claims. The alternative career options provided by the Hattons and Donaghues, and their demonstrable and conspicuous success in the local informal economy, were sufficient to ensure their significance as role-models for participants operating within the sub- and anti-employment subcultures. Moreover their roles as 'employers' within what may be described as the local 'alternative enterprise culture' were occasionally supplemented by their recruitment of participants for more explicitly criminal activities including drug dealing and distribution and robbery.

Other writers have noted similar instances of a "DHSS economy" (C. and L. Gofton 1984) developing in high unemployment areas (Turner *et al* 1985; Coffield *et al* 1983; Seabrook 1987). According to Seabrook:

> "Capable and energetic people cannot be expected to sit passively by and accept. This is one reason why so many of the poor channel their efforts into finding ways of increasing the meagre survival income of the state; not necessarily by 'ripping off' or stealing, but in the twilight zone of 'fiddling', getting a bit extra, a little something in hand" (1987 : 20).

In some areas, alternative enterprise or entrepreneurship is an historico-cultural inheritance, part of the social fabric or "economic ecology" of the district (Hobbs 1988; Coffield *et al* 1986 : 53-54; Coffield *et al* 1983). According to Celia and Leslie Gofton, the "Giro Cities" of the north-east have developed a similar culture of worklessness, a "full blown DHSS economy" in the social twilight zone that accompanied the demise of local traditional industries:

> "The DHSS money circulates and breeds its own kind of entrepreneurs - back street motor repairers, scrapyards where you can buy an engine for your car, and have it fitted by the boys who work there, builders who will repair your roof or repaint your walls - all at bargain rates because there's no paperwork, no VAT, and many of them are signing on for the dole because they couldn't make a living if they relied on that kind of work (1984 : 282).

4.8.3 Davvo : A Case Study

Davvo's alternative career transition provides an ideal-typical, representative example of those male study participants who operate within the local subculture of the sub-employed. Davvo was unemployed for eleven months from school leaving in 1980 until he secured a six month work placement as a trainee butcher's assistant under the Youth Opportunities Programme. He described his experience of the scheme as: "A waste of time ... all I was doin' was cleaning out the freezers an' 'brewing up' for the others".

After his YOP work experience placement was completed, Davvo was not offered permanent employment and was subsequently unemployed for approximately eighteen months. During this period, partly out of financial necessity, and partly because the

opportunities existed within his local peer group, Davvo made the decision to organise his life around 'off the books' "sub-employment" (Norris 1978; Roberts *et al* 1982b). Here it is important to draw a distinction between my use of the term 'sub-employed' and its use by Norris, and Roberts *et al.* For Norris and Roberts *et al*, sub-employment is characterised by frequent job changes, particularly amongst young people in unskilled work (Roberts *et al* 1982b : 3). For both Norris and Roberts *et al*, despite the frequency of job-changing, the work was within the formal (i.e. 'cards in') labour market, and, as such, required workers to relinquish benefit claims and entitlement. For the sub-employed in my study, the types of jobs obtained were 'off the books', and benefit claims and entitlement were not relinquished. Davvo, for example, worked intermittently for almost two years after his YOPs, but nevertheless continued 'signing on' and claiming his basic benefit entitlement: "I used to give my giro to me mam and keep the extra's [from the fiddle jobs] for meself".

Davvo was able to secure various kinds of work through his contacts in the local community and during this time worked as a painter and decorator, labourer in the building trade, and as a motor mechanic. The latter was largely a self-taught skill, though he did receive some guidance 'helping out' a motor mechanic who worked from a 'lock-up' (garage), one of several situated adjacent to the local back-street scrapyard. He eventually utilised his skills to purchase, overhaul, and resell vehicles, cheaply obtained from auctions or scrapyards. Sometimes this involved stealing similar models to strip down for parts. Generally this work was organised in concert with his peers:

> "We used to clean 'em up you know, the motors like ... do 'em up ... we'd get parts from the scrappy [scrapyard] ... or nick one, same year, you know, and 'break it' for the parts. Then we'd do it up an' put it in the paper."

Davvo and his friends derived peer group status as well as financial reward from their collective ability to get a vehicle 'on the road' within a week. These were then offered for resale through advertisements placed in the regional newspaper.

However, in March 1983, Davvo was subject to investigation by the DHSS and, as a result, was compelled to take a 'proper job' in a supermarket warehouse. This he did reluctantly under threat of benefit withdrawal, as he had grown accustomed to, and enjoyed, the variety and autonomy of his sub-employment life style:

> "It was a real bastard you know when they got me the job at 'Tarko's' ... but you can't say no or they stop your dole. They'd been watchin' me so they knew I was at it, but I cracked on daft like ... Anyway ... I liked bein' in charge, you know, bein' your own gaffer ... [before starting work in the supermarket warehouse] ... I'd wake up and think what do I fancy today, there was the motors, or the paintin', or summat with Maz and Willie, you know, summat 'bent'. Anyway I was well gutted 'avin to get up in the mornin', not bein' in charge, you know ... I got used to 'avin no one to answer to ... 'cept me mam (laughs) ..."

Davvo worked as "a ware'ouseman, loadin' and unloadin' [stock] an' drivin' a stacker [-truck]" for almost a year until he was sacked due to irregularities in stock levels. Davvo admits he was "doin' a number" with the lorry drivers who supplied the various supermarkets in the chain with goods from the warehouse in which he worked. The "number" involved overloading the incoming lorries with excess stock, which, with the connivance of the drivers, would be sold to independent shops in the district. The profits from this "amateur property theft" (Henry and Mars 1978) would be shared equally between Davvo and the lorry driver. This type of employee pilferage has been extensively documented by anthropologists of the 'informal economy' and needs no further elaboration here (see for example, Ditton 1977; Henry 1978; Mars 1983). As Davvo maintained: "They was all at it ... but they picked on me 'cos I'd only been there for a few months. I was the youngest ... some of 'em 'ad been at it for ages, it's just what you did there".

After losing his job, Davvo tried to claim benefits again after 'signing on', but "the social took almost three months to sort out me claim". During which time, he was without income. As a consequence, Davvo returned to his former lifestyle of fiddle work, this time as a window cleaner:

> "I bought the [established window cleaning] round off me old man's mate for a couple of tons [two hundred pounds] ... it was only small ... an 'undred [houses] ... an' some ladders ... (laughs) ... I 'ad to buy me own buckets (laughs) ... You get a

> pound an 'ouse, front and back like ... but it's a doddle once you get into it. I can do twenty [houses a day] minimum, fifty if I'm pushin' it an' it's not pissin' down. I've got five 'undred now ... I 'ave to turn 'em down ... I like to take me time, you know. It [the round] takes about three weeks to do 'em all, or maybe a month, depends if I work every day. It's up to me ... if I'm short [of money] ... I do more, if I'm brassed off with it, I don't bother ... it all depends."

Davvo can, if he chooses, earn up to five hundred pounds a month tax free on top of his basic supplementary benefit entitlement (as a registered unemployed person). He has also maintained his former interest in "doin' up" cars for eventual resale and, at the time of my preliminary fieldwork, seemed permanently in the process of dismantling and reconstructing vehicles that were often parked in the communal square outside the council maisonette he shared with his parents.

For those like Davvo, hustling a living within the sub-employment subculture, the lack of security in the work obtained, and the constant threat of discovery by 'snoopers' from the social, was compensated for by the overall income that could sometimes be achieved and the subjective feelings of autonomy and self-worth which were derived from the "livin' off yer wits". The ideology of the sub-employed was informed by the permanent potential for the "big-score", a paradoxical by-product of the impermanence and insecurity of the jobs typically on offer. The big-score was, perhaps, just around the corner, and its potential could not be squandered by being "at work all day". As Maz put it: "You're never gonna make big quids if you're out at work all day".

The potential for the big score is linked to a traditional fatalism that is part of the local cultural ecology. As Morris has described it:

> "Fate plays an important role in the repertoire of lower class concerns. The fatalism that may help a youngster to understand that a term in borstal is really only a natural part of life for people like him [or her] is the same fatalism that can encourage [the] dream of the Big Tickle - that big rock candy mountain whose discovery will render all further effort and risk superfluous" (1985 : 15). (my inserts)

Davvo, in particular, had achieved a high degree of 'job satisfaction' within his proactively chosen lifestyle and 'alternative career'. Apart from the not inconsiderable financial rewards, he enjoyed flexibility, autonomy, mobility and, moreover, as a consequence of his day-to-day contact with the households of his window cleaning round, was provided with an additional status-enhancing role within the subculture of his peers. His frequent daily contacts with a variety of householders afforded him access to a constant supply of information about goods and services that were required, or were for sale. Thus he occupied an important role as a supplier of information to the relevant people within his peer group who were able, for example, to supply a colour television or video, or to purchase an unwanted fridge or washing machine, etc. This form of word-of-mouth information network was extremely important in the 'alternative enterprise' subculture of the sub-employed, as it enabled deals to be done, services to be obtained, and goods to be bought and sold. Information that was the life blood of the hustler's lifestyle, role, status, and identity.

However, it is important not to over-romanticise the dole-economy of the informal labour market, the "penny capitalism of the poor" (Cohen 1982 : 45) which often operates as a "kind of parody of mainstream values" (Seabrook 1987 : 21). However attractive and subjectively satisfying informal work may be in combating the burden of 'enforced leisure', it nevertheless pushes participants further into a marginal existence that is increasingly subjected to investigation and stigmatisation. Periodic headline-winning crackdowns on scroungers can serve to divert attention away from public issues of social structure (Mills 1971 : 15), locating the problem of unemployment as "personal troubles" of inadequacy or moral failing. This further justifies an expansion of social security fraud inspectors, and legitimates reduced access to, and cuts in, benefits (Sinfield 1981 : 116-117). It is also important to acknowledge that informal enterprise cultures are themselves subject to some of the worst problems of formal institutions. As Henry (1982) has argued: "In spite of their romantic appeal, informal economies are ... subject to ... inequalities, injustices and abuses which can

stem from their own internal unregulated constitution" (1982 : 472). Moreover, "stealing and cheating may keep people out of worse (and possibly political) mischief" (Seabrook 1987 : 20).

> "It effectively palliates those with immediate needs and pacifies the most vociferous of society's critics who are deluded into thinking their problems are solvable through local action. Energies are then diverted from any more fundamental criticism of the social structure" (Henry 1982 : 472).

However, unreserved acceptance of these points would amount to a crude disapprobation of the human creativity which lies at the heart of local enterprise, and which, moreover, often proves the alleged focus for critical concern. Locally based alternative enterprise cultures may indeed provide the means for people to "connive at their own oppression" (Illich 1981), but at another level, participation in the hidden economy also brings self-esteem, self-identity and individual autonomy. For some writers, "the hidden economy supports rather than undermines the status quo" (Ditton and Brown 1981 : 521) by creating subjective feelings of "fantasy equality" whilst exacerbating objective conditions of inequality. However, the paradox is that ideological domination through the "naked and eager identification" (Seabrook 1987 : 21) with dominant values is achieved through proactive autonomy. It brings a potential awareness that the decisions people are making are not the only decisions they might make:

> "The irony is that at the point at which people are most ideologically subordinated is the point at which they are most sensitive to the collective awareness that would render paper-thin the structure of the dominant social order" (Henry 1982 : 473).

4.8.4 Intermediate Careers

Aspects of he 'dole-economy', referred to by Seabrook, the Goftons, and others, have produced new forms of 'getting by' which exist in the twilight zone between the 'straight world' of 'cards in' paid employment (when benefits cannot be claimed), and the more usual benefit dependent state of unemployment. Participants' lives have become organised around moves between wagelessness and benefit dependence and 'fiddle jobs on the side', occasionally punctuated by 'compulsory' participation in

(un)employment training schemes or the increasingly infrequent periods of 'proper' employment in semi-skilled or unskilled work. Economic activity in the twilight zone of the sub-employed blends almost imperceptibly into a fully criminal (or anti-employment) existence *via* the intermediate stage of illegal activities such as: busking and begging; fraudulent benefit claims, whilst for example working on the side; unorganised 'hoisting' or shoplifting, usually undertaken by individuals who seek out specific items for personal use or resale; and 'tatting' or 'totting' and 'hustling'.

Many study participants had, by claiming benefits whilst working 'on the side', taken the first step into illegality. For some, unwilling or unable to work, fraudulent benefit claims became a necessary strategy for survival and one which at least ensured a basic minimum level of income with which to subsist. Whilst maintaining a basic income, participants were left free to organise their lives around other possibilities for income acquisition. Fraudulent claims were achieved in a variety of ways.

Susan Hargreaves provided a good example of one of several strategies utilised by study participants to negotiate extra income "from the Social". Susan, one of the unregistered long-term unemployed study participants, was, at the time of my preliminary fieldwork, married with three young children. Her husband, Chris, was an electronics engineer. After extended periods of unemployment following redundancy in 1981, he had been compelled to live outside Manchester in order to obtain work. Chris lived and worked in Rotherham, travelling home at the weekends. The expense of commuting, together with the cost of running their home in Hartingleigh, plus the added expense of renting a flat in Rotherham, meant that for Susan and Chris there was "little left over" from Chris's wages. It was "local knowledge" supplied by Lisa, Susan's friend, that enabled her to devise a strategy for supplementing the family income. As Susan explained:

> "With Chris bein' away all he time, my mate said, well, why don't you go to t'Social an' tell 'em 'e's left you. Then I thought about it. But first I didn't want 'an Chris just went 'ape-shit' when I said.

> So I waited ... then last Christmas [1985] ... after we'd paid the rent, an' gas an' bought kids some toys, there was nowt left. Chris went back [to work] an' I went to the Social with Lisa an' t'kids. We told 'em 'e'd been batterin' me ... it was a laugh really ... 'e wouldn't dare ... then we said 'e'd fucked off 'an I 'ad no money ... they asked me a lot of questions about where 'e was an' whether 'e was working ... but we said we didn't know.
>
> They wrote a load of stuff on t'forms an' I 'ad to sign it ... I was really scared .. my 'ands was shakin' ... after a bit I got a giro an' then a book [an order book] an' they paid the rent an' now there's something left over at the end of t'week ... I usually spend it on t'kids, you know shoes, toys, clothes; last month we got a new cot ... forty quid ... Chris don't know ... I daren't tell 'im, but I get worried in case they [the Social Security] send 'n inspector round ... it's good job Chris's only 'ere at weekends. At least it looks like 'e's left me."

When discussing illicit modes of income acquisition, including money obtained by "doing a number" on the Social Security, participants would frequently describe their activities as 'totting' or 'hustling'. 'Tatting' or 'totting' is an old and long-established survival strategy in traditional working class areas in the north of England. The original tatters were rag and bone merchants and the totters were itinerant travellers, often of Irish descent, who 'bought and sold' and exploited the potential for stealing metal for resale as scrap. The tradition of totting was revived in the 1920s and 1930s during the depression years of high unemployment when "local scripts" (Coffield *et al* 1983 : 332) were revived to find the necessities with which to subsist. In the 1960s and 1970s, the demolition gangs working in the areas of urban renewal would similarly be described as totters when "weighing in" at scrap merchants the cast-iron fireplaces, lead pipes and copper cable from the rows of terraced houses that were being demolished. By the 1980s, the term was still in common currency, but had expanded to embrace a variety of strategies which, like hustling, involved the acquisition of extra income, utilising local contacts to buy and sell second-hand goods, stolen property, or earning money through some other form of 'shady' practice.

4.8.5 Hustling

Hustling is a self-affirming status role which has been identified and documented by participant observers (see for example, Polsky 1967; Pryce 1979; Roberts *et al* 1981, 1982a, b, c; Cashmore and Troyna 1982; Ullah 1987; Wallace 1987 : 65-67). It is

one of a variety of 'alternative careers' developed within the subcultures of the long-term unemployed. According to Roberts *et al*: "Rather than tolerating regular hours for low pay, there can be more status in proving one's ability to get by without surrendering to the system" (1982a : 174).

Hustling takes on something of an affirmatory self-definition when counterposed to other legitimately available options. As Willie proclaimed:

> "Who me ... I'm an 'ustler, I've always been an 'ustler an' I always will be ... I 'jibbed' my way through school an' I 'blagged' enough for me first score an' I've been 'ustling ever since ... So what's the fuckin' choice? ... Oh yeah, do Y.T. fuckin' S for buttons ... don't be a cunt. Sign on with the sheep ... 'ands an' knees job forra packet o' straights [cigarettes] ... Fuck it ... I'd rather do bird [go to jail] ... they're cunts at the dole man. I've been 'ustling since I was this big ... you fuckin' 'ad to 'round 'ere ... You know me for fuck's sake ... it's all I know an' it's all I want to know, the rest of it's for cunts."

According to one of the participants in Ullah's (1987) study of "unemployed black youths in a northern city", hustling amongst young blacks is a survival strategy developed over time for coping with the fundamental psychological and social inequalities of being black in a white dominated society. The disaffected young blacks in Ullah's study perceived their abilities as being superior to those whites they believed had not yet learned to cope with disadvantage:

> "The white community does not know how to hustle like blacks, who have been hustling all their lives. And now we're in the situation where nobody has any money, the white community doesn't know how to hustle or create anything to go and hustle it, right, to gain money or income" (1987 : 128).

Here, as in Willie's case, hustling is not only an alternative route to income, but also a proactive means for affirming status, self-esteem, and identity. Hustling can be perceived as a status role which affords the hustler a sense of self-worth, even superiority over the 'sheep' who do YTS or 'sign on', or the 'white community' who do not know how to hustle successfully. As a result of research investigating the 'coping strategies' developed within an urban 'Rasta' sub-culture, Roberts *et al* rather prophetically, from the point of view of my own work, predicted that : "We consider

it probable that some of the 'coping strategies' which young blacks are pioneering will spread through the white working class" (1982b : 9).

Hustling is a nebulous term used by many participants to describe their day-to-day activities. It covers a range of enterprises which straddle the sub-employment and anti-employment subcultures. Hustling can mean anything from 'working on the side' whilst claiming benefits, to petty theft, 'street level' unorganised drug dealing, unorganised 'hoisting' or shoplifting, and tatting or totting. The latter are local colloquial terms, used interchangeably with hustling, which refer to the 'shady' acquisition of income, generally through utilising local contacts in a variety of ways to buy and sell second-hand goods, stolen property, or, in the traditional local sense of the words, tatting or totting stolen metals for resale as scrap

Hustling and totting may include most of the fiddle jobs outlined earlier, but in its most common usage, hustling refers to 'street level', relatively unorganised, drug dealing. Hustling 'draw' (cannabis), for example, unlike the more organised 'dealing', takes place in local pubs frequented by study participants and their peers and sometimes City Centre discos, or the 'warehouse parties' of the acid-house scene, which developed from the mid-1980s onwards. Hustling as a mode of consciousness is usually associated with 'scally' (scallywag) wheeler-dealing and is an affirmatory status role characterised by an oppositional attitude, quick wits, extensive local contacts and an eager eye for the 'main chance', which more often than not exists only at the level of fantasy. Most hustlers believe there are no real opportunities for them in the 'straight' world of 'proper jobs', and general attitudes are couched in terms of resistance to the straight world and cynical disillusionment. Their experiences of the cyclical transition through the various government employment training schemes (discussed in Section 4.5) or in unskilled manual work, inform the hustler's beliefs and dispositions:

> "Because it is so hopelessly difficult either to derive intrinsic satisfaction from work or reap high remunerative rewards, there is no purpose in conforming to the model worker ideal ... once this decision is taken, legal work then comes to be seen as a kind of ordeal, a kind of unprofitable restraint that restricts the full enjoyment of life" (Pryce 1983 : 235).

Willis has outlined the main socio-psychological components of the hustler's world-view:

> "The 'Cargo Secret' of urban poverty may be crime, petty theft, hustling, anything to 'turn a buck', allied with a general fatalism and disillusionment with the main society. This may mean an angry and apocalyptic separation from society. It is based on street wisdom, toughness and expediency" (1984b : 14).

The world-view of the hustler within the context of the twilight culture of worklessness blurs the boundaries between the 'straight' and 'bent' worlds. Within the intermediate stages of semi-legal and illegal economic activity, which are the province of the young urban hustler, are contained the potential for such 'alternative careers' to solidify into fully blown criminal careers and identities. The bonds which tie these young people to the conventional world, to conventional adult roles, status, and identities are loosened as they grow more marginal to social and economic life. Their commitment to the dominant moral and legal order is conditioned by the degree of their investment in the dominant social and economic order. "All the evidence suggests that the numbers now forced to survive in these ways on the margin of legal life are increasing directly in line with the numbers unemployed and that the age limit of those involved is dropping" (Hall *et al* 1978 : 358-9).

Germane to the discussion of the development of the hustler's world-view is their response to an experience of relative deprivation and status frustration which throws participants' relationship with the wider social order into question. As Maz put it: "We knew there was nowt down for us. It's what they was tellin' us right from the off ... teachers, probation, my ol' man, the government ... fuck 'em all, no work, no money, we knew it was up to us to get it sorted".

In his work on capitalist culture, Daniel Bell (1976) has identified an attitude of "entitlement" as the central emerging dimension of consciousness. Bell locates the sources of this culture of entitlement within the structure of capitalism. The accumulation of capital, the motor of capitalist economies, is, argues Bell, paralleled by an increasingly "accumulationist" approach to the self and to personal gratification. In reflecting capitalist imperatives of incessant growth and increasing consumer demands, contemporary culture reflects contemporary needs and impulses towards self expansion and gratification. The capitalist ideology of self-interest reflected in the contemporary Thatcherite view of "no society", individualist, competitive, 'yuppie' mobility has fuelled the growth in expectations. Expectations for the self have, in Bell's view, qualitatively evolved into new feelings of entitlement:

> "What is clear is that the revolution of rising expectations which has been one of the chief features of Western Society in the past twenty-five years, is being transformed into a revolution of rising entitlements in the next twenty-five" (1976 : 233).

Widening class differentials, coupled with the "erosion of citizenship" (Dahrendorf 1987) have produced a "discrepancy or dissonance" (Pitts 1988 : 139). The actual means of realising the ethos of rising entitlements (to a decent life, good job, etc.) have been frustrated, particularly for the young unemployed; and it is the young who are so often at the cutting edge of advertising campaigns, lending a particular piquancy to their frustrated consumer and status aspirations. Allatt and Yeandle (1986) organise a similar argument around the concept of "fairness", a notion constantly invoked by their unemployed study participants. Extensive unemployment has, they argue, produced "discontinuities in social and cultural relations" within which people are jolted out of their social niches, patterns of daily life are upset, and latent beliefs about how social life should be conducted, are exposed and fundamentally re-evaluated: "When ... normative expectations about economic life are not met, it becomes difficult, even impossible, for individuals and groups to

maintain belief in idealised standards ... within such a social context, individuals may feel bitter, frustrated and let down" (1986 : 98).

Underlying the notion of fairness is the recognition of an implicit social contract of mutual obligations. Other work as well as my own indicates that the young unemployed in particular feel a sense of betrayal in the face of diminishing social opportunity in the Thatcher decade (Turner 1984; Coffield *et al* 1986; Allatt and Yeandle 1986; Dahrendorf 1987). Both Turner and Coffield *et al* maintain that the vanishing youth labour market is a sign for many young people that politicians and other representatives of adult authority have broken their side of this unwritten social contract. As a result, "individuals became aware that the world was changing, bases of power were shifting, norms were being eroded, authority was losing its legitimacy" (Allatt and Yeandle 1986 : 113).

A consequence of the major discontinuities engendered by prolonged unemployment, against a background consciousness of rising entitlements, is the sense of betrayal experienced by the young unemployed which has resulted in an erosion of the state's legitimacy. This sense of betrayal experienced as "it's not fair" (Allatt and Yeandle 1986) has precipitated the conditions which engender social unrest (Scarman 1982 : 205), and the progressive development of deviant or alternative career strategies and solutions (Pitts 1988 : 141).

> "It is our view that the unofficial unwritten contract between young people and society has finally broken down ... The ... end came rather suddenly with the increases in youth unemployment ... in the late 1970s and early 1980s" (Coffield *et al* 1986 : 203).

4.8.6 The Anti-Employment Sub-Culture

Within the anti-employment sub-culture of Hartingleigh, the angry and apocalyptic separation from mainstream society may be seen as a product of this fundamental breakdown in the unwritten social contract. What Pitts describes as "ghetto

delinquency" (1988 : 141) has engendered a range of local solutions by those experiencing the strain induced by their actual position in the social structure against a consciousness informed by a notion of entitlement. The selection of subculturally available solutions are partially determined by gender and reference group and the meanings imposed on the individual's experience of long-term unemployment and relative deprivation. The impact of structurally induced strain loosens the moral bind, or the controls which usually hold the individual to the wider conventional order. Within the anti-employment subculture, participants faced with decreasing legitimate possibilities have proactively evolved alternative status systems for defining their roles and position in relation to the dominant goals and values of the wider society. Hustling dope, dealing, handling stolen goods, "doing a number" on a punter, the Social Security, or in terms of a "major blag" (armed robbery), are only partially concerned with economic survival. Subjectively, the concern is to be something or somebody, to promote, maintain, enhance status and identity in the eyes of a small localised audience. At the time of my preliminary fieldwork, there were several notable anti-employment careers discernible amongst the long-term unemployed and their peers.

Hoisting or organised shoplifting is one such career directly linked to the social networks of the anti-employment sub-culture. Four of my study participants formed the core of one of several 'hoisting teams' or crews, which operated from within the council estates in and around my study area. The hoisting crews consist of up to eight individuals who systematically work as a team to hoist a wide range of consumer goods from shops and stores. The group usually travels to towns or villages in more 'upmarket' residential locations away from their immediate areas. Hoisted goods are then passed on to a "professional fence" (Klockars 1975), of which there are several in my study area. The entrepreneurial families at the heart of the local alternative enterprise culture, outlined in Section 4.8.2, also provide a ready outlet for hoisted goods obtained by the Hartingleigh Crew.

The hoisting crew receives up to one third of the 'ticket price', that is, the retail value of the goods. The fence in turn receives half or more of the retail value when the goods are resold. The fence distributes goods to individual local purchasers or, with larger quantities, through retail outlets *via* legitimate markets. Fences also have access to 'industrial contacts' through some of the larger chemical and engineering factories remaining on the industrial sites of the north-west and, as such, have recourse to the pay-day, 'locker-room' trade.

Sometimes goods or particular items are hoisted specifically 'to order' which guarantees the hoisters a larger 'half-way' (half the retail price) profit (see Taylor 1984 : 100). During my preliminary fieldwork, and later during the Fourth Phase (1986-1990), I documented systematically the career progression of the Hartingleigh Crew and this is detailed in the case studies in Chapter Nine. Frequently, during this stage of my preliminary fieldwork, I encountered participants and their families and peers who had acquired prized household items, jewellery, fashion wear, and other goods *via* the activities of the Hartingleigh Crew, indicating the significance of their role in the locally based redistributive alternative enterprise culture.

A second significant anti-employment career distinguishable amongst study participants during my preliminary fieldwork, was dealing. Dealing (illegal drugs) provided a status role and alternative career for several of my study participants. Willie in particular had organised his life around 'punting draw' (selling cannabis) from the flat he shared in Collington with his girlfriend. Smoking 'draw' was a widespread subcultural activity within the social networks of my study participants. In 1985-86, over a third of the young women, and sixteen out of the twenty young men, in my study group admitted to regular recreational use of cannabis. As well as the more organised dealing, there is an informal network of supply that is usually the province of the hustler.

The cannabis organisation-distribution network ranges from the "upper-level dealers and smugglers" who import and distribute quantities of "between 300 and 1,000 kilos" (Adler and Adler 1983) to the street level hustler who deals directly to consumers in quantities of 'eighths' and 'teenths' (sixteenths) of an Imperial ounce. There is evidence to suggest that in Britain, the upper level importation and distribution of cannabis has been increasingly commandeered by the financial and organisational "muscle" of organised crime (Duncan Campbell, *The Guardian* 17.8.92). In part, this is due to the geographical proximity of the major cannabis producing countries of North Africa with the safe haven for the profits of spectacular robberies, etc., and their perpetrators, in the coastal resorts of southern Spain's infamous 'Costa del Crime' (Duncan Campbell, *The Guardian* 14.12.91). Below these upper levels of importation and distribution are the "middle-level dealers" who purchase quantities of between 50 and 300 kilos which are in turn sold on to "lower-middle-level dealers" (such as the Hattons and Donaghues) who purchase quantities of between 10 and 50 kilos. The lower-level dealers, such as Willie, 'buy in' between one and ten kilos from suppliers such as the Hattons or Donaghues, whose place in the dealing hierarchy was assured by their purchasing power, network of outlets, and ability to safeguard their investment.

In 1985-1986, Willie usually 'scored' in quantities of between one and five kilos. In 1986, the street price was approximately £2,300 per kilo for Moroccan 'soaps', with a discount for five. Moroccan 'soaps' were the standard commercial form for hash in the mid-1980s. These were usually available in soap-like bars, each weighing a quarter of a kilo (250 grams) or approximately nine ounces. The 'soaps' were then 'broken down' (usually by being placed in a microwave for a minute or so and then cut up with a butcher's knife) into imperial units based on the pound and ounce. The amounts to be resold would vary "dependin' on the punter". Willie's "prize punters" were those who "scored in quantity", usually in units of the imperial pound weight; a 'weight' was sixteen ounces; 'half a weight', eight ounces; 'a quarter weight, four

ounces. Willie also dealt in smaller quantities to his circle of closest friends, usually in units based on the ounce, 'an oz', (or twenty-eight grams). Amounts would vary, 'half an oz' was, in 1986, about £40 to those closest to him, a 'quarter' (£22), an 'eighth' (£11), a 'teenth' (£6). Deals in these smaller quantities were the exception rather than the rule, for to encourage "bits 'n' pieces punters" was to increase the flow of human traffic to his flat, thereby increasing the possibility for detection. Aside from which was the "hassle" of attending to a constant stream of callers who would "'ang 'round all day gettin' stoned and talkin' shite". Willie, as a consequence, had learned to set a limit on the number of callers by restricting his business to "prize punters, a couple of 'ustlers an' me mates".

The dealer's lifestyle and mode of consciousness epitomises the oppositional posture of those long-term unemployed participants who operate within the anti-employment subculture of Hartingleigh. According to Young (1971), socialisation into the work ethic is accomplished by the inculcation of the desirability of various material and status rewards offered by the system and the efficacy of work as a means of achieving them. This socialisation process can break down if the means of achieving societally valued goals are not available, that is if the employment suitable to realise material and status aspirations is unobtainable. This process may also be ineffective for sections of the community who do not value the material rewards or status goals. Young refers to two groups who are beyond the strict dictates of the work ethos: "The ghetto negro and the bohemian young. The former lack the means of achieving society's rewards, the latter disdain the rewards themselves. For very different reasons ... they share similar values and both are ... particularly prone to illicit drug use" (in Wiles 1976 : 106).

Similarly, the ethos of the anti-employment subculture is vehemently opposed to legitimate work and the plodding accumulation of, and psychological investment, in, symbols of status. Instead Willie's status is derived from an ability to maintain a

comfortable existence without recourse to paid employment. Although consumer items are valued, colour television and video, expensive stereo system, washing machine, three-piece suite in leather, etc., these items gain greater symbolic meaning having been obtained illegally either through the profits of dealing or through his extensive contacts within the local alternative enterprise culture. Moreover, the actual role of 'dope-dealer' is, within the milieu and social networks of the young unemployed, a status enhancing occupation. Not only does it provide a necessary and valued local service, but it is also valued for its explicit oppositionality in that it operates firmly outside the law. As Digger confided:

> "Dealin' - it's for fuckin' heroes ... with me I do my thing simple like, in an' out, pick up me quids, thanks a lot, over 'til the next 'un. But Willie, 'es at it all the time ... it's dealin', you 'ave to 'ave yer face in the frame all the fuckin' time ... know what I mean? Twenty four hours a day they can give yer front door the brooster [sledgehammer] an' yer fucked. See yer face is up front - you 'ave to 'ave the draw in yer 'ouse if yer gonna do the biz [business]. That's why 'es the soundest guy I know, yer never see 'im paranoid. (Sings) ... ice ... ice ... Willie".

Unlike those participants who have been fortunate enough to effect the traditional transition to primary employment, thus providing an escape from the social conditions of the local community and, moreover, securing a relatively uncomplicated route to adult roles, status and identity (see Chapter Six), for those who operate within the sub- and anti-employment subcultures, their "escape attempt" (Cohen and Taylor 1976) is achieved through symbolic means, primarily through redefining their status position. Thus to be a hustler, totter, or dealer, for example, is to valorise the deviant life in an attempt to "stay ahead" of the psychic game. In certain of the anti-employment careers, 'grafting' or 'blagging', for example, there is an added masculine concern with an image of potency. Of course, the displays of masculine subcultural potency are informed by the social context within which the traditional legitimate theatre for the display of working class masculinity, as breadwinner, or labourer, has been demolished. Being a 'blagger' or 'grafter' offers some participants alternative routes for defining a masculine psychological and economic potency by staying smart,

being cool, trying to "keep your balls when all around are losing theirs" (Pitts 1988 : 142).

Grafting is a colloquial term which in the days of accessible employment referred to hard manual work. To 'graft' for a living was to work hard. To be recognised as a good 'grafter' was to enhance one's status as a working class male by being acknowledged as a man who was physically capable of enduring long, hard, demanding, labour. In the past ten years, the term has been appropriated from the parent working class culture to embrace meanings that are far removed from the world of heavy manual labour. Nowadays grafting can refer to a variety of anti-employment careers, including property theft from shops and warehouses, burglary, and 'kiting', which refers to organised cheque and credit card fraud. The grafter differs from the hustler in that he eschews any kind of paid work, even the fiddle jobs within the local alternative enterprise culture. The grafter can be situated within the anti-employment subculture in this respect. The grafter's sense of self-worth and potency is derived from his abilities to 'stay ahead of the game' without recourse to work in any form. The grafter is firmly committed to a lifestyle outside the law and prides himself on a kind of masculine mental and physical toughness:

> "The hustle alone is not a sufficient means whereby the highest status can be achieved ... [it] is also contingent on demonstrated or perceived machismo and toughness" (Pitts 1988 : 143).

The blaggers are the storm-troopers of the anti-employment sub-culture. Their focal concern is with a way of life that is unshakeably committed to crime and, if necessary, violence. Within the local community, various role models provided by certain members of both the Hatton and Donaghue families have served to provide a blueprint for the demeanour of the blagger. For two of my study participants in particular, their post-school transitions through the anti-employment careers had by 1986 seen them involved in a variety of activities with which they had achieved a measure of desired local status and financial success. These activities included: 'ram-

raids', driving stolen vehicles into shop fronts in order to steal goods; 'snatches', of money from tills in shops and stores, and from retail employees delivering money to bank night safes; and 'armed blags' (robberies) on a sub-post office and jewellers with, in one case fake guns, and in the other an (unloaded) 'sawn-off' (shotgun).

Such activities had brought them to the attention of the Hattons who by 1986 provided more continuous employment for both participants within one of several 'sauna clubs' they manage throughout the North-West region. Within the saunas, which provide a semi-legal facade for organised 'soft' prostitution, the pair act as security or bouncers, "controllin' punters, collectin' the takings, 'an lookin' after the girls". This employment had effectively removed them from their more remunerative, though unstable, early careers, though they were to be occasionally recruited by members of the Hatton family for "a one-off blag", or to act as couriers for the transportation of drugs and stolen property, etc.

Both participants retained a fascination for the power and status provided by an association with guns and other weapons of violence. According to Barlow:

> "I 'ad a tool [weapon] all the time, 24 - 7 [twenty four hours a day, seven days a week] 'an I wasn't bothered about usin' it ... There's a buzz, you can't talk about it, like when it's on top an' it's just you an' the oppo' [opposition] they've got to know you mean it ... There's no room for fuckin' about, you're in there for the blag an' you've 'ad it away an' there's a Joe ['have a go Joe' - citizen or employee attempting to prevent the robbery] makin' 'is stand ... you're not gonna chat to 'em are you? 'urt 'em an' off ... there's no choice, it's that or a ten [years imprisonment] for the blag ... what you gonna do? So I give it 'im ... no danger ..."

According to Summers, the reputation for carrying weaponry further ensures safety in conventional day-to-day encounters: "when word's out, you've done one ... [armed robbery] no one bothers [you], who's gonna risk it?" Moreover, the reputation for access to, and use of, weapons provides masculine status within the sub-cultural context:

> "We'd 'ad it away, sweet like, divvied up [divided the proceeds from a robbery] an' gone into Town for a suit ... I always gets a new 'un when we've done one ...

> Anyway we're back in the Vic [the local pub] 'an you've got the suit on and it's drinks for the crew an' that, quids on the pool table, an' everyone knows you've done one. 'An your not lettin' on ... but they know ... 'an it's extra sweet 'cos you went in tooled [armed] 'an they know ... it's a buzz I'm tellin' you ... you feel like fuckin' Al Capone or summat" (Barlow).

In Manchester recent evidence indicates that the incidence of gun carrying and the use of guns by unemployed youths operating from within the most deprived estates of the Inner City has become widespread (*The Observer* 12.7.92). In one three month period, towards the end of 1992, there were, for example, over 120 separate shooting incidents in Moss-Side, Hulme and Cheetham Hill (*The Observer* 17.1.93). Between September and November 1992, eight people were badly injured in shooting incidents between rival gangs operating within the drugs scene in Moss Side and Hulme (*Manchester Evening News* 25.11.92). According to former Assistant Chief Constable, John Stalker: "Policemen will tell you that to some - not just in Moss Side - a gun is now a Manchester fashion accessory" (quoted in *The Guardian* 7.12.92).

In part, this growing fascination for the power of the gun may be related to the distortion of perspective which accompanies social and economic entrapment within the urban ghetto. A perception of the world is constructed out of an exaggerated version of the 'normal' values of the parent culture. As Willis has noted, the valorisation of "manual labour is associated with the social superiority of masculinity" (1977 : 148). Manual work represents, contributes to, and substantiates a certain mode of consciousness "which criticises, scorns and devalues others as well as putting the self ... in some elusive way ahead of the game" (1977 : 113). Manual work is thus highly regarded as an affirmation of masculinity within the traditions of working class culture. However, in the context of a declining local labour market wherein the traditional industrial shopfloor culture has all but disappeared, the legitimate arena for articulating working class masculinity through manual labour no longer exists. In such a context new social forms have been proactively constructed (subculturally) which supply a domain for the articulation of a distorted and exaggerated version of the working class male's 'normal' cultural values of masculinity, dominance, aggression

and machismo. The new social state for unemployed Inner City youth, the twilight zones of the new urban deprivations, have provided a set of personal, social and economic circumstances which circumscribe the articulation of traditional cultural norms. Stripped of the opportunity to express masculine concerns through manual labour, gun carrying and the status derived from a reputation for violence and the mad courage of spectacular crime, ensure an opportunity to salvage subculturally some vestige of masculine self-esteem and identity. This is not to excuse acts of extreme violence, or minimise their horror. The point is that such social forms are a partial outcome of an avoidable combination of social, political and economic determinants.

4.8.7 Unemployment Careers : A Concluding Discussion

Professional crime is now the fourth largest industry in Britain, with an estimated annual turnover of between fourteen and twenty billion pounds, employing an estimated 420,000 people (Duncan Campbell, *The Guardian* 17.8.92). Even the police hierarchy now acknowledges the role of politically determined social factors as being a major contributor to the dramatic increases in crime levels during the Thatcher decade. According to a confidential Metropolitan Police discussion document assembled in 1986, for example: "The Government pursues an economic policy which includes a Treasury-driven social policy with one goal, the reduction of inflation. Any adverse social by-products are accepted as necessary casualties in pursuit of the overall objective" (quoted in *The Observer* 5.7.92).

By 1992, Scotland Yard had released its latest round of unprecedented record levels of crime figures with the explanation that they were "more an indication of social/economic malaise than police performance" (*The Guardian* 14.9.92). Scotland Yard Commissioner, Sir Peter Imbert, was one of several high ranking policemen who openly spoke out about the need to address issues of poverty and disadvantage in the struggle against rising crime. In his annual report to the Home Secretary, Kenneth Clarke, Imbert argued that "more help for the poor would make the country a safer

place. We ignore that at our peril". Imbert's comments fuelled a political debate over the connections between Government policy, unemployment, spending cuts and rising crime. Imbert maintained that there were "compelling reasons" to believe that there was a link between social deprivation and crime. He argued that: "If you take a map of disadvantage and press it over a map of crime, there is too close a correlation to be ignored" (quoted in *The Daily Mirror* 30.7.92).

The last decade has seen the biggest growth in recorded crime this century. A survey by Jock Young indicates that recorded crime has risen twice as fast under the Tory governments in power since 1979 (Young 1992). Crime is a proxy for disaffection. To commit violent crime is to say you are not a stakeholder in the society to which you belong and plainly there are many more non-stakeholders. The growth in crime is a symbol of the disintegration of civil society and the erosion of citizenship, factors increasingly acknowledged by the police hierarchy. However attempting to deny that social and material deprivation are connected to crime growth has led the Conservative Government into some extraordinary contortions:

> "As crime of all levels has increased, the government has attempted to individualise crime, firmly resisting any suggestion that it is a response to unemployment and poverty" (Brake 1990 : 214).

Education Secretary, John Patten, for example, complained in a *Spectator* article that crime was linked to a decline in individual religious belief. Individuals fear hell less, therefore commit more crime (quoted in *The Guardian* 4.7.92). Norman Tebbit in a similar role as the Conservative Party "demonic Witchfinder General" had, in the wake of the 1985 riots, caught a frightening glimpse of the British urban landscape "being cursed by carefully orchestrated outbreaks of 'wickedness'" (quoted in Box 1987 : 29). Douglas Hurd, speaking at the Conservative Party Conference in 1985, argued that "public expenditure is not a remedy for crime ... the roots of these acts lie in greed and excitement of violence" (in Pyle 1987 : 17) Aside from this traditional conservative connection between crime and individual moral defectiveness, during

1986 Government representatives, including Margaret Thatcher and the then Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, also sought to locate the growth in crime in terms of individual victim's "carelessness": "Much of the increase is due to the carelessness of car owners and residents who fail to lock doors and windows" (quoted in *The Guardian* 4.10.90). Thus, within the Conservative view, the lawless do not commit their depredations because of inequality or injustice, but because of a weakening of the ties of social discipline and moral authority which results in freely chosen decisions to prey upon the careless! As Ian Taylor has remarked in his discussion of right-wing criminology:

> "The rhetoric of the Right is almost always silent on the specific social context of any crime ... and tries to displace crime and delinquency from their origins in the social formation itself, and in so doing asserts that the disorder in social relations is unrelated to the accelerating crisis of social reproduction in capitalist society ... Right wing criminology's essential project is indeed to disconnect the facts of social disorder from the (developing) disorderliness of social relations by remaining silent on the specific social context of crime and by speaking about crime as individual moral defect" (1981 : 23-24).

4.9 Summary and Conclusions

The period of the Third Phase of my evolving study (1985-1986) saw me leaving University and re-entering the urban environment and home community with which I was familiar. The period of preliminary fieldwork which followed took me on an exploratory ethnographic journey into the lives and cultural and subcultural milieu of a group of unqualified young people from my home community who had left school in 1980 and who were to become my research participants. It was an exploratory journey which began in Hartingleigh with those young adults with whom I had already established friendships and informal contacts as a result of my detached youthwork during the First Phase. These contacts had been consolidated during my frequent trips home during the university years of the Second Phase. Thus, by the time I began the Third Phase of preliminary sampling and fieldwork, I had not only established an easy rapport with several groups of young people, but had also developed relatively open and informal access to their wider social networks. My

friendships within these groups provided the necessary credentials and 'insider status' which allowed me to begin the process of documenting the variety of local adaptive responses to prolonged unemployment which had been proactively developed within the overlapping sub- and anti-employment subcultures. These subcultural structures had been constructed with the help of scaffolding supplied in the form of resources, traditions, focal concerns and attributes of the working class parent-culture.

During this phase of exploratory fieldwork, I also sought to tease out the roots of localism which may also be seen as embedded within the workingparent class cultural traditions of collectivism and solidarity. I sought to explore contemporary manifestations of these traditions with reference to the 'Girls Night Out' and the subcultural affiliations of the Northside football supporters.

In contrast to the informality of my fieldwork contacts with the Hartingleigh participants and those from the areas immediately surrounding Hartingleigh, my fieldwork relationships with the dispersed group of study participants traced from the Project's 1980 Survey were characterised by a more formal and semi-structured approach. Nevertheless, as a result of the total information gathered, I was able to sketch out some broad patterns in terms of post-school 'career trajectories'. The traditional post-school transition into employment, a transition available to the majority of unqualified early leavers up until the mid-1970s, was unambiguously a 'broken' or 'fractured' transition for most of the thirty-nine participants in my study group. Only three participants had secured the traditional route into primary (adult) occupations. A second more protracted transition to full-time employment had been taken by a further six participants. The vast majority (twenty-five) had followed post-school transitions into unemployment, many *via* an intermediate cyclical transition through government training schemes, bouts of casual and part-time work in secondary labour markets, punctuated by periods of unemployment, more training schemes, and so on.

The majority of participants who had followed the more common post-school transitions into unemployment, and for seventeen participants this was a transition to long-term unemployment, I sought to locate in terms of a 'hardcore' within the Social Division of Welfare. I also examined the more popular concept of a new urban underclass, but this notion was rejected because of its pejorative connotations. Despite its descriptive appeal, the concept of an underclass contains historically rooted associations with individualised pathology, personal inadequacy, behavioural defects and inter-generational welfare dependency. Such associations blend with conservative views of the aetiology of social problems and their solution and contain implicitly reactionary policy implications, such as a reduction of welfare benefits and programmes for "re-moralising" the undeserving poor. In connection to these points, I sought to examine the implications of, and societal reactions to, long-term benefit dependence, in order to place local responses within the wider context of fears ("scrounger phobia") about scroungers and the consequent "scrounger bashing".

Young women's unemployment is, I argued, generally, qualitatively different than young men's because of the added constraints of child care and domestic responsibility. Despite the warnings issued by some sociologists of utilising separate job and gender models in the sociology of employment and unemployment (*cf* Feldberg and Glenn 1979), a gender model has been applied to the unemployment experiences of young women in order to draw out the implications in terms of the types of oppositional or survival strategies that were developed. Generally, though not exclusively, survival and oppositional strategies were proactively developed sub-culturally out of masculine focal concerns located in the traditional working class culture. For the young men, the development of such strategies depended on relative freedom from the constraints of domestic and child care responsibility, and were often articulated in terms of an exaggerated or displaced masculine focus on psychological and economic potency, and in terms of status derived from mental and physical toughness.

Three broad bands of unemployment careers were examined with reference to the entrepreneurial sponsorship of two prominent local "hard families" who occupy a significant role in the cultural ecology of the local alternative enterprise culture. A sub-culture of the sub-employed has produced a survival strategy located in the local opportunities afforded by the informal economy. This involves moves between total benefit dependence and fiddle jobs on the side where benefit entitlement and claims are maintained. An intermediate set of careers involving semi-legal and illegal activities locally grouped under the terms hustling or totting were also examined. These activities blend almost imperceptibly into a fully criminal anti-employment sub-culture which takes the form of various careers, examples of which include dealing, hoisting, blagging and grafting. In part, the development of such careers may be viewed as a response to status frustration and relative deprivation. These careers are set within a context of declining legitimate opportunity against a background of rising entitlements, heightened consumer aspirations, and the breakdown in the unofficial, unwritten contract between citizens and the state.

By the late Spring 1986, I was confident enough about my research to seek postgraduate research funding on the basis of my established "data base" and the fieldwork undertaken. In September 1986, after securing postgraduate supervision with Stephen Edgell at the University of Salford, I was notified by the ESRC that I had been successful in my application and funding would ensure my project could continue into a fourth and final phase. This would allow me to explore in depth the themes and insights that had arisen from the earlier phases and enable me to give voice to the post-school experiences of my research participants.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EVOLUTION OF A RESEARCH PROJECT: THE FOURTH PHASE 1986-1990

"To seek knowledge for the sake of a thesis is to be a pimp. The only valid seeking is for one's own life project. Knowledge is not to be divorced from living"

(Mary Douglas cited in Clarke 1975 : 122)

5.1 Introduction

Following the year of preliminary fieldwork outlined in Chapter Four, I applied to the Department of Sociology, University of Salford, for post-graduate research supervision for my evolving project. After successfully negotiating research supervision with Steve Edgell, I applied to the ESRC for a postgraduate research grant. I had resolved to make my academic base in Manchester in order to maintain both family commitments and ease of access to research participants. My established 'data base' and the exploratory fieldwork undertaken since returning to Hartingleigh considerably strengthened my application to the ESRC. In September 1986, I was notified that I had been successful in securing a postgraduate competition award - this provided three years of research funding for my study.

5.2 In the Field

I occupied a small space within the 'post-grad' room of the Sociology Department at Salford and quickly settled into an early routine concerned with literature surveys and reviews, and carefully worded letters of introduction to the various members of the 'academic community' who were similarly involved in researching the young unemployed. I was also keen to maintain my fieldwork contacts and my time became divided between my desk in the corner of the post-grad room and visits to, hanging out, and participatory research with, study participants. The pattern of my fieldwork continued the routines established in the third phase of preliminary sampling and fieldwork (Chapter Four,

Sections 4.2 and 4.3). Contacts with the study participants who lived in and around Hartingleigh were frequent and informal, and in many respects overlapped with my own social networks and predilection for 'after hours' sociability. My hanging about and varying degrees of informal association and involvement were largely unquestioned by study participants - though I periodically sought to remind them that I was now officially engaged in full-time research into their lives, circumstances and post-school transitions. I made no attempt to distort or disguise my research interests and on occasions I was commended on having secured a reasonable "little earner". As one of the hustlers in Polsky's study put it: "You mean they pay you to run with guys like me? That's a pretty good racket" (1971 : 131). Sometimes I utilised recent publications in the area of post-school transitions/youth unemployment to remind participants of my research. On one occasion, Coffield, Borrill and Marshall's book *Growing Up at the Margins* (1986) prompted the following conversation:

"Dilly: So you gonna write a book 'bout us?
S.C.: I don't know yet?
Maz: What ... whaddya gonna tell 'em up at the University?
Coggs: E's gonna tell 'em we're all at it an' we don't give a fuck ...
Dilly: Gonna get a job as a teacher?
Maz: Teachin' wankin' (laughter) ...
Coggs: Stinkin' thinkin' ... an 'O' level smokin' draw (laughter)
Dilly: Naaw go on Steve whaddya gonna say?
S.C.: I've not worked it out yet.
Maz: (reference to *Growing up at the Margins*)
Whadda the fuckin' Geordies up to then? Are they all at it?
S.C.: It doesn't say ... they (Coffield *et al*) say they don't want to talk about it even if its going on.
Coggs: Fuckin' Geordies ...
Dilly: You tell 'em Steve ... pure Crime down 'ere ...
S.C.: I'm not sure if it's a good thing to talk about. People get the wrong ...
Maz: There's fuck all else goin' on ...
Dilly: All the fuckin' Geordies I know are at it ... an' the Scousers ...
Coggs: Yeah but they're not sorted ...
Dilly: Not like us (reads) *Growing Up at the Margins*!!? What's it 'bout?
S.C.: It's about how unemployment fucks up your life.
Maz: Oh yeah! ... Fuck's the Geordies up ya mean ...
Coggs: Yeah, they've not sussed a fuckin' number ...
Dilly: It's all bleedin' coal mines an' that ... fuckin' 'eads full o' nutty slack (laughter)
Maz: Fuck it Steve ... if the Geordies 'ave got a book you write one an' tell 'em 'bout the Northside.
Coggs: Tell 'em we've gorrit sorted ...
Dilly: Yeah pure fuckin' thieves an' we don't give a fuck ...
Maz: Tell 'em that ...
S.C.: Ah'll think about it.

As I outlined in earlier sections (Chapter Two, Sections 2.4; 2.7 and Chapter Four, Section 4.3) the friendships I had developed during the first phase of living and youthworking in Hartingleigh, consolidated and maintained during the second phase, and perpetuated during the third phase of preliminary fieldwork, allowed me to establish a fairly secure position within the informal social networks of my study area. My researcher status added an extra dimension to my relationships but participants generally seemed willing to accept and distinguish between my academic agenda and my personal regard for them.

My scholarly interest, especially with the long-term unemployed males, had one very significant positive ramification. It allowed me a special position within their network, a niche that justified my continued presence but which, to some extent, set me apart. The position of being simultaneously of, and yet apart from, the group echoed my role as detached youthworker and contained the implication that the unwritten rules did not wholly apply to me. Thus, for example, when vociferously insulted, I would not necessarily be confronted with the only two options normally open to an individual in that situation - fight or lose a great deal of social standing within the group. For this special status within the Northside Crew I was, on more than one occasion, thankful. I was not, however, totally free of the group's informal status delineations and there were the rare occasions when left with little choice I was forced to physically defend myself. Generally, these confrontations would quickly blow over and I could usually count on the support of Maz and Digger if someone was particularly "out of order". The fact that my research meant I spent time with the "snobs" and "shirtlifters", those considered unworthy by the Northside, also caused me problems from time to time. Nevertheless, as I spent a lot of informal social time with the Northside, havin' a laff, exchanging insults, and playing and watching soccer, meant that I could not stay entirely outside their pecking order - even if my position in it was fluid.

As my research developed and the intensity of my involvement with the Crew and their peers deepened, I developed a conflict between my academic persona and my after-hours personality. Without consciously intending to do so, I began to fit in with the group's norms. My speech, colourful at the best, became increasingly punctuated with obscenities; elements of working class machismo crept into my own attitudes and values. In part this was a defensive reaction, a response to the cultural ambiguities of movement between home and University, between life on the streets and the academic norms and rituals of refined politeness. My reasserted 'street-kid' affectations were not consciously contrived but were rather the unstudied products of my increasing involvement in the lives of study participants. To a large degree, I was unaware of the changes; they were pointed out to me by people whose opinions I valued - both in the Sociology Department at Salford and among my non-researched friends.

The world of Hartingleigh and the academic world, both at York and Salford, were at odds with each other in almost every conceivable way. To stand with one foot in each was a difficult posture to maintain. Unresolved facets of my own biography in many respects made it more comfortable for me to operate within the alternative values of the Northside than those operative within academia. It was only a twenty minute bus ride from the deck-access flats of the Jungle to subsidised three course lunches within the University dining hall, with its high ceiling and formally attired waitresses. The conflict between my research role and my academic role was highlighted on one occasion when I had naively invited some of the 'lads' for dinner at the University. I was five minutes late, and the lads had settled themselves amidst the academic staff at a table in the University dining hall; when I entered, it was to a chorus of shouts - "Hey Steve where've the fuck ya been man!. It's fuckin' sound 'ere but there's no chips!", etc. The cultural clash between University and the Jungle and the different standards of behaviour expected of me in each were sources of constant angst. Over time, I became increasingly disoriented by the constant role changes that were required. That I walked, talked, and acted differently within the lads' informal networks than I did in the Sociology Department did not seem

inconsistent, artificial or affected, but the inevitable strain of attempting such a difficult role and personality juggling act eventually began to take its toll, the consequences of which are discussed more fully in section 5.4

In contrast to the almost daily contacts with the most immediately accessible participants from Hartingleigh and the districts surrounding Hartingleigh, maintaining regular informal fieldwork contacts with the eight study participants who were scattered throughout the various districts of the Greater Manchester conurbation was more problematic (see Table 8, Chapter Four, Section 4.1.1 for details of participants' residential locations). Several participants lived in areas to the extreme south of the conurbation, so daily informal contact was out of the question. Field relations with these participants, in the preliminary fieldwork stage, were characterised by a semi-structural formality. During the fourth phase, this emphasis was, to some, extent, relaxed as I gained increased access and research involvement, but visits still necessitated a measure of pre-planning and formal arrangement. However, through sheer persistence, and an informal familiarity developed over time, I gradually evolved good, unforced relationships with the dispersed group. Maggie, Lynda Willcox and Spider, for example, were three of the dispersed group who were all unemployed. They lived within reasonable travelling distance of each other in the South of the City. Apart from my one to one meetings with the three women, between 1987 and 1988, I also developed a pattern of monthly visits to meet them in one or other, of their homes. All three developed lives based around home and child-care routines, and these periodic meetings not only provided me with the chance to compare and contrast their post-school transitions, but also allowed them the opportunity to share their difficulties and experiences.

In contrast, my fieldwork contacts with Denise Weldon and Deirdre Sharp, who had both similarly left the Hartingleigh area, were less frequent, based on the need to fit my fieldwork visits into their schedules of full-time employment. Both participants had made traditional post-school transitions to employment, followed by early residential mobility,

which was a feature of their existential 'getting out' frame of reference (see Chapter Six, Section 6.4 for details). Nevertheless, Denise and Deirdre were two of several, study participants who undertook an active role in the preparation of reconstructed biographical accounts of their post-school transitions. Both participants were, for example, extremely enthusiastic about editing and re-ordering transcripts of our conversations. Both women also provided written accounts of their post-school transitions within the labour market as well as their complementary domestic career transitions. This general approach was a feature of the participatory mode of fieldwork I was committed to and much of the material generated has been collaboratively 'worked up' into the case studies presented in Chapter Six.

Poolie was one of three male participants in the dispersed group. Poolie left Hartingleigh in the mid-1980s to live in a privately rented flat in Sale, a suburb of the Borough of Trafford in the south of the Greater Manchester conurbation. He made the move as a result of a relationship he had developed with a young woman who came from the Sale area. However, as a core member of the Northside Crew, the informal social networks of Hartingleigh remained of central significance in his life. In part, Poolie's alternative careers, which included hustling drugs, ensured that he made frequent visits to the local area in order to maintain informal associations and contacts. Throughout the fourth phase, I frequently encountered him among the informal lads network in and around my study area.

The most inaccessible group of study participants were the four individuals who, by the third phase of preliminary fieldwork, had migrated from Greater Manchester. These were Berksy who lived in York, Charlie Dougan who lived in London, Georgie B. who lived in Oldham, and Julie Birchall who lived in Blackburn. During the fourth phase, the four migrants were joined by Denise Weldon who moved to Norwich. My contacts with Berksy averaged four a year, between 1986 and 1990, and I tended to coincide the trips to his home in York with visits to old friends and associates from my undergraduate days

at the University there. I visited Charlie a total of seven times during the same period and these trips to London tended to coincide with a shared arrangement to watch Manchester United's 'away' fixtures in the capital. My contacts with both participants were informal and relaxed, based on our past associations, originally established during the first phase of detached youthworking for the Project. Both were enthusiastic about my study and participated extensively in the collaborative work of editing transcripts and constructing the case study material outlined in Chapter Seven (see especially Sections 7.6.4 and 7.8.2).

Charlie and Berksy were significant figures in my study. Both had been among my group of ten interviewees in the Project's 1980 School Leavers Survey (see Chapter Two, Section 2.5), both were participants drawn from Hartingleigh's Chicken Lane estate - known locally as 'the Jungle' - and both had been prominent 'faces' within the informal 'lads' culture on the streets of Hartingleigh during my detached youthwork. Following extended periods of post-school unemployment, like others from the Northside Crew, both had been in a good deal of trouble with the law as a consequence of pursuing alternative careers within Hartingleigh's anti-employment subculture. Court appearances had resulted in Borstal for Charlie; Berksy, on the other hand, had narrowly avoided incarceration partially as a consequence of army enlistment. However, these interruptions to their post-school transitions paradoxically afforded the opportunity for geographical mobility. As a result of their moves, there followed similar, biographical patterns of stable employment, courtship and marriage; these appeared to be factors which had enabled Charlie and Berksy, both members of the Northside Crew, to break the adolescent bonds which had tied them to the norms and values of the peer group in Hartingleigh. Geographical mobility, stable employment, courtship and marriage (and in Berksy's case, owner-occupation and parenthood) appeared to be factors which had enabled Charlie and Berksy to relinquish their propensity towards adolescent criminality.

During the fourth phase, Denise Weldon departed from Greater Manchester to accompany her boyfriend, Tim, when he secured employment in Norwich. The couple

eventually undertook a traditional domestic career of owner-occupation, marriage and parenthood. This transition reflected Denise's 'getting out' frame of reference which characterised a 'getting on - getting out' mode of consciousness typical of the three study participants who had secured traditional post-school transitions directly to primary employment. In the fourth phase, I visited Denise and her husband, Tim, three times to spend long weekends at their home in Norwich, on two occasions coinciding my visits with trips to Carrow Road to watch the local team, Norwich City, in their matches against Manchester United. I also saw the couple in Spring 1988, shortly before their marriage, when they were staying in Manchester at Denise's mother's home. Though increasingly infrequent, my contacts with the couple were relatively informal and through them, and with Denise's active collaboration, I was able to chart her employment and domestic career progressions. Denise's traditional transition took her from school into primary employment, from residential dependence to residential independence, and from courtship to engagement, marriage, parenthood and owner-occupation. A traditional transition to full-time employment provided the financial foundation upon which a stable adult identity was constructed (Chapter Six, Section 6.6).

The two other 'migrant' participants, Georgie B. in Oldham and Julie Birchall in Blackburn, I was able to maintain fairly regular contacts with as both Oldham and Blackburn are towns in the North West relatively accessible by public transport. Nevertheless, my visits were characterised by the need for prior contact and a measure of forethought and planning. I saw both participants three times a year between 1986 and 1990. Julie and Georgie were, for different reasons, significant to my study. Julie had sought to effect a post-school transition to adulthood *via* an early career of lone parenthood. The poverty associated with raising her child alone had necessitated various 'survival strategies' on Julie's part including 'totting from the Social' (fraudulent benefit claims) and 'working on the side'. Like the majority of long-term unemployed women in my study who, in 1985-1986, were unattached or lone parents (see Table 10, Chapter

Four, Section 4.7), Julie by 1990 had formed a relationship with a man, and had settled into a full-time domestic career of home and child care (Chapter Eight, Section 8.6.4).

Georgie's transition to full-time employment occurred *via* the successful completion of two years post-compulsory education and a 'sponsored sector' employment training scheme. In fact, Georgie was the only study participant to have successfully effected the transition to full-time employment, a proper job, *via* a 'decent' training scheme (see Chapter Seven, Section 7.4.1 for details).

5.2.1 Data Collection

My routine for recording information in the fourth phase of intensive fieldwork followed the pattern established in the third phase. My note taking would vary according to the participant(s), or the context in which meetings or encounters occurred. In my one-to-one meetings, or small group encounters, in participants' homes - or in my house in Hartingleigh - I would either record conversations on mini-tape for transcribing later, or if participants were not comfortable with this approach, I would take notes manually. If I considered that taping or note-taking were, for whatever reason, inhibiting to participants, I would generally try and record my impressions later. Most participants had no objection to being taped, although, as my fieldwork intensified, the sheer volume of material obtained and the increased amount of time required to transcribe the tapes, forced me to adopt a more selective approach. As particular themes and topics emerged from the ongoing processes of researching the relevant literature and sorting and sifting the accumulated research materials, I learned to focus taped conversations on selected areas of interest.

I also sought to maintain a variety of field diaries on a day-to-day basis. One diary was concerned with a daily routine of contacts or appointments - who should be contacted, when and for what, if any, specific reason. In a separate folder, I built up a record of theoretical or methodological issues that had arisen from my parallel reading of the

relevant literature in various areas of concern. I also evolved a system of utilising three separate diaries in each of the four years of the fourth phase, concerned with contacts with individuals who could be grouped according to their different modes of post-school transition. Conforming to the typology developed and outlined in Chapter Four (Sections 4.4.1; 4.4.2; and 4.5), the three diaries per year were grouped under the headings of Traditional Transitions, Protracted Transitions and Cyclical Transitions. Moreover, I sought to build up individual folders of observations, contacts, transcripts and other documentary material relevant to each of the thirty-nine participants in my study group. In 1988-1989, whenever possible, I utilised these folders in order to engage participants in the collaborative task of ordering, re-ordering and editing the accumulated material. The active involvement of study participants in the construction and re-construction of their 'social biographical transitions' is a feature of the participatory approach which reflects both an orientation derived from my detached youthwork practice and a developing trend within contemporary fieldwork practice (see Chapter Three, Sections 3.2.4 and 3.5).

5.3 Ethics and Ethnography

> "The only safe way to avoid violating principles of professional ethics is to refrain from doing social research altogether" (Bronfenbrenner in Burgess 1984 : 207).

In recent years, youth research has concentrated on post-sixteen progressions. Studies have examined the implications of mass unemployment, the 'new vocationalism', and the apparent breakdown in the smooth progression from working class origins to male and female working class destinations in the occupational and social structure (Banks *et al* 1992; Furlong 1992). Recent ethnographies have reflected these general trends within youth research and have concentrated on the effects of changes in employment, education and vocational training on the transition to adult roles and statuses (Coffield *et al* 1986; Brown 1987; Stafford 1991; Wallace 1987; Bates and Riseborough 1993). Within this broad body of youth research literature, there have been some attempts to explore the "coping tactics" and "survival strategies" of young adults in high unemployment areas (see for example Coffield *et al* 1986; Griffin 1985; Jenkins 1983; Wallace 1987). However,

for a variety of reasons, mostly to do with access, little has been revealed about recourse to the informal economy, the development of redistributive neighbourhood based "alternative enterprise cultures" (*cf* Hobbs 1988) or the recourse to petty and/or serious crime (Robins 1992).

After conducting interview based research with unemployed 16-20 year olds living in high unemployment areas in Liverpool, London, Manchester and Wolverhampton, Roberts *et al* (1982b), for example, identified "only a handful of individuals", in fact, "just three from 551 interviews, who were not seeking work, having discovered more remunerative (illegal) activities" (1982b : 5). On the Isle of Sheppey, Wallace's (1987) research revealed that some of the long-term unemployed in her study group had access to the local informal economy but that the numbers involved were a statistical minority: "The number of unemployed young adults engaged in informal jobs was very low at any given time" (1987 : 139). Within the more recent ESRC 16 to 19 Initiative, however, minor reference was made to routine opportunistic theft, which was associated with trans-generational unemployment (Banks *et al* 1992 : 85), and some unqualified Youth Training Scheme trainees (Riseborough 1993 : 172).

Echoing the majority view within recent youth research, Coffield *et al*'s ethnographic study of "growing up at the margins" in the recession blackspots of the North East, found no one "whose life was organised around crime as a career or who had adopted a criminal identity" (1986 : 149). Coffield *et al*'s study was conducted in the same part of the country where, more recently, riots have laid waste large areas at Meadow Well (North Shields) and in the Elswick and Scotswood districts of Newcastle. The riots on the Meadow Well estate were triggered by the death of two North Tyneside youths killed as a result of a police car chase (*The Guardian*: "Riot puts Despair on Agenda", 11.9.91 : 1; *Sunday Observer*: "No Hope in No-Go Land", 15.9.91 : 23). It is the same part of the country where gangs of young ram-raiders have been conducting a protracted struggle for territorial supremacy with the police. In this drawn out campaign, the families of at least

four policemen have been forced to move as a result of attacks and intimidation; police cars have been destroyed in petrol bomb attacks; death threatening graffiti have been daubed on police houses; off duty policemen have been followed home and their car registration numbers logged; and there have been widespread reports of radio-scanners being used to monitor police activity, with lists of police frequencies being sold in Tyneside pubs (Bennetto 1991 : 2). Nick Brown, Labour MP for Newcastle East, has argued that, within the most disadvantaged areas of his constituency, "Alternative cultures are growing up with every year that passes and they are alienated from mainstream culture" (*The Guardian*, 8.9.93 : 12).

Moreover, in a recent study, Campbell (1993), among other things, has pointed to the irreducible poverty and trans-generational unemployment, sometimes running into and beyond the third generation, as responsible for the "big-business black economy" and a youthful propensity towards crime on Tyneside. Within Coffield *et al*'s study, however, reference is made to one of the major reasons why contemporary ethnographic youth research has failed to address, or fully explore, the issue of law-breaking among the unemployed young, namely concern over the problem of confidentiality:

> "Technically undeclared work is illegal too but ... it was usually their only means of eking out their ... benefit and of keeping skills and self respect alive. The various jobs on the side which they worked have not been referred to in the main account for reasons of confidentiality ... but a majority ... had ... undeclared earnings" (1986 : 53-54). (my emphasis)

Thus, although Coffield *et al* had access to an area of significant contemporary sociological interest, they chose not to confront the ethical problems involved.

During the initial stages of my research project, in a personal communication, David Morgan provided early warning that the "ethical/confidentiality/political implications and ramifications" involved in researching social and acquisitive criminality amongst the long-term unemployed were, "formidable". Similarly, Bob Coles has also pointed out the consequences of producing unrepresentative ethnographies of the "glamorous fringe"

which may create a distorted image of the long-term effects of unemployment, especially for the great majority of "ordinary kids" who do not seek out anti-employment life styles:

> "It would have been possible for sociology to have produced a new crop of ethnographies featuring the glamorous fringe whose response to the absence of jobs for the young has been to seek out an alternative status system through non-work based life styles ... But by and large sociologists have rightly resisted returning to their former role as scholarly sidekick to the media myth makers. The overwhelming findings of youth research in the age of unemployment is that joblessness is a serious blight upon the economic, psychological and social maturation of the Thatchered young ... the young unemployed who find worklessness a lark ... are 'a tiny minority'. Unemployment research has at least resisted the temptation to slander ordinary kids" (1986 : 8-8).

I had to take seriously such warnings about the ethical minefield that is involved in studying "law-breaking in its natural setting" (Polksy in Becker 1963 : 117). As my project developed, I struggled with the realisation that some of the material I was recording could, in a variety of ways, be potentially damaging to my research participants.

How this is so can be illustrated with reference to two studies, Ditton's (1977) ethnographic study of bakery salesmen involved in routinised 'fiddling', and a paper about youth unemployment presented by Ken Roberts, in September 1982, to the British Association for the Advancement of Science. When Ditton's research was published, the consequences for the bread salesmen of his study were that they were eventually traced, exposed and sacked for their activities. The paper presented by Roberts was based on his research in high unemployment city areas. In it, Roberts argued that the young unemployed were learning to cope with, and adapt to, unemployment because economic uncertainty was an accepted fact of life within the communities he studied:

> "Joblessness is probably harder to bear in communities where the status is exceptional, but Britain's young unemployed tend to be clustered in localities where living without regular work is a common experience which unites their age-group and sometimes the generations" (1982b : 2-3).

However, the day after the presentation of Roberts's paper, the *Daily Mail* carried a partial and distorted version of its contents under the headline: "Youngsters who can find life brighter out of work", and went on to report: "The idea that rising unemployment is

sapping the spirits of British youngsters ... met with a major challenge yesterday" (*Daily Mail*, 8.9.82).

Thus, even with the best will in the world, sociological research may harm study participants and sociologists may unwittingly take on the role of "scholarly sidekick to the media mythmakers". Once in the public domain, research findings, filtered through the distorting medium of the Tory Press, can moreover lend academic credence to reactionary ideologues such as, for example, Norman Tebbit who, informed by the *Mail* article, commented on the plight of the young unemployed in the following terms: "I do not like the use of the word intolerable for something which is going on and being tolerated" (*Tyne Tees Television*, quoted in Hirsch 1983 : 16).

Aside from the ethical implications involved in the dissemination, or publication, of research findings and the potentially negative impact of these on the community one seeks to represent, I was, during the ten year course of my study, provided with two timely reminders of the potential danger to research participants from recorded and stored information on their undetected law-breaking activities. Under the 1984 Police and Criminal Evidence Act, the police were provided with the power to enter and search any premises for the purposes of gaining evidence, even in circumstances where the owner or occupier is not suspected of any offence (Smith 1986 : 7). In 1986, for example, the Act was invoked against two Bristol daily newspapers and a freelance photographer who were compelled to hand over unpublished photographs of the mid-1980s riots in the St. Paul's area of the City (*The Guardian* 24.10.86: "Papers Must Hand Over Riot Photos"). Under the same Act, on two separate occasions, my home in Hartingleigh was subjected to visits by the Greater Manchester CID seeking information about certain individuals who were not, in fact, research participants. The police did attempt a desultory search of my house but the bulk of my research records were fortunately stored at two other separate locations where I usually worked and, as a result, no incriminating material was taken. Nevertheless, the experiences did emphasise the implications of some of the research I was

undertaking and made me diligent to the point of paranoia, about the need to immediately transcribe, code, anonymise, and safely store sensitive materials obtained from research participants. Such ethical considerations have also been brought to bear on the construction of the text and I have followed many ethnographers in changing names, places, dates, locations and incidents to protect the people from whom sensitive data was obtained. In this, I have gone as far as Platt (1976) was prepared to in protecting members of the 'Sociological Research Community' who participated in her study:

> "I have ... gone to some lengths to make it difficult to identify individuals or projects in the text, though I have been conscious of the danger of concealing relevant information by doing this. All names have been changed and sometimes sexes; institutions, affiliations and research topics have been changed or described in general terms ... If the same name appears in more than one place, it does not necessarily refer to the same individual" (1976 : 7).

"With such circumspection", John Barnes observes, "we might well think we were about to hear something really iniquitous, alas all that is offered is an account of the realities of Social Research" (Barnes 1979 : 140).

In presenting some of the material in my study, it is apparent that it was necessary that I should be involved in certain law-breaking activities. To avoid any legal action against myself, I have similarly sought to anonymise my own roles and thus, "I appear in the text on various occasions under a pseudonym" (Hobbs 1988 : 14). While engaged in crucial parts of my study, I undertook the strategy of adopting the non-judgmental role I had developed during my early youthwork practice, particularly with participants who were aware of my own criminal biography and who were therefore acquainted with my pre-University persona. Drawing the moral line is a decision each researcher must make within a particular research context and no amount of ethical codes or instruction booklets can minimise the individual responsibility involved (Dingwall 1980 : 883; Polsky 1971 : 132). Like Hobbs (1988), my approach was open and flexible and guided by "the ethics of the researched culture and not the normative ethical constraints of sociological research ... Consequently, I was willing to skirt the boundaries of criminality ... and I considered it crucial to be willingly involved in 'normal' business transactions, legal or otherwise" (1988

: 7). Inevitably there was a high degree of anxiety generated from my involvement in such activities, the long-term consequences of which are outlined in the following Section (5.4).

In Chapter Two (Section 2.4), I explained how my own law-breaking and status as an 'ex-con' facilitated significant entrée into the informal lads culture. Generally being recognised as someone who "knows the score" allowed me access to data usually prohibited to the 'straight' outsider. My own background and biography also influenced my decision to pursue research in certain areas rather than others. What McRobbie has described as the "politics of selection" have been largely unacknowledged in most ethnographic studies of subcultures:

> "Although few radical (male) sociologists would deny the importance of the personal in precipitating soci l and political awareness, to admit how their own experience has influenced their choice of subject-matter (the politics of selection) seems more or less taboo. This silence is particularly grating in the literature on hippie and drug countercultures, where it seems to have been stage-managed only through a suspiciously exaggerated amount of methodological justification" (1981 : 113).

Because of my own background of teenage to late twenties affiliation to Manchester's Inner City law-breaking subcultures, I found nothing immoral, or even unusual, in the 'biz' - the dealing, hoisting, grafting and blags that I encountered. However, I do not consider my study to be unethical for the ethics that I adhered to were the ethics of the participants in my study (*cf* Hobbs 1988 : 7-8).

Most studies of 'delinquent subcultures' deal with those who have 'failed' at their 'chosen' alternative career. Studies have generally concentrated upon data gathered from 'caught' law-breakers who have ended up as residents in one or other of the various state institutions established to incarcerate youth and adult offenders (see for example Little 1990). However, as Polsky has pointed out, the emphasis on data gathered from caught criminals has led the criminologist to develop theories based on the investigation of an inherently "skewed sample, studied in non-natural settings" (1971 : 120). Moreover, the data derived from 'failed' law-breakers, in addition to sampling bias, is also "too heavily retrospective" (*ibid* : 121). As Polsky has asserted:

> "Only about six out of every hundred major crimes known to the police result in jail sentences, so much of our alleged sociological knowledge of criminality is based on study of people in jails. The sociologist ... typically gathers ... data from deviants who are jailed or otherwise enmeshed with the law - a skewed sample who over-represent the non-professionals ... who are seen in artificial settings and who are not systematically studied as they normally function in their natural settings. Thus, the sociologist often knows less about truly contemporary subcultures - particularly those composed of adult professional criminals - than the journalist does" (Polsky in Becker 1963 : 171, Note 7).

And finally, returning to issues of confidentiality and the desire to protect participants from whom 'data' has been derived, like Patrick (1973) I resolved to delay writing-up the material which highlighted the law-breaking activities of participants. The chronology of incidents has also been distorted and disguised in order to ensure that participants retain immunity from retrospective police action. Likewise, I have ensured that several years have elapsed between recorded incidents and the construction of the text. Moreover, to further protect the anonymity and safety of research participants, it is my intention to secure a moratorium on access to the thesis for a period of two years - under the terms of copyright and the University of Salford's Code of Practice (1992). Further requests may be made annually for additional single years up to a maximum of five years. I trust that these procedures will further ensure anonymity and protect participants from any possibility of future detection and prosecution.

5.4 Reflections of An Engaged Fieldworker

Few sociologists who employ qualitative research methods discuss the actual mechanics of fieldwork in their published writings. A frank account of the processes involved might disabuse readers of the idea that sociological insight arrives through the logical analysis of a systematically gathered, and largely static body of 'evidence'. If my experience is at all typical, insight comes from an immersion in the research materials, a sifting and re-sifting, ordering and re-ordering of a lot of pieces of paper, until patterns develop. My research methods were not applied 'objectively' in a manner devoid of human limitations or personal values and my study reflects the same commitment to advocacy and empowerment as I sought to employ in my detached youthwork. Naturally, as a University-based researcher,

I had access to the literature which describes the qualitative methods used in participatory research, but, if, as I would argue, the real point of fieldwork is to be immersed in the community under study (*cf* Whyte 1955), it means that one's personal life is inseparably bound up with the research. What follows then is a personal account of my relationship with the Hartingleigh community and the effects, strengths and limitations of conducting participatory research in one's own 'backyard'.

Despite being superficially flushed with the success of my ESRC research application and my new official status as a 'sociological urban ethnographer', walking through Hartingleigh in Autumn 1986, I felt strangely uneasy and vulnerable. I might have been closer in class background to the people of Hartingleigh than to the bulk of my University colleagues - but the time I had spent in York and in the Department and Library at Salford had made things subtly different. Earlier I outlined the disorientation engendered by the role changes required to stand with one foot in each of two distinctly separate cultural worlds. The process of estrangement had begun with my movements between the contrasting worlds of home and University during the second phase. The stark contrasts generated from movements between an undergraduate existence of libraries, lectures, seminars, and predominantly middle class students and lecturers in York, to my family life with my wife and our two growing children in a terraced house in Hartingleigh, was to provide the starting point and impetus for research within my home community. My student life occurred within the genteel atmosphere of a picturesque rural outpost of the ancient walled City of York, and my family life within the rapidly deteriorating social environment of the Northside of Manchester's Inner City. Although it was easier to manage the role conflict during the second phase, when the two roles were spatially and socially separate and aided by a train journey to adjust to the role-change, the constant movement between these two starkly contrasting environments provided a harsh reminder of the patterned inequalities in our society. In ways that I did not fully understand at the time, and therefore could not properly articulate, I saw clearly the contrast between those whose lives are circumscribed by optimism, cultural nourishment

and opportunity, and those for whom the multiple and cumulative impact of social disadvantage had created an almost impenetrable barrier to opportunity which rendered hope a superfluous emotion. At a level beyond words, my time at York had changed me and I sought to give voice to the change through preliminary fieldwork in Hartingleigh.

During the third phase of preliminary fieldwork, outlined in Chapter Four, I worked hard to get to grips both with the relevant literature and in terms of constituting a 'data-base' by establishing contacts with the young people who would become my study participants. I drafted a substantial research proposal for submission to the ESRC based on the literature review and preliminary fieldwork. During the same twelve month period, I threw myself wholeheartedly into the various activities promoted by the Project and sought to reaffirm the basis of informality upon which my former employment, as a youthworker, had been based. I interviewed extensively during preliminary fieldwork and spent long hours transcribing and editing tapes, occasionally in collaboration with research participants. My informal access to the peer group networks of Hartingleigh's burgeoning sub- and anti-employment subcultures provided me with an arena both for articulating a reasserted 'proletarian' identity and for generating significant areas of research interest. By autumn 1986, I had successfully secured research supervision and funding - yet paradoxically, this served to increase my sense of estrangement. At approximately the same time, I ran into difficulties with the Management Committee of the Youth and Community Project. In part the problems arose out of my commitment to a participatory mode of research.

In line with my research commitments, I had sought to 'feed back' early drafts of my preliminary fieldwork to various employees of the Project for comment. In particular, I provided drafts of those sections of my fieldwork which contained reference to my early youthwork and to Project staff and resources. Ostensibly, I was looking to secure informed comment on, and further support and co-operation for, my study. At another level, however, I recognised I was also seeking community approval for my work. I was

particularly concerned about the political and ethical implications inherent in a possible examination of the propensity towards acquisitive crime, discernible among a significant proportion of my study group - and was inviting comment upon this. At an early stage, I understood that there would be a host of ethical, political and confidentiality implications and ramifications, and I wanted to secure general approval that exposure of these, often desperate, survival adaptations was acceptable to the wider community (these issues are discussed more fully in Section 5.3). At the same time, insulated by a sense of 'respectability' engendered by my academic successes, I also sought to 'come clean' about my former incarnation as an 'ex-con'. There was a ripple of consternation among certain members of the Project's Management Committee. What also became issues of concern were some of the 'revelations' contained in the preliminary drafts of my fieldwork, revelations about, for example, the semi-officially sanctioned practices within the Project's organisation of MSC funding and trainees. The descriptions of what were described as, "unorthodox" approaches to detached youthworking, also met with strong condemnation by certain members of the Project's Management Committee. Two Committee members, who were also prominent local clergymen, led the campaign of disapproval.

Although Jim Donovan, the Project's Neighbourhood Worker and Chair of the Management Committee was extremely supportive of my work - both as a detached youthworker and in terms of my research study - others were less sympathetic. A series of meetings were convened; some I was invited to attend, others I was excluded from. I argued that the material which pertained to the Project's use of MSC funding and the "unorthodox" youthwork practice were instances of community generated resistance and relevant to the background of my study. In response, members of Management argued that the early drafts, if included in my thesis, would enter the public domain and, if the identity of the Project was discerned, could be potentially damaging. Of concern were the implications that the Project was manipulating or misappropriating MSC funding (Chapter Two, Section 2.6.2); that revelations about 'cash-in-hand' payments to Project volunteers, who were registered as unemployed, could lead to investigation and prosecution by the

DHSS, fraud section (Chapter Seven, Section 7.6.2); and that the 'permissive' youthwork approach, evolved in the 1980s by Project youthworkers, could be interpreted as tacit approval of, or even incitement towards, crime, amongst the young people affiliated to the Project (Chapter Two, Section 2.7). The debates surrounding these and other issues not dealt with in this text, continued into 1987. Initially a narrow vote sought to exclude me from any further access to the Project's records, facilities, resources and premises - I was 'banned' from the Youth and Community Centre!

Because I had retained a strong emotional commitment to the Project, my first reaction was to completely excise the offending material from the early drafts. However, after lengthy consultation with the various participants in my study, who were relevant to the controversial passages, and with further advice and encouragement from my former co-workers, I decided, instead, to re-draft the material. I excluded sections, key characters, incidents and facts, in order to render a more generalised picture - whilst at the same time seeking to retain the sense of community resistance which was implied in the original. I also sought to further disguise the location of the Hartingleigh community, the Project and the various individuals portrayed in the original drafts. With the support of Jim Donovan, Gail Hindle, Marie Hulton, and a strongly worded letter of support from Tony Boyle - who was at the time working on a similar community based project on Tyneside - the ban was lifted. This was my first tangible encounter with the limitations of participatory research.

Although my problems at the Centre and with the Project's Management Committee were eventually resolved, the dispute seriously undermined my confidence. Caught between the two worlds of academia and the community and the streets, I had found myself in, but not really of, either. Although the support from my former co-workers was consistent throughout this period, I remained permanently undermined. The growing feelings of estrangement were exacerbated by problems in my home. My years in prison in the late Seventies, followed by the dislocation experienced by my family as a result of

my three years as an undergraduate, had helped to undermine my marriage. The pressure of trying to cope and maintain the family economy on the income derived from my undergraduate grant, and later the ESRC research funding, had ensured an almost continuous struggle to ward off debt. How long was this to continue? .... Where was it all leading? These were the questions that were asked of me, questions to which I had no sure replies. Despite my sense of estrangement, both at home and within the Sociology Department at Salford, I knew that my academic identity was a vital component of who I now thought I was. I now sought to derive self-esteem from academic endeavour and not the law-breaking activities of my past. I could not abandon the journey I had begun since coming out of prison. My wife was exasperated; the constant absences and an enduring poverty led her to question the whole basis of our relationship. In 1988, we separated; the house was sold, I handed over the surplus profit, and moved into a flat.

For the next twelve months, I buried myself in fieldwork and, when the sense of failure and loss impinged, I sought solace in the after-hours recreation of study participants. By 1989, I felt myself drawn into the milieu of Hartingleigh as I had never been before, into its political and social life and into the web of personal, economic and social problems that dominate its residents. At the University, I had a demanding academic schedule with some undergraduate teaching, my research was nearing the 'cut-off' date I had been set, and the process of writing up loomed. It was a very busy time, and I also found it emotionally draining, especially in trying to reconcile the two lives I led: the one at the University campus and the other on the streets of Hartingleigh.

It was my study that was to bridge the two worlds. One of the most challenging and perhaps rewarding features of a participatory ethnographic study is the synthesis a researcher must create between a perceived intellectual heritage and the 'data' (collaboratively) generated from fieldwork. Without a theoretical framework to make sense of the massive quantity and variety of empirical material, researchers would be drowning in a sea of field notes, with each new interview tossing them in a different

direction. Yet the theoretical framework must be generously applied in order that collaboratively 'worked up' material can modify, or readjust, the theoretical boundaries; so that new insight may be generated from new material. By the same token there is - perhaps - all too much theoretical abstraction, with no experiential grounding whatsoever, coming from some scholars who are too often afraid to venture into the life-worlds of those they seek to represent. There is also an important sense in which studies in the areas of youth culture and subculture can be said to have produced 'unrecognisable' versions of the social world; scholars whose theoretical abstractions are meaningless to those from whom meaning has been derived. "It is unlikely", admits Hebdige, "that members of any subcultures described in this book would recognise themselves reflected here" (1979 : 139). In an unusually frank confession, Hebdige concludes that the culture analyst is doomed to -

> "live an uneasy cerebral relation to the bric-à-brac of life ... We are in society but not inside it, producing analyses of popular culture which are themselves anything but popular ... we are still ... condemned for some time yet to speak excessively about reality" (1979 : 139-140).

My study began with a review of the participatory influences derived from youthwork theory and practice. The twin notions of individual and community empowerment, enshrined both in the inherently empathic, non-hierarchical, detached youthwork role and within the community self-survey, with its focus on community problem definition and solution, were significant methodological influences for my research (see Chapter Two). In Chapter Three, I examined how these influences meshed neatly with a 'humanistic and empathic' research mode derived from the Participant Observation traditions within sociology. However, the more 'subjectivist' participant observation traditions, especially those derived from phenomenological and symbolic interactionist roots, could not fully articulate participants' lived experience. Lived experience in Hartingleigh occurs within the overarching "canopy of structured inequalities", such as youth poverty, gender and unemployment, and, as such, necessitates other theoretical commitments. In order to articulate the matrix of experiences and conditions which shape and influence lived

realities, I explored the work of Willis who, among others, argues that, although the individual's relationship to the mode of production wields a significant influence on attitudes and actions, people do not simply respond to such pressures with passivity or indifference. Willis insists that the cultural sphere has a relative autonomy (1977 : 171) and that subordinate groups may produce alternative cultural forms endemic to the parent culture. Similarly, Fryer's (1986a) theory of agency examined in Chapter Four (Section 4.6.3) allows for participants to be proactive in "choosing to initiate, intervene in or reperceive situations" (Fryer and Payne 1984 : 273). Giroux's theory of resistance, examined in Chapter Three (Section 3.5), also allows for an examination of active experiences which embody oppositional attitudes and practices. As Mann has argued, historically and culturally, "the poor have hardly been passive" (1992 : 136). Giroux suggests that working class subordination is not a simple reaction to the logic of capitalism, or capitalist rationality, but that, rather, oppositional cultural patterns draw on elements of working class culture in a creative and potentially transformative fashion (1983a : 291).

As such work informed my theoretical thinking, the empirical materials generated from fieldwork and the theoretical perspectives were held in a kind of dialectical tension. I found myself moving back and forth between the two until my ideas coalesced. The emergence of my ideas was a slow circuitous process. I had anticipated problems analysing the 'data', but, before even reaching the stage of analysis, I became enmeshed with the difficulties involved in simply organising the material generated from many hours of fieldwork. The task of organising the material proved more difficult than I had foreseen. By January 1990, I had in excess of five thousand pages of field notes and transcripts. As an ESRC funded student, I was under pressure from the Sociology Department at Salford to convert the material into a PhD thesis, and complete on time. The ESRC completion date loomed and my grant was coming to an end. I was aware that the analytical and theoretical chapters would push me to my intellectual limits and, essentially, I was afraid of the task that awaited. At the time, I also had no understanding

of how demanding it would be to organise my notes and transcripts into the basically descriptive chapters I had envisaged to illustrate participants' labour market and domestic career transitions (eventually these emerged in parallel with the theoretical work and contain movements between descriptive and theoretical paragraphs within each Chapter).

I had also neglected to make adequate theoretical notes throughout the fourth phase - the complex conceptual architecture was held inside my head. I had plenty of notes and transcripts which depicted events, incidents and conversations, but no tangible record of the development of a more abstract sense of what the observations meant. By Summer 1990, I had sketched out, in loosely constructed first drafts, the various ideas contained in Chapters Two and Three, which complemented and informed the year of preliminary fieldwork depicted in Chapter Four. I had also taken on board more of the contemporary youth research literature which emphasises what Chisholm has described as "social-biographical transitions" (1990 : 39) and the theoretical implications of 'trajectories', 'transitions' and 'careers' as organising concepts for post-school transitions (examined more fully in Section 5.7). I was especially cognisant of these ideas when I carried out a final wave of brief interviews with the thirty-nine participants in a six month period between September 1990 and February 1991. Being 'in the field' was what I was most comfortable with, but the final sweep of interviews served as another way of delaying the task of writing-up, which awaited like some oppressive shadow in the corner of my life. I dragged out the final fieldwork task - putting off and avoiding what, when I allowed myself to think about it, seemed like the awesome process of imposing order and meaning on my fieldwork. Retrospectively, I believe I was reluctant to finish fieldwork for, if the process was completed, what then was I to be? If not a researcher in the process of conducting research, what, or rather who, was I?

A further six months passed. The Sociology Department's representatives were becoming agitated - as was my supervisor. I could not quite disengage from 'the field'; my after-hours sociability with the unemployed males had become a week-by-week

occurrence. I was mesmerised by their lives, their lawlessness, and disregard for convention or formality. Often I quite clearly ran the risk of arrest, but this was not especially distressing. Often I was in the presence of those selling 'soft' or 'hard' drugs, handling stolen property, or in possession of firearms (see Chapter Nine). Despite the blatant sexism and espousal of often dangerous and violent views, I marvelled at their "collective expressions of disaffiliation from authority and the hegemony of the dominant classes" (McRobbie 1981 : 21). The New Order song, *State of the Nation*, is playing in the background as I write these very sentences:

> "We turn our backs you see
> The State of the Nation will never enter me"

The solidarity, group loyalty and assertiveness, displayed in the face of lives and circumstances stripped of all the conventional routes to dignity, I found was occasionally inspiring; their cocksure belligerence and often explosive combativity succeeded in "creatively blocking all attempts by others to control them" (Riseborough 1993 : 10). However, unlike Riseborough, the author's perspective has <u>not</u> been left implicit, "and some readers will find much to concern them here" (*ibid*).

After several stilted interviews within the Department at Salford, and a re-negotiated thesis deadline, I re-focused and strove to re-order information that would assist me to determine the validity of my tentatively formulated theoretical discernments. In fact, the entire period between Summer 1991 and Summer 1992 involved a constant appraisal and reappraisal of ideas I thought could help me make sense of, and impose order on, the empirical material. But, ludicrously, I kept no written record of the development and progression of these ideas. I again negotiated an extension on my writing-up deadline on health grounds and packed up my research materials, books, files, papers, and catalogue of tapes and arranged a move far away from Manchester. The 'call of the streets' would no longer impede the task that remained. I was, by that time, exhausted, and suffering from "fieldwork schizophrenia".

> "Doing fieldwork at home is a perpetual schizophrenia ... In the case of fieldwork at home ... the researcher is darting back and forth between one world and another ...

> While this shuttling process has certain methodological advantages over those of my colleagues in other cultures, it is extremely emotionally stressful. The energy involved in switching cultures daily is exhausting. From time to time, I actually forgot where I was, who I was, and what I was doing" (Posner 1980 : 205).

Traditionally, fieldwork has provided a route for the investigation and analysis of the ongoing social worlds of others. As examined in Chapter Three (Section 3.2.4), there has been an increased interest in the ethnographer's personal processes and problems. Reflective accounts of the personal aspects and consequences of fieldwork have enriched the awareness of the social nature of fieldwork. They have provided a method with which to address the deeply subjective, emotional and personal experiences involved. In keeping with this new, more reflective, posture, I will speculatively explore the culmination of the sense of estrangement alluded to throughout this section. The stress and anxiety which surrounded my research had, by the time I departed from Manchester, manifested itself in a set of disturbing personal experiences which occurred as I sought to draw my fieldwork to an end, and which culminated in the shock of disengagement.

5.4.1 Leaving the Field and Data Analysis

My departure from the Project in Hartingleigh, and from my association with colleagues and research participants, entailed an impromptu party and an evening spent trying to say goodbye. I was assailed by a multitude of conflicting and contradictory emotions and during the course of the evening made my excuses and left - farewells were not a strong point in my repertoire of social attributes. When I got back to my flat - which was already stripped bare, possessions boxed in anticipation of departure - I was overcome by a series of strange and then terrifying sensations. As someone who has been acquainted with the psychedelic experience, I thought I was familiar with the terrain of altered consciousness - but this was something unfamiliar. It was not chemically induced; apart from the half bottle of white wine I had drank at the party, I was totally 'straight', yet parts of my body felt disconnected and gradually I was overwhelmed by a desperate vulnerability. I lay down. Initially I recognised the sensation as an exaggerated version of the estrangement I had experienced at different times throughout my study ... and then,

somehow, I lost the ability to think, all meaning dissolved. I was in what Laing has described as a state of "ontological insecurity". The ontologically insecure person -

> "may feel more unreal than real ... so that ... identity and autonomy are ... in question. [They] may not possess an overriding sense of personal consistency or cohesiveness ... may feel more insubstantial than substantial. And ... may feel ... self as partially divorced from [the] body" (1960 : 42) (my inserts)

At some point I must have got up and I pushed my hands against the wall trying to directly feel or make contact with my physical self. It was as though another surface level, something intangible, separated the concreteness of physical objects from myself. Smells, sounds, sights, all held an ethereal quality. I was simultaneously entranced and terrified by the chimerical nature of things. I felt in a state of vacillation in an alien world, a world suddenly fragmented and immaterial. Time passed. I do not know exactly how long; several hours, for the first light of dawn was creeping over rooftops. I felt myself returning. I felt more settled, inside my body, 'real', 'normal'. While I made no notes about this experience, it burned itself into my memory so that to think and reflect back, I can feel the faint echoes of physical sensations I experienced at the time.

I did not make, nor now do I offer, any detailed analysis of this and other less dramatic experiences of ontological insecurity during fieldwork. The 'shock of disengagement' from the field was, perhaps, the culmination of several years of stress and pressure and a growing sense of having no place to locate self and identity. Trapped and oscillating between two incompatible worlds, I made my escape.

The first step I took towards reconstructing both my 'self' and my study was to ensconce my research bric-à-brac in a tiny room in a Community Arts Project in a Welsh University town. Here there were no distractions. I was literally a stranger in a strange land. I had mentally cultivated and modified my sociological views in line with developments within the empirical material generated from fieldwork. But I had neglected to record the changes and progression of my ideas and was compelled to systematically back-track to examine the development. This was the task I initially

undertook towards reconstituting my thesis. I should have noted after every interview how the new material had fitted into the overall picture, or if the material had forced revisions in, or had affirmed, my previous thinking. Had I kept such notes, the stage between the end of my fieldwork and the beginning of writing-up would have been less awesome and filled me with much less dread.

I spent days reading through my notes and diaries, trying to cross-reference material, reading and re-reading again and again, sifting through the material, trying to discern an organisational framework which did not distort participants' views, or experiences. I began to record the process and the insights gleaned from the undertaking, some of which came to me at the most bizarre times and inappropriate places, often touched by chance incident or stray observation. In order to get a grip of the empirical material, I developed a card index for each study participant on which I recorded information that struck me as particularly relevant or important. Perhaps the most useful organising device I employed was a huge wall chart fashioned from a roll of decorators' lining paper. The chart contained, for each participant, information according to the following specifications: gender, employment status, mode of post-school transition, domestic career, domestic status, residential status, father in the household, employment of father, employment of mother, whether the participant had, or was currently, engaged in illegal activity, subcultural affiliations, alternative economic activity, arrest and/or imprisonment. Once the materials gleaned from my folders and field diaries had been laid out, and by systematically utilising different coloured felt-tip pens to code different activities, or statuses in different spheres, patterns began to emerge. Such patterns gave form and further meaning to the lives and post-school experiences of study participants. The chart helped me to measure the relative significance of the various structural, cultural and sub-cultural factors and influences that shaped post-school progressions. Ultimately, however, it was the memory and transcripts of conversations and incidents through which I gained whatever understanding I eventually achieved.

5.5 Employment and Unemployment

During the third phase of my evolving project (1985-1986), I compiled a 'snapshot' of the post-school transitions of study participants (see Table 9, Chapter Four, Section 4.4). The 'snapshot' revealed the post-school progressions of study participants into employment, part-time employment, unemployment and full-time education. Later, between September 1989 and September 1990, in the final year of the fourth phase of my study, I compiled a second 'snapshot', reproduced as Table 11 (below). The following section will make reference to both Table 9 and Table 11.

Table 11: Employment/Unemployment Amongst Study Participants by Sex (1989-1990)

	Female	*Male*	*Total*
Employed	4	6	10
Part-Time Employed	4	-	4
Unemployed	11	14	25
Full-Time Education	-	-	-
TOTAL	*19*	*20*	*39*

Both Table 9 and Table 11 provide cross-sectional 'snapshots' of participants' transitions in the labour market. The Tables, however, do little justice to the complexity of the 'process' of participants' movement through different stages of the life-course - so crucially dependent on post-school transitions in the labour market. Indeed, much of the fieldwork undertaken during the fourth and final phase of my study (1986-1990) was concerned with the investigation, documentation and social cartography of the process of participants' post-school transitions. In this final phase of fieldwork, I sought to examine the interrelationships between post-school labour market transitions and study participants' transitions to adult roles and statuses. The fieldwork is presented in succeeding Chapters and seeks to distinguish between three separate modes of post-school transition: namely Traditional Transitions, presented in Chapter Six; Protracted Transitions, presented in Chapter Seven; Cyclical Transitions, presented in Chapter Eight. Each of these separate modes of transition had enormous implications for participants' movement into adulthood.

Table 9 (Chapter Four, Section 4.4) reveals that, in 1985-1986, nine study participants were in full-time employment. Of these, three participants, Denise Weldon, Deirdre Sharp and John Conleigh, had taken a traditional post-school transition directly to employment (see Chapter Four, Section 4.4.1). By 1990, Denise Weldon was no longer in employment; she had married and undertaken a traditional domestic career of home and child care. John Conleigh and Deirdre Sharp both remained in full-time employment, although Deirdre's hairdressing career was briefly interrupted by the birth of her first child in December 1989. However, Deirdre re-established her career when she undertook a joint business venture with her sister, through which leasehold premises were secured and converted into a hairdressing salon. The business venture was organised as a partnership with her sister and provided employment for them both. The details of the labour market and domestic career progressions of the three traditional transitionaries are examined in Chapter Six.

Of the remaining six study participants, Amanda Gardiner, Charlie Dougan, Berksy, Russell Robinson, Georgie B. and Mick Kent, who were all in full-time employment in 1985-1986, five retained their employment into the fourth phase of my study. The unfortunate participant who returned to unemployment was Mick Kent. In Chapter Four (Section 4.4.2), I highlighted Mick's complex and extended post-school transition to employment. Mick's labour market career followed a five year progression characterised by unemployment, underemployment, and government schemes. He eventually secured a 'proper job' in February 1985. This was clerical employment within a local government department. In 1988, however, as a consequence of a wave of 'last-in, first out' redundancies, Mick lost his job. His experiences within the labour market engendered a bitter and angry cynicism and, after he had re-registered as unemployed, Mick eventually sought and secured an alternative career as a 'hoister' within the 'Hoisting Crew' of Hartingleigh's anti-employment subculture (see Chapter Nine, Section 9.4.2).

During the period 1985-1990, the other five participants who, like Mike, had similarly undertaken protracted transitions to full-time employment, were joined by three others, Jimmy Bee, Tracy Smith and Cathy Tittle. The post-school progressions of the eight protracted transitionaries were characterised by prolonged bouts of unemployment, Government inspired (un)employment training schemes, underemployment in casual, contract and part-time work, as well as acquisitive crime and work within the local informal economy (see Table 12, Chapter Seven, Section 7.2). Such post-school progressions extended the transition to 'proper jobs' for periods of between four to almost eight years. The details of the complex labour market and domestic career progressions of the eight protracted transitionaries are examined in Chapter Seven.

Table 9 also reveals that, in 1985-1986, three women study participants were employed in part-time jobs; these were Cathy Tittle, Viv Richardson and Jill Souter. Cathy Tittle worked part-time in a City Centre florists. In September 1987, her work was upgraded so that she became a full-time employee. Cathy's protracted transition to full-time employment had taken over seven years, the details of which are outlined in Chapter Seven (Sections 7.6.3 and 7.8.6). Viv Richardson and Jill Souter maintained an intermittent association with part-time employment throughout the fourth phase of my research and both were in part-time work in 1990. However, Jill was compelled to briefly abandon her work as a home machinist in 1986, after her male partner had lost his job. Jill's part-time job was cash-in-hand 'piecework'. When her partner was made redundant, he insisted that she give up her part-time job on the pretext that it could lead to investigation and potential prosecution by the Department of Employment, from whom he was claiming unemployment benefit on behalf of the family. Jill was convinced that his attitude was more a reflection of the dent to "his pride" as a result of being unemployed. Nevertheless, she was only able to resume her work when her partner was re-employed in 1987. As Table 11 reveals, by 1990, Viv Richardson and Jill Souter, the two women in part-time employment, had been joined by two others. These were Lynn Parker and Lynn Chapman.

Part-time employment was usually only undertaken by women whose husbands/partners were in full-time employment. Benefit dependent couples generally considered part-time work not worth undertaking, certainly not on a formal 'cards-in' basis. This was not a reflection of some innate fecklessness, but was rather a consequence of the vagaries of the benefits system. The income derived from part-time employment held negative implications in terms of participants' entitlement to means-tested benefits and, more often than not, would have resulted in a disproportionate reduction in living standards. These points are discussed more fully in Chapter Eight (Section 8.6.2).

As Table 9 shows, in 1985-1986, two women study participants were in full-time education. Both Spider and Lynn Chapman had undertaken full-time courses in the mid-1980s as a means of effecting withdrawal from the formal labour market after post-school transitions characterised by government schemes and protracted unemployment. However, neither women secured formal employment after leaving College and both eventually undertook careers of full-time domestic and childcare work within the home. As mentioned earlier, Lynn Chapman did eventually manage to secure part-time employment; this occurred in March 1990. The part-time work was for twelve hours a week in a cake shop and provided Lynn with the opportunity to secure extra income for the family budget and, at the same time, "take a break" from domestic and childcare routine. Both Spider and Lynn Chapman's post-school transitions are examined in Chapter Eight (Section 8.4.2).

As Table 9 reveals, in 1985-1986, by far the largest group among my study participants were those who were unemployed. At that time, twenty-five participants (14 male and 11 female) were unemployed and seventeen of these had been without formal employment for more than twelve months. Table 11 reveals that, by 1989-1990, there had been some limited individual movement by participants between the categories of employed, part-time employed, and full-time education, but that the numbers of participants who were unemployed remained remarkably constant. By this final stage in my fieldwork, there

were still twenty-five study participants who were unemployed (14 male, 11 female) and the overwhelming majority had virtually no experience of full-time employment within the formal sectors of the labour market. Of the eleven women who were unemployed in 1985-1986, for example, nine were still unemployed in 1989-1990. The two exceptions were Lynn Parker and Tracy Smith. Lynn Parker undertook part-time employment in 1988 after her two children were old enough to attend nursery school. Tracy Smith, after a protracted six year post-school transition, secured permanent full-time employment, in August 1986, within Hartingleigh's Youth and Community Centre (see Chapter Seven). These participants were replaced by Spider and Denise Weldon within the category of unemployed. The transitions of the unemployed women were generally characterised by cyclical movements into and out of unemployment, government training schemes, underemployment, work in the informal sector, more unemployment, schemes, and so on. The majority of long-term unemployed women were also typically characterised by a general withdrawal from the formal labour market and work commitment into home-based domestic and childrearing 'careers', the details of which are examined in Chapter Eight (Sections 8.4.3; 8.6.3; 8.6.4).

Of the fourteen men who were unemployed in 1985-1986, thirteen were still unemployed in 1989-1990. The exception was Jimmy Bee who, in March 1988, after a protracted post-school transition, which lasted for almost eight years, finally secured a full-time job as a butcher's assistant (see Chapter Seven, Sections 7.3.2 and 7.8.3). Jimmy was replaced within the category of unemployed by Mick Kent, whose complex labour market transition I outlined earlier. The majority of long-term unemployed males were characterised by labour market withdrawal into alternative careers within the local informal economy or through proactively developed careers and identities based on more socially proscribed modes of income acquisition and these are also examined in Chapter Eight (Sections 8.4.4; 8.4.5) and in Chapter Nine.

Here I would like to make a final comment with reference to the language of 'work', non-work, employment and unemployment; a language that sometimes obscures more than it clarifies. During the fourth phase of my fieldwork, I realised that I needed to make subtle distinctions between alienating labour and creative work, between official 'cards-in' employment and unofficial cash-in-hand fiddle jobs on the side, which were essentially legal forms of income acquisition but shaded into illegality in terms of being 'undeclared' to the benefit agencies. Some fiddle jobs were also more directly concerned with illegality. The status roles of 'barking' and 'touting', for example, examined briefly at the end of Chapter Four, were not only undeclared forms of alternative income acquisition, but also occasionally involved participants in illegal acts such as 'barking or 'fly-pitching', stolen goods, or 'touting' forged venue tickets or unofficially printed programmes for sports and pop events (see also Chapter Nine, Sections 9.2.2 and 9.2.3 for details). Distinctions need, therefore, to be made between official and unofficial labour (e.g. jobs on the side) and also between paid, and unpaid labour, such as housework and childcare. The term "work" tends to be used loosely and its use is ingrained in "common culture" (Willis 1990) and also, I discovered, within my own unreflective thinking. As my fieldwork progressed, I realised care was needed to distinguish, for example, between official jobs and government (un)employment training schemes, between 'proper jobs' and underemployment in casual, contract or part-time work. I have therefore followed Coffield *et al* (1966 : 57) in making the following distinctions:

1. Jobs/'Proper Jobs'/Waged Employment = Official (i.e. 'cards-in') Paid labour.

2. Housework/Domestic Labour/Child Care in the Home/Voluntary Work/Creative Use of Time = Unofficial unpaid labour.

3. Undeclared Work/Unofficial Work/Fiddle Jobs/Jobs on the Side/Cash-in-Hand Work/Informal Work = Unofficial paid labour

I have also grouped this type of income acquisition under the term sub-employment. In Chapter Four (Section 4.8.1), I outlined how a distinctive subculture had evolved among study participants based on moves between total benefit dependence and various fiddle jobs, undertaken off the books, when benefit claims and entitlement were maintained. For

most sociologists, the term sub-employment denotes a system of frequent job-changing in youth labour markets, particularly associated with young people in unskilled work (*cf* Norris 1978; Roberts *et al* 1982b). For these observers, despite the frequency of job changes, the work undertaken was generally within the official (formal) labour market and, as such, required workers to relinquish benefit claims and entitlement. For those operating within the sub-employment subculture of my study, the types of work obtained were undertaken precisely because they were 'off the books' and, as such, allowed benefit claims and entitlement to be maintained. I have also referred to this sphere of informal economic activity as the local informal economy, or the alternative enterprise culture. As previously outlined in Chapter Four, such activities often shaded into more illegal enterprises such as 'touting', 'barking', 'hustling' and 'totting' (see also Chapter Nine).

4. Unemployment/The Dole/Government Schemes = Without official paid labour

Again, this may be considered a slightly ideosyncratic categorisation as Government Training Schemes sometimes provided participants with work experience on employers' premises. Nevertheless, these were not regarded as 'proper jobs' by study participants, did not command a 'proper wage', but rather a training allowance, and generally did not lead to full-time official paid labour. Within the category of 'unemployed' in Table 9 (Chapter Four, Section 4.4) and Table 11 are contained, therefore, study participants who were undertaking government schemes, or involved in domestic childcare routines within the home, or involved in alternative modes of income acquisition within Hartingleigh's sub- and/or anti-employment subcultures.

5.6 Causes of Youth Unemployment

Although my study is more concerned to examine the consequences, rather than the causes, of youth unemployment, it is necessary to briefly address the debates surrounding the explanations for the dramatic increase in the levels of post-school unemployment, in order to set the experiences of study participants within the macro-economic context. Youth unemployment seems to have been around as a political issue for a long time. It is sometimes forgotten that many of the largest increases occurred at the beginning of the

1980s at a time which coincided with study participants' school leaving. According to Raffe (1984), youth unemployment grew more in 1980 than in the whole of the previous decade. In the early 1980s, debate about the nature and causes of youth unemployment focused on two explanations. The first examined youth unemployment as an exaggerated reflection of "recession led" general unemployment trends (Makeham 1980; Raffe 1984; 1986). The second explanation argued that the youth labour market has distinct "structural" characteristics and that change had occurred in the demand for labour in the sectors and occupations where young people used to congregate (Ashton and Maguire 1983; Ashton *et al* 1982).

Although there was lively debate, most commentators now agree that a fall in aggregate demand for labour was the most important factor (Furlong 1992). In other words, unemployment rose due to a reduction in demand for labour caused by the recession. However, the approach taken by Ashton and Maguire (1983) has relevance to the experiences of study participants in that it emphasises the changes which have taken place in the organisation of the youth labour market. Most young people seek employment in their own locality and are, therefore, most affected by what is happening to their specifically local economy. These local labour markets are further 'segmented', with male and female sectors, and divisions between different skill levels. The growth in youth unemployment in Hartingleigh was due to the changing demand for 'youth jobs' which tended to be over-concentrated in declining industries (see Chapter Eight, Section 8.3.2). An implication of this approach is that the condition will not be remedied, even by sustained economic growth, and that special intervention is required to permanently restructure the process of entry to the labour market. As Furlong has argued:

> "The important point ... is that changes in the labour market are not seen simply as a result of the recession, nor regarded as a consequence of 'forces' which are beyond the control of society, but are perceived as structural processes which are themselves a consequence of economic, social and political decisions" (1992 : 74).

Raffe (1986) denies there is anything especially structural about contemporary youth unemployment, and has tried to show that there is no tendency for young people to be concentrated in declining industries. Youth unemployment is rather viewed as a product of the all-round drop in labour demand. In turn, Ashton *et al* (1990) have criticised Raffe for assuming that the labour market is relatively 'open', arguing that it is necessary to take account of the segmented nature of the youth labour market. Various factors appear to be at work. Ashton *et al* (1990) argue that, for young males, the decline in the manufacturing sector and the growth of the service sector, together with the growth of part-time employment, have all led to a loss of youth jobs over and above that due to aggregate unemployment. Roberts *et al* (1988) have similarly argued that the "bottom" has fallen out of the youth labour market. In part, the trend towards the employment of married women and adults in youth sector jobs has resulted in young people being "squeezed out" of some segments to which, according to Roberts *et al*, they will not return (1988 : 25-26). Moreover, further evidence from the research conducted by Roberts *et al* suggests that employers are concentrating their investment on "core workers" with qualifications and skills at the expense of "periphery workers" who can be hired and fired at will. It is therefore unqualified young people who are most vulnerable to being "squeezed out" of employment when demand for labour is low. However, Raffe (1984) attributes the concentration of youth unemployment among the less qualified to the tougher competition which has forced school leavers, with academic or skill credentials, to enter the labour market at lower levels. This process, rather than structural changes in the economy, is said to explain the distribution of youth unemployment. The main implication of Raffe's viewpoint is that special intervention would be unnecessary if a cure for economic recession could be found.

In contrast, Roberts *et al* (1988) maintain that economic growth is no longer a reliable means of reviving youth labour demand. In the sense that employers' recruitment procedures, which occurred between 1979-1981, are unlikely to be reversed, youth

unemployment may be considered to be structural. Roberts *et al* (1988 : 34) maintain that "permanent measures are required to rebuild school-leavers' transitions".

Finally, according to Furlong (1992 : 74), the Government's response to the increase in youth unemployment has, ironically, led to the greatest structural change. The introduction of compulsory youth training schemes, enforced under the removal of welfare benefits for the 16-18 year old age group, has led to a situation where the youth labour market has been replaced by what Lee *et al* (1990) describe as a "surrogate labour market". A large proportion of young people, particularly school leavers, now spend their first two years in the labour market warehoused on schemes which are largely financed by the Government.

5.7 Transitions, Trajectories and Careers

During fieldwork in the fourth phase, I sought to map the inter-relationships between post-school labour market transitions and the effects and implications the different modes of transition had for study participants' complementary progressions into adulthood. Although the terms 'transition', 'trajectory' and 'career' are used interchangeably, they do carry slightly different theoretical connotations. Roberts (1993) had recently articulated the most deterministic view of post-school transitions, utilising the concept of "career trajectory". The term 'trajectory' carries the connotation of young people being somehow "propelled along awaiting channels towards predetermined destinations" (1993 : 229). In part, the theoretical language of post-school 'trajectories' evolved as a reaction against the notion that, in the 1980s, the loosening social structure had widened opportunities and increased social mobility. Although there was very little empirical evidence for this, within Conservative political and social thought the talk of a new classlessness gained ground partly as a consequence of Thatcherism and, later, John Major's "classless society" discourse. However, the results of the recent ESRC 16 to 19 Initiative (Banks *et al* 1992), as well as other youth research concerned to examine the implications of *Growing*

Up in a Classless Society (Furlong 1992), have shown that, for most school leavers in the late 1980s, Britain was still a land of very unequal opportunities.

Research in the late 1980s, early 1990s, has unequivocally revealed that the problems posed by class, race, gender, sexual orientation, and other forms of social oppression, have not gone away and that the Conservative strategy of releasing capitalist market forces has not engineered expanded opportunities for significant sections of the population. The ESRC research has indicated that local labour markets play a significant role in the opportunities available to young people within a given locality. Thus, for example, a third of young people from the ESRC research sample in Swindon made direct transitions from school to employment, whereas in high unemployment areas like Kirkcaldy, Liverpool and Sheffield, only one in ten made such traditional transitions. Educational attainment and class background have remained good predictors of young people's opportunities throughout the 1990s. Thus young people from middle class backgrounds were twice as likely to experience 'success' in education and the labour market as those from working class families (Roberts 1993 : 24). Such findings have led Roberts to conclude that the notion of career trajectory best illustrates: "Just how bounded their opportunities were, and how they were being propelled along awaiting career routes" (1993 : 233).

In contrast to Roberts's almost deterministic notion of 'career trajectory', the softer, more voluntaristic, concept of post-sixteen 'transitions' pays a closer concern to dynamic processes. A response to the charge of over-determinism in youth studies, especially those which took a youth-cultural, or social and cultural reproduction viewpoint, led to a shift in emphasis. This has produced a movement in youth research towards a conceptualisation and integration of the active subject. In this latter view, agency and structure are linked together in an image of the active subject in constant struggle with structured and structuring contradictions. These dynamic processes produce constantly moving but nonetheless patterned, systems of resistance and accommodation (e.g. Aggleton 1987; Anyon 1983; Giroux 1983). According to Chisholm (1990 : 39):

> "Structuring principles and the analysis of their interdependence demand both historically specific anchoring and holistic, temporal contextualization. The concept of social-biographical transition offers a means to draw these strands together."

Moving further in the direction of voluntarism is the important organising concept of 'career'. Within my study, I have made use of the concept, for example, with reference to the 'alternative careers' developed by long-term unemployed study participants within Hartingleigh's sub- and anti-employment subcultures (see Chapter Four, Section 4.8; Chapter Eight, Sections 8.4.4 and 8.4.5; and Chapter Nine). It has been a valuable device for explaining the transitions of the long-term unemployed as a series of status sequences which involve patterns of "choice" (*cf* Coles, forthcoming, Chapter One). The concept of 'career' has also allowed for an examination of the interplay between what Giddens (1983) has termed "structuration" and human agency. Within my study, I have sought to draw out the relationship between institutional and structural developments - such as the collapse of the youth labour market and government policy interventions in education, employment, vocational training, housing and welfare benefits - and young adults as active social agents, responding procreatively to changes rather than being simply "propelled" or "programmed" by them (*cf* Roberts 1993 : 223). The concept has also allowed me to examine the relationships between different career tracks such as labour market career; housing career; domestic career; and 'deviant' career. Each of the different but interrelated career tracks involved a series of status sequences which, in turn, involved participants in patterns of choices.

However, although voluntaristic 'choices' were made and individual biographies and careers proactively constructed, these processes occurred within the "canopy of structured inequality". In fact, such constraints, as they impinged upon individual 'choices', were recognised by participants. As J.W. put it: "No jobs, no money, what fuckin' choice"; or as Jimmy Bee declared: "Beggars can't be choosers". Chisholm has argued that, "the social construction of biography is inevitably linked with social position" (1990 : 56). This is not to imply a crude cultural or materialist determinism, for participants were

indeed active in the construction of their personal histories, but they did not construct them just as they pleased, nor under circumstances chosen by themselves, "but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past" (Marx in Feuer 1959 : 360).

In the vacuum created by wagelessness, for those involved in the active construction of non-conventional alternative careers and identities, even when they seemed engaged in creating something culturally innovative, the subcultural edifice conjured up the "nightmare" traditions of the past, such as an exaggerated subcultural concern with the old parent cultural values of 'hard' masculinity, sexism and a, sometimes violent, *machismo*: "The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living" (Marx in Feuer 1959 : 360).

Thus, with these considerations in mind, in utilising the notion of 'career' and 'career choice', I am not prepared to go as far down the voluntaristic road as Little (1990), who has examined the development of criminal careers and identities solely in terms of choice: "Delinquents choose a criminal identity based on a series of decisions which appear rational to them" (1990 : 138). Little's thesis might have been more credible had he made at least passing reference to the "socio-economic disadvantage" which typically characterises the 'Identikit Prisoner' (portrayed in a report of the same name issued by the Prison Reform Trust : 1991). In fact, Little's *Young Men in Prison* (1990) makes no reference to any of the background disadvantages which recent national prison surveys have highlighted as typical of the incarcerated young (Prison Reform Trust 1991; Home Office Statistical Bulletin 1991; Home Office 1991). Such social disadvantages typically include homelessness, unemployment, mental health problems, and poverty (Prison Reform Trust 1991).

5.8 Transitions Compared

The fieldwork conducted during the fourth phase highlighted the differences in participants' experiences of transition from school to work, or, as was more common, from school into unemployment. Post-school transitions within the labour market also reflected the movement of study participants from childhood dependence into adult independence. Some recent youth research has suggested that post-sixteen transitions have become freer from class-gendered constraints, that young people can construct their futures in the new 'spaces' that have appeared during the past decade or so (see, for example, Chisholm *et al* 1990). My research generally does not support this view. Basic survival within "the canopy of structured inequality" (Riseborough 1993 : 2) was the dominant experience of research participants. A recent analysis of Government statistics shows one fifth of the population living below the poverty line and an increase in these numbers of one and a half million between 1987 and 1989 (Piachaud: *Guardian Society*, 30.9.92). Within this structured inequality, however, my research also provides evidence of the empowering proactivity and resistance of subcultures which supplied an alternative basis for re-constructing identity and self-esteem (see Chapter Nine and Chapter Ten).

The experiences of the eight study participants who effected a protracted transition to economic independence and adult roles and status may be vividly contrasted with the experiences of the three study participants who secured a traditional transition to primary employment upon school leaving. The traditional transitionaries left home and were formally engaged to be married by their early twenties, and had all married and successfully undertaken owner-occupation and parenthood by their mid-twenties. A traditional post-school transition to primary employment provided the economic foundation upon which stable, conventional, adult roles and identities were constructed.

In contrast, the post-school transitions of the eight participants who undertook a protracted transition to proper jobs were characterised by prolonged periods of unemployment, and, in most cases, underemployment and government schemes, which

extended the transition to proper jobs for periods of between four to almost eight years. Economic instability prevented the forward planning and 'saving for the future' which had characterised the domestic careers of the traditional transitionaries. Many of the study participants who effected a protracted transition to primary employment were unable to sustain residential independence until their mid- to late twenties. Essentially the protracted transitionaries were attempting post-school progressions to a working class adulthood without employment, whilst often still living at home with their parents.

Family influences and residential location appeared to be significant factors at play in the post-school transitions of study participants. Unlike the traditional or protracted transitionaries who effected post-school progressions to employment and who were drawn from 'respectable' working class families, or families at the mid-point of the 'rough-respectable' continuum, the long-term unemployed participants were more likely to be drawn from Hartingleigh's 'rougher' estates, and to have fathers who were absent or unemployed.

In Chapter Six (Sections 6.3 and 6.4), I examine in detail the significant advantages 'respectable' working class families were able to bestow on job-seeking siblings. The most important influences appeared to be secure housing status (owner-occupation); a family background of work commitment as a source of intrinsic satisfaction and self-advancement; a family history of members' prolonged employment in skilled or semi-skilled jobs; and the consequent ability to confer labour market advantages on job seeking siblings through informal workplace contacts. These were the factors that distinguished the three participants in my study who had successfully secured a traditional post-school transition to employment from the vast majority who had not. In contrast, the income providers (usually fathers) from the families of the protracted transitionaries were generally employed in low-skilled, or unskilled jobs, or were unemployed. As such, family members were unable to bequeath the social or labour market advantages to their offspring as the family members of the traditional transitionaries.

Despite the illusion of greater opportunity for young people in the 1980s, and the increased variety of training options presented to those attempting the transition from school to work, research has shown that, throughout the past decade, it was young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds who remained most vulnerable to unemployment (*cf* Banks *et al* 1992; Furlong 1992). In Hartingleigh, where unemployment remained high throughout the decade, it was precisely those young people from parts of the Ward characterised by residential stigma and social disadvantage, whose family backgrounds contained absent or long-term unemployed main income providers, for whom the school to work transition was most problematic. Trans-generational unemployment was a significant factor in the family backgrounds of study participants who had entered the ranks of the long-term unemployed. As working family members may be a useful source of unadvertised job vacancies, family unemployment may be considered responsible for severing these participants from an important, informal, information network.

Moreover, evidence accumulated during my final phase of fieldwork indicated that the absence, or unemployment, of the parents of the long-term unemployed participants precluded significant parental intercession in terms of the development of work commitment or aspirations related to formal employment (see Chapter Eight, Section 8.3). In general, the parents of the long-term unemployed participants exerted little influence upon their children's lives, either in terms of the ability to bestow social and/or labour market advantages, or to inculcate work commitment and aspirations. This was in stark contrast to the significant degree of parental influence and intercession exercised by the parents of the traditional transitionaries (Chapter Six, Sections 6.2 and 6.3) and, to a lesser degree, the protracted transitionaries (Chapter Seven, Section 7.5). In contrast to the long-term unemployed study participants, both the traditional and protracted transitionaries maintained a strong commitment to employment and employment aspirations. The subjective development of work commitment and aspirations has been explored utilising Brown's (1987) organising concept of working class "Frames of Reference", the details of which are outlined in Chapter Six (Section 6.4). The traditional

transitionaries could be characterised as embodying a 'getting out' or 'getting on' frame of reference, whilst the protracted transitionaries were generally characterised by a frame of reference that was concerned with 'getting in' to the adult working class through waged employment (Chapter Seven, Section 7.5). In the case of the protracted transitionaries, work aspirations and commitment were maintained even in the face of protracted transitions to primary employment which, in two cases, lasted for over seven years. Evidence of the desire of the protracted transitionaries to 'get into' working class adulthood through waged labour was gleaned from the amount of effort put into, and the various strategies adopted for, acquiring that first 'proper job' (Chapter Seven, Section 7.5.1).

Although the families of the study participants who became long-term unemployed did not significantly contribute to the inculcation of work commitment and employment aspirations, most participants in this group, nevertheless, unsuccessfully attempted post-school entry into the formal labour market. In their attempts to find regular, stable employment, all were subsequently thwarted. Work commitment and employment aspirations were "cooled out" (Goffman 1952) both by these initial labour market experiences and also by their subsequent experiences on the Black Magic Roundabout of cyclical transitions through unemployment, underemployment and government inspired 'sink schemes' (Chapter Eight, Sections 8.1; 8.2). These types of first-hand experiences within the formal labour market further deflated any illusions participants might have had about the openness of the opportunity structure, and such experiences often preceded the slide into disillusionment and cynicism. The disillusionment of the cyclical transitionaries provided partial explanation for their development of non-conventional economic solutions and alternative status systems for defining the transition to adulthood. For many long-term unemployed participants, a reduction in personal commitment to the official, or orthodox, labour market had positive psychological benefits (Chapter Eight, Sections 8.4.4; 8.4.5).

As indicated earlier, post-school transitions within the formal sectors of the labour market had enormous significance for participants' movement into adulthood. The three traditional transitionaries' domestic careers followed a clear-cut life course progression. Their traditional domestic careers were augmented by the benefits bestowed by full-time employment. Traditional transitions to employment facilitated social contact, leisure mobility and residential independence. With each of the three participants' traditional transition to employment, there followed a complementary, traditional domestic pattern of courtship, engagement, marriage, owner occupation and parenthood. Traditional transitions to employment were reflected in relatively unambiguous transitions to adult roles and status (Chapter Six, Section 6.5).

Among the eight protracted transitionaries, relationship/family formation was often extended and complex, characterised by economic instability and social insecurity. Progressions to adult roles and statuses were typically elongated, delayed by lack of income, marred by residential dependence and, in some cases, characterised by psychological ambiguity (Chapter Seven, Sections 7.7 and 7.8). These patterns were to some degree repeated in the post-school transitions of the majority group within my study - the long-term unemployed. Cyclical transitions were the post-school experiences of the majority of long-term unemployed and consisted of bouts of unemployment, underemployment, government schemes, more unemployment, more schemes, and so on. However, unlike the protracted transitionaries, for those study participants undergoing a cyclical transition, primary employment was not an end result. Thus, the cyclical transitionaries who entered the ranks of the long-term unemployed could be distinguished from the protracted transitionaries in terms of their final labour market destinations.

Cyclical transitions, labour market withdrawal, and long-term unemployment had significant consequences for participants' domestic career transitions. For male study participants, cyclical transitions and labour market withdrawal typically resulted in a retreat into the norms, values and alternative status systems of their peer group subcultures.

Such withdrawal involved the restriction of social contacts to social networks containing others in a similar position. Participants built on a common sense of identity constructed out of an exaggerated valuation of working class male machismo (Chapter Eight, Section 8.5.2). Group bonding, loyalty and solidarity remained a central feature of male participants' lives. The subcultural affiliations fostered in their early teenage years were not severed by transitions to employment and, as a consequence, same-sex friendship patterns and affiliations formed the predominant focus for domestic career transitions (Chapter Eight, Section 8.5.3). For six long-term unemployed males, commitment to the generating milieu of their localities and peer groups militated against residential independence. For eight male participants, however, early sustained residential independence was secured primarily through the income derived from fiddle jobs or acquisitive crime (Chapter Eight, Sections 8.5.4; 8.5.5). The unemployed males displayed a complex variation in domestic career transitions, but were generally unsuccessful in sustaining ongoing childrearing relationships. The pressure, insecurity, lack of stable routine, and sometimes danger, associated with participants' alternative careers, mitigated against stability, or emotional commitment in relationship/family formation (Chapter Eight, Section 8.5.5).

The domestic career transitions of the long-term unemployed women were circumscribed by the cultural emphasis on a domestic apprenticeship of home care and childrearing (Chapter Eight, Section 8.6.2). Early domestic careers of pregnancy, childrearing and home caring served, generally, to locate women in positions of economic and domestic subordination. Domestic roles and duties effectively kept women divided and dependent. In such situations, there was a general withdrawal from labour market commitment and aspirations into a fatalistic acceptance of the taken-for-granted roles of domestic responsibility (Chapter Eight, Section 8.6.3). Of the eleven women who in 1989-1990 could be identified as long-term unemployed, eight were responsible for the care of two or more dependent children, and ten were either married or cohabiting with male partners (Chapter Eight, Section 8.4.3). Lack of other viable options, such as the

possibility of a 'proper job', or independent life style, made the mothering option a higher status occupation than long-term unemployment (Chapter Eight, Section 8.6.4).

5.9 Summary and Conclusions

In this Chapter, I have sought to provide the reader with an overview of the research conducted in the period of the fourth phase of my project. I began with a brief review of the fieldwork conducted between 1986 and 1990. I outlined differences in the nature of fieldwork contacts between participants and their peers who lived either in Hartingleigh, or in the immediately surrounding areas, and those who were either scattered throughout the various districts of the Greater Manchester conurbation, or who had 'migrated' from Manchester to other areas or parts of the country.

My contacts with study participants and their peers in Hartingleigh and the areas immediately surrounding the Ward, were frequent, and characterised by a high degree of informality. With some participants, relations had been developed over a number of years since my period of detached youthworking for the Project in the first phase (1979-1982). During the course of my study, I grew very close to some participants and was accepted and liked by them. Such mutuality had certain methodological strengths in that it allowed me to get 'inside' their informal social networks and afforded me relatively unconstrained access to valuable areas of sociological interest. As a result of my friendships, I was, for example, allowed to document and explore, at first-hand, the propensity towards and development of, non-conformist alternative post-school careers - many of which were modes of income acquisition that were illegal. However, the neutral reader may feel that, as a consequence of "over-rapport" (Miller 1952), or what anthropologists have described as "going native", or what social workers might describe as "over identification with clients" (cited in Miller 1969 : 88, notes 4), my work has lost a certain capacity for analytical detachment. As Miller argues:

> "Friendship connotes an all-accepting attitude; to probe beneath the surface of long-believed values would break the friend-to-friend relationship" (1969 : 88).

The glaring gaps in the recent sociological research literature of post-school transitions (outlined in Section 5.3) reveal the clear need for exploration by social researchers of the informal, cultural and subcultural adaptations to long-term unemployment. In my case, such exploratory fieldwork into these 'backstage' areas of participants' lives could not have been achieved without their friendship, trust, acceptance and co-operation. In seeking to operate from a position of advocacy, I am prepared to concede that my research may be viewed as having been conducted from the "Utopian perspective of celebrating youthful creativity" (Taylor and Jamieson 1983 : 96); but I make no excuses for this. Given the overarching "canopy of structured inequalities" and institutionalised economic and social insecurity (in which participants' social-biographical transitions have been proactively constructed), the celebration of creativity and resistance offers a counterpoint of optimism to those youth studies which have provided a sober investigation of stress, depression and injury to personal health, engendered by post-school transitions during the Thatcher years.

In contrast to the almost daily contacts with the most immediately accessible participants from Hartingleigh and the districts surrounding my study area, maintaining informal fieldwork contacts with eight study participants who were scattered in residential locations throughout the various districts of Greater Manchester was more problematic. Nevertheless, during the four years of fieldwork, I developed fairly informal relationships with most participants and devised strategies for enhancing the fieldwork data. Such strategies included small group meetings, the active involvement of participants in the editing and re-ordering of transcripts of taped conversations, and the collaborative construction of biographical accounts.

The most inaccessible group of study participants were those who had 'migrated' from Greater Manchester. However, I had informal contacts with two of the 'migrants', Charlie Dougan and Berksy, based on our past associations during the first phase of youthwork. Both had been among my group of ten interviewees in the Project's 1980 School Leavers Survey and I maintained contact with them throughout the fourth phase. I also sought to

maintain contacts with Denise Weldon in Norwich, Georgie B. in Oldham, and Julie Birchall in Blackburn.

The migrant group of participants had followed distinctly different modes of post-school transition which highlighted the variation to be found within my study group as a whole. Charlie Dougan and Berksy had effected a protracted transition to employment *via* early careers within Hartingleigh's anti-employment subculture. Incarceration for Charlie and a spell in the army for Berksy had provided for geographical mobility which allowed them to break their past associations with the male informal group in Hartingleigh. Both participants eventually secured full-time employment and followed similar domestic careers of courtship and marriage. Denise Weldon's residential mobility was a feature of her 'getting out' frame of reference. A traditional transition to employment afforded the financial foundation upon which a stable domestic transition was established. The traditional transition to employment complemented a parallel transition from courtship to marriage, owner-occupation and parenthood. In contrast, Julie Birchall undertook an early career as a lone parent. Poverty and hardship entailed survival strategies of 'totting' from the social and working on the side before she eventually entered a full-time domestic career of home and childcare; this followed from her marriage and the birth of a second child. Georgie B was the only participant in my study group to have secured a protracted post-school transition to employment *via* post-compulsory education and a government employment training scheme. Georgie was the lucky one; generally government-scheming served only to extend participants' post-school transitions and 'warehouse' or deflate labour market aspirations (see Chapter Seven, Section 7.4 and Chapter Eight, Section 8.2 for details).

Aside from differences in the nature of my fieldwork contacts and introductions to participants' post-school transitions, I also briefly outlined my routines for recording information in the fourth phase. I highlighted the difficulties involved with utilising taped interviews and conversations in terms of the accumulation of material and the amount of

time required to transcribe tapes. However, as particular themes and topics emerged from the processes of sorting and sifting and a parallel reading of the youth research literature, I learned to be selective in the focus of my fieldwork. I outlined the processes of collaborative or participatory research in terms of engaging participants in ordering, re-ordering and editing accumulated fieldwork notes and transcripts of conversations. With varying degrees of dedication, many participants actively engaged in the construction and re-construction of their social-biographical transitions, and also provided written material relevant to incidents and issues connected with their case studies: see, for example, Davvo - Chapter Four, Section 4.8.3; Denise Weldon, Deirdre Sharp and John Conleigh - Chapter Six; Amanda Gardiner, Cathy Tittle, Charlie Dougan, Berksy, Georgie B., and Jimmy Bee - Chapter Seven). The active collaboration of study participants in the construction of material used in the text is a feature of the participatory approach derived from detached youthwork principles and practice, and also reflects a developing trend within contemporary fieldwork practice.

In Section 5.3, I sought to examine some of the ethical issues raised by my study. In my fieldwork with the unemployed, assurances of anonymity and confidentiality were coterminous with the 'no-grassing' subcultural norm. My research was partly derived as a result of guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality to research participants and, in line with my desire to ensure such guarantees were met, I followed Sieber's recommendations for the secure management and storage of sensitive research materials. Precautions that were taken include: the responsible use of lock and key; the omission of any means of identification from files and tapes; the purging of all identifying names, dates and locations from records at the earliest possible opportunity; and the storage of acutely sensitive material at a location separate from the main body of research material (Sieber 1982 : 112-115). In maintaining the anonymity of research participants, I have travelled as far along the road of confidentiality as Jennifer Platt was prepared to in her study of professional sociologists. I have changed names, though some participants chose to invent their own (see also Reynolds 1979 : 169), sometimes sexes, institutions, affiliations,

topics, and identities (Platt 1976 : 7). Although he will not go down in the history of social research for the rigour of his ethical principles, Humphreys (1975) operates the following test on the issues of anonymity and confidentiality:

> "The question I have always asked myself in this connection is: Could the respondent still recognise himself without having any other recognise him? I may have failed ... to meet the first part of this standard, but I am confident that I have not failed to meet the second" (1975 : 172).

In the ethics section, I explained how my own law-breaking past and status as an 'ex-con' had facilitated entrée into the informal social networks of my research group. My own biography also influenced the "politics of selection" and the choice to pursue research into the law-breaking activities of the local subcultures. Because of my own background of affiliation to Manchester's Inner City 'deviant' subcultures, I found nothing immoral, or even unusual, in the dealing, hoisting, grafting and blags that I encountered (see Chapter Eight and Chapter Nine).

I argued, following Polsky, that, despite the formidable ethical problems, the study of law-breaking activity in its "natural-setting" may be justified on the basis of the empirical gaps in the existing literature. The omission is particularly noticeable in the recent research literature of post-sixteen transitions. Evidence suggests that researchers either do not have access to the relevant research material, or, when they do, refuse to engage with it because of the political, ethical, confidentiality implications and ramifications. However, in a situation where politicians and senior representatives of the police force are, almost daily, prepared to offer public comment on the issues of unemployment and crime, it seems inexcusable that social researchers do not undertake the investigation of these areas of contemporary cultural concern. Even senior detectives of the Greater Manchester drug squad are prepared to offer public comment and analyses of the "career patterns of boys wanting to boost their street credibility by dealing". Detective Superintendent David Brennan, head of the Greater Manchester drug squad, has obviously read a sociology textbook or two in arguing that "a major factor is peer pressure"

(*Manchester Evening News*, 23.11.92). It is time, perhaps, that Brennan had something more up-to-date to inform his views.

In order to disabuse readers of the assumption that the linear construction of the text reflects the logical progression of research, I have followed contemporary ethnographic trends in offering a personal reflection on my fieldwork. If, as I would argue, the real point of fieldwork is to be immersed in the community under study, it means that one's personal life is indivisible from the research; as such, I have provided a personal account of my relationship both with the community and with the 'data' derived from my work within it. In so doing, I have explored the strengths, limitations and effects of conducting intensive research 'at home'. My approach to fieldwork follows the principles and practices I acquired in detached youthwork, including a commitment to advocacy and empowerment. I was also guided by the humanistic and empathic approach to research derived from the participant observation tradition in sociology, including the "use of self" (Kreiger 1985). As Dean has argued:

> "A person becomes accepted as a participant observer more because of the kind of person [s/he] turns out to be in the eyes of field contacts than because of what the research represents to them" (Dean 1954 : 233).

In providing a personal account of my fieldwork in Hartingleigh, I have followed others in examining the strain and contradictions (see, for example, Malinowski 1967; Powdermaker 1966; Smith-Bowen 1964). I have examined my own developing sense of estrangement which culminated in a profound ontological insecurity engendered by the shock of disengagement from the field. Similarly, Michael Clarke (1975 : 105-6) rather unsympathetically cites the example of an anthropologist who "had gone mad during fieldwork and had to be flown home and hospitalised"; in this case the fieldwork was ultimately written up without reference to the episode. I have also discussed the methods used for reconstituting both myself, and my study, and the problems I encountered in trying to impose order and meaning on the accumulated fieldwork materials.

In Section 5.5, I returned to the less ethereal realm of employment/unemployment amongst study participants and provided an overview of the limited movement of participants into and out of work, part-time work, education, and unemployment; by far the largest group were those who had entered the ranks of the long-term unemployed. Of the eleven women who were unemployed in 1985-1986 (during the third phase of preliminary fieldwork) nine were still unemployed in 1989-1990. Of the fourteen men who were unemployed in 1985-1986, thirteen were unemployed in 1989-1990. The post-school transitions of the unemployed were characterised by cyclical movements into and out of unemployment, government schemes, work in the informal sector, more schemes, more unemployment, and so on. The majority of unemployed women were characterised by withdrawal from the labour market and labour market commitment into home-based domestic careers of housework and childrearing. The majority of unemployed men were characterised by labour market withdrawal into alternative careers, located in the informal economy, or through acquisitive crime.

The causes of youth unemployment which precipitated non-conformist or home-based domestic careers were examined in Section 5.6. Two main explanations have emerged in recent years. The first, associated with the work of Raffe (1984, 1986), offers a "recession-led" explanation; the second, associated with Ashton and Maguire (1983) and Ashton *et al* (1982; 1990), attributes youth unemployment to "structural" changes in the youth labour market. Although most commentators agree that a fall in aggregate demand for labour caused by the recession is the primary explanation, I argued that local labour market factors, such as the decline in traditional industry, particularly manufacturing, provides the most important explanation for local youth unemployment. This may be viewed as a "structural" explanation and contains the implication that economic growth, in itself, will not recreate a youth labour market that has now vanished.

Study participants undertook one of three modes of post-school transition and these are examined in detail in succeeding Chapters. In Chapter Six, I examine the traditional route

from school to employment, undertaken by three participants. In Chapter Seven, I examine the more common protracted transition to employment, and in Chapter Eight, I examine the majority post-school experience of cyclical transitions. Cyclical transitions through schemes, unemployment, more schemes, more unemployment, and so on, typically engendered feelings of profound cynicism and disillusionment which preceded labour market withdrawal.

In Section 5.7.1, I examined the different theoretical connotations of the terms 'transitions', 'trajectories' and 'careers'. Although I have, throughout my study, utilised the terms interchangeably, they do carry different theoretical implications. The most deterministic view of post-school transitions is embodied in Roberts's (1993) concept of "career trajectory". The least deterministic concept has been outlined by Coles (forthcoming). Utilising the term "career", Coles seeks to retain the notion of voluntaristic choice in the individual's construction of post-school progressions; these he describes as status sequences which involve choice patterns. The concept of 'transitions' occupies a mid-position between the two others. Chisholm and du Bois-Reymond (1993) have recently argued that there is the suggestion in youth research influenced by critical modernisation theory that:

> " ... Youth transitions are ... losing their internally structurally differentiated quality ... the sequencing and timing of the rites of passage between childhood and adulthood are dissolving and fragmenting ... the separations and ...the inequalities between the situations and orientations of young people ... are gradually disappearing" (1993 : 260).

Crucial to this view is the idea that processes of individualisation and destructuring/destandardisation have usurped the adequacy of psychological or sociological developmental approaches to youth as a life stage (Chisholm *et al* 1990). Whilst agreeing that changes in patterns of family life, education, and labour market opportunity structures have taken place in recent decades, the basic structure of youth transitions remains generally ordered and experienced in ways which reproduce patterns of inequality, a view apparently shared by Chisholm and duBois-Reymond (1993), whose

recent research has led them to conclude that, certainly with regard to gender differentiation and inequality:

> "Individualism of destinations remains an implausible sociological proposition ... youth transitions are [not] losing their gendered quality or their underlying 'logic' ... We can hardly describe this as living in a socially open space" (1993 : 272-273).

In comparing the post-school transitions of study participants (Section 5.8), I have highlighted how labour market transitions carried enormous implications for participants' movement into adult roles and statuses. The experiences of the eight participants who undertook a protracted transition to employment, may be vividly contrasted with the experiences of the three study participants who moved from school *directly into* employment. The three who secured a traditional post-school transition effected residential independence, owner-occupation, marriage and parenthood by their mid-twenties. In contrast, the participants, whose protracted transitions to employment took between four to almost eight years, were unable to sustain residential independence until their mid- to late twenties, and, unlike the stage-like progression in domestic careers followed by the traditional transitionaries, for the protracted transitionaries, relationship/family formation was often extended and complex. Progression to adult roles and statuses were typically elongated, delayed by lack of income, marred by residential dependence, and characterised, in some cases, by psychological ambiguity.

The protracted transitionaries could be distinguished from the participants who had entered long-term unemployment, *via* cyclical transitions, in terms of their final labour market destinations. For the male long-term unemployed, cyclical transitions resulted in labour market withdrawal, which in turn produced a retreat into the norms and values of their peer group subcultures. Participants built on a common sense of identity constructed from an exaggerated emphasis on parent cultural values of 'hardness'. The unemployed males displayed a complex variation in domestic career transitions but were generally unsuccessful in sustaining childrearing relationships. The domestic careers of the long-

term unemployed women were typically characterised by domestic roles and childrearing. Early domestic careers generally located the unemployed women in positions of economic and domestic subordination.

Of all the participants in my study, the most 'successful' in conventional terms were the three who had secured a traditional post-school transition directly to primary employment. Stable employment provided a sound economic foundation upon which adult identities were established. Their transitions within the labour market were complemented by parallel transitions to adult roles and statuses; their hopes and expectations provided the background against which could be highlighted the careful fatalism or embittered alienation of other, less fortunate, study participants. In the following Chapter, I provide a detailed examination of the social and biographical elements involved in the traditional post-school transition.